



FAQs of Linguistics Olympiad Training Course

(语言学奥林匹克课程常见问题和回答)¹

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College admission's view on Linguistics Olympiad

大学招生的角度看语言学奥林匹克

Question: From college admissions' perspective, Is Linguistics Olympiad as well recognized as other STEM Olympiads, such as AMC in math, F=ma in physics, USACO in CS?

问题: 从大学招生的角度看, 语言学奥林匹克竞赛跟其他理工科奥林匹克竞赛相比, 例如数学里的 AMC, 物理里的 F=ma, 计算机里的 USACO, 能够得到同样的认可吗?

Answer: Yes.

First, MIT has a list of Olympiad competitions that it recognizes. Linguistic Olympiad is on the list, along with other renowned STEM Olympiads, such as math, physics, chemistry. MIT's endorsement of this contest is strong evidence of its value.

Second, students who did well in the Linguistic Olympiad (such as NACLO or IOL) in the past have been admitted to the top tier colleges, such as MIT, Yale, Harvard.

Third, Linguistic Olympiad is NOT a memory-based test. It does not test a student's knowledge of how many languages s/he masters. By contrast, it tests a student's logical thinking and analytical skills of solving a new problem from scratch without having any prior knowledge of its content. This is the ability that colleges look for from prospective students.

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回答: 是的。

首先, MIT 有一份公认的奥林匹克竞赛列表, 语言学奥林匹克竞赛在该列表上, 与其他著名的 STEM 奥林匹克竞赛, 如数学、物理、化学一起。MIT 对这项比赛的认可是其价值的有力证明。

其次, 过去在语言学奥林匹克竞赛 (如 NACLO 或 IOL) 中表现优异的学生已被录取到顶尖大学, 如 MIT、耶鲁、哈佛。

第三, 语言学奥林匹克竞赛不是一个基于记忆的测试。它不测试学生掌握多少种语言的知识。相反, 它测试学生的逻辑思维和分析解决从头开始一个新问题的能力, 而没有任何先前知识的内容。这正是大学需要学生具备的能力。

Question: If I take Linguistic Olympiad, does it mean that I should declare the linguistics major in my college applications? If I am interested in non-linguistic majors, such as STEM, humanities, social sciences, or business, then the Linguistic Olympiad seems not to be directly linked to what I plan to study and thus it is not useful for me. Is my understanding correct?

问题: 如果我参加语言学奥林匹克竞赛, 是否意味着我在大学申请中应该申报语言学专业? 如果我对非语言学专业, 如 STEM、人文学科、社会科学或商业等感兴趣, 那么语言学奥林匹克竞赛似乎与我的计划研究没有直接联系, 因此对我来说并不有用。我的理解正确吗?

Answer: This is a very typical linearly styled but wrong understanding. Many people believe that if a student plans to study major XYZ in a college, then s/he may only take the Olympiad competition on the same subject XYZ. All non-XYZ Olympiads are useless.

However, this is completely wrong. This understanding fails to capture the essence of the Linguistic Olympiad and its interdisciplinary nature. Below are some examples of how Linguistic Olympiad is useful for other non-linguistic subjects.

Example 1: Interface of linguistics and computer science

First, people use techniques such as machine learning and neural networks, to develop algorithms that analyze and process human language. These algorithms can be applied to a range of tasks, including text classification, sentiment analysis, entity recognition, and machine translation.

Second, people develop natural language interfaces and chatbots, which can be used to interact with users in a more natural and intuitive way than traditional graphical user interfaces. These interfaces rely on natural language processing techniques to understand user input, generate responses, and carry out tasks on behalf of the user.

Example 2: Interface of linguistics and sociology

First, people study language variation and change in different social contexts. People may analyze large datasets of language use, looking for patterns and trends that can shed light on how language varies across different social groups and contexts and how these differences evolve over time.



Second, people extract language information from large volumes of social media data, such as tweets, comments, or posts. This information can be used to identify and analyze social networks and communities, as well as to study patterns of communication and discourse within these networks.

Example 3: Interface of linguistics and business administration

First, companies use sentiment analysis to identify patterns of positive or negative sentiment towards a product or service, and to gain insights into customer preferences and behavior.

Second, companies extract information and insights from unstructured text data to analyze customer feedback, identify key themes and topics, and gain insights into customer needs and preferences.

Example 4: Interface of linguistics and legal studies

First, people use computational linguistics to extract information, such as the names of parties involved, dates, and specific clauses, from large volumes of legal documents.

Second, computational linguistics can be used to develop language models that can help with legal tasks such as legal document summarization, legal document retrieval, and legal question-answering. These language models can be used to automate many legal tasks, such as legal research or document review, helping to streamline legal processes and reduce costs.

回答: 这是一个典型的线性思维但错误的理解。许多人认为, 如果一个学生打算在大学学习主修 XYZ, 那么他/她只能参加相同主题 XYZ 的奥林匹克竞赛。所有非 XYZ 奥林匹克竞赛都是无用的。然而, 这是完全错误的。这种理解未能捕捉到语言奥林匹克竞赛及其跨学科性质的本质。以下是一些语言奥林匹克竞赛对其他非语言学科有用的示例。

例子 1: 语言学与计算机科学的交叉领域

首先, 人们使用诸如机器学习和神经网络的技术来开发分析和处理人类语言的算法。这些算法可以应用于一系列任务, 包括文本分类、情感分析、实体识别和机器翻译。

其次, 人们开发了自然语言界面和聊天机器人, 这些界面可以以比传统图形用户界面更自然和直观的方式与用户交互。这些界面依赖于自然语言处理技术来理解用户输入、生成响应并代表用户执行任务。

例子 2: 语言学和社会学的交叉领域

首先, 人们研究语言在不同社会语境中的变化和变迁。人们可能会分析大规模的语言使用数据, 寻找能够阐明语言在不同社会群体和语境中的变异以及这些差异随时间如何演变的模式和趋势。其次, 人们从大量的社交媒体数据中提取语言信息, 例如推文、评论或帖子。这些信息可用于识别和分析社交网络和社群, 并研究这些网络内的交流和话语模式。

例子 3: 语言学 and 商科的交叉领域

首先, 公司使用情感分析来识别对产品或服务的积极或消极情感模式, 并获取客户偏好和行为的洞察。其次, 公司从非结构化文本数据中提取信息和见解, 分析客户反馈, 识别关键主题和话题, 并深入了解客户需求和偏好。



例子 4: 语言学和法律研究的交叉领域

首先, 人们使用计算语言学从大量的法律文件中提取信息, 例如涉及方的名称、日期和特定条款。

其次, 计算语言学可以用来开发语言模型, 帮助处理法律任务, 例如法律文件摘要、法律文件检索和法律问答。这些语言模型可以用于自动化许多法律任务, 例如法律研究或文件审核, 有助于简化法律流程并降低成本。

Prerequisites of taking your Linguistics Olympiad training course

参加你们语言学竞赛培训课程的先修要求

Question: Is it true that Linguistic Olympiad tests a student's knowledge of languages, such as the number of languages a student masters?

问题: 语言学奥林匹克竞赛测试学生语言知识, 例如学生掌握的语言数量, 这是真的吗?

Answer: NO!!! The Linguistics Olympiad is not with the purpose of testing a student's knowledge of languages in terms of how many languages they master. Instead, it tests a student's analytical and problem-solving skills in language-related challenges. These challenges may involve deciphering unknown scripts or languages, identifying grammatical structures, and analyzing linguistic patterns. Strong logical reasoning is sufficient for students to do well in Linguistics Olympiad.

回答: 语言学奥林匹克竞赛并不是为了测试学生掌握多少种语言。相反, 它测试学生在与语言相关的挑战中的分析和解决问题的能力。这些挑战可能涉及解密未知的文字或语言, 识别语法结构以及分析语言模式。很好的逻辑推理足够支撑学生在语言学奥林匹克竞赛中取得好成绩。

Question: What is the minimum requirement of the age/grade for a student to take your Linguistic Olympiad training course?

问题: 学生上你们的语言学奥林匹克培训课程, 最小年龄/年级的要求是什么?

Answer: This course has no minimum age/grade requirement. The fundamental reason is that the Linguistics Olympiad problems can be solved by using logical reasonings only. So, students of any age or at any grade can solve these problems if they have good logical reasonings. This is quite different from other STEM Olympiads. For example, to take AMC 12 in math, students must know precalculus first. To take $F=ma$ in physics, students must have solid backgrounds in AP Physics 1.

回答: 这门课程没有最低年龄/年级要求。这是因为语言学奥林匹克竞赛的问题只需要运用逻辑推理就能解决。因此, 只要学生具备良好的逻辑推理能力, 任何年龄或任何年级的学生都可以解决这些问题。这与其他 STEM 奥林匹克竞赛非常不同。例如, 要参加数学的 AMC 12, 学生必须先学习预备微积分。要参加物理的 $F=ma$, 学生必须具备扎实的 AP Physics 1 基础。



Non-NACLO Linguistics Olympiads

NACLO 以外的语言学奥林匹克竞赛

Question: Is your training course helpful for me to take non-NACLO Linguistics Olympiad, such as UK Linguistics Olympiad (UKLO), National Linguistics Olympiad in China (NOL)?

问题: 你的培训课程对我参加非 NACLO 语言学奥林匹克竞赛，如英国语言学奥林匹克竞赛 (UKLO) 和中国国家语言学奥林匹克竞赛 (NOL)，有帮助吗？

Answer: Yes. Here is the reason. All these national level Linguistics Olympiads have a common objective of using their exams to select students to represent their respective countries to take the International Linguistics Olympiad (IOL). Therefore, their test problems are consistent with the IOL problems. If a student is well prepared for one national level Linguistic Olympiad, say, NACLO in Canada and the U.S., then s/he is also prepared for Linguistic Olympiads in other countries, such as U.K. and China.

回答: 是的。原因是所有这些国家级语言学奥林匹克竞赛的共同目标是通过考试选拔学生代表他们所在的国家参加国际语言学奥林匹克竞赛 (IOL)。因此，他们的测试问题与 IOL 问题一致。如果一个学生准备充分参加了一个国家级的语言学奥林匹克竞赛，比如在加拿大和美国的 UACLO，那么他也准备好参加其他国家的语言学奥林匹克竞赛，比如英国和中国的比赛。

Question: Your course is taught in English. But I want to take National Linguistics Olympiad in China (NOL). Problems in NOL are written in Chinese. Is your course a good fit for me to prepare for NOL in China?

问题: 你的课程是用英文授课的。但我想参加中国的全国语言学奥林匹克竞赛 (NOL)，因为竞赛题目是用中文编写的。你的课程适合我为参加中国 NOL 做准备吗？

Answer: You do not need to be concerned with this language difference. Please note that the Linguistic Olympiads in most countries do not test the number of languages a student masters. These contests primarily test student logical reasonings. All problems can be solved by using logical reasonings only, rather than a student's familiarity with a particular language. Because the logical reasonings to solve linguistic problems are independent from the languages used in writing exam problems, the problem-solving skills a student learns in our course can be applied to solve Linguistic Olympiad problems written in any language, such as Chinese.

回答: 你不需要担心这种语言差异。请注意，大多数国家的语言学奥林匹克竞赛并不测试学生掌握的语言数量。这些竞赛主要测试学生的逻辑推理能力。所有问题都可以通过使用逻辑推理来解决，而不是学生对特定语言的熟悉程度。因为解决语言问题的逻辑推理与编写考试问题所使用的语言无关，所以学生在我们课程中学习的解决问题的技能可以用于解决任何语言编写的语言学奥林匹克竞赛问题，比如华语。