



**Cambridge Assessment
International Education**

Example Candidate Responses – Paper 4

**Cambridge International AS & A Level
English Language 9093**

For examination from 2024



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Introduction

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge International AS & A Level English Language 9093, and to show how different levels of candidates' performance (high, middle and low) relate to the syllabus requirements. This document helps teachers to assess the standards required to achieve marks beyond the guidance of the mark scheme.

In this booklet, candidate responses have been chosen from the June 2024 exam series to exemplify a range of answers.

For each question, the response is annotated with examiner comments about where and why marks were awarded or omitted. This is followed by comments on how the answer could be improved. There is also a list of common mistakes and guidance for candidates for each question.

Please refer to the June 2024 Examiner Report for further details and guidance.

The question paper and mark scheme are available on the [School Support Hub](#)

9093 June 2024 Question Paper 41

9093 June 2024 Mark Scheme 41

Past exam resources and other teaching and learning resources are available on the [School Support Hub](#)

How to use this booklet

This booklet goes through the paper one question at a time, showing you the high-, middle- and low level response for each question. In the left-hand column are the candidate responses, and in the right-hand column are the examiner comments.

Example Candidate Response – high	Examiner comments
<p>of the pervasiveness of this English dialect in Korean society. Among these, the ones that stick out the most are the colonial history of Korea and the issues challenges that being a post-colonial nation has on language preservation, how English as a global language is undermining movements of language preservation like Korea's, and how Korean serves as a vector to extrapolate discussion of Konglish to other examples.</p> <p>Before diving further, it would first be prudent to examine Konglish itself through a variety of lenses, and ultimately categorise it within a global context. According to the Kachru's circles model, which categorises varieties of English</p>	<p>1 The candidate gives a succinct overview of the content of the stimulus material. This provides an immediate demonstration of the candidate's focus. Register is elevated and expression is mostly effective with a few slips which detract slightly.</p> <p>2 To begin the main body of the essay, the candidate</p>
<p>Responses are written by real candidates in exam conditions, demonstrating the types of answers for each level. These could be used to discuss and analyse the answers with learners in the classroom to improve their skills.</p>	<p>Examiner comments explain where and why marks were awarded. These help to interpret the standard of Cambridge exams to help learners refine their exam technique.</p>

How the candidate could improve their answer

- Although the response began in a very focused way with a succinct and clearly written introduction, the essay could have been improved by selecting a greater number of points from the stimulus material. For example, the candidate could have discussed national pride, government intervention or how the age of speakers might affect the reception of language diversity.
- The candidate took the concept of colonialism and scrutinised it in depth, contrasting the Japanese invasion of Korea with that of the creation of the British Empire. This is creditable although the response could have been improved with a greater amount of discussion on how American English has influenced the Korean language, the creation of Konglish, and the two-way transfer of Korean and Japanese influences and more consideration of the English of focus on the question frame and stimulus material.

This section explains how the candidate could improve each response. It helps learners to improve their exam technique.

Common mistakes and guidance

- It is a common mistake for candidates to spend insufficient time reading the stimulus material and noting which of the points made by the text originator are the most important. Sometimes important points are not raised in the text until part way through or near to the end, therefore thorough reading of all the available material is advised.
- In general, candidates provide an introduction to their essay which offers a lengthy explanation of some aspects of their wider study of the language topic. This is a common mistake as they summarise some of the points raised in the text provided in the stimulus material. A good response will begin **Q1** with an immediate focus on the question frame and stimulus material.

This section lists common mistakes as well as helpful guidance from the examiner. This will help your learners to avoid these mistakes. You can use this alongside the relevant Examiner Report to guide your learners.

Question 1

Example Candidate Response – high

Examiner comments

The text provided gives some notable insight into the intersection between English and Korean in the form of Konglish, as well as exploring a number of issues raised as a result of the pervasiveness of this English dialect in Korean society. Among these, the ones that stick out the most are the colonial history of Korea and the issues challenges that being a post-colonial nation has on language preservation, how English as a global language is undermining movements of language preservation like Korea's, and how Korea serves as a vector to extrapolate discussion of Konglish to other examples. 1

Before diving further, it would first be prudent to examine Konglish itself through a variety of lenses, and ultimately categorise it within a global context. According to the Kachru's circles model, which categorises varieties of English based on how foreign they are to the region in which they exist, Konglish is firmly within the area of a variety in which English is a ^{foreign} second language and has no particular status in society outside of informal use. This is in contrast to somewhere like India, for instance, that falls in the category of "second language" English speakers on the Kachru's circles model due to having English as an official language of the country and its respective dialect, Hinglish, being pervasive within Indian society as a lingua franca, among other functions. This distinction is very important, as dialects like ~~the~~ Hinglish tend to fall into the "second language" category due to extensive colonial histories with an English-speaker power – usually ^{Great} Britain. However, Konglish is remarkably different due to ^{Korea} being colonised by other Asian powers, such as China (in a limited capacity) and Japan – these occupations introduced elements of the Chinese & Japanese languages into Korean, which already undermined the Korean language's vitality substantially. A notable characteristic of dialects in 2

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1 The candidate gives a succinct overview of the content of the stimulus material. This provides an immediate demonstration of the candidate's focus. Register is elevated and expression is mostly effective with a few slips which detract slightly.

2 To begin the main body of the essay, the candidate explores the position of the Korean language and Konglish variety according to Kachru's Circles of English model. Descriptions are accurate and precise. There is an effective comparison drawn using India's position on Kachru's model, together with the Hinglish variety of English.

3 The candidate develops the discussion with the introduction of colonial influences on native languages. Here, the candidate demonstrates detailed understanding of the text provided by outlining differences between colonialism in India and that experienced by Korea.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

the "foreign language" category of Kachru's circles is the element of 'soft power' influences on the dialect, which is more indirect as opposed to colonial occupations. This is why Konglish takes a substantial amount of loanwords from English - the text makes specific mention to American media, which makes sense when considering Korean youth in recent decades may have had more access to foreign film, music, and television due to the internet, and more generally the widespread cultural influence of the United States following World War Two. Digressing aside, it is clear that Konglish is a 'foreign language' variety of English based off of Kachru's circles, as well as the implications as to what that means for the Korean language relating to its

American 'soft power' as discussed previously connects more widely to the ideas of killer languages and language imperialism, especially when taking into consideration the text's stated concerns regarding the purity of the Korean language itself and how Konglish may be affecting that. Language imperialism is simply the conception that a widespread language dominates over smaller languages, and that eventually those smaller languages are assimilated or wiped out over successive generations. Many consider English to be a vector of language imperialism due to the colonial history of the British Empire, but its relationship to Konglish is more nuanced due to how 'indirect' the domination is. This is where soft power really becomes a key component, as many Koreans worry that the dominance of American culture and ideas, which are communicated in English, may be replacing traditional Korean ones. Especially considering Korea's colonial history with Japan, this is not an unfounded concern - the forced imposition of the Japanese language onto Koreans draws some parallels with how English is being 'imposed' presently in the form of Konglish. For a more direct comparison, take

4 The candidate makes reference to the stimulus material in respect of loanwords and the influence of American popular culture before returning to cite Kachru once more. This is an extremely long paragraph.

5 The candidate introduces the concepts of English as a 'killer language' and 'language imperialism' at the same time.

6 The candidate returns to discussion of 'soft power' stating 'as discussed previously'. They provide some repetition where this lengthy paragraph once again refers to Korea's colonial history.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

the nation of Ireland and the United Kingdom. Ireland's native language is Gaelic, or Irish, but this has historically been oppressed in favour of English as the UK occupied the country up until the 20th century. This mirrors Korea's experiences with Japan, but the main ^{idea} ~~comparison~~ here is how English never truly left Ireland following independence. It is still a widespread language, and many have chosen not to learn Irish as a result. The Irish example greatly validates the feelings of Koreans ~~of~~ over English, as many perceive English as having the potential to marginalise the Korean language in a similar way over time.

The text brings up a notable point about loanwords and how the increasing use of English loanwords may be undermining the Korean cultural and linguistic identity. The Japanese language presents a good vector through which to examine this claim. The McArthur's wheel model, which categorises English ~~language~~ varieties by region, places Korea and Japan closely; comparing the Japanese and Korean approaches to English is crucial here, as Japan has been historically very welcoming of American soft power while Korea has been more wary. Japan, for instance, has a number of loanwords from English that feature very prominently in its language, replacing traditional words. This is clearly a result of the Japanese English variety, but the fact that English words are being incorporated into the Japanese language itself ~~present~~ validate many of the worries of organisations such as the Korean Language Society. In fact, this approach by Korea mirrors nations such as Iceland; while having nearly all of its citizens speaking English, the Icelandic language is kept pure through heavy regulation and a staunch resistance to loanwords.

Overall, the text raises some notable concerns about

7 The candidate plausibly draws a comparison between the relationship of Gaelic and English and that of Korean and Japanese.

8 Using loanwords as presented in the stimulus material, the candidate introduces McArthur's Wheel model to illustrate and develop the above comparison. The reference is accurate and precise and the essay is being developed clearly. There are no examples of the Japanese loanwords to evidence claims, however.

9 The candidate does not substantiate the reference to the way in which the Icelandic language is 'kept pure through heavy regulation'.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

English as a global language and how it may be marginalising other, smaller languages. Presently, the influence of the United States on the world stage culturally is clear, and this presents some pertinent dangers regarding language preservation efforts. For some Koreans, Konglish represents a perversion of traditional words and the wider Korean cultural identity. There are some glaring global examples that back this fear, such as Ireland and the erasure of their native language. Further, one only has to look at Korea's colonial history to gain a ^{clear} ~~noticed~~ understanding of this fear; the domination of Korea by global powers has been a notable part of its history, and the marginalisation of its language and culture was a key aspect of that domination. Therefore, it is extremely important to be wary of the potential implications of the unchecked dominance of English on the world stage, and to take appropriate steps to protect languages and cultures everywhere in the world.

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10 The candidate provides a concluding paragraph which summarises the points made in the main body of the essay. The paragraph is longer than it needs be although clarity and control of expression is effective and a linguistic standpoint is maintained.

**Total mark awarded =
19 out of 25**

How the candidate could improve their answer

- Although the response began in a very focused way with a succinct and clearly written introduction, the essay could have been improved by selecting a greater number of points from the stimulus material. For example, the candidate could have discussed national pride, government intervention or how the age of speakers might affect the reception of language diversity.
- The candidate took the concept of colonialism and scrutinised it in depth, contrasting the Japanese invasion of Korea with that of the creation of the British Empire. This is creditable although the response could have been improved with a greater amount of discussion on how American English has influenced the Korean language, the creation of Konglish, and the two-way transfer of Korean lexis into the English language. With less consideration of Japanese influences and more consideration of the English Korean variety, there would have been more evidence of focus on the question frame and stimulus material.
- The candidate cited two linguistic models: one from Kachru and one from McArthur. These references were used wisely and accurately. However, the response could have been improved if the candidate had cited more conceptual examples. For example, the sources for linguistic imperialism (Phillipson) and English as a killer language (Pakir) were not acknowledged. There were missed opportunities to discuss cultural transmission according to Hockett or Diamond's language steamroller, perhaps. The reference to Icelandic being regulated was partly correct but the unsubstantiated comments seemed rather stand-alone. This was a further missed opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of government intervention and could have been developed with reference to the ways in which the French or Singaporean governments have developed language policies.
- Overall, the candidate provided a sustained response which maintained a linguistic standpoint albeit with some loss of focus on the question frame. At times, there was some danger of repetition, and some material ran the risk of becoming irrelevant.
- The candidate used linguistic terminology and low frequency lexis with ease. The register was elevated which gave an impression of a sophisticated level of expression. However, the response could have been improved if paragraphs, some of which were very lengthy, had been separated to give a clearer sense of organisation to the essay as a whole.

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

The spread of English in recent centuries has given the relatively newer language a major status as both the Lingua Franca, a universal language - as well as a nearly global language. The ~~transition~~ induction of the language into those around it has been both violent and peaceful but its spread is unwaveringly strong. 1

The threat of English is seen by natives of other languages as dangerous. The most concerned people seem to be those who speak other very powerful languages. Historically, the most powerful and important countries come with equally powerful languages, hence the connotation between language equating to power. 2

The threat of English rising in power threatens and worries the speakers of Korean, who use the Hangeul script. When English is introduced into other cultures, it creates a blend of the two languages, where accommodation is used to form new neolects. This ~~was~~ is the case for the Korean-English blend called 'Konglish'. This consists of a vocabulary of slang that is born from the convergence of the two cultures. An extract from the British newspaper, The Times, in 2021. 3 4

1 The candidate gives a reasonably clear account of the spread and status of the English language. Despite inaccuracies of spelling, this introduction is appropriately succinct.

2 The second paragraph introduces the English language being viewed as a 'threat'; there is no direct reference to the stimulus material, however, until the third paragraph.

3 The candidate appears to have constructed neolects, which can be understood, despite its inaccuracy.

4 The candidate makes selections from the stimulus material to illustrate points. These are not always shown as direct quotes. Although the candidate states, 'This raises major internal, cultural issues' these issues are not described.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

points out how this new generation of slang is "incomprehensible to an older generation." This raises major internal cultural issues between the speakers of the ~~net~~ language.

For ~~Korea~~, South Korea, the country's pride is largely entangled with its own language. As ~~The~~ The Times article suggests, being a ⁵ country with a very long history with colonization and domination by great powers, makes them increasingly afraid of another cleansing of their cultural language. The country is so prideful of their language, they have a Hangul day to celebrate the induction of their Hangul script. This emphasizes how personal a language is to one, and their culture, and why the new dominance of English is of concern.

When new languages like Hanglish are used in slang and common phrasings by newer generations, they become increasingly separated from their history, families, and first language. The historical ⁶ implementation of English in Korean as a language is rooted in the ~~spread~~ usage of English by the American soldiers who have been stationed there since the Korean war. Although the Power

5 This paragraph, outlining Korea's 'pride' in its linguistic heritage is clear and developed well with evidence from the text.

6 The candidate demonstrates clear understanding of the text provided and discusses the way in which the Korean language adopted English terms due to American influence.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

of Korea has maintained a strong cultural identity, the less violent, but culturally vital use of imported media, mass communication, and digital forums, has let English slip into the every-day use of Koreans ~~there~~ over the last few decades.

For many, the considerably peaceful formation of Konglish, is not the case for them. English is being imposed both forcefully and silently, to languages globally, acting as a dictator language that conforms languages into its own.

This births creolanguages and ~~ett~~ language deaths, which is the extraction of a language. This, much like in Korea, frightens and weakens cultures and the balance of power between countries and people.

Hence, why Konglish is less of an "inevitable" change, and more of a threatening part of the new world. ~~There is~~ The prime minister, Kim Boo-Kyom, has stated that their government will make an effort to remove unnecessary foreign words, to prevent the misunderstandings between Korean speakers. As a powerful leader of the country, he recognizes the fear of threats to cultural identity as

7 The candidate describes the way that English acts as 'a dictator'. The candidate provides no examples to support their claims, therefore, the meaning of the commentary is unclear.

8 There appears to be confusion here, not only in the term 'creolanguages' but also in the way the candidate joins the concepts of creole and language death.

9 The discussion returns to the notion of English as 'a threat' but is developed with support from the text. The candidate mainly presents ideas as paraphrase or with close reference to the stimulus material.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

well as political status.

English's imposition, due to its spread worldwide, has created all kinds of new words, phrases, and entirely new languages. This allows for the global communication that allows connection and understanding amongst speakers, as it provides understanding. This is largely rooted in the digital world, where firms, music, shows, and social media, can give anyone anywhere access to media of any language. The transfer of language is not just ~~for~~ by English but by any other language as well. For example, the extreme popularity of Korean food, and music-dubbed 'K-Pop', has promoted convergence of cultures and languages everywhere.

The risk of culture convergence is ~~both power and generational~~ related to both power and historical context. By merging languages, the misunderstanding due to a lack of historical connection to the language culture, can cause a diluted, inaccurate representation of cultures, that degrades them, allowing for others to over-power them.

To conclude, the globalisation of English is a fast-acting force that seeks power, even if not in

a threatening way, but still imposes fear to others. Global shifts of power and cultural identity is closely linked to identity, and English is the main threat to other languages.

10 The candidate gives further development of English's imposition, with particular reference to the influence of popular culture, and the 'transfer' of language. This paragraph mainly uses generalised terms but there is reference to the text towards the end.

11 Although what the candidate describes is cultural transmission, there is a missed opportunity to introduce a conceptual reference by citing Hartl, Clark et al.

12 The candidate's conclusion mixes a number of issues and therefore does not fully retain a firm standpoint.

**Total mark awarded =
13 out of 25**

How the candidate could improve their answer

- Although the discussion was sustained and expression was generally clear, the candidate could have improved their answer by using more linguistic terminology to elevate the register. Some technical terms were invented and there were some inaccuracies.
- A number of points were selected from the stimulus material as required by the question. However, there was some disorganisation in their presentation. The candidate could have improved their answer by reorganising the response into a series of individual ideas, maintaining focus on one whole point rather than making more than one reference to a specific idea during the course of the essay.
- AO4 offers marks for conceptual reference to linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches. This candidate referred to some linguistic issues and concepts which were relevant to ideas presented in the stimulus material. However, the candidate did not always introduce linguistic theories explicitly. The response could have been improved with reference to, for example, Phillipson's notion of linguistic imperialism, Pakir's description of English as a 'killer language', Kachru's Circles of English model, or cultural transmission as identified by Hartl and Clark or Hockett, although this was not a prescriptive list.
- The candidate could have improved their answer by describing the method used by the Singaporean government in their Speak Good English campaign which may have enhanced the pertinent discussion of 'Hangul Day'.

Example Candidate Response – low

Examiner comments

The English language is one of the most spoken languages in the world. So much so that there has developed a ~~crete~~ or dialect of it in Korea mixed with common terms from their native language and mother tongue. ~~The~~ Social concepts and theories that play a part in creating "Konglish" are media and technology influences, creole, and the theory of just how unpredictable the English language can be. ¹

The media has a grave effect on why English is corrupting Korean words and the language. As films, songs, televisions, and programmes are just about everywhere and used by everyone thus setting that influence to the Korean culture, impacting how words can be differently used in different context. This cultural influence in turn cause some confusion and misunderstandings among Koreans. The extract ~~refer~~ includes a reference stating that with all this slang and mixing of pure Korean and English it is seen as "incomprehensible to ~~the~~ the older generation". This is due to the fact that older generations ² didn't develop and grow up with media so they have a much harder time understanding the different lexis and slang used when it comes ³

¹ The candidate provides an introduction comprising an overview of the content of the stimulus material and includes some conceptual influences. Expression is generally reasonably clear.

² The second paragraph takes up the idea from the text provided that popular media might have a damaging effect on the Korean language. The candidate's clarity of expression has deteriorated somewhat and a number of inaccuracies are detected.

³ The candidate selects evidence from the text to illustrate how older people in South Korea find Konglish 'incomprehensible'. Aside from the brief quote, however, the candidate mostly paraphrases what has been stated in the text.

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

to pronunciation, and meaning.

Another significant influence to English corrupting the Korean language is its similarity and being a ~~create~~ ^{Creole}.

A creole language is the mix and ⁴ ~~compounding~~ of two languages with influence of location. Against other creole languages Konglish has gone even further than most by "abbreviating and combining terms until they are unrecognisable". This version Konglish is killing and dominating the Korean language slowly as more and generations use it the less common and socially ~~apet~~ acceptable it will be it use pure Korean. The

Korean language is already apart of ⁵ the outer ~~water~~ ^{circle} / language theory meaning that many can only say few phrases and words, thus making it a not significantly dominant or influential language around the world compared ~~to~~ English which is a inner circle language meaning that it's common for many to be partially fluent or fluent completely in English and not be from an English native speaking country.

A linguist and theorist ⁶ David Crystal helps gain another perspective by saying how unpredictable English is that it can be one of the most dominant language or

⁴ The candidate attempts to define 'creole' but the definition is not wholly accurate. The candidate mentions 'other creoles'; no examples are provided, however.

⁵ It may be inferred that the candidate intends to introduce Kachru's Circles of English but commentary is not accurate or specific.

⁶ The candidate gives an imprecise reference to Crystal. Although expression does not flow easily in this part of the script, the candidate makes an attempt on page 4 of the script to tie Crystal's notion of the unpredictability of English to evidence from the stimulus material.

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

or be endangered and killed language, because of how ever changing English is as a language. This theory of his just happens to support the "inevitable part of growth and develop of languages". That currently the English language is taking dominance currently as it grows itself into Korea's language through its influential popularity. Thus ~~is~~ not to say that in a few years the English language couldn't be a dead language as in the Oxford English Dictionary "20" Korean terms or influenced ~~the~~ phrases were added showing that the Korean culture and language is also being becoming a part of the English language and not just the English language completely only taking over and dominating the Korean language alone.

Overall while Konglish may be corrupting Korea's language and its purity, along with also threatening Korean culture English's language is overall a dominant language causing it to be continuously growing and developing was an inevitable factor.

7 The candidate seems to take the point of view that the English language could become a dead language 'in a few years' which is rather naive, although the main difficulty in this section of the script is that clarity and control of expression are rather muddled. The effect gives the impression that the candidate may not have fully understood the content of the text provided or the concept of language death.

8 The conclusion refers briefly to some of the points made in the essay but the expression remains generalised with some inaccuracies.

9 Overall, the essay gives the impression of being sustained but conceptual references are usually incomplete and comments are provided in general terms on a limited number of points from the stimulus material.

**Total mark awarded =
8 out of 25**

How the candidate could improve their answer

- Although it was obvious that there was some understanding of the stimulus material, this seemed limited because of the way in which ideas were expressed. Sentences sometimes ran on at length and would have been better split so that just one idea was provided at a time.
- The candidate selected a limited number of points made in the text provided. The response could have been improved by using the stimulus material more thoroughly, discussing the most important points raised and supporting these with relevant reference to the candidate's wider study. The response would then have been organised into a clear series of paragraphs, each one containing a separate idea.
- Although the content of the essay was mostly relevant and there was a limited attempt to develop ideas, marks for AO2 could have been improved with a greater level of accuracy in spelling, and with more attention to detail in punctuation and grammar: for example, a capital E is expected on 'English'.
- The concept of creolisation could have been defined more accurately. The candidate could have improved their answer by providing examples of 'other creoles' as described to demonstrate deeper reference to wider study of the growth of the English language in the world.
- More accurate and precise reference to linguistic concepts, models and approaches would have enabled the candidate to improve their answer. The candidate referred to 'the outer circle/language theory' but there was a missed opportunity to provide an explanation of Kachru's Circles of English and to assess where the Korean language might be positioned in relation to the use of English in other countries.
- The response could have been improved by reference to Pakir's notion of English as a 'killer language' or perhaps to the UNESCO model of the stages of language death.

Common mistakes and guidance

- It is a common mistake for candidates to spend insufficient time reading the stimulus material and noting which of the points made by the text originator are the most important. Sometimes important points are not raised in the text until part way through or near to the end, therefore thorough reading of all the available material is advised.
- In general, candidates provide an introduction to their essay which offers a lengthy explanation of some aspects of their wider study of the language topic. This is a common mistake. Such introductions are not required unless they summarise some of the points raised in the text provided because they run the risk of containing irrelevant material. A good response will begin **Q1** with an immediate focus on the stimulus material.
- Candidates often cite well-known linguists such as Crystal with a brief quote from their wider study but without making a clear link to the discussion. Candidates are reminded that all conceptual references need to be relevant to the point being made in the stimulus material which is being discussed in the essay. It is a common mistake to make conceptual reference without relevance and this approach can only lead to irrelevant content or demonstrate loss of focus.
- It is a common mistake when responding to **Q1** to discuss only points raised in the stimulus material without reference to any wider study. It is also a common mistake to discuss only linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches without reference to the stimulus material. Candidates are reminded that AO1, offering marks for demonstration of understanding of the text provided, and AO4, offering marks for demonstration of understanding of wider study, have equal weight (10 marks each). Therefore, the best approach to answering **Q1** is to make a careful selection of a number of points and to discuss each one in turn, evidence the points with brief quotes from the text, and then to refer to relevant theoretical examples as support to the argument.

Question 2

Example Candidate Response – high

Examiner comments

Language is an inevitable part of nearly every individual's day to day life, as through it we express our emotions, thoughts, opinions, affection and many more. As language is the main medium through which humans achieve communication, it is closely related to our functioning and can have a large impact on human psyche. Its influence being especially complex, language and the relationship to self is still researched by many fields: linguistics, psychology, sociology and many more. The given extract regarding the power of pronouns includes discussions about the aforementioned topic, and the main issues presented thereby will be dissected and analyzed in the following points.

Firstly, one can notice upon speculating the extract that it is published on a psychological website, meaning that the effects of language are very diverse and are often a topic of discussion among psychologists. Language - which may seem solely as a set of grammatical rules needed for expressing thoughts - may have severe influences on the speaker and the listener, such as the 'we' pronoun, which is, in this article, claimed to be more positively accepted than implicit exclusion through focusing on oneself. Psycholinguistics usually in such situations apply the Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where the 'bottom' needs are the most fundamental, and the 'top' are what we strive for, but cannot achieve without fulfilling the lower-placed needs. In the very middle lies the need for 'love and belongingness', the most applicable one to the issue of feeling included or excluded after the usage of a specific pronoun, meaning that it is as fundamental as it is needed for self-actualization. Hence the narrow connection between the discussed linguistic issue mentioned throughout the entirety of the extract, and psychological background.

The author of the extract highlights that pronouns are crucial for our expression of 'power and social status', and focuses on how the 'we' pronouns when used by leaders are significantly more effective than the 'I', 'me', 'my'. The likely reason for this is the wish for avoidance of the 'us versus them' mentality, which Henri Tajfel discussed in his 'Social Identity Theory'. This means that using an exclusive pronoun 'I' can exclude the feeling of oppression in subordinates within a workplace and make them resentful towards work and superiors, while using pronouns which emphasize unity (e.g. 'we', 'us', 'our'), which can ~~be~~ evoke a more positive feeling in the listener. This means that

1 The candidate presents a lengthy introduction using low-frequency lexis and an elevated register. Expression could be described as effective but only where comments are fully relevant to the task.

2 The candidate identifies the source of publication of the stimulus material and uses this as a springboard for a discussion taking a psycholinguistics standpoint which is mostly relevant to the task.

3 Continuing to take a psycholinguistic approach, the candidate introduces Maslow. Although an unexpected conceptual reference, the candidate makes it mostly relevant to the stimulus material.

4 The candidate explores 'power and social status' as presented in the text. Discussion is developed and supported relevantly with reference to Tajfel.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

the likely reason for an increase in support of politicians who use plural pronouns is the regained power in the voters that they are part of community and can make a change. Therefore, the nowadays political correctness does not exclusively refer to avoiding offensive terms, but is a more complex, wider concept, which can also include the usage of right pronouns to achieve the desired result of appreciation, belongingness, and inter-connectedness.

The language of inclusion and exclusion has been analyzed by numerous linguists through many theories, one of which is the Communication Accommodation Theory (by Howard Giles). This theory states that humans prefer feeling as they belong in a specific community, hence often adapt their language to blend within a sociolect (language of a group), rather than to be characterized by idiolects (language of an individual). This is, naturally, more easily achieved if the listeners feel welcome to a certain community and a speaker practices using plural pronouns, which could help the audience feel as 'one of them'. One can even notice that the author of the given extract uses plural pronouns (especially the 1st and 2nd person) throughout the text, with implementing synthetic personalisation (addressing to a non-existent 'you'), which is -consciously or subconsciously- likely done in order to better captivate the reader's attention, therefore implicitly reinforcing the point elaborated throughout the text. Psychologists are, in the extract, claimed to have discovered the sheer power of inclusive pronouns, which can be related to the wish to avoid the effects of feeling oppressed of the audience.

The Theory of Muted Group Theory, by Cheris Kramarae, discusses that specific individuals can feel less worthy due to the different language they use and their social status (e.g. subordinates within a business), hence the attempt to avoid these effects may be related to the increased usage of inclusive pronouns.

The brief introduction of the text mentions that pronouns have been a topic of a 'heated debate' also in terms of how we address gender, which globally called for increased measures of respecting individuals' wishes on their own expressions of identity. The terminology for such identity expressions, if incorrectly used, can leave severe effects on the ~~more~~ individuals in question, and can lead to the previously mentioned increased division - 'she versus her'. Steven Pinker, in his 'The Euphemism treadmill' argued that words can, with trends, become offensive, and get replaced with other words which can be globally

5 Development continues with the term 'political correctness' although there is no conceptual reference to support comments.

6 Reference to Giles and the Communication Accommodation Theory is full and the candidate correctly applies this to ideas from the text originator in terms of synthetic personality and direct address.

7 The candidate fully and correctly applies reference to Kramarae and the Muted Group Theory to the idea of pronouns and social inclusion.

8 The candidate takes up the idea from the stimulus material regarding gendered pronouns. Instead of citing a genderlect theory as support, discussion moves to Pinker's notion of euphemism followed by a comparative reference to de Saussure.

Example Candidate Response – high, continued

Examiner comments

imitable for a specific period of time, but then get replaced again, which becomes a vicious cycle. In relation to Saussure's Semiotic Systems Theory Pinker argues that what is important is not the signifier, but the signified - the mentality towards individuals and how they feel in our presence, not which words one uses. This controversial view challenges the presented argument questions the extent to which pronouns themselves are crucial, and suggests a more important, long-term reform in human behavior. The author similarly states in lines 23-27 that the politicians have 'quickly jumped on the rhetorical bandwagon, and that the preference for the use of inclusive pronouns has been found only over the last century (line 31). This suggests the potential disposability of language which is deemed 'appropriate', and that such pronouns may not always and eternally be the most crucial factor of communication.

Nevertheless, the very emphasized importance of pronouns shows that language as a medium of communication is extremely powerful, and that the stated arguments can be related to linguistic relativity/determinism (that language has strong effects on our thoughts and emotions). A similar principle has been suggested by Orwell in his novel '1984', with the made-up, simplified version of English - 'Newspeak', which aimed to 'brainwash' Oceania's residents, hence showcasing the power of language one uses to express their thoughts. The arguments provided within the text represent that Grice's maxims of conversation (quantity, quality, relation, manner) are important in a conversation, but only if correct language is used with which one can apply these maxims. The arguments in the text, as one can conclude, have a high applicability to everyday life, and showcase that language is a powerful tool for leadership, power and unity. However, in order for these effects to be achieved, one ought to follow trends, as language behaves as a living being and is bound to change over time.

9 Although the final paragraph appears at first to be a conclusion, new material is added with 'linguistic relativity/determinism', Orwell, and Grice being introduced in quick succession with only brief commentary on each.

10 Expression is effective overall with mostly effective development of ideas although there are lapses in crafting towards the end of the response.

**Total mark awarded =
19 out of 25**

How the candidate could improve their answer

- From the beginning, it was clear that the candidate's level was effective, and sophisticated at times. The opening to the response could have been improved, however, if the stimulus material were to be introduced as the primary focus rather than take second place to the over-arching commentary on language.
- The candidate adopted a psycholinguistic approach applying the unexpected but creditable reference to Maslow. The discussion in this part of the response was quite long and ran the risk of providing irrelevant material. The response could have been improved with more succinct writing in this section and then moving towards more detailed discussion of the contents of the text provided.
- References to Tajfel, Giles and Kramarae were full and appropriately placed to support discussion on specific points raised in the stimulus material. An improvement could have been made if Pinker's theories, for example, had been introduced earlier in the response where the commentary describes political correctness with that concept being given over to fuller discussion.
- The response lost some tone where the concept of gendered pronouns, as stated in the text provided, was discussed briefly. Here, if the candidate had applied theoretical support, the response would have retained its strength. Moreover, the comparison between Pinker's writings on euphemism and the notions of de Saussure could have formed a new, separate paragraph which could improve the response.
- Although the level of expression and detailing in the development of ideas was sometimes insightful, the final paragraph of the response read as an attempt to include as much information as possible in a short space of time rather than sit as a firm conclusion. The response could have been improved by the removal of the brief comments on 'linguistic relativity/determinism' and the reference to Grice. The discussion of Orwell could then form a plausible, clear penultimate paragraph. The actual conclusion to the response could then be created from the candidate's final four lines with a paragraph break above them.

Example Candidate Response – middle

Examiner comments

Descartes and other philosophers believed speaking required no cognitive skills, you were born with the knowledge. As time has progressed it is clear languages requires skills like attention and memory. The modern era of language has shifted into many trying to be politically correct in order to not ~~effect~~ offend anyone. As explained by the "article published on the Psychology Today website", pronouns are a huge factor in being politically correct and ~~affected~~ ^{powerful} in society. 1

Fairclough's theory is that ~~is~~ ^{it has been} normalized for there to be unequal status in conversation, like between a boss and employee. This theory is proved in the article as leaders use 'fewer first-person singular words' and 'more plural words' and subordinates use 'first-person singular words'. 2

Early Childhood Development is a factor as to why 'I-words' are less powerful. The article explains that parenting 'in terms of what you want' does not build an inclusive environment. Hence, people are likely to ~~converge~~ follow those who use pronouns like 'we' and 'us'.

— Similarly to Early Childhood Development, Skinner believes your sense of self develops with language acquisition through behaviorism. ~~So,~~ Using inclusive pronouns will create a more comfortable environment for a positive sense of self to grow. Hence, people are likely to follow those who use pronouns like 'we' and 'us' as it convinces 'people you are in' 3

1 The candidate cites linguistic theory before introducing the stimulus material. Relevance of the reference to Descartes is unclear although the later inclusion of the term 'politically correct' is appropriate to the brief mention of the text provided.

2 Fairclough is more relevantly cited in terms of status to begin discussion on plural and singular pronouns. The paragraph also includes discussion on parenting which would have been better placed as a separate point for the next paragraph to develop.

3 A further paragraph is headed with reference to a theoretical example with selections from the stimulus material made to exemplify Skinner's notion of behaviourism.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

it together?

A study in the article showed "candidates who were victorious [in campaign speeches] used more inclusive 'we' and 'us' pronouns." Everyone is in a speech community or as Milroy says a social network. These networks can be close knit, but using inclusive pronouns makes sociolinguists much more likely to converge ~~into~~ their beliefs. Second person plural pronouns makes the Muted Group Theory, where minorities ~~are~~ less commonly say how they truly feel, almost nonexistent. These pronouns can build on individual's self-esteem as they feel less excluded.

The article's research suggests that leaders are preferred who 'identify as part of a collective' rather than those who ~~set~~ instead of those using 'self-referring pronouns.' As Grimes Maxim's say it is more polite to be relevant and not discuss yourself, through first-person singular words. Goffman's face Theory explains everyone has a conversational face that they present and want to be received well. That is why leaders use second person plural pronouns because they know it makes their conversational face appear better so they can gain ~~p~~ have a gain a higher status.

However, ~~using~~ ^{the use of} second person plural pronouns has not always been the case. People used to have more individual idiolects that diverged from today's societal norms. Linguistic societal norms. This could be the increasing "preference for the use of inclusive 'we' and 'us'" was only in presidential speeches over the last century. This could be due to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that language determines ones thoughts. Since ~~precede~~

4 The paragraph includes citation of Milroy which is underdeveloped. The candidate then uses the term 'converge' and proceeds to discuss 'the Muted Group Theory'. As such, there are three separate linguistic concepts being discussed although what is said is tied to the stimulus material.

5 The candidate makes an imprecise reference with only brief explanation.

6 The reference to Goffman is more complete. The candidate provides a reasonable explanation for its inclusion but no evidence from the text is provided.

7 The candidate crafts the response more appropriately. They make a selection from the text, supported by a conceptual reference which is explained and which is mostly relevant.

Example Candidate Response – middle, continued

Examiner comments

presidential speeches used to not use second person plural pronouns, people were limited by the language. Nowadays, language has expanded and pronouns are used more freely when discussing self-identity.

As you can see, language, specifically through pronouns, can reflect how individuals view others. More powerful leaders use second person plural pronouns. ~~This is~~ Society is more likely to follow ~~these peo~~ follow people who use these pronouns. This shows, how pronouns can effect self status in the world.

8

8 There is some loss of register as the candidate makes direct address to the audience. The conclusion is otherwise strong, however, despite errors seen in the final line.

**Total mark awarded =
12 out of 25**

How the candidate could improve their answer

- The candidate took an approach which, though not unusual, did not indicate careful crafting of writing, even though the general level of expression was clear. The response could have been improved if the candidate had addressed what they decided were the most important points in the stimulus material, evidence ideas with carefully selected quotes from the text, and then use support gained from their wider study of the language topic.
- A logical sequence of paragraphs could have been formed to create a more controlled organisation of the work.
- The candidate referred to the concept of political correctness at the beginning of the response. An improvement could have been made if the candidate had applied the term to a relevant selection from the text provided, explaining the concept more fully.
- The candidate mixed together three underdeveloped conceptual references. The first of these was to Milroy's Social Network theory which is relevant but not fully explored. The second reference was to convergence, part of Giles' Communication Accommodation theory. The third was to the Muted Group theory. The candidate could have improved their response by separating the ideas in this paragraph and supporting them with a much more detailed explanation of how and why these three different linguistic approaches were relevant.
- The opening comments on Descartes would have been better removed as it was imprecise and inaccurate. The response would have been improved by making an immediate introduction of the stimulus material presented as a brief summary of points to be made. Furthermore, the inaccurate reference made to 'Grimes Maxims' would have been better removed as it indicated incomplete understanding of a concept which is not wholly relevant or fully explored.

Example Candidate Response – low

Examiner comments

<p>The text is an article from 'Psychology today website' in 2021. It highlights the importance of pronouns specifically the pronoun 'we' in regards to leadership and politics. 1</p>
<p>The extract states that pronouns reveal 'how we relate to one another'. It is important for inclusion in order to feel heard and accepted in a social group and social settings. It further gives a sense of belonging. The text states how politicians and leaders will be more likely to use pronouns—such as 'we' and 'us' instead of 'I'. This can be explained by the Communication Accommodation Theory. This thesis states one will differ their manner of speech in order to fit in (convergence) or stand out (divergence) in a social group. 2</p> <p>Politicians and leaders that use pronouns such as 'we' were 'victorious'. This is due to convergence meaning they will adapt their speech to fit in with their audience and give the feeling that 'they see themselves as one of us'. The text states they use 'we' to 'motivate people' and convince them 'you are in it together'. Both of this is convergence as they are actively trying to change their idiolect meaning their own manner of speech to accommodate others and fit into a social group. 3</p>
<p>The text states that politicians 'who set themselves apart' were more likely to fail due to the feeling of exclusion by their 4</p>

1 The response begins with a succinct introduction. Expression is clear and there is an immediate signpost to the stimulus material.

2 Two brief quotes are selected from the text which the candidate has explained fully.

3 The candidate introduces a theoretical example. Whilst the theorist, Giles, is not acknowledged, the reference is relevant.

4 The main paragraph is long. The candidate reinforces the ideas of accommodation and convergence by more selections from the text.

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

audience / people. The phrase 'those who set themselves "apart" further indicates actively trying to adapt their manner of speech in order to be different from a social group. This is an example of divergence from the communication accommodation theory as the politicians are actively trying to sound in a particular manner that does not align with the social group they are addressing

5

Further ~~lastly~~ the extract states that our pronoun patterns reveal 'how we express power and social status'. This could be explained by Sapir-Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis. This theory states the way we speak affects the way we view the world. In this case by using pronouns such as 'I' could mean a competitive or selfish world while pronouns 'we' and 'us' gives a sense of inclusivity and unity in the world.

6

Lastly the extract briefly touches on how pronouns relate to gender. This might explain the increase in gender neutral pronouns such as 'they' 'them' as the text states pronouns have "been at the core of heated debate and social reform." Therefore to be politically correct and provide social equality, we should not assume which pronouns to use. The extract highlights the importance of pronouns in politics and leadership but also use a social aspect

7

5 The candidate considers the concept of divergence as part of Communication Accommodation by selecting further relevant material from the text.

6 The candidate quotes 'power and social status' from the stimulus material and attempts to use the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis as support for ideas. The citation is briefly described, inaccurately labelled and is only partly relevant to subsequent comments.

7 The candidate briefly discusses gendered pronouns in relation to a minor point raised in the text. They use the term 'politically correct' but there is no further conceptual reference and the discussion returns to emphasise the text's theme of politics and leadership.

Example Candidate Response – low, continued

Examiner comments

within the world in order to not provide face threatening acts or exclude any social group or setting. 8

In conclusion this extract from an article from the Psychology Today website states the importance of using plural pronouns such as 'we' and 'us' in leadership and politics position in order to give a feeling of inclusion to their audience. This can further be supported by the Communication Accommodation Theory and the Sapir-Whorf linguistic relativity. The extract also very briefly mentions the debate of pronouns around gender. 9

8 The candidate uses the term 'face threatening acts' but there is no explanation of Goffman's theory.

9 The candidate provides a conclusion which repeats information already provided in the main body of the response.

**Total mark awarded =
10 out of 25**

How the candidate could improve their answer

- The response began well with an appropriate introduction and a clear understanding of a limited number of the points raised in the stimulus material was demonstrated. However, the response could have been improved with a broader range of points being selected and discussed in more detail in separate paragraphs.
- The reference to the Communication Accommodation Theory demonstrated a clear understanding of the model. This section of the response was lengthy: not only did the candidate overdevelop the discussion on convergence but the next paragraph outlined divergence which is part of the same theory. Overall, the inclusion of CAT could have been made more succinct which would have left space in the response for consideration of other points from the text and therefore support from other linguistic concepts.
- The candidate could have improved the response with more precise labelling of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and more discussion of how linguistic relativity was seen in the selection made from the text. More appropriate to a discussion of language and power might have been a reference to the theories of Fairclough, Brown, Levinson or Coulthard and Sinclair, for example.
- There were further examples in the response in which improvements could have been made with more in-depth conceptual referencing. These included the candidate's discussion of political correctness where citation of Pinker or Orwell may have been useful, and the brief mention of face threatening acts. Here, Goffman's theory is not described therefore it is not clear which point in the stimulus material it might support.

Common mistakes and guidance

- Candidates usually provide introductions to their essays in **Q2** which are appropriate in discursive work. However, it is a common mistake to provide over-arching discussion on the broader aspects of language itself or to name a linguistic theory or theorist as seen in the higher and middle examples above, prior to introducing any ideas from the stimulus material. The approach taken by the candidate in the 'lower' example shows more careful crafting of an introduction, although the main body of the essay in that example is weaker.
- Labelling of concepts is often imprecise giving the impression of a lack of full understanding of the linguistic issue, concept, method or approach.
- It is more relevant for candidates to cite linguistic theories in which they are fully confident of their relevance to the discussion and not merely use names of theorists or theories without justification to the point being raised.
- It is a common mistake to use what is presented in the stimulus material to support a demonstration of knowledge and understanding of theoretical examples. Candidates are reminded that this is the wrong way round: linguistic issues, concepts, methods and approaches should be referenced relevantly to support ideas gained from the text provided.
- Conclusions are generally provided at the end of responses which should reinforce the standpoint made in the main body of the work. However, these are not always carefully crafted. It is a common mistake to introduce new ideas into a conclusion because they will diminish the strength of the writing. A further common mistake in writing a conclusion is merely to repeat what has gone before. A strong conclusion will draw ideas together, relate them to each other and finish with a decisive sentence. Fundamentally, it should be brief and meaningful and take only a very short time to write.

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