

Linguistics written assessment 2

This assessment consists of **three parts**, which should each take about 20 minutes.

You will have **60 Minutes** to complete this test. If you have been granted extra time to complete the assessment due to special circumstances, then please refer to the timing provided to you by the College assessing your application.

You are **NOT** allowed to communicate with anyone or use any resources (dictionaries, books, the internet, etc) during the test: you do not need anything apart from the information provided in the paper to formulate your answers. Failure to abide by this rubric will invalidate your application.

All parts contain data questions about different aspects of Linguistics. Each part is worth 30 marks, giving a 90-mark maximum for the overall written test.

Please type up your answers in a format readable in MS Word and be clear about the part and the questions they relate to.

Part 1 – total of max 30 marks (recommended time = 20 minutes)

Look at the following sentences in “Cammy” with their English translation:

- | | |
|--|--|
| i. Tin xi syavayeiti. | He doesn't put it in motion. |
| ii. Syavanahi rinu pvilu-n curu. | We are moving across the green fields. |
| iii. Tapaiti, vatani. | It's hot, I understand. |
| iv. Tin nayehi & na barahi. | You lead her and you carry me. |
| v. Tin vo nayayeiti ko? | She lets you lead her? |
| vi. Dwa tin barayanahi psitu-n to. | We let him carry you down the streets. |
| vii. Vo xi vatani; tin tapayada bais-o inu ko? | I don't understand you; you heat it up in a pan? |
| viii. No baraiti mik situ-n curu. | He carries us across the big street. |

Question 1. Translate the following Cammy sentences to English:

- a) No xi barada vilu curu.
- b) Na nayayada psitu curu ko?

Question 2. Translate the following English sentences to Cammy:

- a) I don't make you move into the field.
- b) He understands us: we let him lead us.

Question 3. Does Cammy make a difference between singular and plural 'you'? Explain your answer.

Question 4. Mention at least 3 *similarities* between Cammy and English grammar, using examples from the data above.

Question 5. Mention at least 5 *differences* between Cammy and English grammar and explain how they differ, using examples from the data above.

Part 2– total of max 30 marks (recommended time = 20 minutes)

Consider a scenario in which speaker A and speaker B are having a conversation. Speaker A asserts the sentence in (1).

1. A: Mary saw Ellen at the train station.

The sentences in (2-4) are possible responses by speaker B (a word or phrase in ALL CAPS would have extra emphasis when spoken aloud).

2. B: No, Mary didn't see Ellen at the train station.

3. B: No, Mary didn't see ELLEN at the train station.

4. B: No, Mary didn't see Ellen at the TRAIN STATION.

Question 1. For each of the responses in (2-4), describe a short context in which speaker B might utter it.

Question 2. In each of the responses in (2-4), what is speaker B specifically denying, and what are they not denying?

Consider the following sentences, which speaker A might have uttered instead of (1).

5. A: Mary only saw ELLEN at the train station.

6. A: Mary only saw Ellen at the TRAIN STATION.

Question 3. Compare sentence (1) with the sentences in (5) and (6). What extra information is speaker A providing in (5) and (6), compared with (1)?

(Hint: it may be helpful to think about what possibilities are excluded by the sentences in (5) and (6), compared with sentence (1)).

Consider the following sentences, which speaker A might have uttered instead of (1).

7. A: Mary even saw ELLEN at the train station.

8. A: Mary even saw Ellen at the TRAIN STATION.

Question 4. Compare sentence (1) with the sentences in (7) and (8). What extra information is speaker A providing in (7) and (8), compared with (1)?

Part 3 – total of max 30 marks (recommended time = 20 minutes)

Sociolinguists are interested in people's evaluations of language because this can help us to understand how exactly languages contribute to specific attitudes towards their speakers. It also helps us to reveal how we perceive their identities and can give insights into underlying ideologies and prejudices. The data presented in figures 1 and 2 were collected to investigate attitudes towards different languages. In this study, participants listened to recordings of nine languages that were unknown to them to see how they might develop attitudes towards languages without any contextual knowledge.

For the purpose of this test, it is not necessary to know which languages were involved in this study, hence the abbreviations LangB and LangJ. Only two languages from the study are presented here. For this task, you should just focus on the data presented in the figures and draw your conclusions based on them.

All of the language recordings were readings of short, neutral texts, spoken in a calm voice without any background noise. The speakers were male and had very similar voices, the recordings were 25 seconds long. In the study, participants listened to the recordings in a random order.

The evaluations were measured on the traits 'pleasant', 'friendly', 'natural', 'strange', 'educated', 'peaceful', 'familiar', 'artificial' and 'aggressive' using a rating scale where (1) stands for 'very pleasant', 'very friendly', etc and where (7) stands for 'not pleasant', 'not friendly', etc. The languages were rated by 30 participants from England with British English as their first language (EnglishENG) and 30 participants from Hong Kong with Cantonese as their first language (CantoneseHK). The individual scores for each accent were averaged for each trait. Figure 1 shows the data for LangB and figure 2 shows the data for LangJ.

Figures are shown on the next page and questions follow afterwards.

Figure 1. Average ratings of LangB for English and Cantonese-speaking participants.

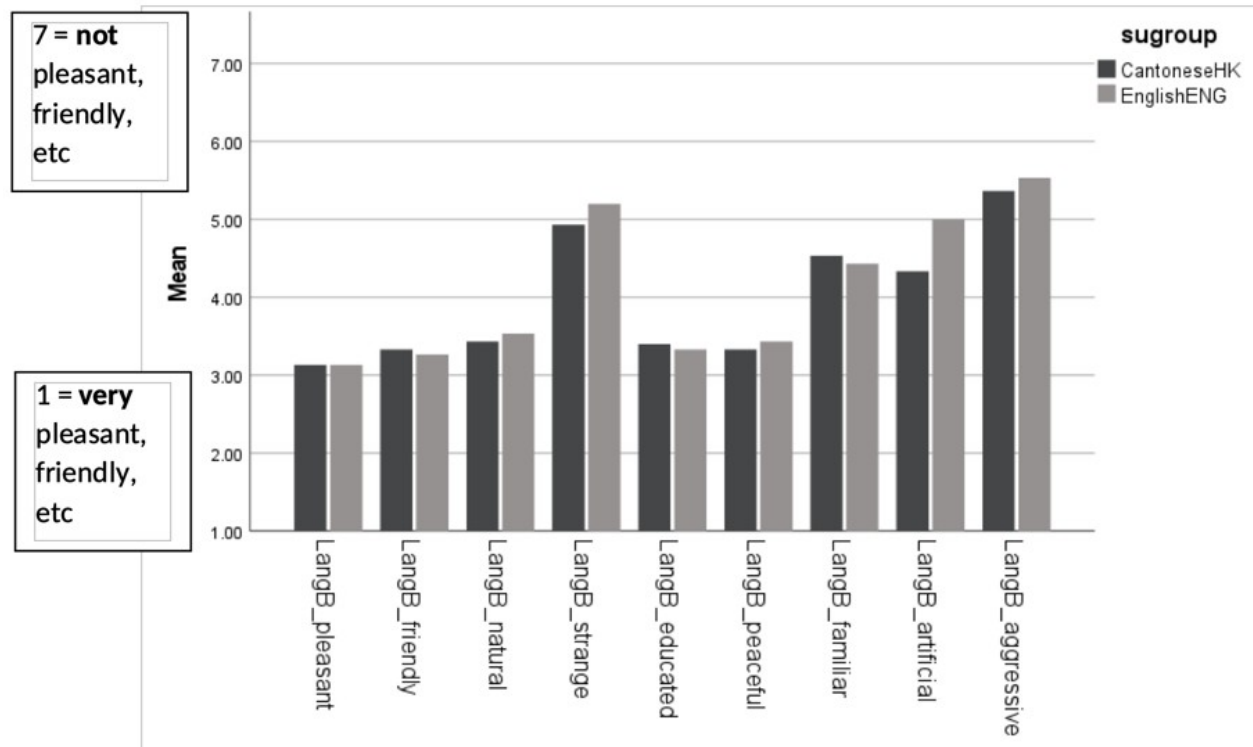
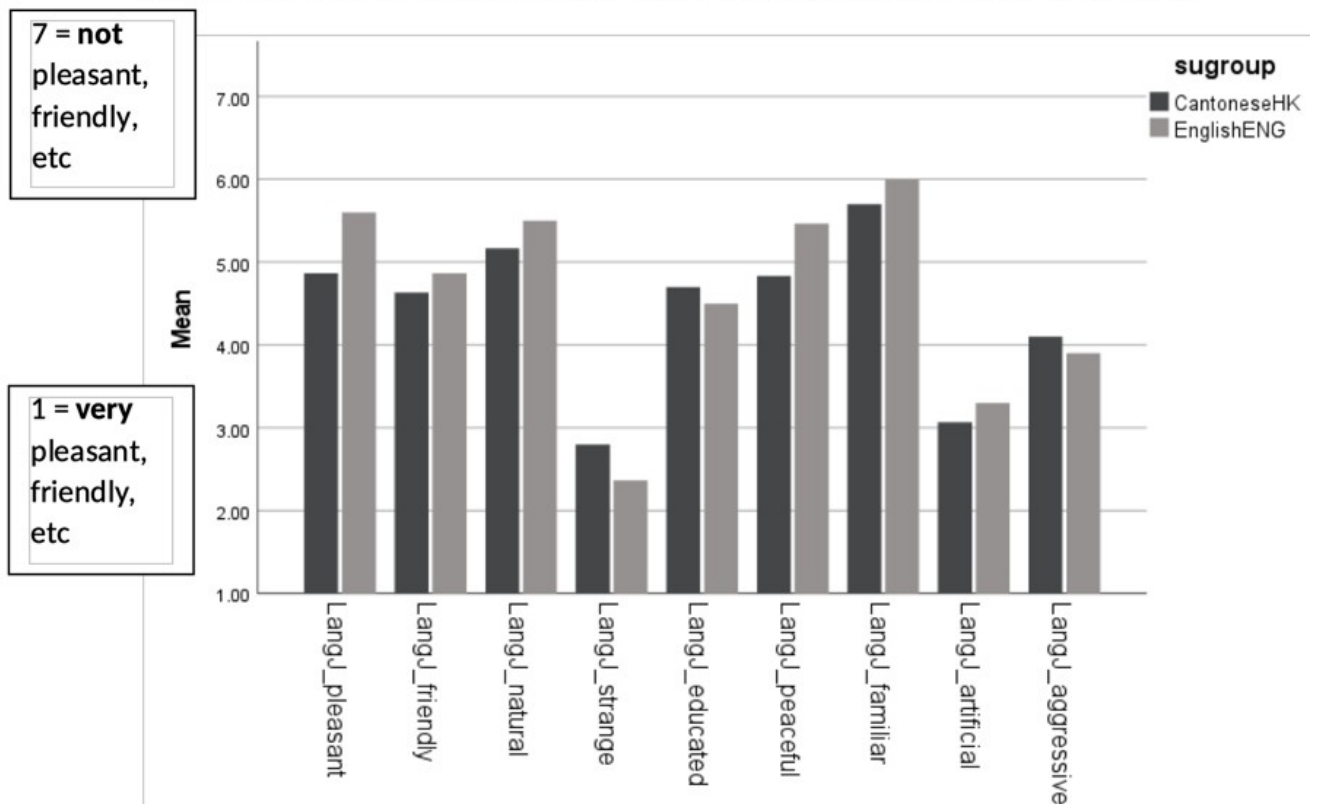


Figure 2. Average ratings of LangJ for English and Cantonese-speaking participants.



For multiple choice questions 1-5 below, choose the correct answer (type A, B, C or D):

Question 1. Looking at figure 1, which one of the following statements is correct?

- A. The EnglishENG group were without exception harsher in their judgements than the CantoneseHK group.
- B. The CantoneseHK group were without exception harsher in their judgements than the EnglishENG group
- C. The EnglishENG group rated LangB as sounding more 'strange' than the CantoneseHK group.
- D. The CantoneseHK group rated LangB as sounding more 'strange' than the EnglishENG group.

Question 2. Looking at figure 2, which one of the following statements is correct?

- A. The CantoneseHK group rated LangJ as more 'pleasant' sounding than the EnglishENG group did.
- B. The EnglishENG group rated LangJ as more 'pleasant' sounding than the CantoneseHK group did.
- C. The EnglishENG group were without exception harsher in their judgements than the CantoneseHK group.
- D. The CantoneseHK group were without exception harsher in their judgements than the EnglishENG group

Question 3. Comparing figure 1 and figure 2, which one of the following statements is correct?

- A. The CantoneseHK participants rated both languages more favourably than the EnglishENG participants on all traits.
- B. The EnglishENG participants rated both languages as more 'educated' than the CantoneseHK participants.
- C. The CantoneseHK participants rated both languages higher on 'aggressive' than the EnglishENG participants.
- D. The EnglishENG and the CantoneseHK participants rated both languages the same on the trait 'pleasant'.

Question 4. Looking at figure 1 and figure 2, which one of the following statements is correct?

- A. Based on the overall ratings we can say that both EnglishENG and CantoneseHK participants rated LangJ less favourably than LangB on all traits.
- B. Based on the overall ratings we can say that both EnglishENG and CantoneseHK participants rated LangJ more favourably than LangB on all traits.
- C. Based on the overall ratings there is no pattern of preference for any of the two languages for both EnglishENG and CantoneseHK participants.

Question 5. Looking at figure 1 and figure 2, which one of the following statements is correct?

- A. Based on the overall ratings we can say that both EnglishENG and CantoneseHK participants agree that LangJ sounds more 'peaceful' and 'educated' than LangB.
- B. Based on the overall ratings we can say that both EnglishENG and CantoneseHK participants agree that LangB sounds more 'peaceful' and 'educated' than LangJ.
- C. Based on the overall ratings we can say that both EnglishENG and CantoneseHK participants agree that LangJ is less 'aggressive', less 'artificial' and less 'strange' than LangB.
- D. Based on the overall ratings we can say that both EnglishENG and CantoneseHK participants agree that LangB sounds less 'friendly' than LangJ.

[more questions on the next page]

Question 6. In sociolinguistics, we understand that the context makes a major contribution to the formation of attitudes towards language. For example, knowing about the country of origin, culture and history of the people who speak a language typically influences our evaluation of it.

- a) Give two reasons why the study of unknown languages (i.e. languages where the associated country of origin, culture and history are not known) may be of interest for sociolinguists.
- b) How would your interpretation of the results for LangB be different if you were told that LangB was Welsh?

Question 7. You may have noticed that some of the traits used here seem to be very similar (e.g. 'natural' and 'artificial' or 'strange' and 'familiar').

- a) What might be the benefit of including such similar traits in a study – and what might be the drawbacks? Briefly discuss one benefit and one drawback.
- b) If you were to conduct such a study, how would you go about selecting the most suitable traits?

---- END OF WRITTEN TEST ---