科目：英文測驗　　　　　　　　系所組：跨文化研究所翻譯學碩士班
中英組

I. Précis (60%)

Instructions: Summarize the following two articles in no more than 300 words each. Be sure to include the main points and keep the general writing style of the original. Avoid using the same language and sentence structure when possible. Do not list points; your summary should read like a coherent short article.

Article 1:　Is the internet killing empathy?

By Gary Small and Gigi Vorgan, Special to CNN

A TV news reporter for a Los Angeles station was doing an on-camera report on the Grammy Awards Sunday night, and suddenly her speech became garbled. The newscast quickly cut away when it became apparent that she was in trouble. But by the next morning, televised news reports were making it part of their Grammy coverage. (One AOL.com page featured the incident at the top of its five "memorable moments" from the Grammys.)

The video went viral on the internet. At the UK Telegraph website, where we caught up with the video showing her sudden slurred speech, 9,388 people noted they "liked" the video with a thumbs up signal and 6,027 recommended it to Facebook friends.

People couldn't turn away. They were drawn to it, watching the images over and over with the same kind of grim curiosity that compels drivers to slow down and gaze at a fatal car crash -- drawn often by a subconscious fear that the same thing could happen to us. By observing it in other people, we have our own experience of it, but at an emotional distance. The more we observe terrifying events happening to other people, the more they reinforce our sense of denial and detachment: It can't happen to us.

Online, at least, the reporter's incident evoked a range of emotional reactions -- anxiety, laughter, horror and perhaps a voyeuristic thrill.

But where is the empathy when thousands linger on YouTube, repeatedly watching this unfortunate woman possibly in real danger? (A doctor said on Thursday the reporter suffered a migraine, not a stroke, and is completely back to normal.)

In an earlier time we might have been instructed to look away or give the person privacy. No more. We click and click.

Have our brains become so desensitized by a 24/7, all-you-can-eat diet of lurid flickering images that we've lost all perspective on appropriateness and compassion when another human

being apparently suffers a medical emergency? Have we become a society of detached voyeurs?

According to the most recent findings from the Kaiser Family Foundation, 8- to 18-year-olds on average spend 11½ hours a day using their technology.

Their brains have become "wired" to use their tech gadgets effectively in order to multi-task -- staying connected with friends, texting and searching online endlessly, often exposing their brains to shocking and sensational images and videos. Many people are desensitizing their neural circuits to the horrors they see, while not getting much, if any, off-line training in empathic skills. And the effects may even reach young people.

In a 2002 study published in Brain and Cognition, Robert McGivern and co-workers found that adolescents struggle with the ability to recognize another person's emotions. The teenage volunteers in their study had particular difficulty identifying specific emotions expressed by another person's face.

These young people were at an age when they are still developing the capacity for empathy, the ability to understand another person's emotional point of view. In many ways, the young teenage brain is non-empathic.

We are concerned that all this tech time interferes with young people's learning and development of basic empathy skills, such as maintaining eye contact or noticing subtle nonverbal cues during a conversation.

In a 2007 study of 197 students age 17 to 23 years, participants were asked to quickly identify the emotional expression of a face as it rapidly morphed from neutral to an angry or happy face. Happy faces were identified faster than angry faces, but when the volunteers played a violent video game before the facial recognition task, they were much slower to recognize the happy facial expression.

Since middle-aged and older digital "immigrants" are catching up with these younger digital natives in the amounts of time they spend using technology, this empathy deficit may not be limited to just young adult and teenage brains. Empathy is learned, but it can be un-learned as well.

Using functional MRI scanning, our UCLA research team found that internet savvy middle-aged and older adults showed dramatically greater brain activity when searching online compared with age-matched "internet-naïve" volunteers. When these older naïve volunteers started searching online for an hour a day, after only one week their frontal lobe neural circuits showed significant activity increases during internet searching. Brains of any age seem sensitive and reactive to exposure to technology.

What can you do to help prevent this image onslaught from affecting the way you react to other people's pain or difficulties? The next time you receive a link to a lurid video or you pass a car crash that's been slowing you down on the highway, ask yourself what you're feeling.

Curiosity is human -- our brains constantly seek novelty and stimulation from both positive

and negative sources. But empathy is human, too. Noticing your first response and trying to get some perspective on it is one strategy to push back technology's assault on our brain's ability to feel compassion for others. When our brains become wired to disassociate from unpleasant experiences, we lose a part of what defines our humanity.

(Source: http://www.cnn.com/2011/OPINION/02/18/small.vorgan.internet.empathy/index.html)

Article 2:   Babies: Expensive, Intrusive and Too Few for the Economy

By Blaire Briody, The Fiscal Times

Whether it's hospital costs, diapers, day care, or the ever increasing cost of a college education, children are expensive, and getting more so. Due to the recession, couples are starting to consider the financial realities having a family — for many, that means downsizing or skipping out on baby-making altogether.

Three Strikes Against Children

The birth rate has dropped over 8 percent since 2007. Women are having an average of 2.01 children over their lifetime, below the population replacement rate of 2.10 (a number that was holding steady before the recession). If the downtrend continues, it could create a small workforce supporting a large aging population with less revenue for the expensive tax-funded social programs seniors depend on.

In addition to the rising costs of children, women are marrying later and waiting longer to have children, lowering their chances of conceiving, and facing staggering fertility treatment costs when they get there. With all these forces compounding, it's possible the birth rate will continue to fall even after the economy recovers — a shift that has undermined the social systems and economies in many developed countries, including Japan and Italy. Right now, the birth rate in the U.S. appears to be teetering on the edge of a cliff, ready to nosedive at any moment.

How Much Is That Baby in the Window?

In 2009, the Department of Agriculture estimated the total before-college cost of raising a child was $286,050 — about $11,700 per year today, and $21,600 a year by the time they're 18. With college, the cost nearly doubles, not to mention the costs many parents face during a recession, when their college grad shows up at their doorstep expecting to move back in. Housing and child-care were two of the biggest expenses, 31 percent and 17 percent respectively, and 50 percent higher for those who live in urban areas. The U.S. is becoming more urbanized every year — 90 percent of the population is expected to live in cities or suburbs by 2050. For a newborn in New York City, the average family spends up to $16,250 per year on child-care alone.

Many Americans want more children than they actually conceive and deliver. Surveys show that 26 percent of Americans say three children is ideal, 46 percent say two — only 3 percent say one child and 3 percent say zero. Yet birth data tells a different story. A whopping 18 percent of

women now have no children, up 80 percent since 1996, and some 20 percent have one child. The average is still two, close to replacement rate, but as Phillip Longman, author of *The Empty Cradle: How Falling Birthrates Threaten World Prosperity And What to Do About It* says, "If the average woman has to have 2.1 kids [to replace the population] and 18 percent of women are having no kids over their lifetime, then women who do have kids have to have a whole lot more than two."

Wrinkle Cream and Fertility Pills

Back in the 1970s, the average age of a woman's first birth in the U.S. was 21. Today, it's 25 — and higher for states like Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Jersey, where it's 27. Although the birth rate declined in 2009, it actually rose for women ages 40 to 44, the only age group to do so. Celebrity moms over 40, like Jane Seymour and Madonna, make it appear effortless to get pregnant at this age, but when women wait until they're in their 30s and 40s to have children, the chances of conceiving drops dramatically and they're more likely to use fertility treatments. In vitro fertilization in the U.S. will set you back some $15,000 with each attempt — more than any other developed country. In addition, many babies born through IVF and other methods are premature, increasing the initial health care costs for the child.

A Shifting Lifestyle

With more women working, childbearing has become a difficult choice, especially at a time when two incomes are essential. Yet, it doesn't make financial sense for both parents to work if the majority of one partner's paycheck goes to childcare. *Eat, Pray, Love* author Elizabeth Gilibert, who is childless by choice, said, "I didn't think I had the support to both have [kids] and continue on this path that was really important to me. I wasn't married to a man who wanted to stay home and raise kids. So ..."

With the rise of birth control, some wonder if young women are becoming more disconnected with fertility and child-rearing. Gone are the home economics and family planning classes (and few women were sad to see them go). Women want control and freedom in their lives — something children can impede on. "Having kids is such a huge financial responsibility, and once you're in it, you're stuck, and you have to do whatever you've got to do — maybe work extra hours or take a second job, just to provide for your kid. It just takes away freedom," says Milkes.

With all of these forces intersecting, the dip in the birth rate since 2007 starts to look like the beginning of a new era – one with smaller families and smaller workforces. "It's important for people to remember how anomalous the baby boom was," says Longman. "The long-term trend [for the birth rate] has been down down down."

(Source:
http://www.thefiscaltimes.com/Articles/2011/02/07/Babies-Expensive-Intrusive-and-Too-Few-for-the-Economy.aspx)

II. Cloze Test (40%)

Instructions: Supply the missing word or string of words. Make sure that they make sense, are grammatically correct, relevant, and conform to proper collocation. There are twenty items.

Historical linguistics, the study of language change, is the oldest subfield of modern linguistics. The success of historical linguistics in the nineteenth century was a major force behind the growth of synchronic linguistics in the twentieth. This article gives an overview of the classical theory of linguistic change and the comparative method, and is followed by a discussion of modern perspectives on language change.

The classical theory

The first historical linguists noticed recurrent correspondences between the sounds of cognate words in the early Indo-European (IE) languages. They explained these by positing historical sound changes or "sound laws." One of the first sound laws to be discovered was the Germanic consonant shift ("Grimm's Law"), which converted earlier voiceless stops to voiceless fricatives (cf. Sanskrit trayas : English three), voiced stops to voiceless stops (Skt. dvau : Eng. two), and "voiced aspirates" to plain voiced stops in Germanic (Skt. bhra⁻tar- : Eng. brother). As more and more sound changes were studied, an important generalization _____ (1): if the statable, language-specific phonetic environment for a given sound change was satisfied, the change took place; otherwise it did not. The change of voiceless stops to voiceless fricatives in Germanic, for example, always applied word-initially and after vowels and sonants, but never after stops or fricatives (Skt. star- : Eng. strew, not **sthrew). The global claim that "sound change is regular," or that "sound laws have _____ (2) exceptions," was first made by the German "Neogrammarian" (Junggrammatiker) school in the late 1870's and has been accepted in some form ever since. It can be considered the fundamental theorem of historical linguistics.

The regularity principle is not falsified by the phenomenon of "analogy" — the type of change in which a form is altered under the influence of a related word or pattern elsewhere in the language. The English ordinal number *sixth*, for example, goes back to an ancestral form containing the cluster *-kst-* (compare the Latin cognate *sextus*), with a *-t-* that should not, according to the regular conditioning of Grimm's Law (see above), have shifted to *-th* after the fricative *-s-*. But the *-th* of the present-day English word has nothing to do with any failure of Grimm's Law to operate correctly. In fact, the Old English form was *siexta*, with *-t-*; the *-th* of *sixth* was introduced under the influence of the other ordinal numbers, where *-th* was phonologically regular (*fourth, seventh*, etc.).

Sound change and analogy, the latter typically invoked to repair morphophonemic irregularities induced by the former, were the distinctive analytic tools of classical historical linguistics. Syntactic and semantic change were also of interest to many scholars, but the power of the regularity principle gave sound change a fascination that _____ (3) aspect of the field could equal.

The comparative method

The statement that languages are related means that they represent changed forms of a single parent language or "protolanguage," which may or may not be directly attested. The common parent of the Romance languages (French, Spanish, Italian, etc.), which could be called "Proto-Romance," is one of the relatively few cases of a protolanguage that is well-documented; we usually call it Latin. On the other hand, the common ancestor of the Germanic languages (English, German, Swedish, etc.) was _____ (4); everything we know about Proto-Germanic must be recovered by inference from the surviving daughter languages. This is also _____ (5) of Proto-Slavic (the common parent of Russian, Polish, Czech, etc.), Proto-Semitic (the common parent of Arabic, Hebrew, Aramaic, etc.), and hundreds of others. The _____ (6) by which we reconstruct the words and grammar of a protolanguage by projecting backwards from its daughters is called the "comparative method." In the domain of phonology, where sound change is constrained by the regularity principle, comparative reconstruction can be as rigorous _____ (7). The Greek, Sanskrit, and Latin words for "five" (*pénte*, *páñca*, and *quinque*, respectively), for example, allow us to specify the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) form uniquely as **pénkʷe*. The _____ (8) consonant of the PIE form could only have been **p-*, which can be shown from other words to have assimilated to a following *-qu-* in Latin. In the second syllable, **-kʷe* is the only PIE sequence that would have _____ (9) Gk. *-te*, Skt. *-ca*, and Lat. *-que*; of the other imaginable choices, PIE **-kʷe* would have given Skt. ***-kva*, PIE **-ke* would have given Gk. ***-ke*/Lat. ***-ce*, and PIE **-te* would have given Lat. ***-te*/Skt. ***-ta*. Careful and consistent use of this procedure affords a window on three _____ (10) of the unrecorded prehistory of Greek, Sanskrit, and Latin.

Families of related languages, including Indo-European and its main branches, were discovered long before the principle of regularity of sound change. But informal inspection _____ (11) usually a reliable way to tell whether languages are related. The longer two languages _____ (12), the harder it is to distinguish inherited lexical and grammatical features from accidental resemblances, borrowing effects, and typologically driven convergences. To _____ (13) genetic relationship we must be able to point to correspondences that could *only* have come about through common descent. In inflected languages, these may be shared morphological irregularities, such as the peculiar paradigm of the _____ (14) "to be" in Latin (*est* 'is' : *sunt* 'are'), Gothic (*ist* : *sind*), and Sanskrit (*asti* : *santi*). More usually, relationship is proved by finding systematic phonological correspondences attributable to regular sound change. The deepest securely identifiable families are c. 6000-8000 years old. PIE and Proto-Uralic (the ancestor of Finnish, Hungarian, etc.) are usually _____ (15) to around 4000 BCE; Proto-Afro-Asiatic, the parent of Proto-Semitic, Ancient Egyptian, and various African groups, is appreciably older. Other deep families include Austronesian and Sino-Tibetan in Asia, Niger-Congo in Africa, Ritwan-Algonkian ("Algic") in North America, and Pama-Nyungan in Australia, among many others. The enterprise known as "long-range comparison," which seeks to link families like these in yet larger groupings of immense antiquity (e.g., "Nostratic," "Amerind"), is regarded as methodologically unsound by most practicing historical linguists.

Modern perspectives on language change

The advent of synchronic linguistics made it possible to understand sound change, analogy, and other kinds of _____ (16) in a more general context. All observable linguistic change consists of an inception phase — the change proper — and a period of diffusion. In the commonest case, the initiating event is a juvenile learning error: a child _____ (17) *foot* as *foots*, for example, or misparses an acoustic signal and wrongly fronts a vowel before **i*. Such innovations are normally _____ (18) before they can spread.

Occasionally, however, they escape correction and become acceptable variants, potentially acquiring prestige value and being _____ (19) by other speakers. Sociolinguistic studies have greatly clarified this phase of the change process. Claimed violations of the regularity principle, such as "lexical diffusion" — the supposed word-by-word progress of sound change through the lexicon over a period of decades or generations — have nothing to do with the essence of sound change itself, but reflect one aspect of the social mechanism by which *all* change is propagated. For early historical linguists, who lacked a developed theory of underlying structure, all change was surface change, conditioned by surface facts. With the rise of generative grammar, language change came to be seen as *grammar change*, thus focusing _____ (20) on the possibility that some change might be controlled by non-surface linguistic factors — inefficiently exploited phonological contrasts, marked rule orderings (or constraint rankings), typologically inconsistent word order choices, etc. The sometimes overused tool of analogy invited particular scrutiny in this context. Critical discussion of analogy centered over whether the phenomena traditionally labeled "analogical" might be better explained in terms of rule loss, rule reordering, or other grammar-internal operations.

(Excerpt is taken from the homepage of Jay Jasanoff, Professor of Linguistics at Harvard University)