

---

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS**

**9727/02**

Paper 2 Investigating Language Use in Society

**19 September 2014**

**3 hours**

Additional Materials: Answer Paper

---

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your registration number and name on all the work you hand in.  
Write in dark blue or black pen on both sides of the paper.  
Do not use paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

Answer **three** questions: you must answer at least one question from Section A **and** at least one question from Section B.

At the end of the examination, fasten all your work securely together.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.

You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers.

A reference chart of IPA Phonemic Symbols is provided at the end of this Question Paper.

## Section A: Language Variation and Change

Answer at least one question from this section.

Answers should demonstrate awareness of wider geographical/historical/social perspectives (as appropriate) in relation to English language.

Examples may be drawn from written or spoken English, or from both.

Do not repeat material in your answers to different questions on this Paper.

### 1 Read Texts A(i) and A(ii), and then answer the following question.

Discuss in detail attitudes towards changes in the English language.

You should include a range of examples/ideas from both Texts A(i) and A(ii) and from your wider studies of English language, with detailed reference to lexis, grammar, syntax and discourse as appropriate.

**Text A(i)** is the introduction from the book *My Grammar and I (or should that be 'Me'?)* (2008)

We cannot stop English changing – and only the most ardent, dyed-in-the-wool pedants waste their time trying – but we can do our best to ensure that it does not become compromised along the way, and to preserve its best features. Since linguistic sloppiness often leads to ambiguity – which is one of the things that grammar rules try to avoid – a few  
5 rules are surely a good thing. And frankly, if you can't bring yourself to agree with that, you might as well stop reading now and go and get your money back before the book starts to look tatty.

Rules were very much in the minds of the sticklers of the eighteenth century who, fearing for the health of the English language, decided to impose on it a grammar system that would fix  
10 it good and proper. Unfortunately for us, these scholars were specialists in Ancient Greek and Latin – not German, the language from which English is derived – so they imposed an awful lot of Latin rules that didn't fit too comfortably with English, thereby creating all manner of unnecessary complications. Most English people couldn't even speak Latin, let alone master its grammar.

15 Ignoring this major flaw in the plan, in 1762, an Oxford professor called Robert Lowth produced a prescriptive text titled *A Short Introduction to English Grammar*, a publication so influential that it dominated grammar teaching into the twentieth century (and indeed is much quoted in this book). No longer did one dare to end a sentence with a preposition, to split an infinitive or to say 'between you and I'.

20 Grammar teaching was regarded as important until the early 1960s, when the authorities decided that we did not need to be drilled in a language we could already speak, and pretty much everyone decided that Latin was boring and pointless. Thirty years later, however, businesses and universities began to complain about the younger generation's bad grammar and punctuation, with the result that the subject was once again taken seriously and  
25 reappeared on school syllabuses. But, like maths, it remains a subject that many of us regard with foreboding. Either you belong to the generation that 'missed out' on grammar when its teaching was out of fashion, or, if you are older or younger than that, you'll have hazy recollections of rules that you perhaps only half understood in the first place.

**Text A(ii)** is part of a news item taken from an online newspaper in 2014.

### **Why Grammar Isn't Cool – And Why That May Be About To Change**

A 15-year-old boy made headlines last week after writing a passionate letter of complaint to Tesco regarding bad grammar on its bottles of orange juice. Tesco claimed it used the "most tastiest" oranges, rather than "tastiest", "most tasty" or "distinctly average".

The fact it was deemed newsworthy shows how rare it is to see enthusiastic pedantry at such a young age (especially if there's no strong family history of it). But before any grammar enthusiasts get excited, he admitted language was not the only motivation – he expected some Tesco vouchers for his ordeal.

Grammar rarely makes headlines, and when it does it's often due to conflict over something the size of an apostrophe. But there's a much greater issue that needs addressing. We complain that children cannot construct a sentence as they used to, but this nostalgic attitude towards literacy abilities has always been around. What we need to focus on is grammar's reputation among the young.

It's a challenge for anything to be accepted as "cool" among younger generations, but we'd need to worry less about the future of society if grammar could finally earn some street cred.

When we think of grammar we picture dusty textbooks, evil teachers holding canes and dry lesson plans. But grammar is colourful, and its ability to completely change the meaning of a sentence is fascinating.

The good news is that there have been a few small "cool" victories recently. YouTube channel jacksfilms regularly uploads Your Grammar Sucks videos for its 1.3 million subscribers. Perhaps the premise – laughing at grammatical errors – is one we should be steering away from, but it puts grammar in the spotlight.

Not everyone thinks grammar is doomed. Bas Aarts, professor of English linguistics at University College London says the enjoyment of grammar depends on how it is taught. "There is a renewed interest in grammar, partly because of improved teaching, partly due to some very successful books on language."

The way we view grammar is subjective, and, as it turns out, the way we view how everyone else views grammar is also subjective. Perhaps grammar-lovers are just too uncool to know what's cool.

But I do know anything trying to be cool is automatically uncool, and grammar shouldn't have to try.

**2** Read Texts B(i) and B(ii), and then answer the following question.

Discuss in detail contextual factors which determine whether any specific variety of English is acceptable.

You should include a range of examples/ideas from both Texts B(i) and B(ii) and your wider studies of English language, with detailed reference to lexis, grammar, syntax and discourse as appropriate.

**Text B(i)** is a from a personal blog about Chinglish.

I've had a few requests recently to properly codify the Chinglish language. So I'm setting up a new page on my blog for key Chinglish terms, phrases, and grammar as a reference for aspiring Chinglish speakers. Here's some basic ground rules:

**5 Verbs**

Use the Chinese verb when it is two-characters long (helps when they are not the same sound in two different tones, to avoid confusion) and conjugate them with English or other Romance language conjugation rules.

EX: I was 跑步ing the other day and got hit by a 3-wheel trolley.

10 跑步ing → running

Pronunciation: (*PaoBu*-ing)

Sometimes you can use an English verb and conjugate it in Chinese, which is difficult because Chinese doesn't actually have conjugations in a formal sense, or at least my understanding of Chinese grammar isn't good enough to know what is a conjugation and what isn't.

15 EX: I dance了! → I danced

Pronunciation: (dance-*Le*)

**Nouns**

Any word in Chinese that sounds awesome and you want to use it you do. Words with deep meaning that no amount of words in English can properly conveyed are ideal for this usage.

EX: I gave him some serious 面子 the other day. → meaning 'face' which is way too complex to begin to describe properly.

20 Pronunciation: (*MianZi*)

**Text B(ii)** is from the blog section of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* news portal.

Considering the overwhelming presence of American popular culture in China, as well as the embrace of English as the primary foreign language taught in Chinese schools. A new generation is coming of age switching between English and Chinese and, in doing so, is being caught in the crossfire. Chinglish is the symptom of the process of Westernization.

5 While on the surface similar, Spanglish, Chinglish, and other "mixed tongues" respond to distinct cultural phenomena. For one thing, Chinglish doesn't emerge from a confrontation between majority and minority groups. It is about making intelligible in one tongue what is uttered in another – and, needless to say, the abyss between standard Chinese and English is enormous.

**Text B(iii)** is a sign located at a tourist attraction in China.

Appreciate Lovely View Of the Great Wall. Do Not Forget The Fire Is Heartless!  
One World, One Great Wall! Protect Culture Relics Please!

## Section B: Language, Culture and Identity

Answer at least one question from this section.

Answers should demonstrate awareness of wider geographical/historical/social perspectives (as appropriate) in relation to English language.

Examples may be drawn from written or spoken English, or from both.

Do not repeat material in your answers to different questions on this Paper.

### 3 Read Texts C(i) and C(ii), and then answer the following question.

Discuss in detail ways in which language is used to construct our values in political discourse.

You should include a range of examples/ideas from both Texts C(i) and C(ii) and from your wider studies of English language, with detailed reference to lexis, grammar, syntax and discourse as appropriate.

**Text C(i)** is the opening excerpt of the Singapore Prime Minister's speech on the President's Address Debate

Mdm Speaker, I rise in support of the motion. We all want the same thing – to “Secure Our Future Together”. That was the title of the PAP manifesto in 2011. And it stated my Government's goal: To develop a “fair and inclusive society, where every citizen has a rightful place and the opportunity to fulfil his or her aspirations”. We set out our plans clearly in the manifesto. For example, to develop a vibrant city and an endearing home - by providing high-quality and affordable HDB homes, and enhancing our public transport system. By improving the lives of lower-income Singaporeans, for example by helping them to own their own homes.

We have made steady progress on these programmes over the last three years. We have stabilised the housing market, we have cleared the first-timer queues, we have introduced the Bus Service Enhancement Programme (BSEP) for commuters while we expand the rail network. And we took prudent steps to manage our population, particularly the inflow and the profile of foreign workers. And we have strengthened our social safety nets, and balanced economic growth with social priorities. So today I intend to recap our progress in each of these areas before talking about our agenda for the rest of this term, as it has been set out in the President's Address.

Let me start with housing. When Parliament first opened in 2011 this was a big concern for Singaporeans. So the Government mobilised all our resources to tackle this problem. In the last three years, we have built two Clementi new towns worth of Housing Development Board (HDB) flats - 52,000 flats. We have almost doubled the subsidies for the flats, which have been disbursed so as to make the flats more affordable. The situation is now under control, as many MPs have acknowledged - Mr Zainudin Nordin spoke about this, so did Mr Edwin Tong, so did Mr Gan Thiam Poh. I think Minister Khaw Boon Wan, Ministry of National Development (MND) and HDB, they have done a good job - both the political leaders and also the civil servants.

**Text C(ii)** is from a leaflet sent to voters in one British constituency during the 1997 election.

**Your last chance to vote for a referendum on who should run Britain – Westminster or Brussels.**

This General Election is by far the most important in Britain's history. It will decide whether our country finally surrenders her independence to Brussels and we become a mere province of Europe.

5 Already, we have seen our fishing industry destroyed and our businesses swamped with regulations from the army of unelected bureaucrats in Brussels.

And already, laws made by the European Commission are the laws of the land and take precedence over our own.

10 What's more, our economy must now be run for the benefit of the whole of Europe. The Government has surrendered the right to put us first when it comes to creating jobs and security for our future.

And if the Eurocrats have their way, we will soon be forced to abandon our 3 remaining rights – to decide foreign policy, to organise our own national security and control our own borders.

15 With these rights gone, Britain will be little more than a province in a new country called Europe. That is why this General Election is so crucial.

The politicians have put off discussion of further integration until after the Election. But there's no doubt what they intend.

We believe the politicians have no right to surrender our national independence without a proper referendum.

20 We have been deceived for far too long. Most people thought they were voting for a common trading market in 1975. How wrong they were.

And now, when we realise the truth, we are being denied the democratic right to decide our future.

25 This is an issue which towers above party politics. That's why, on this one occasion, we ask you to lay aside your traditional party loyalty and support the Referendum Party.

In this constituency, and over 550 others around Britain, people will be standing as Referendum Party Candidates.

None is a politician, nor wishes to become one. But all care passionately that the British people should make their views on Europe heard through a referendum.

30 Every single vote for the Referendum Party will count. The total number of votes cast for the Party across the country will send a clear message to the politicians that the people want a referendum.

35 And any Referendum Party candidates elected to Parliament will fight vigorously for the interest of their constituents. When a full referendum has been achieved, the Party will disband. Then you can vote once again for your usual party.

But now, just once, we urge you to put your country before your party.

4 Read Texts D(i) and D(ii), and then answer the following question.

The linguist Teun van Dijk, in his paper *Discourse and Society*, wrote: “Political, media, academic, corporate and other elites play an important role in the reproduction of racism. They are the ones who control or have access to many types of public discourse. Analysis of many forms of discourse suggests that the elites in many respects ‘preformulate’ the kind of ethnic beliefs of which, sometimes more blatant, versions may then get popular currency.”

Discuss in detail ways in which language can be used to construct and reinforce social attitudes and values in terms of ethnicity.

You should include a range of examples/ideas from both Texts D(i) and D(ii) and your wider studies of English language, with detailed reference to lexis, grammar, syntax and discourse as appropriate.

**Text D(i)** is taken from the research paper quoted above.

- 5 The denial of racism is one of the moves that is part of the strategy of positive in-group presentation. General norms are values, if not the law, prohibit (blatant) forms of ethnic prejudice and discrimination, and many if not most white group members are both aware of such social constraints and, up to a point, even share and acknowledge them. Therefore, even the most blatantly racist discourse in our data routinely features denials or at least mitigations of racism. Interestingly, we have found that precisely the more racist discourse tends to have disclaimers and other denials. This suggests the language users who say negative things about minorities are well aware of the fact that they may be understood as breaking the social norm of tolerance or acceptance.
- 10 Denials of racism, and similar forms of positive self-presentation, have both an individual and a social dimension. Whereas the first, individual, form of denial is characteristic of informal everyday conversations, the second is typical for public discourse, for instance in politics, the media, education, corporations and other organisations. Since public discourse potentially reaches a large audience, it is this latter, social form of denial that is most influential and, therefore, also most damaging: it is the social discourse of denial that persuasively helps
- 15 construct the dominant white consensus. Few white group members would have reason or interest to doubt, let alone to oppose, such a claim.

**Text D(ii)** is from a newspaper editorial responding to a report published by the Commission for Racial Equality in 1985.

In its report which follows a detailed review of the operation of the 1976 Race Relations Act, the Commission claims the ethnic minorities continue to suffer high levels of discrimination and disadvantage. No one would deny the fragile nature of race relations in Britain today or that there is misunderstanding and distrust between parts of the community.

**Text D(iii)** is from a social media feed documenting racial microaggressions.

- “So, what do you guys speak in Japan? Asian?”  
“You don’t act like a normal black person, ya’know?”  
“You’re really pretty for a dark skin girl.”  
“Why do you sound white?”
- 5 “Can you see as much as white people? You know, because of your eyes.”