

Summer work: English Language. Please complete the questions below and bring them to your first lesson in September.

## **Karen Tracy's Identity Theory**

### **Key Knowledge**

Karen Tracy argues that identity is not fixed. Instead, people display different aspects of their identity depending on the social context and interaction.

### **Tracy's Four Types of Identity**

| <b>Identity Type</b>   | <b>Definition</b>                                   | <b>Example</b>                             |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Master Identity        | Broad social categories that are relatively stable. | Age, gender, ethnicity, nationality        |
| Personal Identity      | Individual characteristics and personality traits.  | Funny, shy, confident, ambitious           |
| Relational Identity    | Identity created through relationships with others. | Friend, daughter, teammate, teacher        |
| Interactional Identity | Identity created during a specific interaction.     | Interviewer, customer, storyteller, leader |

### **Key Idea**

People constantly switch between identities depending on who they are talking to and the situation they are in.

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### **1. Quick Check**

Match the examples to the correct identity type.

1. A student acting as a class representative. \_\_\_\_\_
2. A person being described as hardworking. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Someone identifying as British. \_\_\_\_\_
4. A teenager speaking as an older sibling. \_\_\_\_\_

Additional reading (challenge): [Sample Chapter: Everyday Talk, Second Edition: Building and Reflecting Identities](#)

- 2) Make notes about your own identities using the following table as a starting point. Try to be as specific as possible. Remember you can have more than one element in each section!

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Master        |  |
| Personal      |  |
| Interactional |  |
| Relational    |  |

- 3) Write a paragraph exploring your own use of language in relation to the range of identities you perform.

*How do various identity roles impact my linguistic choices?*

Example:

My conversations change dependent on who I'm with. For example, when I talk at home, I am predominantly performing my interactional identity as a mother. This means I speak about domestic things and give instructions such as 'brush your teeth please' to my children. However, I am also conscious of wanting to be kind and reasonable and so this influences my personal identity. This is shown in my language because I always try to model good manners with my children.

With my friends, my master identity remains the same. I am still female, northern, adult, British but my interactional identity is different from that with my children. My language will alter dependent upon my relational identity at the time. For example, if I am speaking to a larger group and wanting to be sociable I might joke or use expletives for humour, but if I were having a personal conversation with just one friend I would lower my voice and use more empathetic language.

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## LANGUAGE IN USE – LOVE ISLAND

Read the Love Island article you were given at Wyke Start, or scan the QR code on the right to read it online.

### 3) Comprehension questions:

- a) Who does not understand what “muggy” means in this context?

- b) What does that imply about the nature of slang terms like “muggy” and who uses them?
- c) When does the writer say that academic interest in the language of reality television started to grow?
- d) *Challenge question:* Can you think of other developments which have happened since that time which might have made slang terms spread more quickly?
- e) Where did the term “mugged off” originate before Love Island?
- f) What three different ways can “muggy” be used, according to the article writer?
- g) Are all of the Love Island contestants in the series using the word? Who in particular seems to be using it?
- h) Why do you think that people made negative judgements about people who use the word “muggy” with the new meaning?
- i) Why do people still use the word, even though they know other people disapprove of it?

**4) Answer the following as a full paragraph:**

*How would Karen Tracey describe the Love Island contestants' use of language? For example, what language features might be linked to their master identities? What about their interactional identities?*

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*Challenge task: Can you think of anything that has influenced your language in a similar way to how Love Island has influenced some people's language? It could be membership of a group or a particular hobby/interest you have. If you can, write a little bit about it.*