

Participant information online questionnaire (University College London)

Who are we?

We are a German team of researchers based at Bielefeld University, collaborating with Guyanne Wilson at UCL, with the University of Namibia, and other universities in the UK for this project. Our project is called A Pragmatic Profile of Namibian English and is funded by the DFG, the German Research Foundation.

What is the study about?

This project aims to find out how speakers of English use the English language to communicate in everyday situations, comparing differences in use between different varieties of English spoken in different countries.

Why have I been invited?

All participants for this study are university students speaking English as one of their first languages and who spent at least part of their childhood in the UK. There are no other criteria by which you have been selected.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?

You will first be prompted to answer a few questions about yourself, concerning e.g. your study programme and your cultural and linguistic background. In the main part of the study, you will then read situation descriptions and be asked to imagine you are one of the participants in a conversation described there. Your written answer is the next utterance that person would make in this scenario.

What are the possible benefits from taking part?

Taking part in this study will help you to gain an increased understanding of what one way of conducting a linguistic survey might be. The insights you provide will contribute to our understanding of how different varieties of English are used in everyday communication.

If you complete the questionnaire and contact us with a corresponding code via email, you will receive £5 as a PayPal payment for your participation.

Do I have to take part?

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you should not at all feel pressured to participate.

What if I change my mind?

You are free to withdraw from the study at any point. If you have participated and then decide you do not want us to further process your data, you can contact the researchers via the email provided at the end of the questionnaire and on the information sheet.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no foreseeable risks for participants in this study and there are no offensive, brutal, intense, or otherwise psychologically stressful contents included in the questionnaire. Furthermore, your knowledge of the English language is not tested or graded in any way. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions in this study.

Will my data be identifiable?

All data provided via the online questionnaire will be anonymous, that means it will not be connected to your name or person. The personal information in the demographical part of the questionnaire is only necessary for participant group statistics and will not be used to identify individual participants. You will only provide your real name in the email you send after completing the survey, which is necessary for us to be able to pay you for your contribution to the study. It also help us to identify the specific data set you have provided in case you later choose to contact us and ask us to delete it, but this would only be made use of in this specific scenario.

How will my data be stored?

Your data will be safely stored in password-protected, digital format on the university servers of Bielefeld University after downloading it from SurveyMonkey. Data used for further processing and analysis will be fully anonymous. Individual questionnaire data will be deleted after the end of the project's run-time (possible end date: Fall 2025).

How will we use the information you have shared with us and what will happen to the results of the research study?

We will use the data you have shared with us for academic purposes only. Results of our research may be submitted for publication in an academic/educational journal. We may also present the results of our study at academic conferences.

Who has reviewed the project?

The part of this project that concerns you – the data collection in the UK – has been reviewed and positively assessed by the UCL ethics committee.

What if I have a question or concern?

If you have any queries or if you are unhappy with anything that happens concerning your participation in the study, please contact our research partner at UCL:

Dr. Guyanne Wilson

English Department, University College London

E-mail: guyanne.wilson@ucl.ac.uk