
GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH

9239/13

Paper 1 Written Examination

May/June 2016

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 30

Published

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Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the question paper and the Principal Examiner Report for Teachers.

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1 (a) Study Document 1.

Identify two causes of language extinction becoming more rapid, as given by the author of Document 1.

[2]

Credit 1 mark for a correct version of the following, up to 2 marks:

- Population pressures
- Spread of industrialisation
- Policies that repress certain languages/policies that replace a minor language with a more widespread one.

(b) Identify and explain two problems the author thinks would result from the extinction of minority languages.

[4]

Credit 1 mark each for a 'problem' correctly identified and one mark each for explanation. Award up to 2 marks for each of two problems.

Candidates may identify some of the following:

- Repression of minorities/promotion of loyalty to the government (problem)
- If minority languages are lost, those that speak them are likely to lose their sense of belonging together and may be more easily repressed (explanation).
- Loss of medical knowledge (problem)
- If minority languages are lost and the culture with it, then traditional cures might be forgotten (explanation).
- Disappearance of accumulated knowledge of thousands of years (problem)
- If minority language speakers become drawn into the culture of the widespread language, they may forget their own ways and associated knowledge (explanation).
- Cultural homogeneity/standardisation
- If minority languages and the related cultures are lost then the world will lose diversity and become a homogenised/standardised culture (explanation).

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2 Study Document 1.

Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the author’s argument in Document 1 about the need to take action to save the rich diversity of languages. [10]

Use the levels-based marking grid below and the indicative content to credit marks.

Level 3 8–10 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both strengths and weaknesses of argument are assessed. • Assessment of argument is sustained. • Assessment explicitly includes the impact of specific evidence upon the reasoning. • Communication is highly effective – explanation and reasoning accurate and clearly expressed.
Level 2 4–7 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers focus more on either strengths or weaknesses of argument, although both are present. • Assessment identifies strength or weakness of argument with little explanation. • Assessment of argument is relevant but generalised, not always linked to specific reasoning. • Communication is accurate – explanation and reasoning is limited, but clearly expressed.
Level 1 1–3 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers show little or no assessment of argument. • Assessment of argument if any is simplistic. • Reasoning may be identified and weakness may be named. • Communication is limited – response may be cursory or descriptive.

Credit 0 marks where there is no creditable material.

Indicative content:

No set answer is expected and examiners should be flexible in their approach. Candidates may include some of the following:

Strengths

Clear conclusions – the author presents two main arguments with conclusions which make clear what he wants to persuade the reader to accept – ‘*we need to recognise the danger signs*’, leading into ‘*we should take action now to save the rich diversity of languages and the benefits they bring*’.

Relevant and clear examples – the example of Swahili in east Africa illustrates the alleged need for a language of communication in east Africa, and also the possible repressive effects of this.

Similarly, the example of English in the EU. Here it is relevant to and supports the claimed danger of a language of communication replacing strong national languages.

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The example of the skin ulcer traditional cure in Australia relevantly illustrates and supports the claim that *'language diversity has important benefits'*.

Clear comparison – the author compares dying species of plants and animals with dying minority languages to clearly illustrate that *'languages too can be turned around'*. They go on to point out the relevant difference and advantage of language over biological species in that the former can be resurrected after extinction.

Recognises opposing views – the author recognises the opposing view that replacing minority languages with widespread languages aids communication. This helps to balance their argument.

Uses relevant experienced sources – the author uses relevant sources with experience in their fields to strengthen his claims:

- author Stephen Wurm's instance of the danger of disappearing languages,
- Director of a language centre Michael Krauss's suggestion that we can turn around the trend of extinction.

No vested interest – the author has a PhD in Linguistics and is an author, with apparently nothing to gain from the outcome, so is unlikely to have a vested interest to exaggerate the decline of minority languages, or their importance. This gives credibility to their claims about these.

Relevant expertise – having a PhD in linguistics, the author is likely to have the expertise to understand the issues relating to minority languages.

Weaknesses

Weakly supported initial conclusion – the conclusion *'we need to recognise the danger signs'* is weakly supported by extinction trends, which if do not continue, would weaken the extent of the predicted extinction and so also the danger signs.

Weakly supported final conclusion – the author concludes *'we should take action now to save the rich diversity of languages and the benefits they bring'*. From two alternatives, where one side is discouraged with emotive language *'swept away'* by an *'oncoming tide'* rather than strength of reasoning.

Restricts the choices – the author supports the conclusion to act now by restricting the available choices to two:

- letting languages become extinct and losing knowledge *or* supporting them alongside more widespread languages.

An alternative would be to accept the inevitable extinction of minority languages, but to record the knowledge before the languages/culture disappears.

Vagueness – the author gives a call to action, but gives no reasoning as to how this can be achieved, other than an analogy with plants and animals that can be rescued from extinction.

The author begins with *'many linguists predict'*, without any indication of who they are; whether they are representative of the beliefs of linguists as a whole; or any indication of the significance of the size of this group.

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Assumptions – the author makes an assumption that could be challenged, which weakens the dilemma presented:

- that knowledge is incapable of surviving the extinction of the related language. There is a possibility of recording the knowledge from the related languages before they become extinct such as archived video footage.

Lack of sources of evidence – the author uses self-acclaimed data, which weakens its support for immediate action:

- the belief that ‘6,000 or so language will be dead or dying by the year 2050’,
- Krauss’s claim that ‘90% of languages could become extinct by 2100’ and turning it round could be ‘more like 50% by 2100’.

Anecdote – the author simply asserts the benefits of minority languages, supported only by an anecdote from a third party about a traditional medical cure, without any indication of whether this worked.

Opposing view recognised but not addressed – although the author acknowledges the view that a widespread language can aid communication this is not developed or specifically addressed, other than asserting the benefit of retaining minority languages.

Bias – the author may be biased towards recognising the benefits of minority languages because of her background in linguistics, giving the argument more of a one-sided focus.

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3 Study Documents 1 and 2.

To what extent is the author’s argument in Document 2 stronger than the author’s argument in Document 1?

[14]

Use the levels-based marking grid below and the indicative content to credit marks.

Level 3 10–14 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The judgement about relative strength is sustained and reasoned. Alternative perspectives have sustained assessment. Critical evaluation is of key issues raised in the passages and has explicit reference. Explanation and reasoning is highly effective, accurate and clearly expressed. Communication is highly effective – clear evidence of a structured cogent argument with conclusions explicitly stated and directly linked to the assessment.
Level 2 5–9 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judgement about relative strength is reasoned. One perspective may be focused upon for assessment. Evaluation is present but may not relate to key issues. Explanation and reasoning is generally accurate. Communication is accurate – some evidence of a structured discussion although conclusions may not be explicitly stated, nor link directly to the assessment.
Level 1 1–4 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judgement, if present, is unsupported or superficial. Alternative perspectives have little or no assessment. Evaluation, if any, is simplistic. Answers may describe a few points comparing the two documents. Relevant evidence or reasons may be identified. Communication is limited. Response may be cursory.

Credit 0 marks where there is no creditable material.

Indicative content:

No set answer is expected and examiners should be flexible in their approach.

Candidates may include some of the following:

Stronger

More strongly supported conclusion – Olusoji’s overall conclusion about the positive impact of ESL upon Nigeria is supported by its impact on a number of achievements in Nigeria, whereas Ostler’s overall conclusion has weaker support. It is based on reasoning that makes assumptions about loss of minority languages and knowledge and uses emotive language in the two alternatives presented to persuade readers to act now.

More direct experience – Olusoji lives in Nigeria and lectures in ESL for which he has a Masters degree. So, he has direct experience of how English is experienced as a second language, the benefits it has brought and how indigenous languages can still survive alongside it. This gives his argument stronger credibility than that of Ostler’s, as she relies on the anecdotes of others.

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Greater response to opposing argument – Olusoji’s argument responds to the challenge of academics opposed to ESL, showing how the Nigerian government has taken this on board in primary education, strengthening his overall argument, whereas Ostler’s argument mentions the positive of a common language aiding communication, but concentrates on explaining the detrimental effects of minority language loss.

Weaker

More limited perspective – Olusoji’s argument is restricted to the experience of ESL in Nigeria, which may not be representative of countries where minority languages may not be as well respected and protected. Ostler’s argument on the other hand relates to Europe, Africa, Australia and Alaska with the possibility of giving a more informed argument about minority languages globally.

More limited sources – Olusoji’s argument uses the views of Nigerian academics, whereas Ostler’s relates to wider experiences across the world, perhaps giving a wider perspective on minority languages.

Greater use of claims without support – Olusoji’s argument is based on personal reflection where claims are presented as self-evident with little exemplification, whereas Ostler’s argument uses more exemplification and external sources to support her views. This gives greater opportunity for Olusoji’s argument to be biased to his own interpretation.

Greater possible bias/vested interest – Olusoji is a lecturer in ESL, so may have a natural bias to view ESL as beneficial to Nigeria or more strongly may wish to promote it to strengthen ESL in his country. This may weaken the balance of his argument, as opposed to that of Ostler who appears to have nothing to gain from supporting the cause of minority languages.

Similar – neither stronger nor weaker

Similar perspective – both arguments value minority languages, Olusoji’s as a first language and Ostler’s as the keeper of indigenous culture and knowledge.

Both give a reasoned argument – both arguments are clearly structured with conclusions that follow from the reasons. The difference of perspective, whether the language of communication harms minority languages.

Both include relevant sources – both support their argument with the views of relevant scholars giving strength to their arguments. Olusoji uses Nigerian academics and Ostler uses more widely sourced views.

Both include some opposing views – both arguments have a degree of balance in that they both refer to opposing views, although Olusoji’s argument responds to counter views more directly (see above).

Both have relevant expertise – both have access to research and experience in their respective fields to inform their views. Olusoji as a lecturer in ESL with a Masters in the subject and Ostler with a PhD in linguistics.

Both include weak arguments – both appeal to the emotions using weak arguments. Olusoji appeals to fear using a slippery slope argument claiming the use of a tribal language as the common language would lead to *‘the total collapse of the entire nation’*. Ostler also appeals to the emotions with a weak argument that restricts the choices when arguing that we need to act now.