UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
LINGUISTICS ADMISSIONS TEST
ANSWER KEY AND MARKING CRITERIA

Section 1
Answers
1.   A
2A.   uts eruksis ta tolumba pul xasilia
        OR
        uts eruksis pul xasilia se ta tolumba
2B.   kats dolma ekalamitsesi sa paxta?
3.   Any three of the following with appropriate examples drawn from the Anastule data and from their own knowledge of English (or further points that you can establish to be valid by comparing the data above with English):
  ☐ Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) word order in infinitives only
  ☐ definiteness marked with an article
  ☐ definite article is prenominal
  ☐ bare nouns (mass nouns, e.g., 'grass')
  ☐ subject-verb agreement
  ☐ There is suffixal inflection on the verb (although it differs in nature from English suffixal inflection)
  ☐ number is grammatically marked in subject-verb agreement (singular vs plural)
  ☐ negation occurs before the lexical verb
  ☐ future tense is overtly expressed
  ☐ plurality is marked on the noun
  ☐ existence of possessive pronouns (*my*, *their*)
  ☐ conveys a perfective/imperfective aspect
  ☐ double object constructions
  ☐ moves a wh-word to the front to form a question
  ☐ expresses past as a prefix (e-) not a suffix (-ed)

Allocation of marks
1 for each correctly identified property
1 for an appropriate example illustrating the property from Feluma
1 for an appropriate example illustrating the property in English
1 for the clarity and completeness with which the parallels are presented (that's an impression mark, but if you find yourself having to fill in details to make a connection between what's on the script and the above answers, the mark shouldn't be awarded. And it can't be awarded for answers where there's no attempt to identify 3 properties.)
4. Any three of the following with appropriate examples drawn from the Anastule data and from their own knowledge of English:
  ☐ SOV
  ☐ Two negators system: one for present tense; another for future tense (and other nonveridical contexts)
  ☐ The form of articles depends on the number and case
  ☐ Future tense is expressed as part of the lexical verb/inflectionally
  ☐ Has an aspectual marker signalling perfective, namely [s]. In the absence of the marker the verb has a progressive/durative/ongoing meaning (but note epenthetic [v] in 'ekalamitsevan' to avoid hiatus).
  ☐ Possessive pronouns follow their associated nouns
  ☐ The infinitive is one word
  ☐ It has clitics, which include: a definiteness clitic; and a "possessive" clitic (signals one's own).
  ☐ Because it is OV it moves all wh-word to the front to form a question (see (3))

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Section 2
Answers
1. C
2. A
3. D
4. D
5. D

6. The commonest types are NAdj & NDem and AdjN & DemN. There are big differences from region to region. In some regions (Africa, Papunesia, Australia), NAdj & NDem is commonest, while in others (Eurasia, North America), AdjN & DemN is commonest. They are not the commonest in all regions: in South America, NAdj & DemN is commonest.

7. Possible reasons: (i) languages within a region may have influenced each other; (ii) languages within a region may be related to one another/derived from a common historical source; (iii) each region has a relatively small number of languages in it so may not show all the options found in a larger sample.

8. We would expect NNum to be commonest in Africa, and NumN to be commonest in Eurasia. Possible reasons: (i) in Africa, patterns with N first are commonest, and NNum is like this; (ii) in Eurasia, patterns with N last are commonest, and NumN is like this; (iii) a numeral is a bit like an adjective so you'd expect to find it in the same position and most languages in Africa are NAdj; (iv) a numeral is a bit like an adjective so you'd expect to find it in the same position and most languages in Eurasia are AdjN.

Section 3

I. Quality of presentation [maximum total mark for presentation: **15**]

The essay should have clear paragraph structure, with at least one paragraph dedicated to each aspect of the question, and with one or more paragraphs for analysis of any additional examples and cases or arguments that the candidate decides to mention. The paragraphs should be coherent internally as well as with each other.

In arriving at the mark, you should consider whether the candidate has expressed himself/herself clearly, using concise, compelling and accurate English.

Marks are awarded on a scale from Level 1 (up to 5 marks) to Level 3 (11-15 marks).

Level 1: **Rather weak presentation** [up to 5 marks]
• it is difficult to discern an argument developing over more than one sentence
• text is incoherent or unfocussed
• no clear logic in paragraphing
• hesitant fluency/not easy to follow at times
• some flawed sentence structure
• faulty grammar
• limited range of vocabulary or incorrect use of vocabulary

- regular spelling/punctuation errors
- regular and frequent slips or errors

Level 2: **Reasonably clear presentation** [6-10 marks]
• clear evidence of arguments being developed over more than one sentence
• good use of paragraphs
• reasonably fluent/not difficult to read
• simple/unambiguous sentence structure
• fair range and appropriate use of vocabulary
• acceptable grammar
• there may be some weakness in the effectiveness of the English, including some slips/errors

Level 3: **Good use of English** [11-15 marks]
• arguments are developed in a meaningful and persuasive way
• excellent paragraph structure
• good sentence structure
• wide, appropriately used vocabulary
• sound use of grammar
• good spelling and punctuation
• few slips or errors

Where candidates have crossed out sections or added information, the essay should be judged on the quality of the resulting use of English (i.e. crossed out text ignored, and inserted text read as if it were originally in place). An essay that is judged to be below the level 1 on the scale will receive 0 marks for quality of presentation.

II. Quality of content [maximum total mark for content: **15**]

The Required Content

The candidate is asked to think how to define word meaning and is presented with one possible option, namely to associate the meaning of the word with some mental entity: concept, idea, or representation. The essay tests the basic understanding of such an association, ability to present arguments and evidence for and against such a view, as well as an ability to 'think outside the box', for example by denying the utility of mental entities for defining meaning and proposing instead associations with real objects, definitions based on the experience of the use of words, definitions based on the slot the word occupies in the totality of the given language, and so forth. In answering the part of the question concerning differences between words with respect to the availability of associated concepts candidates may choose to consider differences between concrete and abstract nouns, differences between content and function words, differences between commonly used words for which concepts are readily available and words in a more restricted use (e.g. 'tree' vs. 'elm'), simple vs. compound words, problems posed by vagueness and ambiguity or words, and so forth. The candidate is not expected to use technical terminology or refer to theories in lexical semantics. (For the examiner's reference: some relevant orientations in semantics are mentalism, referentialism, structuralism, classical view (meaning as definition), and some others. But basic associations on which these are founded can be discerned and discussed without knowing the theories or labels).

Discussing the principles on which dictionary definitions are formulated or the use of 'big data' for discerning word meaning would also be appropriate here. There are many different ways to answer this question.

In arriving at the mark, you should consider:

- Has the candidate addressed the question, and if so, have all aspects of the question been attended to?
- Are the arguments sound and persuasive? Do the conclusions follow from the discussion? Are the views well justified through argumentation and/or evidence? Generally, what is the quality of the applicant's reasoning? For example, is there evidence of valid logical inference in the argumentation? Are there missing links in the argumentation? Are linguistic facts incorporated into the discussion – for example as premises in reasoning or as further justification of conclusions?
- How can the discussion be assessed on the scale from 'naïve' to 'sophisticated'?
- Is there evidence of sensitivity to linguistic facts?

Marks are awarded on a scale from Level 1 (up to 3 marks) to Level 5 (13-15 marks).

Level 1 [up to 3 marks] An answer that has some bearing on the question but which does not address the question directly or is severely incomplete.

Level 2 [4-6 marks] An answer that demonstrates a satisfactory overall understanding of the problem and attempts a thoughtful argument. It addresses most of the components of the question. There may be significant elements of confusion in the argument. The candidate may misconstrue certain important aspects of the problem.

Level 3 [7-9 marks] A reasonably well-argued answer that addresses most aspects of the question, making reasonable use of theoretical argumentation. There may be some weakness in the structure of the argument, or some aspect of the argument may be missing. Answers in this category may lack scope and originality, for example by not tackling the final question ('Can you think of any other ways of describing what the *meaning of a word* is, without referring to what is in the human mind/brain?'). They may also lack pertinent exemplification.

Level 4 [10-12 marks] A strong, well-argued and well-exemplified answer with few weaknesses. All aspects of the question are addressed, making good use of the material and generating a good argument. Ideas are expressed and arranged in a coherent way, leading to a good synthesis or conclusion. There may be insufficient examples (or insufficiently clear examples) or for example no attempt at exploring possible interesting ways we can define what word meaning is.

Level 5 [13-15 marks] An excellent answer with no significant weaknesses. All aspects of the question are addressed, making excellent use of both argumentation and evidence, generating an excellent argument. There are ample and clear examples and some interesting insights or suggestions have been offered.

An answer judged to be irrelevant, trivial, unintelligible or missing should be given 0 marks.