



Cambridge International AS & A Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE**9093/04**

Paper 4 Language Topics

For examination from 2021

SPECIMEN PAPER

2 hours 15 minutes

You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.
- Dictionaries are **not** allowed.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [].

This document has **6** pages. Blank pages are indicated.

Section A: English in the world

Question 1

Read the following two texts. Text A is a news item published in 2014 on the *BBC World News Asia* website. Text B consists of four online comments written in response to this news item.

Discuss what you feel are the most important issues raised in the texts relating to the spread of English around the world. You should refer to specific details from the texts as well as to ideas and examples from your wider study of English in the world. [25]

Text A

Why some English words are controversial in China

Nowadays, if you eavesdrop on Chinese people's phone conversations, it is commonplace to hear English phrases popping up here and there, like 'Okay', 'Cool' and 'Bye bye'.

In today's Chinese publications, English abbreviations and acronyms also pop up frequently without any Chinese translations: GDP, WTO, Wifi, CEO, MBA, VIP and the air pollutant term PM2.5 are among the most popular. 5

This phenomenon, termed 'zero translation', has sparked a fierce debate, with the Chinese Communist Party's official newspaper *People's Daily* the latest to join the fray.

'Why is zero translation so prevalent?' screams the headline in a recent commentary piece. 'Why do we have translations for Nokia and Motorola, but not for iPhone or iPad?' ask the authors. 10

What irritates them is the fact that these foreign terms are found not only in newspapers and online, but in serious science journals as well.

They claim that such practices damage the integrity and harmony of the Chinese language, dilute the richness of Chinese culture and hamper comprehension. 'How many people can understand these words?' they ask. 15

Text B**fedup123***1 May 2014 22:10*

All languages will I believe merge. English will absorb ever more useful words and so will living languages elsewhere, until they resemble each other more and more.

If China wants to preserve as much of its language and culture as possible, it needs to export it. 5

noonehere624*1 May 2014 22:14*

In what way does including words and terms from another language 'dilute the richness of Chinese culture'? 10

Doesn't it do the opposite? Or have I misunderstood the word richness?

Where would English be without all its borrowings from other languages?

I would suggest that it would be a lot less rich, and a lot less interesting.

laughalots96*1 May 2014 22:19*

This 'purity of the language' debate goes on all over the world and the government in China or elsewhere is doomed to failure. People will say whatever they want to, however they like. They use the expressions they find useful and ignore the rest. Power to the people actually works when it comes to languages, thank goodness. 15

happy81*1 May 2014: 22:41*

One of the reasons English is such a rich language is that it absorbs words from around the world like a sponge. I live in a cul-de-sac with a petite wife who likes to sing karaoke while wearing an ~~ax~~ re dress and wearing cologne fragrance. She never uses rouge on her cheeks when she takes our kids to the kindergarten. Then she goes riding in her jodhpurs. 25

Section B: Language and the self

Question 2

Read the following text, which is an extract from a blog on the website of SOAS, a college of the University of London. It was posted in 2017.

Discuss what you feel are the most important issues raised in the text relating to the ways in which language can shape and reflect social identity. You should refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from your wider study of Language and the self. [25]

The rise of Multicultural London English, innit?

Received Pronunciation is under attack. An early threat to the standard accent of English as spoken in the south of England dates back to the 1980s in the form of Estuary English. A more recent – and perhaps more potent – assault comes in the form of Multicultural London English (MLE).

MLE is a sociolect of English, in as much as it is a dialect specific to a particular social class. It is predominantly spoken by young, working class people in the multicultural neighbourhoods of inner-city London and its suburbs. 5

In a newspaper article, Dr Chris Lucas, Senior Lecturer at SOAS University of London, describes the spread of MLE beyond the capital: 'London accents have spread beyond London and are spreading still. You're seeing more and more features of this Multicultural London English being adopted and blended with the local, traditional, working-class accents of whichever city it might be – Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham.' 10

The power of cool

The term 'cool' to signify something that is fashionable and stylish may be thought to have its origins in the Jazz Age of the 1930s; however, the term was being used at least a century beforehand to similarly signify something that was desirable. 15

The spread of MLE beyond London can be seen as a triumph of the 'cool', with language taken from Grime, Street and Hip-Hop music, and from a gang culture characterised in films such as *AdULTHOOD* and *KiDULTHOOD*, becoming fashionable in youth culture.

However, the rise of MLE in London has not been so much as a result of the influence of popular culture, but has occurred naturally due to an inner-city generation's exposure to a variety of accents, foreign languages, and pronunciations, which have shaped its everyday spoken language. 20

Loanwords

The use of MLE words which derive from other languages is significant. For example, the suffix *-dem* as a plural marker in words such as *mandem* or *gyaldem*, or the term *dutty* to mean something that is either dirty, bad, or ugly, both come from Jamaican Creole. The concept of loanwords is nothing new in language: the English language would be nothing like as rich without the loanwords it has acquired from its neighbours, far and wide. 25

Urban British English (UBE)

Language is ever evolving. Even during the relatively short time it has taken for MLE to become established, spread and now studied, it is also becoming redundant. As MLE gains popularity beyond its original catchment area of London and the Home Counties, so its relevance is diminished. 30

So RIP MLE; and hello UBE. 35

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Copyright Acknowledgements:

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- Question 2: © Andrew Osmond; *The rise of Multicultural London English, innit?*; SOAS University of London; <https://www.soas.ac.uk/blogs/study/multicultural-london-english/> 15 Sept. 2017.

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