

A13355S1

FINAL HONOUR SCHOOL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Paper 4 The History of the English Language to c. 1800

Trinity Term 2016

Choose ONE question from EACH of the two sections. Each answer must be no shorter than 2000 words and no longer than 2500 words, excluding bibliography and appendices. Answers must be typed double spaced on one side of the paper only; the word length of each answer must be indicated at the top of the first page.

Please remember to number your pages.

In the course of your two answers you must show knowledge of two consecutive periods from those covered in the paper (Old English, Middle English to c.1500, early modern English c.1500-1800).

Questions in Section B invite you to make your own selection of texts or passages of texts to analyse, in accordance with the terms of the particular question you choose. Copies of these texts/passages MUST be included as an appendix to EACH COPY of your portfolio. Credit will be given for judicious selection of material, as well as for the quality of the analysis. The material you analyse must not exceed a combined total length of 100 lines (not 100 lines for each text selected, but 100 lines in total for all texts selected). This limit applies to both prose and verse. It is an upper limit: in many cases, much shorter pieces of text will be adequate for your purposes. There is no lower limit, but the quantity of material you analyse must be sufficient to allow you to produce an analysis of the required length.

In both sections, careful attention should be paid to the precise terms of quotations and questions. You must acknowledge all primary and secondary sources used in your answers, ensure that citations and quotations are accurate, and provide a bibliography for each answer.

Section A

1. 'Speech and writing are the same language embodied in different channels' (K. ANIPA).
2. "'Standard" and "standardization" are vexatious terms when applied to linguistic description ... Variability is central, not peripheral' (R. BAILEY). You may restrict your answer to ONE period if you wish.
3. 'Loanword is a concept with necessarily fuzzy edges'.
4. 'The mechanism of change, the inciting causes of change, and the adaptive functions of change are best analysed by studying in detail linguistic changes in progress' (W. LABOV).
5. 'Variables such as gender, age, and social class are by no means easy to examine in the history of English'. You may restrict your answer to any TWO variables.
6. 'English lexicography before 1800 reveals an uneasy relationship between the impulse to record and to reform'. You must make detailed reference to at least TWO dictionaries in your answer.
7. 'Let any man who understands English, read diligently the works of Shakspeare and Fletcher; and I dare undertake that he will find in every page either some solecism of speech, or some notorious flaw in sense' (J. DRYDEN).

Section B

8. 'Quibbling about periodization is not, perhaps, worthwhile'. Analyse TWO texts which either support or contest this view of linguistic periodization.
9. 'Since the standard came early and was quickly implemented, the disregarding of dialect was quick and dramatic' (M. GÖRLACH). Provide a close analysis of TWO texts which make use of regional discourse in some way.
10. 'Our best authors have committed gross mistakes, for want of a due knowledge of English grammar' (R. LOWTH). Find TWO texts which examine, in different ways, the problems of correctness and control, examining the contributions which their own language makes to this debate.
11. 'Letters and diaries, as "language history from below", present a range of insights into historical practice and principle'. Provide a detailed analysis of TWO texts which seem to you to offer 'insights' of this kind.
12. 'Text-types always need to be assessed in the light of their historical and cultural settings: language, here and elsewhere, does not exist in a vacuum'. Making close reference to any TWO text types, assess the validity of this claim.

13. 'When we consider the great anomaly of words in our language wherein the pronunciation differs from the orthography, can we wonder that strangers should complain of the difficulty of acquiring a proper English pronunciation?' (J. BUCHANAN). Make a close analysis of TWO texts, from different periods, which in some way illuminate this problem.

14. 'Intralingual translation, seen from the point of view of language, must, of necessity, present special difficulties'. Discuss this claim with reference to TWO texts from different linguistic periods.