

考試科目	英文寫作	系所別	英國語文學系	考試時間	2月18日(一)第2節
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**Part I (60%)**

Choose **one** of the following passages. Read it and answer **each** of the questions that follow it. Each question should be answered in a separate, coherent paragraph of approximately 200 words. You may use **very short** quotations to support your answer, but nearly all of your answer should be written in your own words. Repetition of entire phrases or clauses from the passage without quotation marks will result in a score of 0 for the answer in which the repetition appears.

**Passage 1: Technique and Technology**

The imposing structure of technology, as the dominating presence in modern society, tends to assimilate the meaning of “technique” to itself. This assimilation shows itself more plainly in other languages than English: in German, for example, *Technik* signifies technology, and in intellectual discussion is likely to be used more often than its cognate, *Technologie*; and similarly for *technique* and *technologie* in French. The assimilation of these two terms to each other is the great fact of modern history. What we are dealing with here, and what we shall be dealing with throughout, is the single phenomenon indicated by the hyphenated form *technique-technology*.

The two, in fact, have become inseparable. The majority of us have only minimal techniques in relation to the machines we use. We know how to press buttons, and most of us drive our automobiles without knowing what a carburetor is. But if our civilization were to lose its techniques, all our machines and apparatus would become one vast pile of junk. We would not know how to produce the power that keeps the machines running, and we would not know how to replace those machines that wore out. We would roam amid a landscape of dynamos, factories, and laboratories, and with all this equipment still intact as so much sheer physical matter, we would nevertheless be a civilization without a technology. Modern science and technology are the offspring of *method* and they persist only so long as we command this method. *Technology is embodied technique.* [ ... ]

Stripped down to its logical essence, the machine would hardly seem to be a threatening thing. It merely performs routine actions in our service; it does our long division for us, so to speak. It is when the machine becomes more clever that we begin to fear it. It may become cleverer than ourselves, and something we cannot control. There is also the fact that clever people can sometimes become quite thoughtless in pursuing their goals; thus the more complex and subtle the technology the more likely sometimes it is to carry with it damaging side effects that were never expected.

But whatever its source, there is no doubt that the suspicion of technology has become so widespread that the dominant myth of our time may very well become that of Frankenstein's monster. And, as should be the case with myths, this one has begun to have a strong grip not only on the intelligentsia but on the popular mind as well. The horror movies, for example, are mostly a re-creation of this myth in one form or another,

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and their audience has grown steadily. Most of science fiction, as a prophecy of the future, is one prolonged horror story. For the student of our culture, this situation has a very curious and striking ambiguity about it. While our writers, and some of the best of them, were seeking to re-create myths in literature for the sake of an age that seemed to have lost the capacity for myth, all this time technology was bringing in one very big myth through the back door. And there is the further irony about this: While technology is something essentially pointed toward the future, it has nevertheless been able to stir in the unconscious of the modern audience the primeval fears and horrors of monsters and ogres with which the old legends and fairy tales abound.

from William Barret, *The Illusion of Technique* (1978)

### Questions:

- 1) According to the passage, what danger(s) from technology does modern society face?
- 2) According to the passage, how is *technique* connected to *technology*, and what is the distinction between them?
- 3) What do you think is the “one very big myth” that *technology* has inserted into modern culture? Use details from the passage to support your answer.

or

### Passage 2: Is Grammar Innate or Learned?

Conventional wisdom has maintained, over and above [our] **physiological pre-preparedness for language**, that we are born with a set of grammatical rules (universal knowledge structures), stored somewhere in our minds, that allow us to acquire grammar almost effortlessly. The idea is that the grammar that underlies all of the 7,000 or so of the world's languages is essentially the same. In short, our species has evolved a **specialised** grammar module, embedded in our brains, and genetically encoded. And this provides us with the ability to acquire language in the first place: our grammar faculty is in place at birth.

This idea is often referred to as Universal Grammar: all human languages, no matter the variety we happen to end up speaking, are essentially the same. Whether someone learns English, Japanese, Swahili, Tongan or whatever, when you get down to it, they are all alike. Sure, each of these languages has different vocabularies. And each language makes use of a different, although partially overlapping, set of sounds. But underneath it all, the essential ingredient of language—our grammar—is pre-programmed in our the human genome: we are all born to produce language because of our common genetic heritage, our Universal Grammar. Just as all of us grown distinctively human organs—brains, livers, hearts and kidneys—so too we

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develop language: a consequence of our grammar organ, which grows in the human brain, and which no other species possesses. And it is this innately specified knowledge of grammar that underpins our ability to develop and acquire language—any language—in the first place. [ ... ]

[However,] the majority of the evidence, viewed with objective eyes, now appears to show that language is not innate in the way just outlined.

In a nutshell, I aim to convince you of the following: language *doesn't* arise from innately programmed knowledge of human grammar, a so-called 'Universal Grammar'. I will argue that language reflects and builds upon **general** properties and abilities of the human mind—specifically our species-specific cultural intelligence; it reflects human **pro-social inclinations for inter-subjective communication**. I will seek to persuade you that when we acquire language in infancy, we do so by acquiring the language of our parents and caregivers, painstakingly, and by making many mistakes in the process. Language is not something that emerges automatically, and effortlessly. It arises primarily from the language input we are exposed to, from which we construct our mother tongue. Moreover, human infants, I will show, are not empty vessels that come empty-handed to the language-learning process. We come ready-equipped with a battery of various **general** learning mechanisms that make us adept at acquiring our mother tongue(s). [ ... ]

While I, and a great many other professional linguists, now think that the old view is wrong, nevertheless, the old view—Universal Grammar: the eponymous 'language myth'—still lingers; despite being completely wrong, it is alive and kicking. I have written this book to demonstrate exactly why the old view is a myth; and to show what the reality is.

from Vyvyan Evans, *The Language Myth: Why Language Is Not an Instinct* (2014)

Questions:

- 1) What does the author mean by “physiological pre-preparedness for language”? Explain this phrase, using your own examples to illustrate its meaning.
- 2) What does the author mean by “pro-social inclinations for inter-subjective communication”? Explain this phrase, using your own examples to illustrate its meaning.
- 3) What is the significance of the words “specialised” and “general” in the passage? Explain the role of these words in the two sides of the argument expressed in the passage. Use examples of your own to clarify the meaning of each word.

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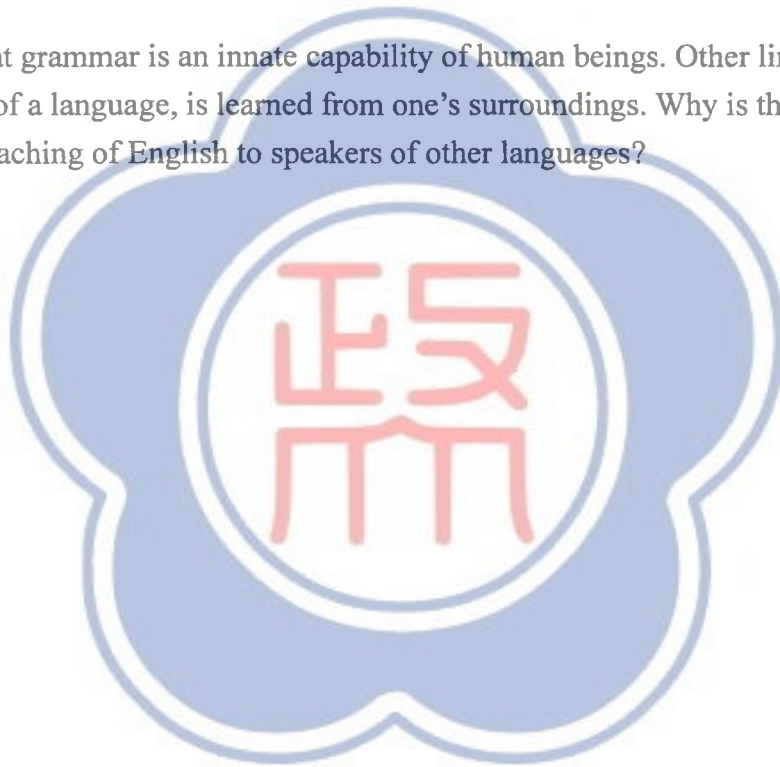
**Part II (40%)**

Choose one of the following questions and answer it in a coherent essay of no less than 700 words.

1) Choose a generally acknowledged classic of English-language literature. Why should the work you have chosen no longer be included in the curriculum of a university English department?

or

2) Some linguists argue that grammar is an innate capability of human beings. Other linguists argue that grammar, like all the other elements of a language, is learned from one's surroundings. Why is the correct answer to this argument relevant to the teaching of English to speakers of other languages?



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一、作答於試題上者，不予計分。  
二、試題請隨卷繳交。