



Cambridge International AS & A Level

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

9093/42

Paper 4 Language Topics

February/March 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 *The Guardian*, a British newspaper. 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]

‘Hello work’ or job centre? Language experts spell trouble for Japan’s mangled English

Encountering mangled English is a frequent source of mirth for many residents of Japan, but for one group of language professionals, the proliferation of inappropriate words and phrases is becoming a national embarrassment. 5

Their recently formed group, loosely translated as the association for the consideration of Japan’s English, is taking local governments and other bodies to task for their over-reliance on machine translation on official websites and public signage.

Since launching their group several months ago, the seven women, mostly graduates of Columbia Business School, have identified a range of culprits. 10

The official website of Meguro ward in Tokyo, for example, renders *kurashi* – or ‘living’ – as ‘dark matter’, while the Kobe municipal government turns *sumai* (home) as ‘I’m sorry’, the machine translation having apparently misread the original word as *sumanai*, a casual form of apology.

Chikako Tsuruta, an experienced conference interpreter and professor at Tokyo Woman’s Christian University, said problems arise when software mistranslates the meaning of specific kanji characters. 15

‘They produce unintentionally funny translations that could easily be corrected if they were just checked by an English speaker,’ said Tsuruta, adding that Chinese- and Korean-speaking colleagues had noticed similar issues with those languages. 20

Her group, comprising interpreters, researchers and employees of foreign companies, had long been frustrated by the widespread use of *wasei-eigo* – Japanese-made English – in official literature, advertising and marketing. ‘We were talking about it over lunch and decided we no longer wanted to feel embarrassed about poor English usage,’ she said.

‘We want official English to be decent and presentable to the rest of the world. And foreign people living in Japan should at the very least be given accurate, understandable information, especially if they need to evacuate after a natural disaster. It could be a matter of life or death.’ 25

The group’s members appear to be divided, however, over the merits of using irregular, but nonetheless catchy, English titles for government business, including Hello Work (job centres), My Number (a 12-digit ID system), and, more recently, Go To Travel, a subsidised scheme to encourage domestic tourism. 30

Even major corporations occasionally fall into the *wasei-eigo* trap, Tsuruta said, citing Hitachi’s long-running ‘Inspire the Next’, and Toyota’s Olympic-inspired ‘Start your Impossible’. 35

The association will have its work cut out should it choose to take on the misuse of English in advertising and design.

The longstanding practice of using English words and phrases to give a product, service or campaign a cosmopolitan feel has produced several classics, including Nissin's 'Boil Japan' promotion for its Cup Noodles.

40

Others are guilty only of the same poor punctuation found on shop signage in countries where English is the first language. This month, Takashimaya department store in Kyoto was forced to cover up posters after social media users pointed out how a missing comma had sabotaged its simple, and supposedly inspirational, message.

'Rising Again,' it began. 'Save the World from Kyoto JAPAN.'

45

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

Read the following two texts. Text A is the beginning of an article published on the *Psychology Today* website in 2020. Text B is an extract from an article published in 2020 on *Insider.com*, an online magazine.

Discuss what you feel are the most important issues raised in the texts relating to the ways in which language can shape and reflect personal and social identity. You should refer to specific details from the texts as well as to ideas and examples from your wider study of Language and the self. [25]

Text A**Baffled by the language of teenagers?**

As the parent of two teenagers, being a linguist did not adequately prepare me for the strange things that sometimes come out of their mouths.

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And, via linguistic innovations, these linguistic trendsetters unknowingly contribute to the shape of language to come.

Text B

Slang words teens and Gen Zers¹ are using in 2020, and what they really mean

Cap/No Cap: To ‘cap’ is to lie about something, whereas ‘no cap’ means to tell the truth.

‘What you said is the biggest cap I’ve heard in a minute.’

Flex: To ‘flex’ (as a verb) is to knowingly flaunt and show off. As a noun, a ‘flex’ is the thing being shown off itself. 5

‘He drove himself to school in a new car the day after he got his license. He’s trying to flex.’

Lowkey/Highkey: ‘Lowkey’ means slightly, secretly, modestly, or discreetly. It’s the opposite of ‘highkey,’ for when you’re sincerely or assertively into something. 10

‘I lowkey can’t wait for summer to be over.’

‘I highkey love snow.’

Salty: To be ‘salty’ is to be annoyed, upset, or bitter, usually about something minor. 15

‘You look really salty right now. What happened?’

Tea: ‘Tea’ is gossip, and ‘spilling the tea’ is the act of gossiping. ‘Tea’ is also used when one is agreeing with a point someone has just said.

‘Spill the tea, what did he say?’

¹ Gen Zers: people born very close to the start of the 21st century

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