Engaging with 'English in a historical perspective' through analysing texts

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ABSTRACT: Though there is little in the literature on the teaching of the history of English, criticism of textbooks which over-simplify *the* story as the rise of the standard variety has been more vocal of late. Meanwhile, some academics have argued for focusing teaching on the analysis of texts. This article reports on a unit/module taught at a British university that makes the analysis of texts central to teaching and assessment. It sets out to demonstrate what can be learned from approaching the subject in this way by presenting composite textual analyses created by the first-named author drawing on the work of his co-authors (five of his final year undergraduate students). This was for two assignments, one focusing on an Early Modern English text and the other a more contemporary piece. A discussion highlights the benefits of making the analysis of texts central to the unit, and considers practical applications for teachers of the subject in other parts of the world.

KEYWORDS: history of English, textual analysis, undergraduate study

INTRODUCTION

There are various approaches to engaging university learners in exploring changes in the English language over time, including those adopted in many textbooks, such as Baugh and Cable's (2013) much reprinted 'history of the English language' (which first appeared in 1951). After a brief introduction, this discusses, in successive chapters, how 'English' emerged from the Indo-European family, appearing as Anglo Saxon shaped by Viking influences, before this 'Old English' was subordinated to French and Latin in many social, political and religious contexts after the Norman Conquest. Subsequently, while acquiring much French lexis and morphology, the language evolved into 'Middle English', which was used in an expanded range of sociolinguistic contexts. Next, influenced by the Renaissance and the flood of Latin that accompanied a translation of the classics, the language developed into 'Early Modern English', a term, like 'Old' and 'Middle English', used for convenience since there were stages within this period and overlapping developments (Nevalainen 2006). While the 16th and 17th centuries were characterized by 'linguistic uncertainty', English subsequently gained greater respectability by being codified in England and America as a 'doctrine of correctness' held sway, as Baugh and Cable (2013) report. English then continued to change and diversify on both sides of the Atlantic and all around the world.

As this brief narrative suggests, it is within the context of various external events that internal changes in the language are described in Baugh and Cable's (2013) textbook and others like it. Indeed, this is an approach which, sometimes supplemented by a more intense focus on sample texts from different periods (e.g. in Barber 2000), might seem logical to the reader following the material chronologically in print form. However, such an approach does have its disadvantages.

"Historiography", writes Mesthrie (2006), is "of necessity a simplifying and idealizing process" and too often the history of English has "been cast as the unilinear progress of the standard variety" (p. 381). Indeed, Saraceni (2015), highlighting ideological sentiments expressed in Baugh and Cable's (2013) work with regard to the continuity of English and its connection with England, argues that ways of presenting the history of English have become at least partially institutionalized as a result of 19th century nation-building. Nevertheless, there has been room for other approaches. Some historians of the language, e.g. Leith (1997) and Fennell (2001), have avoided any such ideological perspective by focusing closely on the social contexts in which linguistic changes have taken place.

The university teacher of an undergraduate unit/module on the history of English might be puzzled, though, when it comes to deciding how to utilize these various resources. Buck (2003) summarizes the dilemmas clearly: The field is vast, there is very little advice available on how to teach the history of English and which aspects of it to focus on; supposedly comprehensive textbooks leave certain areas untreated and yet also present large chunks of information in the form of dull lists. And inevitably, this all leaves the teacher of the history of English, likely to be a non-specialist since this is an interdisciplinary area, searching for creative ways to engage learners and stimulate their critical awareness. Buck's (2003) chosen approach is to focus on texts, arguing that this can engage students

> in hearing and pronouncing the language of different periods; it teaches them to notice language, to look very carefully for features of language that are familiar and also not-so-familiar to them; it shows them different visual representations of text and helps them to identify and recognize graphic conventions of different historical periods (p. 48).

Paul Rastall (2002, p. 31), had come to a similar conclusion about the need to focus on texts in the previous year, reflecting on "a challenging odyssey" to develop a final year undergraduate unit on 'English in a historical perspective' that encouraged students "to observe, research and explain [changes in English over time] from the direct experience of texts and the use of research tools such as historical dictionaries and histories of English". He contrasted this approach with those that "attempt to follow progressions of facts remote from [the students'] experience or to concentrate exclusively on synchronic issues of variety, structure and usage" (p. 31). Rastall (2002) acknowledged that exercises in some of the textbooks then available, e.g. Freeborn (1992), "imply a similar perspective by encouraging students to relate older texts to their contemporary experience of English through the identification of cognates, intralingual translation into Present Day English and the observation of differences between older texts and modern usage" (p. 29). He also acknowledged that teachers in other university contexts might well have constructed similar units to his own, but concluded that a greater awareness of the pedagogical possibilities was needed through a sharing of experiences. In the past 12 years, though, notwithstanding the arrival of fresh textbooks such as Gramley (2012), which uses texts created by individuals "from differing levels of society and over a wide geographical spread" to illustrate historical change (p. xvii), there is still little to suggest that the awareness that Rastall (2002) called for has been developed; there remains too little discussion in the literature on how to use texts to support the teaching of the history of English. This remains a whole area of linguistics, then, in which there has been a much greater focus amongst academics on the subject matter than how it is to be taught.

I (the first-named author) took over Paul Rastall's unit at the University of Portsmouth in 2009, and developed it further along the same lines, making the analysis of texts central to the process. Building on the work of Buck (2003) and Rastall (2002), I wish to reflect here on what can be learned from engaging university learners with 'English in a historical perspective' in this way. I also wish to demonstrate what the textual analyses produced by such students might look like, without suggesting that all might achieve to the same level. For, while, as already indicated, some historians of the language do focus on sample texts from different periods, e.g. Barber (2000, p. 183-188), who provides a very clear analysis of the grammar of Early Modern English through exploring a scene from a Shakespeare play, the analysis in such textbooks tends to look far removed from the undergraduate essays we might expect, e.g. in lacking, in Barber's case, in-text citations.

I set out to achieve these goals by drawing upon the assessed work of five students from the last academic year (2013-14), focusing, with their permission, specifically on their textual analyses, which accounted for 60% of the total marks for the unit. The five (who have since become my co-authors) were the highest performing overall (of 83 in the cohort doing 'English in a Historical Perspective'); they all went on to achieve first class honours degrees in the English Language. My approach is to explore the work of these students retrospectively and then create composite textual analyses filtered by my own interpretations and additional analyses and reflections. The procedure adopted was as follows: First, I annotated the scripts, identifying linguistic features addressed and comparing these to those features I had identified myself. I then explored how these features had been treated and which references, I subsequently (re)visited, had been drawn upon. Since the students had been writing to a tight word limit, they had found sometimes novel ways of presenting

data economically, e.g. as in Table 3, which came from Serena's work. They had also been selective in features addressed, going into depth in different linguistic areas, although they had all covered a range, as specified in the rubric. The structure and content of the assignments reflected their own interests and enthusiasms, so that in discussing the text used for the first assignment, for example, one was clearly fascinated by Early Modern English spelling, while others went into more depth discussing pronouns or lack of 'do' support. In relation to my own analysis, some other features, e.g. the text's references to classical mythology, were less discussed in their work. In creating composite textual analyses, I was drawing on strengths in the students' work (their insights, their scholarship) and blending these with my own. If I had simply analysed the texts myself, my analysis would not have been so rich. In various ways, I have been faithful to the students' work, e.g. in retaining their original words and voices wherever possible, so that hopefully they could identify with the resulting analyses when I emailed these to them (and indeed their feedback suggested this was the case). Before presenting the results of this analytical and writing process (any deficiencies of which I should emphasize are my responsibility alone), I first provide an outline of the unit and discuss the teaching and assessment strategy.

AN OUTLINE OF 'ENGLISH IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE' (2013-14)

The intended learning outcomes of the unit were to enable students to discuss critically the rise and position of Modern English, identify and discuss aspects of the modern diversity of Englishes and account for features of Early Modern English and Present Day English. To achieve these outcomes, the following outline (Table 1, overleaf) was developed (for one-hour lectures and seminars each week, with assignments at intervals).

The outline provided in Table 1 requires some explanation. The first two weeks were focused on the rich diversity of the here and now, with a view to stimulating curiosity as to how this situation of manifold world Englishes had arisen. Lecture 3 then plunged the students into a sweeping history of English in England, before the next few lectures focused on aspects of linguistic change. Meanwhile, the third seminar was the first (of seven) devoted to textual analysis, preparing students for the first assignment due in Week 8. Several seminars previewed rather than recapped lecture context; for example, Lecture 7 recapped seminar input from weeks 3 and 4, while experience from previous years suggested that uptake from lectures 8 and 10 was greater if the content (e.g. on the Great Vowel Shift and English verb grammar) was previewed in the preceding seminar. In Week 8, when Assignment 1 was due, the students were set to work immediately in the seminar on preparing for Assignment 2, which was made available at the end of the week. Course content of less relevance to the textual analyses, since it addressed other learning outcomes, was assessed by Assignment 3.

Table 1. The 'English in a Historical Perspective' unit outline

Week	Focus of the lecture	Focus of the seminar	Assessment
1	Englishes around the world	Activity: Jigsaw reading and discussion of the modern diversity of Englishes.	
2	Standards of English, dialects and accents	Groupwork: identifying varieties of English from audio-recordings and discussing changing attitudes towards these different varieties.	

3	A short history of English in England: from the end of Roman Britain to Shakespeare	Textual analysis: listening to an extract from the King James (1611) Bible, then reading and analysing extracts of this in groups, discussing features of the language.	
4	From the grammar of Old English to Middle English	Textual analysis: watching an extract from a televised Shakespeare history (Henry IV, Part 2), reading and analysing another extract in groups, discussing features of the language.	Assignment 1 set (textual analysis: extract from King Edward II by Christopher Marlowe [1592]).
5	Developments in English lexis over the centuries	Activity: identifying when words entered English on the basis of their characteristics. Textual analysis: comparing the lexis of two texts, one Middle English, the other Early Modern English.	
6	The changing morphology of English	Activity: identifying Romance and Germanic affixes. Textual analysis: comparing Early Modern English texts for lexis of French and Germanic origin, and analysing 'hybrid' words.	
7	Grammatical features of Early Modern English	Activity: listening to an extract from a Shakespeare play declaimed by David Crystal and his son in accents aiming at	

		the original pronunciation. Activity: jigsaw reading and discussion of an article on the changing pronunciation of English throughout the centuries.	
8	Developments over time in the spelling and pronunciation of English	Dictation activity: Australian simplified spelling (1975-1987). Textual analysis: a contemporary newspaper article (from *the Sunday Times*).	Assignment 1 due. Assignment 2 set (textual analysis: The Mary Tyler Moore Show: box set review by Anne T Donahue in *the guardian* [2013]).
9	The spread of English around the world	Grammar activity: tenses, aspects and timelines. Textual analysis: jigsaw reading and discussion of extracts from Jane Austen (early 19th Century).	
10	Grammatical changes in English in the last few hundred years	Activity: Multi-word verb game. Textual analysis: Jigsaw reading and discussion of two contemporary newspaper articles.	
11	A history of English through place and personal names	Activity: Brainstorming how to answer a sample essay.	Assignment 3 set (choice of one from five essay titles).

12	Revision	Group and individual tutorials to support Assignment 3.	Assignment 2 due.
15			Assignment 3 due.

Regarding the focus of the current article, textual analyses, the general advice given was that these should be analytical rather than descriptive, aiming to achieve reasonably broad coverage but also as much depth as the word limit would allow (Assignments 1 and 2 were 1,320 words each, excluding the list of references). Points should be explained, illustrated with appropriate examples and supported by relevant literature wherever possible.

THE FIRST ASSIGNMENT: FROM EARLY MODERN ENGLISH

The text used for the first assignment was an extract from Christopher Marlowe's King Edward II (Act 5, Scene 6, lines 1-67) (Appendix 1). The action in this commences with Young Mortimer, Queen Isabella's lover, receiving confirmation that King Edward II has been assassinated and his murderer killed, as he had ordered. Queen Isabella then enters, to say that the conspiracy has been uncovered. She is followed shortly afterwards by her son, now King Edward III, with his entourage. King Edward III confronts the pair and orders the execution of Young Mortimer, who is taken away.

There are various linguistic features of the text that help us to date it as Early Modern English, including striking grammatical elements such as the presence of the pronouns: 'thou' and 'thy'. Originally, the full set of second person pronouns had been as follows:

Table 2. Second person pronouns at the start of Middle English

Singular			Plural		
Subject	*Possessive*	*Object*	*Subject*	*Possessive*	*Object*
Thou	Thy/Thine	Thee	Ye	Your	You

However, though still preserved today in some regional dialects and religious discourse, the pronouns 'thou' and 'thy' had largely already disappeared from standard use by the beginning of the 18th century (Barber 2000). Indeed, even by 1600, 'thou' was becoming "a somewhat exceptional form" (Gramley 2012, p. 141), so that the need felt by speakers to discriminate between the singular and the plural can only partially explain the use of these pronouns in Early Modern English.

Changes in pronoun use that had already occurred prior to 1592 (when Marlowe's play was first performed) can be ascribed to the influence of French in Middle English, when a distinction between 'thou' and 'ye', similar to that between 'tu' and 'vous', developed; the 'ye/your/you' set (though 'ye' later disappeared, to be replaced by the object form 'you') was used to convey a formal, respectful attitude to a superior in polite society, while 'thou', in contrast, was used when addressing somebody "of a decidedly lower social class" (Barber 2000, p. 186). 'Thou' might also be the choice of someone in an emotionally charged state expressing anger and contempt (Brown and Gilman, 1960, cited in Fennell, 2001). Such attitudes, feelings and consciousness of social hierarchies are reflected in the pronouns Marlowe chooses for the different characters in the extract from his play we are examining, as the following table highlights:

Table 3. Pronoun use between the characters

Speakers and direction of conversation	Pronoun choice			
	thou	*thy*	*you*	*your*
Mortimer → Matreuis (his helper)	x	x		
Matreuis → Mortimer				x
King Edward III → Mortimer	x	x		
Mortimer → King Edward III			x	x
1st Lord → King Edward III			x	
1st Lord → Mortimer (social equals)			x	
King Edward III → Queen (his mother)			x	

As the table demonstrates, superiors and equals are addressed 'you', characters of a lower social class are addressed 'thou', while King Edward III uses 'thou' and 'thy' in speaking to Mortimer, both his social inferior and his enemy, particularly contemptuously. It is interesting that, even though he seems to view her behaviour as having been supportive of Mortimer's treachery, the king addresses Queen Isabella (his mother) with a polite 'you' (Line [L] 37 – Appendix 1) because of her status.

Regarding verb endings, which mirror pronoun use, the text includes evidence of inflectional complexities since lost, e.g. in the second person singular agreement {-(e)st} found in 'know**est**' (L50) or 'grow**est**' (L3), or, when reduced to a {–t} with modals, 'wil**t**' (L5). However, as 'thou' gradually disappeared, these inflectional endings declined through the 17th century, following a trend towards zero-marking that had already been set in recent centuries by the loss of inflectional endings for the first person singular in the indicative mood (Singh 2005).

What remains with us today of a once far more complex inflectional system is the third person singular ending, {-s}, which appears in various places in the text, e.g. 'teare**s**' (L18), 'wring**s**' (L18), 'vowe**s**' (L19). Of note, though, is that this {–s} ending was competing at the time Marlowe was writing with another form it was in the process of replacing, the {-(e)th} found in 'ha**th**' (L15) and 'sai**th**' (L42). The {-s} had originally been the northern form in Middle English, while southerners had used the {-(e)th}. Then, as the {-s} spread south, corpus studies suggest that it did so initially in informal contexts (Gramley 2012) and particularly in the discourse of women (Baugh and Cable, 2013). By 1600, however, the {-s} was already established in a range of contexts in parts of the south (Gramley 2012), so that Marlowe writing in London "was free to use either" (Baugh and Cable 2013, p. 240). Certain verbs, though, including 'have' and 'say', were "slow to acquire the northern suffix", as Nevalainen (2006, p. 91) reports; interestingly, these two verbs have retained the {-(e)th} ending in Marlowe's text.

There are also examples in the text of the subjunctive, which although already in decline in Early Modern English, was still frequently used to express not only wishes and exhortations (Nevalainen 2006) but also doubt, hypothesis or uncertainty (Barber 2000), often with conjunctions such as 'if' and 'though'. A reason for the use of the subjunctive falling away, Gramley (2012) suggests, is the loss of the distinctive verb forms through which it was realized, as inflections were lost throughout Middle English. Nowadays, as Nevalainen (2006) reports, modal auxiliaries have replaced it in many contexts, though it lingers in fixed expressions such as 'God sav**e** the Queen'. Examples in the text include 'What if he hau**e**?' (L17), with the subjunctive third person singular marked here by the uninflected base form of the verb (Barber, 2000). Subjunctive forms of the verb 'to be' are also evident in the text, with 'be' marking

the present and 'were' the past subjunctive regardless of person (Gramley 2012), e.g. 'if this **be** the hand of Mortimer' (L44), 'I would it **were** vndone' (L2). This last example provides an interesting reminder that English has always had other means of signalling hypothesis (Nevalainen 2006), e.g. through the modal 'would', which, dating back to Old English, here combines with the subjunctive in the expression of regret.

Besides its use in the subjunctive, the verb 'to be' is of interest for its role in helping form the present perfect, e.g. in 'Gurney… is fled' (L7), 'he is gone' (L20). The auxiliary 'be', though replaced comparatively recently in such contexts by 'have', was preferred at this and in earlier times with verbs of motion (Nevalainen 2006); as is evident in these examples, it was used primarily to express a concern with a situation that had arisen as a result of an action (Barber, 2000).

Another striking change in auxiliary use since Early Modern English concerns the dummy auxiliary 'do', which was much less used in the late 16th century both in negative statements and in questions (Gramley 2012). Indeed, 'do' does not appear in places where one might expect it in our text, neither in imperatives such as 'Feare not' (L24), 'Thinke not' (L27), nor in questions, whether affirmative, e.g. 'Why staies he heere?' (L51), or negative, e.g. 'Why speake you not vnto my lord the king?' (L38). Another word notable by its absence from the text is the relative pronoun 'who', then in the process of becoming established (Baugh and Cable 2013); in the text instead, we find 'that' (L65), the use of which has since become more restricted (Barber 2000).

Striking lexical features of the text that help us to date it as Early Modern English include references to classical mythology, e.g. 'Ioue' (L11) and the Goddess Fortuna's 'wheel of fortune' (L59), which would have been largely intelligible to an

increasingly educated Renaissance period theatre-going audience that was open, at least through translation, to the writings of ancient Greece and Rome. It is thought that, at the time Marlowe was writing, at least a third of the population of London was literate (Baugh and Cable 2013), which represented a considerable development from the Middle Ages, when, prior to Caxton developing his printing press, knowledge of classical civilization tended to be more narrowly restricted.

There are also allusions in the text to legal and political practices that would have been familiar to the audience but are less prevalent nowadays, e.g. the particularly grisly mode of execution reserved for traitors in the 16th century, involving drawing and quartering as well as public hanging (L52-53), and the absolute power of the monarch in fixing such punishments. Interestingly, the lexis in the text relating to these political practices and legal proceedings, e.g. 'penitent' (L3), 'impeache' (L14), 'councell' (L20), 'treacherie' (L28), 'conspirde' (L37), 'proofe' (L43), 'intreat' (L56), is mostly of Romance origin, reflective of how English was shaped by the Norman Conquest. For, after 1066, the English aristocracy was dispossessed by French-speaking Norman barons who had little need for their specialized lexis, which accordingly fell into disuse; much of the lexis of Old English, including that relating to government and administration, disappeared (Baugh and Cable 2013). Consequently, when for various reasons in the 13th century, the small but powerful elite of French speakers in England started switching seriously to English, a language then lacking in prestige, they found its lexis deficient for the contexts in which they wished to use it, which resulted in them borrowing words in the Middle English period, some from Latin and other languages but mostly from French (Fennell 2001). Many of these French words were then hybridized (Baugh and Cable 2013), e.g. with them taking on 'native' English affixes, such as the adverbial

{–ly} in 'patient**ly**' (L37). Several of the Romance words in Marlowe's 1592 text were actually quite recent in English, in the senses in which they are used here. For example, the first recorded use of 'tragedie' (n.d.), meaning (in L24) an event or series of events that causes great suffering, destruction or distress, and typically involves death, is given by the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) online as 1509. Perhaps even more recent is 'paltrie' (L57), of uncertain origin. According to the OED, its first recorded use is 1565 (paltrie, n.d.)

Similarly useful in dating the text to early Modern English are words and expressions that were current in 1592 but which have fallen into disuse since or are presently used in different ways. For example, many earlier senses of 'sue' (n.d.) have become obsolete and it is rarely a synonym for 'plead' now, as in 'sue for life' (L57). Several expressions such as 'how now' (L27) have become archaic.

The spelling is also distinctively Early Modern English. This is partly because, following conventions regarding the use of the 23-letter Latin alphabet introduced by Norman scribes (Singh, 2005), the graphs 'u' and 'v' were positional variants (Gramley 2012). The 'v' form was used at the beginning of words, e.g. 'vnto' (L52), 'vpon' (L19), 'vnknowne' (L66) and the 'u' form in all other positions, e.g. 'haue' (L17), 'reuengd' (L19), 'Sauages' (L9). This was a universal feature of English up until 1630, where the 'u' and 'v' became letters in their own right (Görlach 1991).

Another striking feature of the spelling is the presence of an {-e} (since dropped) at the end of various words. Barber (2000) explains that, as inflections declined during Middle English, the final {–e} was all that was left of fuller Old English inflections, such as {-an} and {-um}. Then, the {-e} itself disappeared from the pronunciation, as many bisyllabic words lost their final syllable, and the first syllable was lengthened. The spelling of not all of these words has changed; 'name'

(L13) may still reflect Chaucerian pronunciation, but over time, the {-e} has been interpreted as an indicator of vowel length (Görlach 1991), and retained. However, in the text we also find 'weepe' (L34), 'speake' (L38), 'sweete' (L55), which contain doubled vowels, a spelling convention of the 15th century (Görlach 1991), subsequently felt sufficient to indicate vowel length. The final {–e} in 'thanke' (L10), 'thinke' (L27) and 'sonne' (L55) appears to be a relic of earlier inflectional English.

In spelling and more generally in form, considerable variation was possible. This was an age of linguistic uncertainty, to be followed by concentrated efforts to "standardize, refine and fix the English language" (Baugh and Cable 2013, p. 250) in the latter half of the 17th and then throughout the 18th century. Evidence of variation in the text includes the presence of the synonymous forms 'mur**th**erer' (L1) and 'mur**d**erer' (L58), for which there may be both phonological and etymological explanations. According to the OED, the Old English 'mor**th**er' and the Anglo-Norman 'mur**d**re' both influenced the development of the word we now know as 'murder' (n.d.), while this orthographic evidence suggests to Singh (2005, p.153) "sometimes variable pronunciation of [these] word-medial" phonemes. There is further evidence of variation in the form of the past participle 'hid' (L46). As Nevalainen (2006, p. 93) reports, while {-en} endings were in the process of being generalized, past participles "were far from being fixed by the end of the Early Modern period".

There may be other features of the text that help us date it as Early Modern English, e.g. terms of address such as 'my good lord' (L2), the 'of' phrase (L6), contracted forms such as 'twas' (L43), the capitalisation in 'Queene' (L64) and punctuation or lack of throughout. However, the analysis above has highlighted some

of the most significant features, and I now turn to the second text the students analysed, one from a very different era.

THE SECOND ASSIGNMENT: FROM PRESENT DAY ENGLISH

The text used for the second assignment was a box set review of an American television series from the 1970s, 'The Mary Tyler Moore Show'. This was written by a contemporary Canadian journalist, Anne Donahue, and published, in July 2013, in the British newspaper, *the guardian*, both in print and online (where it is freely available) (Appendix 2). Analysing this text after the previous one thus involved students in fast-forwarding 400 years and switching genre. Unsurprisingly, a textual analysis of the article reveals considerable evidence of linguistic change in recent centuries.

Of course, there is the comparatively recent sub-genre itself, a kind of television review published in a newspaper. As a genre, television reviewing did not, in fact, became established in broadsheet newspapers such as *the guardian* until the 1960s, sometime after television sets had become widely available, partly because such reviews needed to compete for space initially with those of theatre and opera first nights, which may perhaps have been more highly valued by the newspapers themselves (Ellis 2008). Moreover, this is a review not of last night's TV but of a long-running series from the past (available on DVD, invented in the 1990s) that readers may have some fond recollection of; such reviews might tend towards tongue-in-cheek description and gentle nostalgia, as is the case here, with the author reporting that the final scene 'still brings tears to [her] eyes' (L43).

Regarding the content, the lexis speaks to us of all sorts of changes in recent centuries, even indirectly indexing the historical colonizing of America in the way the

characters are named. 'Mary' (L2), quite possibly descended from Christians of Anglo-Saxon origins given that this was the most popular girl's name in England in the centuries after the Norman Conquest (Potter 1966), works with 'Lou' (L23), one can surmise of Italian heritage, and 'Murray' (L24), owner of an originally Gaelic name. As Baugh and Cable (2013) report, while the population of the United States in 1790 was still largely composed of the descendants of British settlers, waves of subsequent immigration altered this. These new migrants included the 1,500,000 Irish who arrived in the States following the failure of the potato crop in 1845 as well as 300,000 Italians per year in the decade prior to the First World War.

Mary works as the 'assistant producer' (L6) of a TV news programme, and, as one would expect, since lexical innovation springs from new experiences (Beal 2004), much of that which is comparatively 'new' in the text relates to recent social and technological developments and cultural phenomena (Fennell 2001). This new lexis includes the word TV itself (L1), an alphabetism first recorded in 1948 (TV, n.d.) and additionally characteristic of Present Day English since alphabetisms only really developed from the 19th century (Algeo 2010). It is an abbreviation, of course, of 'television', a word formed from Greek {tele-} and Latin roots, sources of much of the new scientific and technological lexis of recent centuries (Beal 2004); 'episode' (Ll9) is another word derived from Greek, while 'norm' (L30), reflecting our contemporary concern with patterns of social behaviour, came to us directly from Latin (norm, n.d.).

Other languages have left an imprint too, though in a way that suggests less systematic language contact (Fennell 2001), e.g. Russian in 'Veal Prince Orloff' (L40), a 19th century dish now a feature of international cuisine; such developments can be described as word-formation through the 'commonization' of proper names

(Algeo 2010). There is also influence from Dutch in 'boss' (L23), a word that entered American English in the 19th century as a consequence of migration from the Netherlands, and became part of British English sometime later (boss, n.d.).

There are, in fact, numerous examples in the text of Americanization, i.e. the importing of a word or sense into British from American English (Beal 2004), a process that has been ongoing since the 19th century. Some of these are so imperceptible that we hardly notice them. 'Peanut' (L21), for example, is one of a number of words that American serviceman, who were then being relocated to the UK during the Second World War, were warned by their government that their hosts would not know (Strang, 1970, cited in Beal, 2004, p. 213); the then standard British English equivalent that has since disappeared was 'monkey-nut'.

There are Americanisms in the text that relate clearly to technology and the media. This is unsurprising since, from the beginning of the twentieth century, American cultural power has manifested itself in virtually every domain of public life, with diverse American values and products exported to the rest of the world through motion pictures, popular music, television and more recently the internet (Crystal 2006; Chapman 2005). We are told, for example, that the show under review 'won an Emmy' (L19), a neologism that refers to an award made by an American academy for an outstanding achievement in television (Emmy, n.d.). In the text, there is no explanation as to what this is; the writer, probably correctly, assumes shared knowledge. One might wonder, though, if someone writing about an equivalent British award for an American audience could make such an assumption.

Other Americanisms in the text, some of which may reflect the American nature of the product, include 'pilot' (L4) and 'ratings' (L42) in the media and corporate business senses in which they are used here, though senses of these words

that relate to seafaring are much older. Indeed, there is much evidence in the text of semantic change of various kinds, of existing words having been given new meanings (Algeo 2010). An 'anchorman' (L36), for example, was once literally that, in a nautical sense, before television, indeed probably working with a ship's 'pilot' (L4) in the 15th century. These words seem to have broadened in meaning over time, as has 'station' (L7), not used in a TV context before the 20th century, and 'vow' (L4); this once denoted simply "a solemn promise made to God, or to any deity or saint" (vow, n.d.), but now, in our more secular times, is often, as in the text, used in the context of setting oneself a 'goal' or 'target'.

In contrast, other words from the text may have narrowed in meaning, e.g. 'boyfriend' (L31); once simply a friend who was a boy, the word became more restricted to romantic and sexual relationships early in the 20th century, when, in some contexts, it could also be used pejoratively (boyfriend, n.d.). Words that seem to have ameliorated over time, taking on more positive associations, include 'rebellious' (L2) and 'hit' (L11). Some current senses are very different from earlier ones; a 'newsroom' (L21) is now where news stories are assembled, rather than a place where newspapers are read.

'Newsroom' (L21) is an example of the compounding of two or more existing words to form a new one with a distinct meaning, a word formation process that accounts for much of the lexical innovation in Present Day English (Algeo 2010). As to the presentation of these compounds, some in the text, e.g. 'newswriter' (L24) and 'Homemaker' (L38), seem to have lost their variable hyphens, possibly following *the guardian* style guidelines. "New concepts often begin life as two words", before becoming hyphenated and finally accepted as one, *the guardian* writers are told (Marsh and Hodsdon 2010, p. 11); hyphens are acceptable to the newspaper, though,

e.g. in 'career-focused' (L15), an adjective created from noun plus verb, when the alternative would be confusion. Moreover, it can be seen from the text that some 20th century compounds are still written separately, e.g. the Americanisms 'studio apartment' (L8) and 'career woman' (L30), these reflecting contemporary pressures to use living space economically in urban societies and increased opportunities for working women post-emancipation respectively.

Other word formation processes are also evident, e.g. the creation of new words through affixation (Algeo 2010), a process influenced (with regards English) by the Norman Conquest (Baugh and Cable 2013) in that many affixes used since, e.g. {–ment} in the 17th century 'apartment' (L8), are French in origin. Latin, too, has left its mark since the Renaissance, with the prefix {ex-} appearing, for example, in 1827 (ex, n.d.), and evident in the text in the 20th century coinage 'ex-boyfriend' (L8). However, also evident in the text are productive Old English suffixes; these include {-ness}. Used to form abstract nouns from adjectives (Algeo 2010), it can be found in 'cluelessness' (L36), first recorded in 1960 (cluelessness, n.d.).

There is also an example of blending, which involves "a combination of clipping and compounding" (Kastovsky 2006, p. 214), as in 'sitcom' (L32), first recorded in 1964 (sitcom, n.d.), in which the lexemes 'situation' and 'comedy' have been clipped and combined. Kastovsky (2006) describes blending as a 'moderately productive' word formation process. It is less prolific than conversion (Algeo 2010), which involves functional shift accompanied by no change in form, as seen in the verbs 'air' (L4) and 'bag' (L6), for example, which are converted nouns.

Other features of the text that indicate linguistic change in recent centuries include the frequency and type of multi-word verbs. Jackson and Zé Amvela (2000) classify these as 'phrasal verbs', both transitive, e.g. 'shut off' (L50), and intransive,

e.g. 'take off' (L16), respectively, 'prepositional verbs', e.g. 'drift into' (L41), and 'phrasal-prepositional verbs', e.g. 'get in on' (L25). While multi-word verbs began to develop in the 12th century, and grew in number during Early Modern English (Beal 2004), literal meanings initially predominated (Smitterberg 2008). The development of more idiomatic senses is a more recent trend, one that has mirrored a great increase in the number of multi-word verbs since the 19th century (Beal 2004), when several of the examples above first appeared. Of the various types of multi-word verbs, phrasal-prepositional verbs, including 'kick off with' (L4) and 'go out on' (L42), both 20th century examples that illustrate the typically idiomatic nature of this form, are thought to be the most recent type, as Beal reports. The rise of multi-word verbs can be explained as part of a general colloquialization of the language. Colloquialization, as Smitterberg (2008 p. 271) explains, can be defined as a process whereby linguistic features that occur "more frequently in conversational speech than in writing become more common than previously in some written genres". Such genres are likely to include newspaper articles in which the author is trying to build a rapport with the reader. As Smitterberg reports, the move towards colloquialization can be traced back to the 19th century through the expansion of multi-word verbs.

There are various other indicators of colloquialization in the text, including idiomatic expressions such as 'putting the boot (in)' (L8), which may derive from early 20th century Australasian English (boot, n.d.), and the 19th century Americanism 'make it' (L6). These expressions and others, such as 'see it through' (L35), 'bites the dust' (L18) and 'brings tears to my eyes' (L43), have an element of predictability (Jackson and Zé Amvela 2000, p. 114) that reduces the work the reader (at leisure) needs to do.

There is also evidence of colloquialization in the presence of the progressive (Smitterberg 2008), a verb form that, though previously frowned on by the grammarians who also disliked multi-word verbs (Beal 2004), has expanded in frequency and function in every recent century (Mair and Leech 2006). In the text, the progressive is evident in non-finite {–ing} clauses (Leech and Svartvik 1994), sometimes with verbs that suggest the instantaneous, which has the effect of providing an action replay, a technique developed in the 19th century (Beal 2004); Mary found a job and somewhere to live within 20 minutes of the first episode, but progressive forms, 'bagging' (L6) and 'getting' (L7), are used to describe these events. Mair and Leech (2006) suggest that an even newer use of the progressive is interpretative, helping the reader to see the situation from the inside by focusing more closely on the underlying issues. This use of the progressive is evident, for example, in 'fearlessly conquering the working world' (L14), 'battling unequal pay and generally rejecting 1970s social norms' (L29), encouraging, in these instances, the reader to share the author's respectful stance for Mary's work and values.

Despite these various examples above of colloquialization in the verb phrase, there is interestingly a contrary trend in contemporary English with regard noun phrases. These are becoming denser and more compact through pre- and post-modification, as Mair and Leech (2006) report, and there is evidence of this in the text. In pre-modification now, for example, gerunds are often used as adjectives, a recent and very Germanic trend, perhaps influenced, Fennell (2001) suggests, by language contact resulting from German immigration to the United States. 1,500,000 Germans migrated to America in the mid-19th century (Baugh and Cable 2013). Examples of pre-modifying gerunds in the text can be found in 'dress-suit-wearing heroine' (L13) and 'single, dating, career woman' (L30). Another distinguishing

feature of late 20th century pre-modifications is increased use of another Germanic form, the {'s} genitive (Mair and Leech 2006). Nevalainen (2006) points out that these were only used very rarely in the 17th century with inanimate nouns, but in the text we find examples such as 'the station's resident clown' (L19), which illustrates the spread of this form. There is evidence of extended post-modification, too, e.g. as in this lengthy noun phrase: 'a job as assistant producer of The Six O'Clock News on TV station WJM' (L6). Mair and Leech (2006) explain such dense, Germanic-sounding constructions as providing a kind of natural balance in the language that off-sets colloquialization of the verb phrase. A primary function of written language, they point out, is to provide information in a more compressed state; they argue that if every dimension of the language tended towards colloquialization, this would represent a somewhat dysfunctional development.

There are various other features of the text that distinguish it as contemporary, e.g. the use of contractions, as in 'can't' (L9), which reflect a comparatively recent development in British broadsheet newspapers (Duguid 2010), the presence of 'get', more dynamic than 'am', in 'get concerned' (L46) and the conjunction 'like' (L45), both spreading influenced by American usage (Mair and Leech 2006). There is also the semi-modal 'going to' (L5), here operating as the future in the past. Again, influenced by American English, in which it is much more frequent, this structure is spreading, as Mair and Leech report.

The student asked to analyse this text for evidence of linguistic change in recent centuries thus has plenty of material to work with. I now summarize the benefits of engaging university learners who are doing a unit on 'English in a historical perspective' in the analysis of texts such as these.

DISCUSSION

One clear advantage of making texts from different historical periods central to the learning process is that there is then a sociolinguistic focus on language, not as a commodity or artefact but as a tool employed by actual users of English (Leith 1997). Through engaging with texts produced in any particular socio-cultural context, in the process gaining a deeper understanding of the culture in which the text was produced and their own (Buck 2003), learners can then more fully appreciate the inherent vitality of the language they are exploring, in all its rich diversity (Crystal 2004). With regard to the examples here, they might be more sensitized to social changes regarding the portrayal of women in the media in Britain and America over recent decades while immersing themselves in linguistic analysis of Anne Donahue's box set review. Or, while exploring unfamiliar senses of lexis such as 'hurdle' and 'quarter' in Christopher Marlowe's text, in conjunction with the imperatives used, they may gain a deeper appreciation of how punishment was (and unfortunately sometimes still is) meted out differently in despotic societies. Or reflecting on Marlowe's choices regarding pronouns and what these signified to the audience of the time, they may gain a deeper awareness of how politeness rituals operated then and how this differs from the present.

Secondly, through analysing texts from different historical periods in this way, learners can gain deeper insights into why languages change, shaped by new experiences, including technological developments, and through contact with others, including contact with different varieties of the same language. Exploring Marlowe's text, for example, students might become more aware not only of the degree of language contact between English and French after the Norman Conquest, but also of geographical variation within England and the supplanting of the southern third

person singular verb ending {-(e)th} with the northern {-s}. This in turn could lead to curiosity about the lingering effects of Old Norse from the Scandinavian settlement of parts of the north and northeast during Viking times that may also have contributed, for example, to the loss of inflections (Fennell 2001). Meanwhile, engaging with Anne Donahue's text, one cannot help but be struck by the extent to which British English has become Americanized (Beal 2004) and by how languages such as German and Dutch that have shaped the development of American English in recent centuries have impacted British English indirectly. Reflecting on these various influences, students might reflect on the relationship between linguistic dominance and power in different contexts and at different times (Fennell 2001).

A third advantage of making textual analysis central to the unit of study is that, by exploring a text as a snapshot of language use at a particular time, awareness of the processes of language change can be developed, and with it the realization that change proceeds not in stages but in overlaps (Nevalainen 2006); within broader developments, too, there is always scope for individual variation. Students engaging with Marlowe's text, for example, may note that the pronoun 'ye' is not present. Indeed, though preserved in the King James Bible of 1611, which the students had been introduced to in class, 'ye' had already largely fallen into disuse by the time Marlowe was writing in the late 16th century, as Nevalainen reports. So, in this instance, Marlowe's practice seems to reflect the general trend. In another respect, though, evidence from this one very short text suggests that it may possibly run counter to it; Marlowe does not use the auxiliary 'do', even though it was on the rise at the time he was writing, particularly in negative questions, as Ellegård's (1953) 'restricted' corpus study, cited by Gramley (2012 p. 138), highlights. Marlowe had a choice whether to use the auxiliary 'do' or not, and whether to use {-(e)th} or {-s}

third person singular verb endings; both were acceptable. In the latter case, Marlowe has adopted the new practices that had filtered down from the north. Clearly, then, engaging with such a historical text can deepen students' appreciation of how grammatical changes evolve gradually and variably over time, an appreciation which can be enhanced, as in this unit, through engagement with a (second) contemporary text too. Changes in the verb phrase, particularly since the 19th century, and counter-balancing changes in the noun phrase (Mair and Leech 2006), are significant recent grammatical developments that are apparent from a linguistic analysis of Anne Donahue's text. There are also all sorts of interesting recent lexical developments in terms of semantic change and word formation processes which such an analysis uncovers.

As to how students' ability to engage in such textual analyses are developed in the unit I teach at the University of Portsmouth, clues are provided in the outline (Table 1, above) and I expand on these now. Of crucial importance were the seminars that engaged students in analysing sample texts. Typically these seminars involved several stages of groupwork, with different groups given different tasks, often working with different segments of the same text or different texts, and then subsequently being regrouped so that they could compare and share what they had learned with their new group. In a facilitative teaching role, I might feed in input to different groups while monitoring or encourage them to reflect on lecture content at the start, and would pull together what they had learned in plenary towards the end, eliciting and building in a constructivist way on their responses (see Wyatt and Pasamar Márquez [2015] for fuller descriptions of such pedagogy being used in the same university context). One very interesting feature of the context was that the seminar groups, each containing approximately 20-21 students, tended to have an

even mix of home students (mostly British) and European exchange students, typically from countries such as Spain, Germany, Italy and France. This was particularly useful given the content. For example, structural similarities with German or lexical borrowing from French or Latin could be highlighted by relative experts in those languages in mixed groups. British students might be more sensitive to cultural nuances in contemporary texts and could explain idiomatic phrasal verbs if necessary. European students could share their more formally learned grammatical knowledge with home students if required. Both groups could thus benefit, and while, in this particular year, the five highest performing students (my co-authors) were exclusively British, this is not usually the case. In every other year since 2009, students from different European countries have also been amongst the five highest performing overall.

Indicative of the positive reactions this approach to supporting the learning of the history of English can produce, Kristy has written that it was her "favourite unit from [her] time at university". Dorothy has highlighted that practical engagement through analysing texts in the way described above "helped [her] to understand the changes to the language as it tested [her] to identify the features [herself]", and she emphasized: "it was insightful realizing that every part of history is actually ingrained in our language in grammatical, lexical or phonological form". For Corinne:

> The unit content, its delivery (lectures and seminars) and the method of assessment placed emphasis on how essential it is to consider context in all aspects of language study and how this can inform both our approach to analysis itself and in turn our understanding of texts. This approach was perhaps the main benefit of studying the unit and influenced my approach to textual analysis in other units, including my dissertation, and importantly how I encounter language in everyday life. In the context of the unit itself this approach helped to reinforce the notion that English has

always been a living language, developing in direct response to social, political and technological developments that influenced (and continue to influence) the external environment, always reacting to its users' needs. This emphasised that rather than having undergone a linear, and somewhat artificial, progression towards the standard, English has always evolved in response to the ever-changing context.

Reflecting further on the particular texts analysed themselves, Corinne continued these:

played an important role in the delivery of the unit and raised my consciousness of defining features in English today. Using language as part of everyday life, as we live through it, it can be easy to underestimate the impact that contemporary society and on-going human progression is having on our language. Having first analysed the historic text I was well equipped with the toolkit to approach the contemporary text and felt that I was able to identify and appreciate the idiosyncrasies of the language use in more detail, identifying how even developments that have occurred within my own lifetime have impacted the language I use.

Nevertheless, despite such endorsements, the teacher of a unit on the history of English reading this article in a very different context to my own might question the relevance of some of the content described above and insights it generated to the unit they teach. Such units might vary enormously. While Buck's (2003) research seems to indicate that many are quite general like mine, others can be far more intensive. Nevalainen (2006, p. ix) suggests, for example, that her book on Early Modern English "may be used on a ten-week course focusing on English from 1500 to 1700". Had the focus of my unit been narrower, like Nevalainen's, or had it been allocated more teaching hours, extending perhaps over two semesters, the assessment would doubtless have been different. In the latter scenario, for example, I would have been able to deepen the course content in certain areas, e.g. by engaging the learners in

more concentrated analysis of texts from Middle English or the early 19th century. Such periods were focused on, but perhaps inevitably briefly. In the otherwise usually very positive end of course feedback, the relative lack of attention to Middle English is occasionally highlighted.

For the teacher of the history of English in contexts around the world where local English varieties are seen to operate alongside and mixed with those of other languages in aiding the expression of dynamically multicultural linguistic identities (Crystal 2004), there may, from the above, be a clear implication for practice. For while, in a British context, I chose a contemporary (and well-written) text from a British newspaper for my students to analyse, it seems logical that teachers in other contexts should do the same, i.e. choose authentic texts from *their* contexts. This is likely to be far more motivating for their students than would be exposing them to over-simplistic representations of the story of English as the triumphant rise of what is now the standard variety, a view endorsed by my co-authors. While this is increasingly frequently being recognised (e.g. by Leith 1997; Mesthrie 2006; McIntyre 2012; Saraceni 2015), it is still the case that some best-selling textbooks going through multiple editions, e.g. Baugh and Cable (2013), which, according to its preface (p. xv), was first drafted in the 1930s, could be revised more substantially to reflect the needs of a less imperialistic world. In the meantime, by focusing course content more closely on the analysis of texts, teachers of the history of English in diverse contexts have the opportunity to heighten their learners' awareness of and respect for their own world Englishes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Mark Wyatt is currently based in Abu Dhabi as an Assistant Professor in Communication at the Petroleum Institute. He also supervises PhD students at the University of Portsmouth, where he co-ordinated the unit 'English in a Historical Perspective' between 2009 and 2015. His research has appeared in over 20 journals, including *ELT Journal* and *English Today*. Dorothy Constantino, Corinne Cox, Kristy Gilkes, Serena Thompson and Rachael Tiller all graduated from the University of Portsmouth in the summer of 2014 with first class honours degrees in the English Language.

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APPENDIX 1

English in a Historical Perspective 2013-14:
Coursework 1 *(Week 8 - due 15 November 2013)*

Analyse the following text, written in the 16th Century, for the linguistic features that date it as Early Modern English.
You should support your answer with examples from the text and may use references to the literature. If you do so, please use the APA format and list references at the end of your essay. The word limit, which is 1,200 words, includes everything (e.g. in-text citations, tables and appendices) except for the list of references. Essays which exceed the word limit by more than 10% (i.e. essays which are longer than 1,320 words) will be penalised, according to university regulations (see the handbook for details).

Line no.	Text
	[*The royal palace, London*]
	Enter Younger MORTIMER *and* MATREUIS
1	Y. Mor. Ist done, Matreuis, and the murtherer dead ?
	Mat. I, my good Lord ; I would it were vndone.
	Y. Mor. Matreuis, if thou now growest penitent,
	He be thy ghostly father ; therefore choose
5	Whether thou wilt be secret in this,
	Or else die by the hand of Mortimer.
	Mat. Gurney, my lord, is fled, and will, I feare,
	Betray vs both ; therefore let me flie.
	Y. Mor. Flie to the Sauages.
10	Mat. I humblie thanke your honour. [*Exit.*]
	Y. Mor. As for my selfe, I stand as Ioues huge tree
	And others are but shrubs compard to me.
	All tremble at my name, and I feare none.
	Lets see who dare impeache me for his death !
	Enter QUEEN ISABELLA
15	Q. Isab. A, Mortimer, the king my sonne hath news
	His fathers dead, and we haue murdered him.
	Y. Mor. What if he haue ? the king is yet a childe.
	Q. Isab. I, I, but he teares his haire, and wrings his handes,
	And vowes to be reuengd vpon vs both.
20	Into the councell chamber he is gone
	To craue the aide and succour of his peeres.
	Aye me, see where he comes, and they with him.
	Now, Mortimer, begins our tragedie.
	Enter KING EDWARD THE THIRD, LORDS, *and* Attendants.
	1st Lord. Feare not, my lord ; know that you are a king.

25	K. Ed.	Villaine.
	Y. Mor.	How now, my lord ?
	K. Ed.	Thinke not that I am frighted with thy words.
		My father's murdered through thy treacherie,
		And thou shalt die, and on his mournefull hearse
30		Thy hatefull and accursed head shall lie,
		To witnesse to the world that by thy meanes
		His kingly body was too soone interrde.
	Q. Isab.	Weepe not, sweete sonne.
	K. Ed.	Forbid not me to weepe, he was my father.
35		And had you lou'de him halfe so well as I,
		You could not beare his death thus patiently.
		But you, I feare, conspirde with Mortimer.
	1st Lord.	Why speake you not vnto my lord the king ?
	Y. Mor.	Because I thinke scorne to be accusde.
40		Who is the man dare say I murderedd him ?
	K. Ed.	Traitor, in me my louing father speakes,
		And plainely saith, twas thou that murdredst him.
	Y. Mor.	But hath your grace no other proofe then this ?
	K. Ed.	Yes, if this be the hand of Mortimer. *[Showing letter.]*
45	Y. Mor.	False Gurney hath betraide me and himselfe. *[Aside to the queen.]*
	Q. Isab.	I feard as much, murther cannot be hid. *[Aside to Mortimer.}*
	Y. Mor.	Tis my hand ; what gather you by this ?
	K. Ed.	That thither thou didst send a murtherer.
	Y. Mor.	What murtherer ? bring foorth the man I sent.
50	K. Ed.	A, Mortimer, thou knowest that he is slaine ;
		And so shalt thou be too ; why staies he heere ?
		Bring him vnto a hurdle, drag him foorth,
		Hang him, I say, and set his quarters vp,
		But bring his head back presently to me.
55	Q. Isab.	For my sake, sweete sonne, pittie Mortimer.
	Y. Mor.	Madam, intreat not ; I will rather die
		Then sue for life vnto a paltrie boye.
	K. Ed.	Hence with the traitor, with the murderer.
	Y. Mor.	Base fortune, now I see that in thy wheele
60		There is a point, to which when men aspire,
		They tumble hedlong downe ; that point I touchte,
		And seeing there was no place to mount vp higher,
		Why should I greeue at my declining fall ?
		Farewell, faire Queene, weepe not for Mortimer,
65		That scornes the world, and as a traueller
		Goes to discouer countries yet vnknowne.
	K. Ed.	What, suffer you the traitor to delay ? *[Mortimer is taken out to execution.]*

From: Marlowe, Christopher (1592) King Edward II (Act 5, Scene 6). In Briggs, William D. (ed.) (1914), *Marlowe's Edward II.* London: David Nutt. Retrieved from:
http://archive.org/stream/marlowesedwardii00marluoft/marlowesedwardii00marluoft_djvu.txt

English in a Historical Perspective 2013-14:
Coursework 2 *(Week 12 - due 13 December 2013)*

Analyse the following contemporary English text for evidence of linguistic change in recent centuries.
You should support your answer with examples from the text and may use references to the literature. If you do so, please use the APA format and list references at the end of your essay.

The word limit, which is 1,200 words, includes everything but the list of references.

Essays which exceed the word limit by more than 10% (i.e. essays which are longer than 1,320 words) will be penalised, according to university regulations (see the handbook for details).

Line no.	Text
	The Mary Tyler Moore Show: box set review Anne T Donahue, *the guardian*, Thursday 18 July 2013 http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2013/jul/18/mary-tyler-moore-show-boxset
1	This hit 70s comedy show about a local TV news station combined biting social commentary, great jokes and a rebellious heroine in producer Mary Richards.
5	The pilot episode, which aired in 1970, kicked off with a vow. Mary Tyler Moore, playing 30-year-old Mary Richards, was going to "make it". And 20 minutes later she had, bagging a job as assistant producer of The Six O'Clock News on TV station WJM, getting her own studio apartment, and putting the boot when her ex-boyfriend brings her flowers he stole and can't say he loves her.
10	And that was just the beginning. Although no one knew it at the time, there were another 167 episodes of the hit series to go. Clad in the cream of 1970s fashion, which basically meant anything loud and bright, our dress-suit-wearing heroine found herself everywhere from prison (when she refused to give up a source) to the producer's desk, fearlessly
15	conquering the working world through a career-focused attitude, an approachable nature, and collars so wide at times she threatened to take off.
20	Five years on, the show hit a comedy high with Chuckles Bites the Dust, a sixth season episode that won an Emmy. When the station's resident clown, called Chuckles, is crushed to death by an elephant while dressed as a peanut, the newsroom finds solace in humour. Mary is appalled by their lack of respect. "Lucky that elephant didn't go after somebody else," says her boss, Lou. "That's right," adds newswriter

25	Murray. "After all, you know how hard it is to stop after just one peanut." Finally, Mary does eventually crack and get in on the joke – having a fit of the giggles during the funeral, right in the middle of the eulogy, when not even Lou or Murray are laughing.
30	As the series progressed, Mary plunged further into the world of TV news, battling unequal pay and generally rejecting 1970s social norms as a single, dating, career woman. Mary doesn't get engaged or married; in fact, she doesn't even have a long-term boyfriend. But unlike sitcoms today, these are things that neither define her nor bother her. In the 1970s, this felt downright rebellious.
35	The show's compelling mixture of biting social commentary and memorable comedy saw it through to 1977, aided in no small way by a cast that included anchorman Ted Baxter (whose cluelessness knows no bounds), bantering Murray (who at one point nearly confesses his love to Mary), and the Happy Homemaker Sue Ann Nivens (who helps housewives out with cooking and decorating tips – she would rather
40	flush her Veal Prince Orloff down the loo than serve it reheated).
	Instead of bottoming out or drifting into obscurity, the show chose to go out on a ratings high, leaving viewers in mourning rather than bored. The final scene, as the station closes, still brings tears to my eyes. After seven years of friendships, dates, work highs and lows, not to
45	mention the Happy Homemaker's cooking, the cast feels like a family. So much so that Mary, fighting back the tears, says: "Sometimes I get concerned with being a career woman. But last night I thought, 'What is a family?' They're just people who make you feel less alone, and make you feel loved. So thank you, for being my family." As the WJM family
50	hug, cry, and say goodbye, Mary turns back, shuts off the lights, and wells up again. She made it after all.

Donahue, Anne T. (2013, 18 July). The Mary Tyler Moore Show: box set review. *the guardian.* Retrieved from: http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2013/jul/18/mary-tyler-moore-show-boxset