

2 VOCABULARY Describing changes

a Complete the text with the words in the box.

rapid changes substantially noticeable way
barely shift increase subtle ongoing

Changes to the English language may not always be immediately ¹ noticeable, but because over 500 million people now use it as their first language, it is constantly evolving.

Some ² _____ changes, often made in an attempt to simplify the language, are ³ _____ perceptible. However, over time we notice that people are not using 'shall' as much in the first person, or 'no?' is being used instead of question tags, which seem to be on the ⁴ _____ out.

The use of Americanisms by British youth is clearly on the ⁵ _____, with expressions such as 'Can I get a coffee?' becoming very common. Interest in American TV shows and music has grown ⁶ _____ over the last 20 years, leading to this ⁷ _____ rise in American usage.

Linguists and lexicographers spot the most ⁸ _____ changes in the language and make decisions as to whether a steady ⁹ _____ over time is enough to justify a new dictionary entry or even a change to a grammar rule.

The most lasting ¹⁰ _____ to the language come as the result of major innovations in lifestyle. The digital revolution, just like the automobile revolution a hundred years before, has introduced a large number of new expressions and usages, from 'trash' to 'paste' to 'tablet'