

Linguistics written assessment 1

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.

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.

Do not worry if you find you have little to say about some of the questions, or if you do not have technical terms for the features you wish to describe. How you go about finding answers and how you prioritise your time in producing the answers is more important to us than seeing a complete answer for each question in the test. Aim to spend about 20 minutes on each section. Read everything carefully!

PART 1 (total value 30 marks)**(20 minutes)**

Ronzert is a made-up language. It has one vowel (*a*) and five consonants (*t*, *p*, *m*, *l* and *z*). Words in Ronzert are made up of syllables containing one vowel with one or more consonants on either side.

There are certain rules about the order of consonants before and after the vowel in the syllable.

The table below contains some words which obey the rules for consonant order in Ronzert. Sequences of consonants which are not found in these words do not exist in Ronzert.

Words in Ronzert		
<i>tam</i>	<i>zal</i>	<i>map</i>
<i>lat</i>	<i>taz</i>	<i>zlaz</i>
<i>talz</i>	<i>malp</i>	<i>tapt</i>
<i>zpap</i>	<i>zapz</i>	<i>matz</i>
<i>mamp</i>	<i>ztalm</i>	<i>mlamz</i>
<i>mamtz</i>	<i>zmaltz</i>	<i>talmz</i>
<i>lalptz</i>	<i>zpalt</i>	<i>zalpt</i>
<i>mamptz</i>	<i>zlampt</i>	<i>tlamt</i>
<i>zpaltz</i>	<i>zplalt</i>	<i>mlalpz</i>
<i>ztlampz</i>		

Look at the words in the table, and think about what orders of consonants are allowed (i.e. are found in words which exist), and what orders are not allowed. Try to identify any patterns. Then answer the following questions.

Questions

Q1. Which consonant or consonants can only appear directly next to a vowel? [2 marks]

Q2. What are the rules for where *p* can appear in the syllable? [3 marks]

Q3. What are the rules for where *z* can appear in the syllable? What place or places in the syllable can it occupy that other consonants cannot? [4 marks]

Q4. The following words are not permitted in Ronzert. In each case, explain what rules of consonant order are broken.

i) *tlalmp*

ii) *tmamptz*

iii) *mlattz*

iv) *zmapm*

[7 marks]

Q5. What is the maximum number of consonants allowed in front of a vowel? What is the maximum number of consonants allowed after a vowel? Give an example of the longest possible syllable in Ronzert. [3 marks]

Q6. Ronzert also has words of two syllables. Each of the syllables must follow the rules of consonant order. Split the following words into syllables, and explain your reasoning.

For example, the word *maltat* is made up of two syllables, *mal* and *tat*, because all syllables in Ronzert must have at least one consonant on either side of the vowel: *malt* would be a possible syllable, but *at* would not be.

- i) *lamplaz*
- ii) *maltzat*
- iii) *zalmamlatz*
- iv) *matmlap*
- v) *tamptzplam*

[11 marks]

PART 2 (total value 30 marks)**(20 minutes)**

Words like 'all', 'some' and 'many' belong to a special set of expressions that linguists call 'quantifiers'. Language acquisition researchers are interested in when young children learn the meaning of quantifiers. One way to investigate if a child has learned the meaning of a quantifier is to present the child with sentences with quantifiers which are true or false, and ask the child if they agree or disagree with the sentences. A child who has learned the meaning of a quantifier should agree with true sentences **and** should also disagree with false sentences. Otherwise, if they are correct in only one case, they might be guessing or answering based on a bias (e.g. always answering 'agree' or always answering 'disagree' when they don't know the meaning of the quantifier).

Below is a fictional set of data from 5-year-old English-speaking children and adults who have been presented with 9 sentences (S1-S9), three each for 'all', 'some' and 'many'. The table presents the percentage of 'agree' responses for each type of sentence. Let us assume that a sufficient number of children and adults have been tested and that the percentage of 'agree' responses is characteristic for each age-group.

		Child responses	Adult responses
		% AGREE	% AGREE
S1	All birds are animals	82	98
S2	All chairs tell the time	11	2
S3	All dogs have spots	25	3
S4	Some birds live in the forest	84	98
S5	Some ships are made of bubbles	10	1
S6	Some giraffes are mammals	80	50
S7	Many fish live in the sea	90	95
S8	Many dogs have wings	93	8
S9	Many cats are animals	91	60

Questions

Answer the questions below, starting with the '**all**' sentences:

Q1. What is the correct response to S2 and why? [2 marks]

Q2. What is the correct response to S3 and why? [2 marks]

Q3. Are S2 and S3 similar or different? Explain your answer. [2 marks]

Let's now look at the '**some**' sentences:

Q4. What is the correct response to S5 and why? [2 marks]

Q5. What is the correct response to S6 and why? [2 marks]

Q6. Are S5 and S6 similar or different? Explain your answer. [2 marks]

Let's now look at the '**many**' sentences:

Q7. What is the correct response to S8 and why? [2 marks]

Q8. What is the correct response to S9 and why? [2 marks]

Q9. Are S8 and S9 similar or different? Explain your answer. [2 marks]

Now let us look at **adult participants' responses**.

Q10. For which sentence(s) are the adults answering predominantly 'Agree'? (reply by giving the sentence number(s) and explain why) [2 marks]

Q11. For which sentence(s) are the adults answering predominantly 'Disagree'? (reply by giving the sentence number(s) and explain why) [2 marks]

Q12. Which sentence(s) look like they are exceptions in the pattern of adult responses? (reply by giving the sentence number(s) & explain why) [2 marks]

Now let us look at the **children's responses**:

Q13. For which sentences are the children answering predominantly 'Agree'? (reply by giving the sentence number(s) only) [1 mark]

Q14. For which sentences are the children answering predominantly 'Disagree'? (reply by giving the sentence number only) [1 mark]

Q15. Compare the pattern of responses of the children to the responses of the adults for 'all' (S1, S2, S3). Would you say that the children have learned the meaning of 'all'? Justify your response. [1 mark]

Q16. Compare the pattern of responses of the children to the responses of the adults for 'some' (S4, S5, S6). Would you say that the children have learned the meaning of 'some'? Justify your response. [1 mark]

Q17. Compare the pattern of responses of the children to the responses of the adults for 'many' (S7, S8, S9). Would you say that the children have learned the meaning of 'many'? Justify your response. [2 marks]

PART 3 (total value 30 marks)

(20 minutes)

Wolakota is another made-up language. Look at the following sentences in Wolakota along with their English translations.

The ***bold-italic*** elements correspond to inflections, as in English *-ing*, *-ed* and *-s* in *walking*, *talked* and *hats*.

Advice: Do look over the questions (Q1-Q6) before working through the data presented in the examples so that you have a good idea of which aspects of the presented data are particularly important.

- i. Tem mband**ung** oki tundo nkiti oki brinsag**a**.
'The young student visited the shops.'
- ii. Trank**ung** ilko drin?
'What is she studying?'
- iii. Tem trank**ung** oki lehti sago oki grindsili.
'The clever girl studied history.'
- iv. Elend**ung** ndoli oki tundo nkiti sago tulo moosa sto.
'Now the clever young student is working in a big museum.'
- v. Elend**ask** oki faldug**a** ngadi moosa sto.
'The guides are working in a big hall.'
- vi. Tem mvundi**ask** mband**ga** gron mtung**a** sang moosa gron.
'Two visitors broke two glass vases.'
- vii. Tem nvilo**ask** oki faldug**a** oki mtung**a** oki tendi stig.
'The guides saw the vases on the floor.'
- viii. Ham onoo ditro**ask** oki tem**ga** ilkas?
'Will the owners not repair them?'
- ix. Ayi, onoo tem**ask** ilkas galdi.
'No, they have no money.'

Questions

Q1. English word order is Subject-Verb-Object (*The students watched the film.*). Wolakota is _____. [1 mark]

Q2. Translate the following Wolakota sentences to English:

a) *Tem onoo mvundung oki tundo oki mtun moosa.*

b) *Ham nviloask oki mbandga nkiti drin?* [8 marks]

Q3. Translate the following English sentences to Wolakota:

a) *The clever guides worked in a glass hall.*

b) *Will two students study in the shop?* [8 marks]

Q4. The examples give some illustrations of how Wolakota speakers talk about the past, the present and the future. Write down 2 respects in which Wolakota is different to English in this domain, and 2 in which it is the same. [4 marks]

Q5. *The five noisy protesters* is an English noun phrase. Using the data in (i-ix), highlight 1 respect in which Wolakota noun phrases are constructed differently to English noun phrases, and 1 in which they are similar. Illustrate each similarity and difference by referring to Wolakota and English examples. [4 marks]

Q6. List 3 further differences between Wolakota and English that you have not discussed above, and 2 similarities that you have not already mentioned. [5 marks]

END OF ADMISSIONS TEST