



Cambridge International AS & A Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

9093/43

Paper 4 Language Topics

May/June 2024

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 extract from an article posted on the BBC website in 2018.

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

Dutch language besieged by English at university

Students shake off their jackets and scarves as the lecturer opens up a PowerPoint presentation on 'start-up innovations' and prepares to give his talk, which is entirely in English.

'The language is the university's choice,' Frank van Rijnsoever of Utrecht University tells me. 5

So extensive is the spread of English in Dutch universities, a group of lecturers has predicted a looming 'linguicide' and demanded the government in The Hague impose a moratorium banning universities from creating any additional English language courses until an official impact analysis has been conducted. 10

Sixty per cent of masters programmes offered at Utrecht University are in English. At the highest honours level, virtually no courses are taught in Dutch.

'I don't mind. Most of the literature is in English,' says Mr van Rijnsoever. 'So for me as a teacher it's not that much of a problem because we also do research in English. For the students, you see they have to cross a certain barrier to properly express themselves.' 15

Utrecht is not alone. Some Dutch universities have completely erased the Dutch language from the campus. In Eindhoven, even the sandwiches in the canteens are sold as cheese rather than with the Dutch word 'kaas'.

And not everyone is happy with such a creeping Anglicisation at university.

'It's our identity, Dutch,' complains Annette de Groot, professor of linguistics at the University of Amsterdam. 'What happens to the identity of a people of a country where the native language is no longer the main language of higher education? The Dutch aren't as good at English as they think they are. You shouldn't use a weaker language in education.' 20

'If you use English in higher education, Dutch will eventually get worse. It's use it or lose it. Dutch will deteriorate and the vitality of the language will disappear. It's called imbalanced bilingualism. You add a bit of English and you lose a bit of Dutch.' 25

While English can ease students into the global market, others feel its prevalence is excluding them from their homeland.

It is time, says Prof de Groot, for an honest debate. 30

'We're shifting to a more and more Anglo-Saxon view of the world. Universities want diversity, different perspectives. What you get is exactly the opposite. The Anglicisation means you end up with a much more homogeneous world.'

Utrecht University Rector Henk Kummeling argues that moving towards English has been an organic process but accepts that when competing internationally, it makes sense to use a world language.

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‘It’s not that we’re advertising for international students,’ he tells me from his office overlooking a bicycle-strewn campus.

‘Dutch culture will stay for centuries. When we talk as Dutchmen amongst ourselves, we speak Dutch.’

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Section B: Language and the self

Question 2

Read the following text, which is an article published in 2019 in a British newspaper.

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]

‘Self-partnered’ Emma Watson¹ is right: we need more ways to be single

Being alone has been stigmatised by the language of it. By finding new words to describe our lives, we can find new ways to live it.

When Emma Watson described herself as ‘self-partnered’ in an interview with British Vogue this week, the term was met with a mixture of ridicule and praise. 5

Like Gwyneth Paltrow’s¹ use of the phrase ‘conscious uncoupling’ to describe her separation from her husband Chris Martin¹, or Mark Ronson’s¹ recent (albeit accidental) announcement that he was ‘sapiosexual’ (attracted to intelligence before appearance), any deviation from the limited language we have around relationships is met with mockery. This is a shame. We need more words, people! Being able to accurately frame our current experiences is part of being human – and we need more nuanced language to better tell our story. 10

We’re getting better at not labelling sexuality; at accepting that it’s fluid, on a continuum and sometimes hard to categorise. But we’re still stuck with outdated and limiting language around romantic relationships – and around the lack of them. 15

On government forms – and in life – there are only a handful of categories available: single, married, separated, divorced or widowed. What small boxes we place ourselves into when describing something so varied, so vivid, so integral to who we are.

The words themselves come preloaded with expectations about the nature of the experience. Take ‘divorce’, for instance: a harsh word with a lot of negative baggage. What if your experience is tender, careful, amicable and ultimately liberating? Isn’t ‘conscious uncoupling’ more apt a description? 20

And what if describing yourself as single is technically right, but you don’t really feel single? There are so many ways of experiencing singleness – and all of them are valid.

There’s being single and actively looking for a partner: asking your friends to set you up, joining a load of dating apps. Shall we call it ‘actively pre-partnered’? 25

There’s being single and always wanting to be single because you love it. Let’s say ‘committed non-committal’.

And then there is what Emma Watson described. ‘If you have not built a home, if you do not have a husband, if you do not have a baby, and you are turning 30, and you’re not in some incredibly secure, stable place in your career, or you’re still figuring things out ... There’s just this incredible amount of anxiety,’ said the Ivy League²-educated UN ambassador and Bafta³ winner, in what some have pointed out is a telling sign of the times. ‘It took me a long time, but I’m very happy [being single]. I call it being self-partnered.’ 30

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I see 'self-partnership' as just taking some time out from the merry-go-round of relationships and 'looking for the one', and instead getting to know yourself a bit better.

It's a good thing, actively seeking to be more self-aware; it can even prepare you for the next relationship (unless you're a committed non-committal, of course). But self-partnering is also just great in and of itself. We're stuck with ourselves 24/7; all of us are self-partnered for life. We may as well get to know and like the person we'll be with forever.

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Notes:

¹ *Emma Watson, Gwyneth Paltrow, Chris Martin and Mark Ronson*: famous people

² *Ivy League*: a group of prestigious American universities

³ *Bafta*: an award presented by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts

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