

Participant information

Dear participant,

You are invited to take part in a research project on the use of English in Trinidad-Tobago, Namibia and other countries where English is spoken. Please take some time to read the information presented here which outlines the details of this project. Your participation is entirely voluntary and if you agree to take part, you are free to withdraw from the study at any point.

This project aims to find out how speakers of English use the English language to communicate in everyday situations. Speakers of English in different countries use their language differently to communicate in specific situations, and your participation in this study will help us find out more precisely how speakers of English based in Trinidad-Tobago do this. We are not at all interested in correct or incorrect use of English. Participants' use of English is not corrected or graded, so feel free to use English exactly the way you would speaking to others in everyday contexts.

If you decide to take part, this would involve the following: Filling out the questionnaire, you will first answer a few questions about yourself, concerning e.g. your study programme and your cultural and linguistic background. In the main part of the questionnaire, 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. The questionnaire should take 20-25 minutes to complete.

All data gathered will be stored safely, anonymously, and will only be used for scientific purposes. Withdrawal of consent is possible at any time by contacting the researchers involved (contact info provided at the end of the study). 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.

We would be grateful if you would agree to take part in this study. You can optionally participate in a prize raffle as part of filling out the questionnaire.

Kind regards,

Dr Guyanne Wilson (project partner UCL)

Professor Anne Schröder

Dr Pawel Sickinger

Participant information

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 Trinidad-Tobago. 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 your personal 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 voluntarily provide your e-mail address, you will be entered into a raffle to win one of four TT \$50 gift card for Rituals Coffee House.

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 need to provide an e-mail address if you choose to enter the raffle; this is necessary for us to contact the winner and award the prize.

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 Survey Monkey. Data used for further processing and analysis will be fully anonymous. Individual questionnaire information will be deleted after the end of the project's run-time.

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 overall project has originally been assessed by the German Research Foundation and, for the purposes of gathering data from speakers of English in various countries, it has been reviewed by ethics committees at the University of Bielefeld, the University of Namibia, Lancaster University, University College London, Liverpool University and North Western University in South Africa. All reviews have granted the project ethical clearance.

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, you can contact our research partner:

Dr. Guyanne Wilson
English Department, University College London
E-mail: guyanne.wilson@ucl.ac.uk