



Cambridge International AS & A Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE**9093/43**

Paper 4 Language Topics

October/November 2023**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 **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

Section A: English in the world**Question 1**

Read the following text, which is an article from *Nature*, an online scientific journal. It was published in 2020.

Discuss what you feel are the most important issues raised in the text relating to the present and future status of English in an international context. You should refer to specific details from the text as well as to ideas and examples from your wider study of English in the world. [25]

When English is not your mother tongue

Science as a career attracts people from across the world. But whether researchers come from Beijing, Berlin or Buenos Aires, they have to express most of their ideas and findings in English. Having a dominant language can streamline the process of science, but it also creates extra barriers and the potential for conflict. 5

Nature asked researchers with personal or professional experience of language barriers to share their insights.

VERA SHERIDAN: It takes a partnership

I know of a case in which a researcher from India submitted a paper that came back to him largely because of language issues. He thought that he had addressed the problem but it was rejected again, not for the quality of the research but for the quality of the English. He rated the experience as one of the worst of his life. 10

English speakers have become the gatekeepers of science. By keeping those gates closed, we're missing out on a lot of perspectives and a lot of good research.

YANGYANG CHENG: A complicated issue

I know that some professors in English-speaking countries become frustrated with students from China. Educational opportunities in China are extremely limited. Students' lack of ability to speak clearly in English is often perceived as a lack of ability to think clearly about science, and that is wrong. 15

Chinese researchers have made huge contributions to global science, but they've mostly done that using English. The Chinese language is rich and beautiful, but it still lacks much of the vocabulary that's needed to describe physical science. I don't even know how I would give a talk about my work in Chinese. It would take a lot of effort. 20

TATSUYA AMANO: Embrace linguistic diversity

We need to embrace linguistic diversity and to make a concerted effort to dig up scientific knowledge in languages other than English. 25

I suspect that a lot of native English speakers view language barriers as a minor problem. They probably think that Google Translate can solve everything. But the technology isn't there yet. You can't run a scientific paper through a translation programme and get a meaningful result. 30

MICHAEL GORDIN: A long and unfair history

There's nothing about English that makes it intrinsically better for science than any other language. Science could have gone just as far in Chinese or Swahili. But many economic and geopolitical forces made English the dominant language of research, for better or worse. 35

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Having a single global language of science makes the whole endeavour more efficient. There are around 6,000 languages in the world, today. If science were being conducted in all of them, a lot of knowledge would be lost. In the 1700s and 1800s, scientists in Europe often had to learn French, German and Latin to keep up with their fields. We've gained a lot by lowering the burden to just one language. But there's also a lack of fairness. In countries where English isn't spoken, you shut out everyone but the well-educated. We could be losing some really smart minds.

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Section B: Language and the self**Question 2**

Read the following text, which is an article from the Canadian newspaper, *The Province*. It was published in 2020.

Discuss what you feel are the most important issues raised in the text relating to the ways in which language can shape and reflect how individuals think. 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]

Updating our words can drop barriers, open us to new ideas

In 2018, Parliament approved a relatively minor change to Canada's national anthem: 'In all thy sons command' became 'in all of us command'.

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As our words become more
inclusive, so do we.

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