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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE **9093/42**

Paper 4 Language Topics **February/March 2026**

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.

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Section A: English in the world

Question 1

Read the following text, which is an extract from an article published in 2023 in the British newspaper *The Guardian*.

Discuss what you feel are the most important issues raised in the text relating to the effects of the expansion of English globally. 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]

English still rules the world, but that's not necessarily OK. Is it time to curb its power?

For fluent speakers, there are clear benefits – for others, there are huge costs. Here are some ways to boost linguistic justice.

A team led by Tatsuya Amano at the University of Queensland recently published a study of 900 researchers in environmental sciences revealing that non-native English-speaking researchers require as much as twice the time needed by native speakers to read, write or review publications in English. When submitting papers for publication, non-native speakers are about 2.5 times more likely to have their work rejected for linguistic reasons – and they are 12.5 times more likely to have to make language-related revisions. So, even with equal or greater technical competence, they may have fewer career opportunities.

It is certainly easier to identify a problem than to find solutions, particularly when it comes to global issues. However, some compensatory measures may help reduce global linguistic injustice. Philippe Van Parijs, of the University of Louvain, has, somewhat provocatively, proposed a linguistic tax on English-speaking countries to compensate for the costs of teaching English in other countries. This would involve establishing a global tax on countries where the majority of the population speaks English as a native language and distributing the revenue to countries where English is taught in schools as a foreign language.

Yet other forms of indirect compensation could be considered; for example, a partial weakening of industrial property rights, such as patents[1]. The maximum duration of the legal protection of patents is 20 years. This duration could be shortened by a few years when businesses based in an English-speaking country register a patent in a non-English-speaking country. This would mean that these patents could be commercially exploited without a license more quickly than patents belonging to inventors based in other countries. The World Intellectual Property Organization could promote a reform of rules in this direction.

Other proposals include more intensive use of machine translation and artificial intelligence in scientific publications, with the costs borne by the publisher. Criteria rewarding multilingual researchers in applications for funding for international projects could be designed.

Of course, the problem of linguistic justice is not confined to English. The very same problem would arise if the dominant language of global communication were another, such as Spanish or French (but not a neutral language such as Esperanto). But right now, English is the predominant international language. For many this is a blessing, but should we not also think of those for whom it is a cause for concern?

[1]*patents*: inventors' legal rights preventing others from making, using or selling their inventions without permission

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Section B: Language and the self

Question 2

Read the following text, which is the opening to an article published in 2024 in the British newspaper *The Guardian*.

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

'It's an expression of identity': the TikToker[1] taking the western Sydney accent to the world

Mahmoud Ismail says his audience is eager for the Lebanese-Australian ethnolect to be heard in the mainstream media.

For young people living in western Sydney, Mahmoud Ismail is 'that TikToker that reports on the area'. He attracts millions of views to his interviews with locals.

But why? Ismail says it's not just his face and name that reflects an ethnic identity, but also how he sounds.

'It's the representation and the relatability,' he says. 'Some people hate my accent. Some people say I sound like I have three sausages in my mouth.'

What Ismail describes is the perception of a Lebanese-Australian ethnolect – not a geographic accent as found in different parts of the UK, US and many other countries, but rather a way of speaking where his English is influenced by Arabic, even though he was born and raised in Australia and learned English as his first language.

The 26-year-old is representative of a global phenomenon of culturally influenced ways of speaking that is the subject of research in Canada, the UK, Sweden, Germany and Belgium, according to James Walker, a professor of linguistics at La Trobe University in Melbourne.

Walker says ethnolects come about as a result of immigrant parents and grandparents passing on speech patterns to their children, even when the children do not become fluent in their ancestral language.

Yet the Lebanese-Australian ethnolect has also been adopted by many people in the suburbs of western Sydney who have no Lebanese heritage.

Heba Bou Orm, a second-year PhD student in linguistics at the Australian National University in Canberra who is of Lebanese background, is investigating perceptions of Lebanese youth voices through the Sydney Speaks Project.

She says people tell her 'they're hearing Asians, they're hearing a lot of different ethnic backgrounds adopting that way of speaking'.

'You know, if you say, "They have a Leb accent," people will know exactly what you're talking about.'

She says the western Sydney accent 'is more than just a way of speaking, it is an expression of identity'.

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The Sydney Speaks Project also aims to capture the change of Australian English through speakers from Anglo-Celtic background, as well as second-generation Australians of Chinese, Greek and Italian background.

But there are complex attitudes towards the Lebanese-Australian ethnolect in the broader Australian community.

‘For some, it doesn’t sound classy, doesn’t sound sophisticated, it sounds like someone who is less intelligent, it’s associated with that kind of street identity,’ Orm says.

And that is reflected in the fact that the accent is rarely heard in the mainstream media, except as a parody.

Ismail says he would like to pursue a career in journalism but fears being stripped of the sound and aura that stems from his Lebanese background.

He added while Asian-Australians, Muslims and other non-white Australians are appearing on mainstream social media platforms and TV, there is still a ‘white-washed’ sound.

‘Why are we trying to diversify media but not letting them be themselves?’ he says.

[1] *TikToker*: a user of TikTok, a social media site for video sharing.

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