

Culture

Global English

1 Reading

Work in pairs to answer these questions.

- 1 Is global English a good thing?
- 2 Make a list of the advantages and disadvantages of global English.

Read the short texts. Are any of your points mentioned?

Jake (USA)

Global English is definitely a good thing. Communication is much easier when everyone speaks the same language. I don't understand what the fuss is about. Nowadays you find almost everything on computers is in English, it's used in business, travel and in medicine.

Cairan (Eire)

I'm 18 and I live in a small village in the west of Ireland. I speak Irish Gaelic, but many people of my age only speak English. It's a pity because it's part of our heritage and if we lose our language then we'll lose part of our culture. I think there are only about 250,000 people who speak Irish Gaelic!

Franz (Germany)

Languages have been disappearing for thousands of years, it's just a natural thing. For example, people in ancient Egypt used hieroglyphs but nobody uses these now. I've heard there are almost 7,000 languages in the world and that about half of these will disappear in the next 20 years! Well, you can't stop progress, can you?

Moira (England)

My grandparents came here from Russia in 1945 and when they arrived they spoke no English. To get jobs they had to learn and I think this is part of integrating into a new country. I think it's silly when people insist on keeping their own language when they move to a new country.

Raul (USA)

Although I live in the USA and I use English at school my mother tongue is Spanish. My parents were immigrants from Mexico and so at home we speak Spanish. For me language is part of my cultural identity.

Ravi (India)

One of the consequences of global English is that some languages are disappearing. In my country there are 415 different languages, but many of these are endangered. If you want a good job, you usually have to learn English.

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2 Comprehension

1 What do these numbers refer to?

415	18	250,000	7,000	20
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2 Complete each sentence with the correct name.

Example

Ravi comes from India.

1 _____ doesn't think there's any problem with English as a Global Language.

2 _____ speaks one language with his family and another when he is at school.

3 _____ and _____ think that language is an important part of who they are.

4 _____, _____ and _____ mention learning English because of work.

5 _____ says that about 50% of the languages in the world now will soon disappear.

6 _____ lives in a country where there are lots of languages.

3 Vocabulary

Find the words in the texts with the following meanings.

- 1 the results or effects of something
- 2 something that may not exist much longer because there are not many left in the world
- 3 worry for nothing
- 4 people who come to live in a country from another country
- 5 what makes you who you are
- 6 an unhappy feeling because something has happened that you don't like
- 7 the things that people think are important parts of history or culture
- 8 becoming a full member of a society
- 9 to say that something must happen or be done

4 Speaking

Work in groups of three or four students and discuss the opinions in the texts. Who do you agree with?

5 Writing

Write a paragraph about the advantages OR the disadvantages of English as a global language. Try to include at least three points in your paragraph.