

PO 2018 Kernfach/Majors

Sprachpraxis WS: Writing Skills
Language Skills WS: Writing Skills
Exam/Abschlussprüfung

The module Writing Skills is evaluated in the form of a portfolio which consists of:

Essay STRUCTURE	Essay LANGUAGE	TOTAL
Essay 1: In-class essay (Week 6) = 7.5%	Essay 1: In-class essay (Week 6) = 7.5%	15%
Essay 2: ZIM essay (Week 10/11) = 12.5%	Essay 2: ZIM essay (Week 10/11) = 12.5%	25%
Rewrites = 5%	Rewrites = 5%	10%
Essay 3: AP Essay (after semester end) = 50%		50%
Final Grade = Essay STRUCTURE + Essay LANGUAGE		100%

The **Essay Writing AP** at the ZIM usually takes place within the **first 2 weeks after the end of term** (check LSF for exact date). The topics of the essay questions are published on the website of the Studierendenbüro Anglistik one week prior to the exam.

Students register on the **Studierendenportal** as with any exam. This can be done up to 1 week before the exam but we recommend as soon as the registration process becomes available (usually 4-5 weeks in advance). On the next pages you will find the evaluation criteria, a grading sheet and 2 sample essays that were marked at a very high grade

Students **MUST** write their essays in their **own words** and cite their sources where appropriate. Essays will be checked for plagiarism. If the examiners suspect that the wording has been directly taken from another source the student will receive a fail and may be further penalized.

Essay Writing: Marking Criteria

Structure 6

- overall organisation into paragraphs
- paragraph organisation and unity
- cohesion & use of transition expressions
- 500 words +/- 10%

Content 6

- question is answered directly and completely with a clear thesis statement
- adequate and relevant supporting detail is given
- development is logical

Grammatical and Lexical Accuracy and Range 7

- variety and accuracy of sentence structures
- variety and accuracy of grammatical structures
- appropriate, idiomatic and varied vocabulary

Style 6

- register is appropriate to audience and purpose
- style is clear, concise and consistent

Grade	1.0	1.3	1.7	2.0	2.3	2.7	3.0	3.3	3.7	4.0	14 and below =Fail
Points	25, 24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	

Below are some example essays. They are not in themselves flawless, but do demonstrate a high level of competence in some of the key structural features listed in the marking criteria above.

The European commission has launched a competition inquiry into Amazon's dominant market position in online retailing and is considering introducing more restrictive regulation. What problems might Amazon's dominant market position cause?

Amazon is the most powerful and largest online retailer in the world, and its economic success is unparalleled. However, many customers are unaware of the danger that Amazon's dominant market position poses. The European commission should introduce more restrictive regulations because Amazon's position causes economic, ecological and social problems.

First, Amazon's position of power leads to various economic issues. For example, it causes damage to conventional, non-online trading sectors, such as the bookselling industry. This may systematically destroy local retail and therefore result in a loss of jobs. Furthermore, its market power enables the company to embark on dubious strategies, like putting pressure on suppliers and publishers and causing a sale hold-up. This includes threats to deliver books later or not at all if suppliers do not accept higher charges. Additionally, Amazon can force publishers to not sell their products cheaper anywhere else than on Amazon, which is an illegal restraint of competition. Amazon is also said to avoid paying certain taxes, exploiting its position of power in yet another questionable way. These examples clearly show that a monopoly position can be dangerous for the economic system.

Second, Amazon's dominant market position results in ecological problems. On the one hand, there is a general concern with online retail: the numerous returns of goods, especially with fashion, as well as ordering goods separately instead of combining them in one delivery cause a lot of vehicular emissions. On the other hand, there are problems for which only Amazon is clearly responsible. For example, the company does not take back electronic waste, its data centres are not environment-friendly, and it refuses to disclose its amount of greenhouse gas emissions and its climate strategy. The company even received an "F" by Greenpeace for its lack of environmental protection measures, and it still refuses to publish a CSR report. This lack of transparency shows that its position of power enables the company to afford ignoring its ecological responsibility.

Third, its position also enables Amazon to not care about its social responsibility. For example, the company has often been accused of relying on subcontracted work, temporary employment and low-wage workers. This is problematic because the wages and conditions do not equal the ones in conventional retail. On top of that, Amazon is said to have its employees treated inhumanely and to have them work under bad labour conditions. For example, employees are sometimes not allowed to take sick days or have to work in sweltering heat. It is not for nothing that Amazon is currently trying to establish new logistics centres in Eastern Europe, where labour and employment laws are not as strict as in Germany or other countries. This is enough evidence that the company does not hesitate to misuse its power and ignore its corporate social responsibility in many ways.

Amazon's dominant market position, then, has to be seen critically. We have seen that its position of power results in economic, ecological and social problems. It is therefore not only inevitable for the European commission to introduce more restrictive regulations, also, we as customers have the power to force Amazon to change something before it is too late.

524 words

3. Despite the tremendous popularity of the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle in May, is a constitutional monarchy a form of government that fits the modern era?

In what is sometimes termed the era of democracy, constitutional monarchy remains bizarrely popular with a considerable number of people. When Prince Harry married the Canadian actress Meghan Markle in May, millions followed the ceremony on TV - and not only in Britain, but around the globe. Constitutional monarchy is a form of government in which the monarch reigns within the limits set by a constitution.

"Reign", in this sense, usually means that the king or queen serves as head of state, without having much influence on policy. In the modern era, however, constitutional monarchy has become obsolete should be abolished, for it is costly, illegitimate and serves as a symbol of entitlement and undeserved privilege.

Firstly, the monetary support provided to constitutional monarchs often vastly exceeds any sum needed to fund the office of president in parliamentary republics. In 2017, The Guardian reported that Queen Elizabeth's sovereign grant, which is paid for by the British taxpayer, will amount to 82 million pounds in 2019. According to the Bundesfinanzhof, Germany, a similar country in many respects, annually sets aside no more than 32 million euros for the Bundespräsident. This substantial difference seems to suggest that monarchy is wasteful and inefficient, possibly due to, among other factors, the payments and security afforded to minor royals who have very little representational duties. Thus, monarchy should be abolished since other systems are just as successful and cost less.

Secondly, monarchy is illegitimate by design. As early as 1776, the American revolutionary Thomas Paine wrote in his famous pamphlet "Common Sense" that hereditary succession was unjust because of the manner in which it comes to be. Even the most honorable way imaginable to institute a monarchy, that is, by election, lacks legitimacy, for the people who elect a monarch take away from subsequent generations the right to choose their own leaders. True, a modern monarch does not hold much real power, but the argument is still valid as hereditary succession always puts a country at risk of having a head of state that is unfit for office. Therefore, not abolishing a monarchy is just as illegitimate and imprudent as is establishing one.

Thirdly, the constitutional monarch serves as a symbol of entitlement and class privilege. A recent article in The Economist argued that while British citizens are more socially mobile today than their American counterparts, the US remains in the eyes of many the land of equal opportunity, while the UK is seen as a bastion of class division, steadfastly clinging to the last remnants of its feudal past. Clearly, this perception, albeit false, is promoted by the existence of a head of state who did not attain her position based on merit or work, but by birthright. In order to cultivate an image that befits a modern society, a country should be allowed to elect its head of state.

In conclusion, constitutional monarchy is not a form of government that fits the modern era, because it is usually expensive, always illegitimate and it enforces the image of a society divided along class lines. Enlightened parliaments should vote to abolish monarchy and choose a head of state on merit rather than birth, so that he or she may serve as a role model for all citizens, whether rich or poor, nobleman or commoner.

The Australian government is looking into legislation to ban its citizens from volunteering in orphanages in vulnerable countries. Should other Western governments take similar measures to reduce the trend of modern 'voluntourism'?

'Vacations with a heart' is how one fairly typical voluntourism agent heads its website. Slogans like this make it easy to understand how well-meaning school-leavers are attracted to voluntourism. However, they also unfortunately mask the more dubious realities of the projects. In response, Australia is seeking to legislate against the trend, and in view of the fact that voluntourism damages developing local economies, places people in roles they are unfit to fulfil and fosters unhealthy colonial mind-sets in younger generations, it is quite clear that other Western governments should follow suit.

To begin with, voluntourism actually does more economic harm to vulnerable developing communities than good. Communities struggling to establish themselves require employment opportunities and sustainable income, and precisely these are often taken away by the arrival of Westerners who work for free, or even pay for the opportunity. To put it into perspective, a two week medical trip to Tanzania can cost around \$3000, plus an air fare of \$2000: if six volunteers make the trip, the combined expense would be enough to pay a local doctor's salary for one full year. And that is a local doctor who would live, spend their money and pay tax in the local community itself. Put simply, the jobs in question are usually more sustainably and profitably filled by locals on the ground.

In addition to this, the voluntourists who arrive are usually unskilled for the roles they fulfil and can do great damage as a result. While the image of a group of 18-year-old English students trying to build a well in a 40 degree Ugandan village might be poignantly amusing, there is a more worrying side: Often these volunteers are working in extremely sensitive areas like orphanages where the already traumatised children require skilled and long-term care. The potential damage an untrained Westerner on a two-week vacation could do there is much more concerning than a malfunctioning water pump, and this is precisely why responsible charities like Save the Children are urging governments to curb the trend.

More fundamentally, the ethos behind voluntourism is reminiscent of out-dated and harmful colonial attitudes. The notion that spending a number of months working in a poor community creates any lasting change is as misguided as the dogma of Christian missionaries last century. Developing countries need opportunities and chances, rather than unskilled volunteers and charity. The 'white saviour' complex, as the motive behind a lot of modern day voluntourism has become known, hides that reality. Instead of easing their consciences during a summer break, young Westerners need to change their perspective: developing countries are not opportunities for helping and earning praise in job resumes, but autonomous communities trying to establish themselves. It is, after all, the very same patronising attitude that allowed Western governments to economically exploit such regions historically and often bring them to the state of desperation they now find themselves in.

All things considered, the Australian government has more than enough justification to try and ban voluntourism. The help offered local communities is often contrary to their long-term economic goals and sustainability, the voluntourists themselves are often dangerously unsuited for the work, and the tacit promotion of colonial attitudes threatens the long term progress of those countries. It is high time other Western governments took the advice of experts and prohibited the habit.

552 words