1 Spoken language and social groups

The following text is a transcription of a televised interview with three members of the British music band Bastille, at the BRIT music awards ceremony in 2014. The three members of Bastille are Dan Smith, Chris Wood and Will Farquarson and the interviewer is Andrea Lilley.

Discuss ways in which the participants are using language here to communicate. You should refer to specific details from the transcription, relating your observations to ideas from your wider study.

Andrea: we are here with the most (1) AMAZING bastille at the BRIT awards 2014 (.) how on earth are you feeling.

Chris: umm

Dan: we are (.) umm

Chris: excited

Dan: excited (.) nervous

Chris: anxious

Dan: umm (.) looking forward to seeing sophie and lucy1 later

Will: [laughs]

Dan: umm (.) yeah (.) err

Chris: im also hungry

Will: slightly confused about what we're doing here but

Dan: feeling [looks at Andrea Lilley, the interviewer]

Andrea: well (.) i mean (.) id like to tell you im so excited for you guys (.) im so excited (.) youve had err (.) the most storming year (.) if you could pick one highlight where you thought (.) where your six-year-old self just goes (.) YAY (.) what was it

Chris: oohh

Dan: you can take this one woody [looks at Chris]
Chris: i'll take this one (1) im going to say glastonbury\(^2\) (.) last year

Dan: yeah

Chris: that was pretty

Dan: that was (.) umm

Chris: that was intense

Dan: totally unexpected (.) we weren't expecting anyone to come and see us so

Will: yeah i think glastonbury is one of those things that (.\) almost all musicians

Dan: dream of doing from very early on (.\) so (.\) theres no way its not going to be

Will: the most (1) but i mean (.\) theres been so many things this year that have

Dan: just been amazing (.\) like we supported muse\(^3\) and that was insane (.\) i (.\) i

Will: we had to release an album

Dan: yeah (.\) we released an album

Will: who would have thought

Dan: and on that note (.\) you've also written your next album

CW/DS/WF [all laugh]

Will: have we now

Dan: quite a lot of it (.\) yeah

Andrea: and what (.\) how is it going to be different (.) are you writing about different

Dan: writing about different things (.\) err (.\) there's a lot of different influences from

Notes:
1 Sophie and Lucy: friends of Dan
2 Glastonbury: a big, annual music festival in England
3 Muse: a famous rock band
4 RnB: Rhythm and Blues music

TRANSCRIPTION KEY
(1) = pause in seconds
(.) = micro-pause
underlined = stressed sound/syllable(s)
// = speech overlap
[italics] = paralinguistic features
[UPPER CASE] = words spoken with increased volume
↗ = upward intonation
2 English as a global language

The passage below comes from an Australian website called The Conversation. It deals with the emergence of English as a global language and the disappearance of other languages.

Discuss what you feel are the most important issues raised here relating to the changing use of English as a global language and how its use is affecting other languages. You should refer to specific details from the passages as well as to ideas and examples from your wider study.

Renaming English: does the world language need a new name?

English is rapidly becoming a *lingua franca* in international communication for commerce and trade, education, science, international relations and tourism. It is the fastest growing language in the world, with more people speaking English than ever before. School children in India and China are learning English at a staggering rate as their countries emphasise the importance of English as a ticket to participating in the global economy.

So why then do we continue to link this evolving internationalising language with a small island in Europe that once upon a time controlled the world? Perhaps it is about time we got rid of the “English” and start calling it something else – international, standard or common language?

It is important to understand that there is not one English language; there are many. In fact, in Australia we don’t even speak and write English. We actually use Standard Australian English, which is not the same English that you might find in the United Kingdom, the United States, India or China.

There are countless blends, pidgins, creoles and mixed English languages. At the same time that English is becoming the language of internationalisation, it is also becoming localised in different parts of the world as multiple world Englishes flourish.

A sociocultural perspective on language considers the impacts of regional dialects, national standards and conventions, slang, different pronunciations and the use of communication technologies such as mobile telephones, texting and email. Our use of English depends on the contexts, audiences and purposes we are using it for.

The rise of English comes with several concerns, including questions of cultural hegemony and postcolonial criticisms. While it is easy to shrug off such criticisms with the argument that English is necessary for social mobility, economic prosperity and education, there remain many unanswered questions around the social and cultural impacts of English as a global language.

There is a real tragedy in the loss of language diversity as English takes over, placing other languages at risk of extinction. This has been acknowledged and efforts are being made to preserve indigenous languages in places such as Papua New Guinea, Brazil and Australia. However, is this enough? Are we destroying more than language through the rise of English as the international standard?
3 Language acquisition by children and teenagers

The following text is a transcription of conversation between Amy (age 2 years 6 months) and her father. Amy is sitting at the table eating breakfast with her father.

Discuss ways in which Amy and her father are using language here. You should refer to specific details from the transcription, relating your observations to ideas from your studies of language acquisition.

Father: is your cereal good

Amy: [nods] i like my toast

Father: you like your toast

Amy: i like my jamas [looks down at her pajamas]

Father: you like your pajamas huh (2) is the cereal good (.) what kind of cereal do you have

Amy: see

Father: oh i see (.) that looks delicious

Amy: mm hmm

Father: its cheerios right (2) hey (.) we need to wipe your face (.) do you have a napkin

Amy: hmm

Father: do you need a napkin

Amy: i got it

Father: you got it (.) ok [laughs] (1) alright (.) your breakfast looks DELICIOUS

Amy: breakfast delicious yours

Father: my breakfast was delicious too (1) i had some raisin bread and some toast (.) now im going to have a little water

Amy: ok (1) need some milk too

Father: i had some milk in my cereal

Amy: theres milk too [picks up her cup]

Father: yeah (.) thats milk too

Amy: i drink my milk [drinks]

Father: mm that looks good (2) is that delicious (3) mm (1) amy (.) you want to call grandpa on the phone
Amy: mm
Father: or nana.
Amy: i talk nana [put down spoon]
Father: talk to nana (.). ok
Amy: [pick up toy phone] hi nana [smile]
Father: do you want to tell her im going to the gym.
Amy: [put down toy phone] i need running
Father: oh and im running.
Amy: i see (.). mummy running
Father: mummies running.
Amy: nana running
Father: nana running
Amy: yes
Father: oh ok (.). shes a good runner
Amy: and grandpas running
Father: and GRANDPAS running too (.). wow
Amy: and DADDY running
Father: now im going to run too (1). do you wanna run with me.
Amy: yeah [smile]
Father: ok (.). ready (1). lets go running

Note:
1 Cheerios: an American breakfast cereal

TRANSCRIPTION KEY
(1) = pause in seconds
(.) = micro-pause
underline = stressed sound/syllable(s)
// = speech overlap
[italics] = paralinguistic features
[UPPER CASE] = words spoken with increased volume
^ = upward intonation