

# Global English compendium



**Global English**

# Global English

1. Quiz: Do You Know Your English-Speaking World? (Berntzen, Jorunn et al. Targets. Gyldendal 2001, pp. 10-11)
2. Global English (Finderup, Anne Mette & Agnete Fog. Worlds of English. Systime 2010, pp. 22-23)
3. Lost in translation - when English goes wrong! (Current: January/February 2015. Pp. 20-21)
4. Sorry of my english - Extract from "A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers" by Xiaolu Guo, 2008 (Beyer Ramberg Lis, TimeJess Themes - War, Imperialism, Identity, New Technology, Globalisation, Lindhardt & Ringhof Uddannelse, 2013}
5. 'Americanisms' Could they kill off British English? (March/April 2012, Current)
6. 'Britishisms' Invade America ! (March/April 2013, Current)
7. How English evolved into a global language (BBC: 20 December 2010)
8. The international companies using only English (BBC: 20 March 2017)
9. Britain is leaving the EU, but its language will stay (The Economist: 13 May 2017)





# Global English

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**Think about the English language and write for 5 minutes what comes to mind:**

# English and Me

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## **Class Discussion:**

- How much is English a part of your world?
- How often do you speak, read or hear English? In what contexts is English used?
- Do you use English in the same way or as much as your parents? Or more?

## **Individual task:**

1. List 5 reasons why you think it is important for you to be good at English.
2. On a scale from 0 to 5, how good is your English, do you think?
3. In what areas do you hope to improve your English over the next three years? (reading, communication, writing, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, cultural knowledge, literature...)

# Quiz: Do you know your English-speaking world?



- 1) The United Kingdom consists of two large islands and several small ones. Name the two large islands. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Canada is bordered by three oceans.
  - a. Name these: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Which of them lies off the west coast of Canada? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Ireland is today divided into two parts.
  - a. What are they called? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Name the capital city of each. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* author Mark Twain tells about a river. Tom fishes in it, sees steamboats travel up and down it, and experiences its flooding.
  - a. What is the name of the river? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Which city can be found at its mouth? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) What is the longest river in England? \_\_\_\_\_  
What is the second largest city in England? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) In which country can you find a dry region known as the outback? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) If you fly from New York to Rio de Janeiro, in which direction are you flying? \_\_\_\_\_

8) Which of these cities is the capital of Australia: Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra or Sydney?

\_\_\_\_\_

Where in Australia is the capital? \_\_\_\_\_

9) Hadrian's Wall was built by the Romans about AD 126, and we can still see parts of it today. Where is it? \_\_\_\_\_

10) This city is on the east coast of America. It was named after the president who chose the site. It is the capital of the United States. What is the name of the city? \_\_\_\_\_

11) The highest mountain in Wales is often covered in snow during the winter months. What is its name? \_\_\_\_\_

12) Most of the people in New Zealand are of British descent. But who were the original natives of this country? \_\_\_\_\_

13) During the 20th century the greatest number of immigrants to the United States have come from this continent. Which continent is it? \_\_\_\_\_

14) About AD 870 Viking explorers from Norway discovered and settled first on Iceland and then on Greenland. A generation later Leiv Eiriksson pushed even further west and found a new country.

a. What did he call the land? \_\_\_\_\_

b. Which country is it now? \_\_\_\_\_

15) Botany Bay, which is now one of the main ports in Australia, was founded in 1788 as a penal colony for criminals sent from Great Britain. What is the name of the present-day city? \_\_\_\_\_

16) In which country do you find these three major cities: Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch? \_\_\_\_\_

17) In which Scottish city is a famous tattoo held annually? The city is also Scotland's capital.

\_\_\_\_\_

18) Where is British Columbia? \_\_\_\_\_

19) Here are the names of five cities. In which countries do you find them?

a. Galway \_\_\_\_\_

b. Montreal \_\_\_\_\_

c. Cardiff \_\_\_\_\_

d. Brisbane \_\_\_\_\_

e. Houston \_\_\_\_\_

# Global English

That English is a world language cannot be argued. In Denmark its importance is easily seen in the fact that learning English begins in the third year at school, giving Danish pupils and students a minimum of seven years of English. Why this is so can be explained by two major factors. Britain's history of having been the largest colonial empire in the world is one. The USA's status as being one of the most dominant nations in the modern world is the other.

Wherever the British colonists went, they brought along their language and introduced it as the language of government, administration, commerce, education, etc. Even when the British had left, many of the former colonies chose to maintain English as their second – or even first – language. Therefore, there is much truth in the following comment written in a Canadian newspaper when Hong Kong gained full independence from Britain in 1997:

*The British Empire may be in full retreat with the handover of Hong Kong. But from Bengal to Belize and Las Vegas to Lahore, the language of the sceptred isle is rapidly becoming the first global lingua franca. (The Globe and Mail, Toronto, 12 July 1997)*

It is not the whole truth, however. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the USA has played an increasingly important role all over the world, politically as well as culturally, and this has contributed to the world-wide use of (American) English as a common means of communication. Consequently, it would be more correct to say that the British Empire ensured that English became a world language but what has made it *remain* a world language must be ascribed to the USA's role as a superpower.

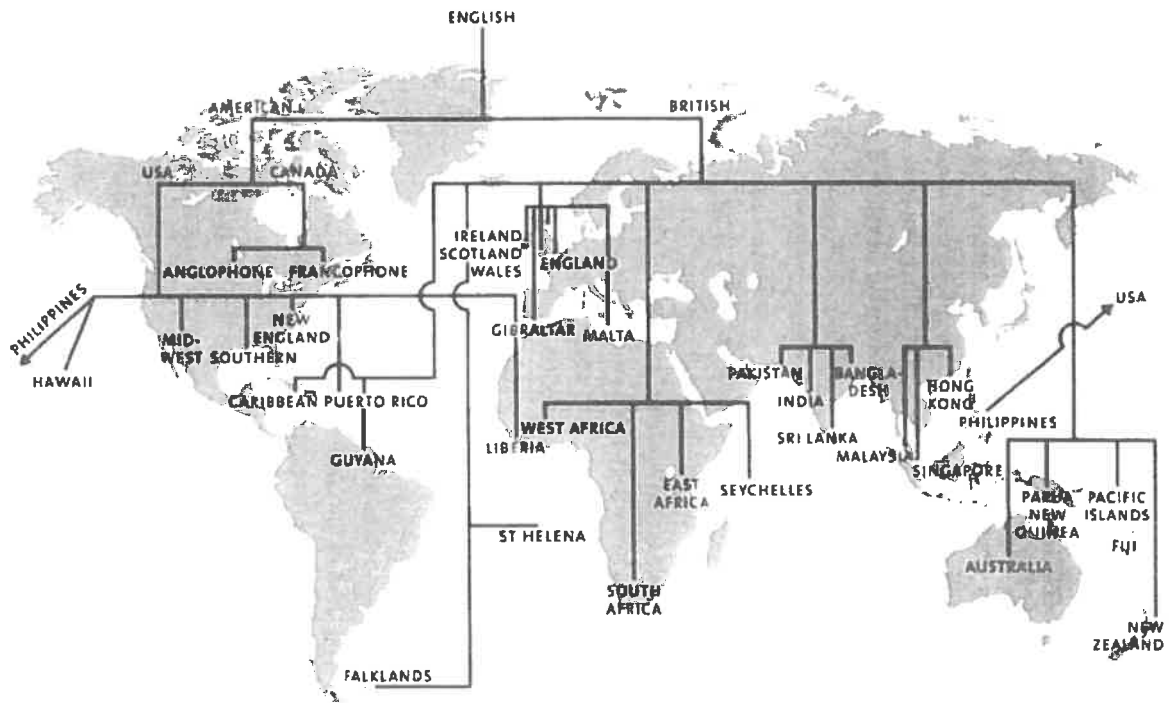
It is estimated that the majority of the world's population now speak English – either as their first, second or foreign language. But is it the *same* English they speak? According to the Nigerian author Chinua Achebe, the price a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to different kinds of use, and linguistics professor David Crystal would agree: when people adopt a language, they adapt it, to make it suit their need (*Crystal 2004*).

[...] This is definitely true of the American variety of English. But as you probably know, there are many other varieties of English, which have their roots in the colonial past, such as Caribbean English, Australian English, (South) African English, Black English and Indian English – to mention some of those whose pronunciation is easily identified. And it does not stop there. The number of people who use English as a second or foreign language are now very much in the majority; in 2004 there were three non-native speakers in the world for every one native speaker. It is obvious that the English they speak cannot be identical with the English that started it all. A language is what its speakers need it to be, so a person from Hong Kong will naturally have a different kind of English than a Canadian, a Nigerian and an Englishman.

Globalization merely contributes to this process. One example can show this: Books, magazines, and newspapers written in English are available in many countries around the world. English is also the most commonly used language in the sciences. In 1997, the Science Citation Index reported that 95% of its articles were written in English, even though only half of them came from authors in English-speaking countries. A similar observation could probably be made if we studied what language dominates the lyrics in popular music, don't you think?

In the future, we may be reading Danish-English novels - written by Danes who choose to write in a Danish-coloured variety of English. [...]

**A family tree representation of the way English has spread around the world**



A family tree representation of the way English has spread around the world, showing the influence of the two main branches of American and British English.  
 © from David Crystal "The Stories of English", Penguin Books 2004, p. 448. Reproduced by agreement with Penguin Books, UK

## BEFORE YOU READ: WHAT DO THESE SIGNS MEAN?

- A Write why you think the sign is funny or confusing.
- B Write what the sign should say in correct English.



A Why is it funny / confusing?

B What is the correct English?



A Why is it funny / confusing?

B What is the correct English?

# Lost in translation: when English goes wrong!

If you were to find yourself in the Far East, you might come across some rather unusual signs. They're written in English for tourists – at airports, in hotels, restaurants and parks among other places – but they often cause sniggers\* (and confusion!). Why? Because the sign language is – well, just plain wrong.

In China the language of erroneous\* English signage is called 'Chinglish'. One place where travellers need to be on their toes\*: "Foreign airports can be scary and confusing places with any number of dangers just waiting to trip you up – especially if the warning signs are all in Chinese English," says the *Daily Mail*.

At one airport, for example, the warning sign for freshly mopped floors reads 'Be careful of landslides'. At another, travellers might want to think

twice about ordering the 'flesh juice' offered in the canteen. "There's also a charity donation box asking travellers to donate cash to help 'especially difficult children'," says the *Mail*. "It is almost full to the brim\*."

Some signs are so confusing it's impossible to even guess what they mean, such as one above the door of a Chinese jet that asks passengers to 'Gets hold of arm rest to fall the wound carefully'. Or a vending machine that urges\* thirsty travellers not to share their soda cans with anyone – unless they are 'not the lovers'. "Found on everything from poorly translated signs and menus to bizarrely worded adverts and strange T-shirt slogans, the misuse of English can be found everywhere," the *Mail* says.

On the Internet, 'Engrish' has become the slang term for comical signs translated from Chinese, Japanese and

Korean. Steve Caires, an American who lives in Tokyo, has launched his own website *English.com* with photos of wrongly-worded signs – they've gone viral as Internet users share them with friends and post their own amusing gaffes\* from their travels.

But in some areas of China the signs could soon be history as the humour they elicit is seen as humiliating for the country. Zhao Huimin, who leads the fight for standardisation, says, "Signage should be useful, not amusing."

So as the *International Business Times (IBT)* reports, "Bad news for fans of China's often hilarious 'Chinglish' signs. They may soon be wiped out. After one city announced plans to track down signs of incorrect English usage, an entire province plans to ban foreign names for buildings, streets and other places."

The crackdown\* on 'Chinglish' signs

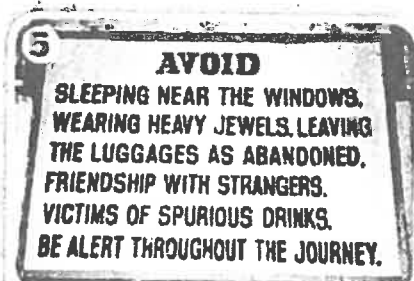
# EVOLUTION ENGLISH



- 3
- A Why is it funny / confusing?
- B What is the correct English?



- 4
- A Why is it funny / confusing?
- B What is the correct English?



- 5
- A Why is it funny / confusing?
- B What is the correct English?



- 6
- A Why is it funny / confusing?
- B What is the correct English?

began in the southern city of Shenzhen in late 2013, when a two-month campaign encouraged the public, with aid from English-literate residents, to snap photos of incorrect and inappropriate English usage and grammar on public signs. Residents were encouraged to use social media to report them to officials.

The city even offered incentives\* to those who helped identify 'Chinglish' signs: "People will be awarded based on how many correct submissions they send," said Huang Zhijun, director of the International Language Environment Department. The rewards included English language books and training.

Why are such signs more prevalent\* in China than in any other part of the world? Language experts point to an over-reliance on machine translation

or the use of outdated English dictionaries, which produce a clumsy word for word translation.

But Li Xiangping, a sociology professor at the East China Normal University, says: "If you standardise all these signs you not only take away the little giggle\* you get while strolling in the park, but you also lose a window into the Chinese mind."

## DISCUSS IT

- Have you ever been abroad and been confused by a sign or translation? If so, what was it?
- What are the dangers of using translation technology? How would you check the translation is correct?

## WORDWISE

**snigger (n):** laugh, often in ridicule at something or someone

**erroneous (adj):** inaccurate or wrong

**to be on [one's] toes (idiom):** to be very aware or alert to something

**full to the brim (phr):** completely full

**to urge (v):** to persuade someone strongly

**gaffe (n):** an unintentional act or remark causing embarrassment

**crackdown (n):** strong action to stop something undesirable

**incentive (n):** something that encourages someone to do something

**prevalent (adj):** common, typical

**giggle (n):** a light, silly laugh

Now go to Language Checkpoint p. 22

## PRACTISE

Do more English activities online  
[www.mg-plus.net/activities](http://www.mg-plus.net/activities)

## COMMENT

Have you ever seen an example of bad English in a sign or menu in your country? Email us! [current@maryglasgowplus.com](mailto:current@maryglasgowplus.com)

# LANGUAGE CHECKPOINT



## CURRENT WORLD When Love is Stronger than war

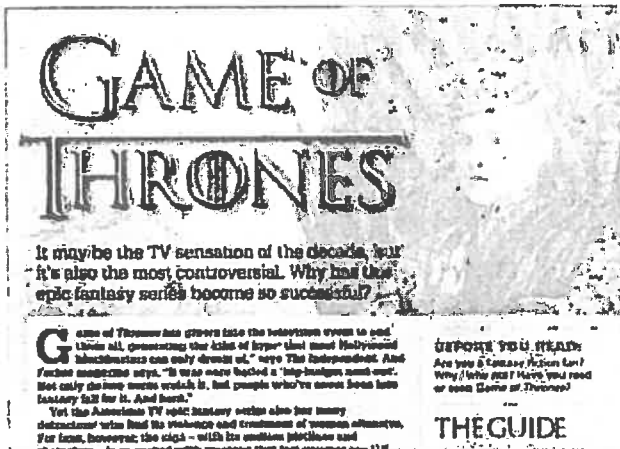
### WRITE IT

Write an imaginary exchange between a couple separated by war.

- It could be a conversation, emails or instant messages.
- You can use the conflict in the article as the background, or another historical or fantasy war. The dialogue should be up to 250 words in length.

## THE BUZZ

### Game of Thrones



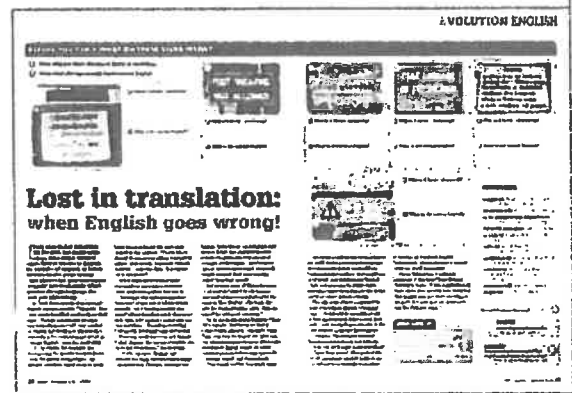
### USE OF ENGLISH SO

One favourite villain in *GoT* is Theon Greyjoy. He is referred to in the article as a 'vain little so-and-so' – (*so-and-so* means an unpleasant person). *So* by itself is used in a number of ways, generally either as an adverb and conjunction. Insert *so* in the correct place in these sentences.

- 1 Sue got a box set of *Game of Thrones* for her birthday. Sam wasn't lucky – he got a pair of socks!
- 2 I don't know if I want to see *GoT* again. That last episode was scary.
- 3 Some people think it is surprising that *GoT* is successful.
- 4 My sister didn't like the first episode, she didn't watch any more.
- 5 It's best to read the book first that you know all the characters.
- 6 Do you think this is the last series of *GoT*? I hope. I don't like it.
- 7 If you haven't seen *GoT*, you should do as soon as possible.
- 8 "Okay, *GoT* is rather violent. It's still a great watch," argued Dave.

## EVOLUTION ENGLISH

### When English Goes Wrong



### IDIOMS WITH TOE

When it comes to signs translated into English, the article says you need to 'be on your toes' in foreign airports. The word *toe* is used in many different expressions. Use the correct one below to complete these sentences, and change the pronouns when necessary.

dip one's toe into | to step on someone's toes | a toe-hold | on tip-toes | from head to toe | toe the line

- 1 When you first start a job, you should always \_\_\_\_\_. You don't want to upset your boss!
- 2 The babysitter walked out of the baby's bedroom \_\_\_\_\_ so as not to wake him.
- 3 The translation company decided to \_\_\_\_\_ the Chinese market. It could be very successful.
- 4 After eating the strange food, he was covered \_\_\_\_\_ in a horrible rash.
- 5 I don't think Jo is the best chairperson, but I don't want \_\_\_\_\_ and cause an argument.
- 6 I've got \_\_\_\_\_ in a great company. I hope I can keep this job and eventually work my way to the top.

## Sorry of my english

Extract from "A Concise Chinese-English  
Dictionary for Lovers" by Xiaolu Guo, 2008

### Prologue

prologue n. introduction to a play or book.

Now – Beijing time 12 clock midnight.  
London time 5 clock afternoon.

But I at neither time zone. I on airplane.  
Sitting on 25,000 km above to earth and trying  
remember all English I learning in school.  
Looking outside the massive sky. Thinking air  
staffs need to set a special time-zone for long-  
distance airplanes, or passengers like me very  
confusing about time. When a body floating in  
air, which country she belonging to?

People's Republic of China passport bending  
in my pocket.

I worry about bending passport bring trouble  
to immigration officer, he might doubting  
passport is fake and refusing me into the UK,  
even with noble word on the page.

China further and further, disappearing behind  
clouds. Below is ocean. I from desert town.  
Is the first time my life see sea. It look like a  
dream.

As far away from China, I asking me why I  
coming to West. Why I must to study English  
like parents wish? Why I must to get diploma  
from West? I not knowing what I needing.  
Sometimes I not even caring what I needing.  
I not caring if I speaking English or not.  
Mother only speaking in village dialect and  
even not speaking official Mandarin, but she  
becoming rich with my father, from making  
shoes in our little town. Life OK. Why they  
want changing my life?

And how I living in strange country West  
alone? I never been to West. Only Western  
I seeing is man working in Beijing British  
Embassy behind tiny window. He stamp visa  
on brand new passport.

What else I knowing about West? American  
TV series dubbing into Chinese, showing us  
big houses in suburb, wife by window cooking  
and car arriving in front house. Husband back  
work. Husband say Honey I home, then little  
childrens running to him, see if he bringing gift.

But that not my life. That nothing to do with  
my life. I not having life in West. I not having  
home in West. I scared. I no speaking English.  
I fearing future.

### Alien

alien adj foreign; repugnant (to); from another  
world n foreigner; being from another world

Is unbelievable, I arriving London. 'Heathlow  
Airport'. Every single name very difficult  
remembering, because just not 'London  
Airport' simple way like we simple way call  
'Beijing Airport'. Everything very confuse way  
here, passengers is separating in two queues.  
Sign in front of queue say: ALIEN and NON  
ALIEN. I am alien, like Hollywood film *Alien*,  
I live in another planet, with funny looking  
and strange language. I standing in most longly  
and slowly queue with all aliens waiting for  
visa checking. I feel little criminal but I doing  
nothing wrong so far. My English so bad. How  
to do?

desert – ǝrken  
Mandarin – officielt  
kinesisk sprog

In my text book I study back China, it says English peoples talk like this:

'How are you?'

'I am very well. How are you?'

'I am very well.'

Question and answer exactly the same!

Old saying in China: 'Birds have their bird language, beasts have their beast talk'.

English they totally another species.

Immigration officer holding my passport behind his accounter, my heart hanging on high sky. Finally he stamping on my visa. My heart touching down like air plane. Ah. Wo. Ho. Ha. Picking up my luggage, now I a legal foreigner. Because legal foreigner from Communism region, I must re-educate, must match this capitalism freedom and Western democracy.

All I know is: I not understanding what people say to me at all. From now on, I go with *Concise Chinese-English Dictionary* at all times. It is red cover, look just like *Little Red Book*. I carrying important book, even go to the toilet, in case I not knowing the words for some advanced machine and need checking out in dictionary. Dictionary is most important thing from China. *Concise* meaning simple and clean.

### Language School

Chinese, we not having grammar. We saying things simple way. No verb-change usage, no tense differences, no gender changes. We bosses of our language. But, English language is boss of English user.

Mrs Margaret teaching us about nouns, I discovering English is very scientific. She saying *nouns* have two types – countable and uncountable. 'You can say "a car, but not a rice," she says. But to me, cars are really



uncountable in the street, and we can count the rice if we pay great attention to a rice bowl. Mrs Margaret also explaining nouns is plural and singular.

'Jeans are pairs,' she says. But, everybody know jeans or trousers always one thing, you can't wear many jean or plural trouser. Four years old baby know that. Why waste ink adding 's'? She also saying nouns is three different gender: masculine, feminine, and neuter.

'A table is neuter,' she says.

But, who cares a table is neuter? Everything English so scientific and problematic. Unlucky for me because my science always very bad in school, and I never understanding mathematics. First day, already know I am *loser*. After lunch breaking, Mrs Margaret introducing us little about verbs, Gosh, verb is just crazy. Verb has verbs, verb-ed and verb-ing. And verbs has three types of mood too: indicative, imperative, subjunctive. Why so moody? 'Don't be too frustrated. You will all soon be speaking the Queen's English. Mrs Margaret smiles to me.'

### Pronoun

**pronoun** n word, such as she or it, used to replace a noun

First week in language school, I speaking like this: 'Who is her name?'

ac'counter – skulle va  
counter – skranke  
Little Red Book –  
reference til Mao's 1  
Rode Bog  
usage – sprogbrug  
tense – tid (i gramma  
gender – køn  
(grammatik)  
noun – substantiv  
pronoun – pronomer  
stedord

It costing I three pounds buying this disgusting sandwich.'

'Sally telling I that her just having coffee.'

'Me having fried rice today.'

'Me watching TV when me in China.'

'Our should do things together with the people.'

Always the same, the people laughing as long as I open my mouth.

'Ms Zhuang, you have to learn when to use I as the subject, and when to use me as the object!'

Mrs Margaret speaking Queen's English to me.

So I have two *mes*? According to Mrs Margaret, one is subject *I* one is object *I*? But I only one *I*. Unless Mrs Margaret talking about incarnation or after life.

She also telling me I disorder when speaking English.

Chinese we starting sentence from concept of time or place. Order like this:

*Last autumn on the Great Wall we eat barbecue.*

So time and space always bigger than little human in our country. Is not like order in English sentence, 'I', or 'Jake' or 'Mary' by front of everything, supposing be most important thing to whole sentence.

English a sexist language. In Chinese no 'gender definition' in sentence. For example, Mrs Margaret says these in class:

'Everyone must do *his* best.'

'If a pupil can't attend the class, he should let *his* teacher know.'

'We need to vote for a *chairman* for the student union.'

Always talking about mans, no womans!

Mrs Margaret later telling verb most difficult thing for our oriental people. Is not only 'difficult', is 'impossibility'! I not understanding why verb can always changing.

One day I find a poetry by William

Shakespeare on school's library shelf I studying hard. I even not stopping to lunch. I open little *Concise Dictionary* more 40 times checking new words. After looking some Shakespeare poetry, I will can return back my China home, teaching everyone about Shakespeare. Even my father know Shakespeare big dude, because out in our local government evening classes they telling everyones Shakespeare most famous person from Britain.

One thing, even Shakespeare write bad English. For example, he says '*Where go thou?*'. If I speak like that Mrs Margaret will tell me wrongly. Also I finding poem of him call '*An Outcry Upon Opportunity*':

'Tis thou that executers the traitor's treason;  
Thou sett'st the wolf where lie the lamb may get'  
I not understanding at all. What this '*tis*', '*execut'st*' and '*sett'st*'? Shakespeare can writing that, my spelling not too bad then.

After grammar class, I sit on bus and have deep thought about my new language. Person as dominate subject, is main thing in an English sentence. Does it mean West culture respecting individuals more? In China, you open daily newspaper, title on top is 'OUR HISTORY DECIDE IT IS TIME TO GET RICH' or 'THE GREAT COMMUNIST PARTY HAVE THIRD MEETING' or 'THE 2008 OLYMPICS NEED CITIZENS PLANT MORE GREENS'. Look, no subjects here are mans or womans. Maybe Chinese too shaming putting their name first, because that not modest way to be.

### Progressive tenses

(Also called 'Continuous Tenses') Progressive tenses are made with TO BE+ – ING. The most common use of the progressive form is to talk about an action or situation that is already going on at a particular moment we

'Tis – =It is (gl.)

thou – you (gl.)

are thinking about. But the 'going to' structure and the present progressive can also be used to talk about the future.

People say 'I'm going to go to the cinema ...'  
Why there two *go* for one sentence? Why not enough to say one *go* to go?

*I am going to go to the supermarket to buy some porks?*

*You are going to go to the Oxford circus to buy clothes?*

*He is going to go to the park for a walk?*

'I go' is enough to expressing 'I am going to go ...' Really.

This afternoon, I am going to go to cinema watch double bill – *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and *Some Like it Hot*. Double bill, they letting people pay one time but twice of the bill, how clever the business here! Cinema is my paradise. When a person not having any idea about real life, just walk into cinema choosing a film to see. In China, I seeing some American films, like *Titanic*, and *Rush Hours*, but of course Hollywood stars speaking Mandarin to us, and I can sing soundtrack from *Titanic*. 'My heart goes on and on', only in Chinese translation.

American films strange in London. People at Language School tell me use student card, I can have cheap cinema ticket. Last week I go Prince Charles in Chinatown. They say is cheapest cinema in London. Two films screening:

*Moboland Driver*, and *Blue Velvet*. All together is more than 4 hours. Perfect for my lonely night. So I buy tickets and get in.

Gosh what crazy films. I not understanding very much the English speakings, but I understand I must never walk in highway at night alone. The world scary and strange like deep dark dream. Leaving cinema, trembling,

I try find bus to home, but some mean kids teasing at each other on bus stop. Shouting and swearing bit like terrorist. Old man drunk in street and walk to me saying words I not understanding. Maybe he think I prostitute.

England is hopeless country, but people having everything here: Queen, Buckingham Place, Royal Family, oldest and slowest tube, BBC, Channel 4, W.H. Smith, Marx & Spencer, Tesco, Soho, millennium bridge, Tate Modern, Oxford Circus, London Tower, Cider and ale, even Chinatown.

Anyway, after *Breakfast at Tiffany* where posh woman dressing like prostitute and *Some Like It Hot* where mans dressing like womans, I go back my new home which have cheap renting 65 pounds per week. It is ugly place.

Double bill – dobbelt  
forestelling  
W.H. Smith – kade af  
boghandler  
Marx & Spencer –  
egl. Marks & S.,  
stormagasin  
Tesco – supermarked

# American English

o'mit rɪf uðləde  
vowel -f vokal

In the following you can study the four major areas of differences between British English and American English.

## 1. Spelling

The major differences in spelling were:

- changing *-re* endings to *-er* (from *theatre* and *centre* to *theater* and *center*)
- omitting *u* from words ending in *-our* (from *harbour*, *colour* and *labour* to *harbor*, *color* and *labor*)
- one vowel instead of two (from *anemic* and *encyclopedia* to *anemic* and *encyclopedia*)
- dropping a vowel (from *axe* and *dialogue* to *ax* and *dialog*)
- z instead of s in verb endings (from *analyse* and *advertise* to *analyze* and *advertize*)
- replacing *-ce* by *-se* (from *defence* and *offence* to *defense* and *offense*)

## 2. Vocabulary

Other differences are found in the vocabulary as this short list of examples will show:

American English	British English
gasoline	petrol
baggage	luggage
truck	lorry
line	queue
freeway	motorway
cab	taxi
apartment	flat
elevator	lift
cookie	biscuit

The really tricky vocabulary differences occur when a word exists in both languages but does not mean the same thing!

When they say...	the Americans mean what the English call...	the English mean what the Americans call...
the first floor	the ground floor	the second floor
potato chips	potato crisps	french fries
a purse	a handbag	a wallet
pants	trousers	underpants

## 3. Pronunciation

Give it a try!

	American English	British English
[r]	farmer [ˈfɑːmər] car [kɑːr]	farmer [ˈfɑːmə] car [kɑː]
[l]	letter [ˈlɛtər]	letter [ˈlɛtə]
[j] before [u]	student [ˈstjuːdnt] news [ˈnuːz]	student [ˈstjuːdnt] news [ˈnjuːz]
[æ] as in cat [ɑː] as in father	rather [ˈræðər] can't [kɑːnt] after [ˈæftər] hall [hæl]	rather [ˈrɑːðə] can't [kɑːnt] after [ˈɑːftə] hall [hɑːf]
other words	tomato [təˈmɑːtoʊ] either [ˈiːðər] anti- [ˈænti] or [ænti] process [ˈprɒsɪs] z (the letter) [zɪ]	tomato [təˈmɑːtoʊ] either [ˈiːðə] or [ˈiːðo] anti- [ˈænti] process [ˈprəʊsɪs] z [zed]

## 4. Intonation

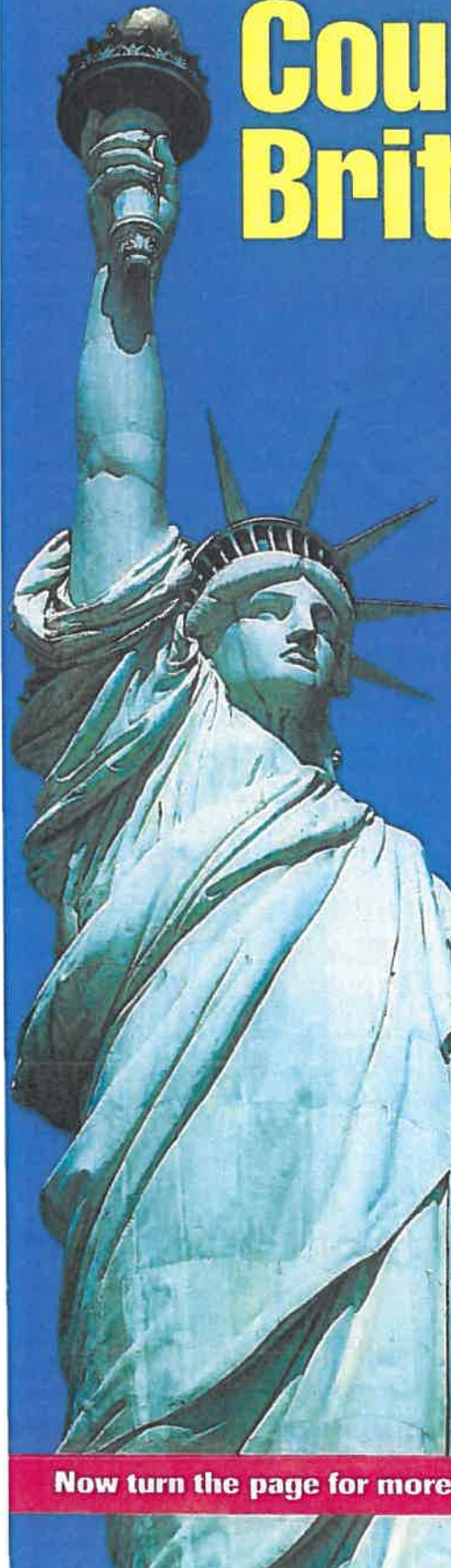
Lastly, there are also differences in intonation. Whereas British English has a pitch range of 90-300, American English will range between only 90 and 200. In this way Americans may sound very calm and dull compared to the British who then again may sound overly excited to the Americans.

into'nation -b intuna-  
tion, 'sprɒŋmɪndɪ'  
pitch range -b forskel  
mellem højeste og lave-  
ste tone  
res'pectively ndr: hun-



# 'Americanisms'

## Could they kill off British English?



**W**hat the world is speaking is not necessarily our English," says British journalist Matthew Engel. "The alarming part is that this is starting to show in the language we speak in Britain."

And the culprit<sup>o</sup>, Engel thinks, is irritating 'Americanisms' – words and phrases that Americans use in daily conversation – and that are

sneaking into everyday British English.

"Britain is a very distinct country from the U.S.," says Engel. "Not better, not worse – just different. And that means maintaining the integrity<sup>o</sup> of our own glorious English language."

But, despite the American language 'invasion' of British English, the two countries still use many different words and phrases to express the same thing.

How much do you know about the differences between conversational American and British English? Mark each sentence below with an **A** for American or **B** for British. Then see page 23 for answers and meanings.

**1**

He's gotten a lot better at Math this year.

He's got a lot better at Maths this year.

**2**

I left my jumper in the boot.

I left my sweater in the trunk.

**3**

This problem adds a wrench to our plans.

This problem puts a spanner in the works.

**4**

Ring me on my mobile.

Call me on my cell phone.

**5**

What are your plans at the weekend?

What are you doing on the weekend?

Now turn the page for more on the 'war' between American and British English. ▶▶▶



# 'Americanisms'



Awesome! **Could they kill off British English?** 24/7

hospitalize  
You do the math

left field

three strikes and you're out

Can I get a latte to go?

burglarize

'Americanisms' step up to the plate

ouster

Have a nice day!

rookie

alphabetize

Monday through Friday

faze

24/7

The use of Americanisms in British English is far from new. Journalist Matthew Engel cites several words used today 'without a second thought' in British conversation that first spread from America in the 19th century. They include:

- lengthy
- talented
- tremendous

The Americanisms often caused an uproar – in 1832 the great British poet Samuel Coleridge claimed the word 'talented' was barbarous.

The uproar hasn't stopped, and Engel claims that the influence of American film and sports culture on the world has taken its toll on British English.

"I remain a big fan of American baseball," he says. "But I sit over here in Britain

and listen to people who know nothing of the game talk about ideas coming out of 'left field'. They speak about 'three strikes and you're out' or 'stepping up to the plate' without the foggiest idea what these phrases mean. I think Britain has started to lose its own sense of itself."

Engel admits that many American phrases are colourful and expressive of great feeling when used in British conversation. But he thinks some U.S. words invading everyday speech are 'ugly and pointless', such as:

- faze
- rookie
- ouster

Says Engel: "I hate the sloppy use of our own distinctive British phrases. We are letting British English wither."

Match each word to its correct meaning:

- a) very skilful at something
- b) excellent or wonderful
- c) too long or drawn out

Which one of these words is more commonly used in American English?

- a) films
- b) movies

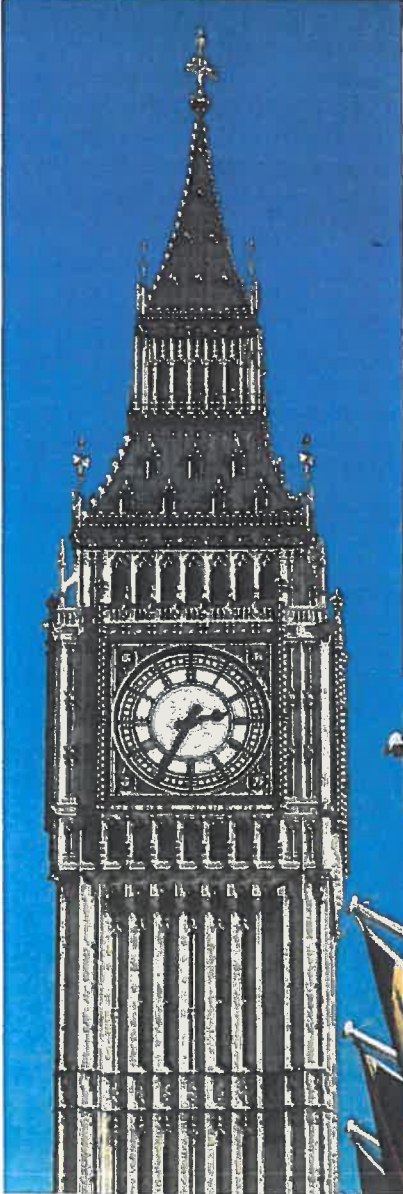
Match these U.S. baseball phrases to their correct meaning:

- 1 'left field'
  - 2 'three strikes and you're out'
  - 3 'step up to the plate'
- a) tackle or take on something difficult
  - b) something unexpected or surprising
  - c) failing after several tries or chances

Match each word to its correct meaning:

- a) someone new at something
- b) confuse or shock
- c) loss of a job

**'Americanisms'** 24/7 the math You do step up to the plate **Awesome!** Have a nice day! Monday through Friday **three strikes and you're out** **left field** **ouster** **rookie** **'Americanisms'** Could they kill off British English? 24/7 step up to the plate **Can I get a latte to go?** **24/7** Have a nice day! **24/7** step up to the plate **faze** Can I get a latte to go? **hospitalize** **'Americanisms'** Monday through Friday **alphabetize**



# EVOLUTION ENGLISH #4

**“The idea that there once existed a ‘pure’ form of English is simply untrue,”**

says Melanie Johnson, an American linguist. “The English spoken in the UK today has been influenced by Dutch, French and German.” Language constantly changes, Johnson says. And this happens especially in cities with diverse ethnic groups like London.

Matthew Engel agrees that the secret of the success of the English language is that it’s so flexible and has become a hybrid of so many imported words. Other languages, he points out, deliberately avoid using words adapted from other cultures: “English has triumphed where Latin, French and the artificial language of Esperanto all ultimately failed. English has become the natural medium of global communication – this version of English is sometimes known as ‘Globish.’”

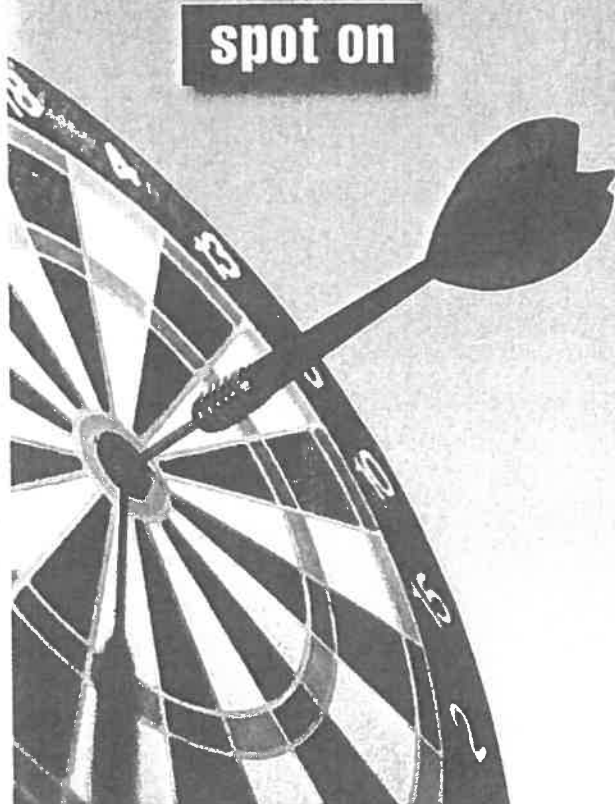
**CURRENT EXTRA**

“American English has a global role at the beginning of the 21st century comparable to that of British English at the start of the 20th,” says *The Oxford Guide to World English*.

What do you think are the specific reasons for this? Discuss your views with other CURRENT readers. Go to: [www.mg-plus.net/ct11419](http://www.mg-plus.net/ct11419)

**\* WORDWISE**

**culprit (n):** someone or thing responsible for a misdeed  
**integrity (n):** having high moral or professional standards  
**uproar (n):** a very heated debate or controversy  
**barbarous (adj):** very uncivilised  
**to take its toll (phr):** to have a negative effect on something  
**sloppy (adj):** without care  
**to wither (v):** to dry up or fade away as part of dying  
**flexible (adj):** adaptable to change  
**Esperanto (n):** a completely new language invented in 1887 based on root words from European languages



spot on



sell-by-date



chat up

# 'BRITISHISMS' INVADE AMERICA!

**While American phrases have been creeping into everyday British English, it's not just one-way traffic!**

**M**any English language experts have come to abhor American words and phrases worming their way into everyday British speech: "In the UK, some see the use of Americanisms as a sign that culture is going down the drain," says Jesse Sheidlower, an American editor at the Oxford English Dictionary. Well, language is a two-way street, and now "bit by bit, British English is invading America too," the BBC reports.

One example is 'spot on' – an informal British phrase that means something is exactly right. It's crept into everyday American vocabulary. And, snaps Geoffrey Nunberg, a linguist at the University of California, "It's just ludicrous! You are just impersonating an Englishman when you say 'spot on.'" As for the British phrase 'will do' – which an American would express as 'I'll do it' or 'I'll get it done' – Nunberg says, "That should be put into quarantine?"

## FROM THE UK TO THE U.S.

Linguists have traced how some Britishisms have taken root\* in American conversation, often with different connotations. Here are three examples, as reported by the BBC:

### ginger

 **British English:**

ginger means red hair

 **American English:**

red head. "Ginger only took off in the U.S. with the publication of the first *Harry Potter* book in 1998," says Kory Stamper. She adds: "Unlike in the UK, there is no anti-ginger prejudice in the U.S."

### sell-by-date

 **British English:**

the date by which food in a British supermarket must be sold

 **American English:**

'expiration date'. But since the 80s the British phrase has become more common to mean something no longer useful. Example: "That idea is well past its sell-by-date."

### to chat up

 **British English:**

to use flirtatious\* conversation, especially with someone you've just met and like

 **American English:**

a similar meaning, though, says Stamper, in this case it's hard to pinpoint how and when the phrase became popular.

“You are just impersonating an Englishman when you say ‘spot on.’”

whined\* about Americanisms since 1781, when John Witherspoon coined the term. But it seems that British words and expressions have crept into American usage only recently.

Some reasons include the rise of British TV imports to the U.S. – such as *Top Gear* and *Dr Who* – and transatlantic celebrities from David Beckham to Simon Cowell and *House* actor Hugh Laurie. "It is not so much the masses who use these terms," says Geoffrey Nunberg, "as the educated elite."

### Two countries – one language?

When Britain first colonised America in the 17th century, there was no difference between British and American English. "It took time for the two to go their separate ways," says Kory Stamper.

If there is one man who changed all that, it may be Noah Webster, who published the first American English dictionary in 1806. "He wanted very much for this budding\* new nation to have its own language," Stamper says.

Whatever the case may be, a new British language revolution has taken hold in the U.S. – and America seems open to the new invasion.

### Language exchange

But many don't share Nunberg's distaste. Says Ben Yagoda, a professor of English at the University of Delaware, "I enjoy seeing them, and if I find an American saying a Britishism, it makes my day."

Kory Stamper, associate editor for Merriam-Webster, perhaps the most widely used U.S. dictionary, agrees that more British words are infiltrating\* American vocabulary. Stamper selects new words for Merriam-Webster, and two entries in the 2012 dictionary are: 'gastropub' – a British pub serving

“Bit by bit, British English is invading America too.”

high-quality meals, while the American term would be 'bar and grill'; and 'twee', or nice and cute, but often with a negative connotation\* – such as a 'twee' village that attracts rich tourists or 'twee' clothes, which are nice but rather safe.

Curiously, 'Americanisms' in British are not new, claims language historian Dennis Baron. He says that Brits have

### TRANSLATE IT

Can you translate these informal British words for an American?

- 1 "I would use that builder but my mate says he's dodgy."
- 2 "I was gobsmacked when she told me about that bloke she's seeing."
- 3 "That new cake shop is amazing – they make bespoke cakes for all occasions."
- 4 "That lad is too cheeky for words."

Answers → Page 23

### \* WORDWISE

to creep (v): to move quietly, often sneakily

to abhor (v): to hate or detest something

to worm [one's] way into [something] (v, Inf phr): to get or creep into something, often through questionable ways

down the drain (exp): something that goes bad or disappears, often used about money

to snap (v): to say something sharply or angrily

ludicrous (adj): ridiculous or absurd

to impersonate (v): to pretend to be somebody you are not

quarantine (n): total isolation, often as the result of a disease

to infiltrate (v): to enter without being noticed

connotation (n): a subtle or implied meaning

to whine (v): to complain irritably

budding (adj): young, new and with hope

to take root (v): to become a deep or lasting part of something

flirtatious (adj): indicating liking someone playfully and romantically

 Now go to page 23 for a language activity

# How English evolved into a global language

As the British Library charts the evolution of English in a new major exhibition, author Michael Rosen gives a brief history of a language that has grown to world domination with phrases such as "cool" and "go to it".

BBC: 20 December 2010

<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-12017753>

also  
TRICAL ENGLISH  
ENGINEERING, SOCIAL  
**Eng·lish** /'ɪŋɡlɪʃ/  
■ noun 1 [U] the language spoken in Great Britain and Ireland  
I **no!**

The need for an international language has always existed. In the past it was about religion and intellectual debate. With the technologies of today, it's about communicating with others anywhere in the world in a matter of moments.

5 Two events, separated by nearly 400 years, show how this need has always been present.

Firstly, sitting in front of me I have a copy of the celebrated book *Utopia*, by Sir Thomas More. This particular edition is published in 1629 in Amsterdam, not in English, not in Dutch, but in Latin.

The second event was a talk I recently had with a German scientist. He said that he knew of scientific conferences taking place in Germany, where all the people attending were German and yet the conference was 10 conducted in English.

## Pride

The Latin of this edition of *Utopia* was a written code, though its most accomplished users could adopt it to conduct intellectual and religious debate.

15 During the previous 1,300 years it had been the main language of the Western Christian tradition - the language of prayer, hymn, sacred texts and religious debate. It was also the language with which Renaissance scientists spoke to each other.

However, this hold on religious and intellectual minds was broken by the rise of national cultures. The peoples of the countries where Latin was being used, spoke their own languages and dialects.

20 Once these came to be written down, more and more people started to ask their churches and religious authorities to speak, write and deliver some, most, or all religion in those local languages.

Two of the most famous texts to come out of this was the King James Bible (soon to celebrate its 400th birthday) and Martin Luther's German Bible, from a little less than 100 years earlier than the King James.

Part of this process to establish the power and influence of these local languages was the effort to produce standardised forms for them, so that teachers, merchants, lawyers, ministers of religion and politicians could write to and for each other in ways that were instantly comprehensible.

This seemed then, and now, to require consistent ways of presenting the language on the page - spelling and punctuation - and consistent ways of delivering the grammar of the words and sentences.

As a result, standardised English writing became a powerful tool in the hands of government, church and school in asking the peoples of the British Isles to see themselves as one.

## 30 Esperanto

But nation went on speaking to nation in peace, war, trade, migration, religion and the world of ideas. A lot of effort went into the production of foreign language dictionaries, grammars and translations of important, or the most interesting books.

Throughout this time one of the most significant events in the history of world languages was happening: English-speaking soldiers, sailors and colonisers were travelling to, and settling in countries right the way across the globe.

Only in the places that either kept their independence or where the Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Dutch had done the same, was English not spoken.

If the 20th Century can be described as a savage flowering of the demands of nationalism - including pride in national languages and literature - it also saw the rise of utopian dreams about international co-operation as seen first by the League of Nations and then the United Nations.

However, in these places it wasn't so much that nation spoke unto nation, as interpreter spoke unto interpreter. In response, inventors of international languages tried to bring about world peace with their inventions, the most famous of which is Esperanto. It didn't catch on sufficiently for the world's politicians to need or want to learn it.

Slowly, another international language emerged, spoken by diplomats, scientists, artists, business people and many more. Benefiting from the legacy of the British Empire, and the rise in influence of the most powerful member of that Empire - the USA - English (or kinds of English) is being spoken all over the globe.

In truth, they speak what the linguist David Crystal calls "Englishes", though some ways of talking are what have been called "creoles", "pidgins" and "patois". I was watching an Austrian pop music channel recently and the comments and ads were in an Anglo-German Creole whose core was German, but which was full of "go to it", "cool", "be there" and the like.

Most of this has gone on without direction from governments. The technologies of telephones, radio, TV, records, CDs, mobile phones and the internet have enabled most people in the world to get access to each other's language in a matter of moments.

Through these channels, millions of young people across the world have grown to like the sounds produced by English-speaking bands. Sub-titled films from Hollywood have given millions of non-English speakers the chance to imitate James Cagney, Marilyn Monroe, Robert De Niro and Harrison Ford.

But will it last? Perhaps in 100 years, the world's population will have come to love the subtleties and beauty of one or both of the standard Chinese languages - Mandarin and Cantonese. We just don't know.

**Exercises:**

- 1) Find udsagnsordene (verberne) i linje 5-10 og noter dem i følgende skema:

Udsagnsord (verbum)	Tid (tempus)
Separated	Simpel datid

- 2) Marker de udsagnsord i tabellen, som står i simpel datid. Tip: Verber i datid slutter ofte på – ed, men ikke altid!

# The international companies using only English

A growing number of global firms are using as English their main language – even if they are based in Japan or France.

By Bryan Borzykowski

BBC: 20 March 2017

<http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20170317-the-international-companies-using-only-english>

Nearly every meeting Keiko Claassen must attend at work is held in English. No big deal – except that her company is based in Italy and she’s Dutch.

At one recent meeting where she was the only non-Italian in the room, her colleagues stopped speaking English – the common language between them – because someone had trouble following the conversation.

5 “It was like watching a movie,” says Claasen. “As soon as they switched... you could see their culture come to life.”

At ITT Motion Technologies, an Lainate, Italy-based engineering company where Classen is executive director of communications, every senior staffer is expected to speak English and most communications are delivered in English. While it’s not considered an official corporate language, with 4,500 employees working  
10 in several countries, including Japan, China, India and Germany, it’s the only language that everyone can generally speak in common – even if speaking doesn’t mean always fully understanding.

In other firms, such as France-based food services company Sodexo, English is being adopted as an official language. After years of translating emails, webinars and other materials into as many as eight languages, including French, English and Spanish, or holding massive town-hall meetings in multiple languages, the  
15 company announced in January that its senior leadership team would be embracing English. By year-end, it’ll be English-only for the leadership teams that are responsible for its 500,000 employees across 80 countries.



Board members of French food services group Sodexo, which is adopting English as an official language for leadership  
20 teams by the end of the year (Credit: Getty Images)

Others that have made the shift to English-only, despite being based in non-English-speaking countries, include Yokohama, Japan-headquartered Nissan, which implemented an English-first strategy in the late 1990s. In 2015, another car maker, Tokyo-based Honda announced that its corporate language would become English by 2020. German electronics company Siemens also made English its official language years

25 ago. It's likely many more companies will adopt English-only, says Jia Lin Xie, a professor of management at Toronto's Rotman School of Management in Canada.

For most of these companies, including Sodexo, the aim is simple: by communicating exclusively in a single language, leaders in South America can collaborate with colleagues in France or the US. It's also part of a larger cultural shift for the company, says Kim Beddard-Fontaine, Sodexo's group vice-president of 30 employee and change communication.

"Business are organised globally and not regionally these days," she says. "We want to become more efficient by collaborating across geographies. English is an enabler of that."

### **English for everyone**

This shift is not a throwback to colonialism or a play for cultural superiority. In Europe, nearly 80% of 35 children in their primary years are learning English, while a 2013 survey by the 21st Century Education Research Institute in Beijing found that 70% of Chinese parents want their children to learn the language to help them get into to better schools.



*From 2020, Japanese carmaker Honda will use English as its corporate lingua franca (Credit: Getty Images)*

40 "It's also one of the most succinct, simple languages to learn" says Lin Xie. "It's a required formal language of study in many schools in different countries."

Sodexo, in theory, could have made its official language French – it is a 50-year old French company, after all – but only 35,000 of its staff work in France, while 125,000 live in the US. Says Beddard-Fontaine: "I think if we decided to make French the company's global language we would have had a revolt on our 45 hands."

Since the change is primarily for the company's 200 executives and its 1,600 senior leaders – and in many companies English-only policies are for senior staffers who are expected to know the language – lower level staffers, many of who don't speak English, will continue to receive communications in different languages. Still, that may change at some point, too, she says. As well, materials might be translated into fewer 50 languages in future.

"It's an absolute must that we move to English," says Beddard-Fontaine.



*English dominates business as the language of choice – but in countries like Brazil and Italy, it's not commonly spoken (Credit: Getty Images)*

### **55 Sense and making sense**

English might be the dominant language of business, but it's not used everywhere or prioritized as a language learned all over. In a country like Brazil, only about 5% of people learn the language. In Italy, just 29% of people speak English.

Lin Xie suggests that if a company wants a smooth changeover and aims to promote people from within the firm, it ought to offer English lessons to staffers lower down the corporate ladder, and not just focus on executives. When Nissan adopted English as its official language, it did just that, in part to recognise that the transition would not be easy for everyone. "They understood that there is a language barrier and if they want to be truly global they'd have to help people do something to overcome it," she says.

Both Sodexo and ITT Motion Technologies offer English courses to some staffers who want to get a better grasp of the language.

### **Compassion and nuance**

Even so, when an entire language changes, a dose of compassion is necessary – imagine having to suddenly speak in a language that isn't your own or which you don't quite speak fluently.



*70 Using a single language lets leaders communicate clearly, no matter where they're based (Credit: Getty Images)*

Bosses and peers alike should realise that others might not fully understand what's being said, says Claassen. That could lead to misunderstandings or feelings of awkwardness. She's been on plant tours where the person showing her around began the conversation by apologising for not speaking English well, even though the employee had an impeccable grasp of the language. "They have to cross this wall for 75 themselves because they don't feel their confidence is high," she says.

In some cases, the perceived language barrier holds employees back. When Claassen has group meetings with Chinese colleagues, many of them remain quiet until they're asked directly for their input. They don't want to lose face by using the wrong word or accidentally saying something funny, she says.

"You have to be conscious of that and really invite them in," Claassen says.

80 As well, non-English speakers will likely fail to pick up on some of the nuances of the language, but it's more important they understand the overall message and that everyone feels comfortable working together, says Sonita Lontoh, a vice-president of marketing at Siemens. It's up to the native and experienced speakers, she says, to repeat and make sure others understand. That's especially true of native English speakers, who are deemed to be the worst **communicators**.

85 Lontoh has worked at several global companies where English has been the main language and has never encountered a problem. But, there have been some humorous moments, like when one her German colleagues was discussing strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions mentioned finding "low carb solutions," – the term refers to a low carbohydrates diet in.

But, the move to English as a corporate language just make sense, she says: "If a Chinese person meets 90 someone from the Middle East, they will speak English. They don't expect to know each other's language."

### Tasks:

1. List the pros and cons of English as a global corporate language as they are presented in the text.
2. Translate the following lines from the text into Danish. Try to be as true to the original text as possible, matching its time: *"At ITT Motion Technologies, an Lainate, Italy-based engineering company where Classen is executive director of communications, every senior staffer is expected to speak English and most communications are delivered in English"*.

### Grammar:

1. Marker alle udsagnsord (verber) der slutter på -ed.
2. Understreg de af de markerede udsagnsord (verber), der står i simpel datid.

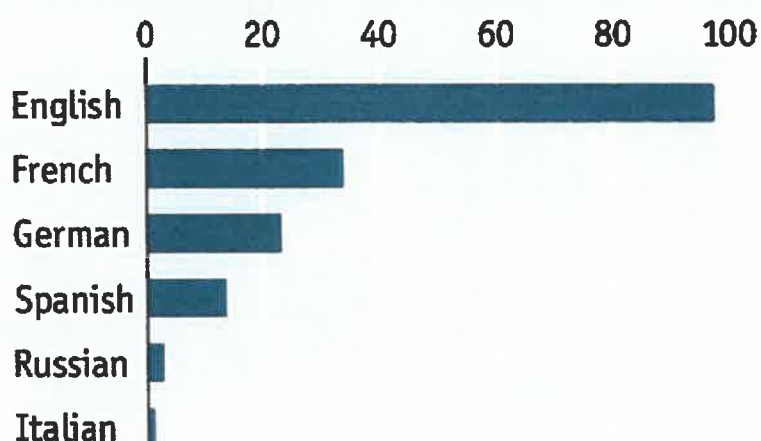
# Britain is leaving the EU, but its language will stay

Despite Jean-Claude Juncker's joke, Anglophones should rest easy

## Does not decline

European Union\*, foreign languages studied

At lower-secondary level, % of pupils, 2015



Source: Eurostat \*Excludes Britain (insufficient data)

Economist.com

The Economist: 13 May 2017

[http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21721861-despite-jean-claude-junckers-joke-anglophones-should-rest-easy-britain-leaving-eu-its?cid=cust/ddnew/n/n/n/2017059n/owned/n/n/nwl/n/n/eu/Daily\\_Dispatch/email](http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21721861-despite-jean-claude-junckers-joke-anglophones-should-rest-easy-britain-leaving-eu-its?cid=cust/ddnew/n/n/n/2017059n/owned/n/n/nwl/n/n/eu/Daily_Dispatch/email)

“SLOWLY but surely, English is losing importance,” quipped Jean-Claude Juncker, the president of the European Commission, before switching to French for a speech on May 5th. Is this true? Not really, and it seems not to have been intended as seriously as easily offended British headline-writers took it. After all, Mr Juncker, who is known for going off-script in speeches, delivered his barb in English, and the audience laughed.

In any case, speakers of *la langue de Shakespeare* have little to worry about. The European Union has 24 official languages, three of them considered “working languages”: French, German and English. Eurocrats are polyglots, often able to speak all three tongues, plus another of their own. Mr Juncker may be right that in the halls of the EU’s institutions, English will be heard somewhat less after Brexit, simply because of the exodus of a big group of Anglophones. But English is not just British: it is also an official language in Ireland and Malta. More important, the three enlargements of the EU since 2004 have decisively shifted the balance in Brussels from French towards English. There is no consensus for going back, still less for switching to German.

Besides, English is putting down deep roots among ordinary people on the continent. For all of France’s notorious linguistic nationalism, it is telling that François Hollande, the outgoing president, was mocked on *Le Petit Journal*, a news and entertainment show, for his ropery English. Emmanuel Macron, a generation younger, is fluent. Fully 66% of EU citizens speak another language, a number that is growing steadily.

Eurostat, the EU’s statistics agency, does not break those figures down by language spoken, but it is easy to extrapolate from what is studied in schools. Among students at lower secondary level outside Britain, 97% are learning English. Only 34% are studying French and 23% German. In primary school 79% of students are

already learning English, against just 4% for French. Some countries, such as Denmark, begin English in the very first year.

A language increases in value with the number of people able to speak it, so tongues that are valuable tend to become more so over time. And language knowledge takes a long time to acquire; societies do not  
25 quickly change the languages they speak. The trend of English in Europe began well before the vote for Brexit and is unlikely to dissipate, even “slowly but surely”. Mr Juncker might better have said that although Britain, unfortunately, is exiting the EU, its former partners will always remember the linguistic gift it is leaving behind.

# Global English – country profiles

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Make a PowerPoint presentation about the English-speaking country your group has been allocated. All group members must be prepared to do the presentation in class, and all group members must participate.

In your presentation you:

- Include a map showing where the country is
- List important facts about the country such as capital city, population, ethnic groups, languages spoken, religion, political leader, etc.
- List 5 important historical facts about the country and comment on why they are important.
- Explain why they speak English in this country

Remember to use presentation techniques☺

Also, make a fact file as a handout to your classmates.

**Use the following sources:**

- CIA World Factbook:  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/>
- BBC Country Profiles:  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country\\_profiles/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm)

Group 1: South Africa

Group 2: Canada

Group 3: Australia

Group 4: New Zealand

Group 5: India

Group 6: Ireland

Group 7: Nigeria

Group 8: Kenya

**Time frame:**

- Study the sources at home
- 3 lessons in class to prepare the presentation
- Duration of presentation: 5 minutes

# English as a Lingua Franca - Assignment

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This assignment has two parts, a summary and a discussion. In the first part, you present the text and summarize it. In the second part, you discuss the positive and negative sides of English as a Lingua Franca. Divide the assignment into three paragraphs:

- The first paragraph: presentation and summary of the text
- The second paragraph: positive sides of English being a global Lingua Franca
- The third and final paragraph: negative sides of English being a global Lingua Franca

Below you will find instructions on how to write a good summary and an intelligent discussion.

The text you are working with is called '*English - the language of Global Business?*' and is also found below.

The time spent on this assignment should be *three hours*.

## Guidelines to a good summary:

The first line of a summary must present the title of the text, the name of the author and the type of text. An example could be:

- The short story *Indian Camp* is written by Ernest Hemmingway.
- Glenn Greenwald wrote the article *Revealed: How US and UK spy agencies defeat internet privacy and security* for the Guardian.

A summary has *between 150 and 200 words*. No more, no less

In order to write a summary, you need to find the main points of the text you are working with. This is best done by dividing the text into paragraphs and finding out what each paragraph is about. Part of the text below is already divided into paragraphs so you can see how it is done. Remember to write notes in the text while doing this work! Look up words you do not understand in Gyldendals Røde Ordbøger Online.

## Guidelines to a good discussion:

A good discussion is all about perspective. That means that you need to look at the issue from many angles. In this discussion, you are going to look at the positive and negative sides of English being a global Lingua Franca.

This discussion must be *between 300 and 400 words*

Make sure to use the main points that you found while working on the summary.

## English - The Language of Global Business?

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**Forbes: OCT 26, 2012**

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/dorieclark/2012/10/26/english-the-language-of-global-business/#6cba3cb3b57e>

With China's growing economic might, is Mandarin becoming the preferred language of business? Not anytime soon, says a newly released study. Instead, English will maintain and grow its dominance, moving from "a marker of the elite" in years past to "a basic skill needed for the entire workforce, in the same way that literacy has been transformed in the last two centuries from an elite privilege into a basic requirement for informed citizenship." (Indeed, the British Council reports that by 2020, two billion people will be studying English.) The new study of 1.6 million online test-takers in more than 50 countries was conducted by EF Education First, a company that – it should be noted – specializes in English language training.

The study is somewhat comforting for English speakers like me, who have struggled to master a foreign language. Indeed, the *National Journal* reports that only 10% of native-born Americans can speak a second language, compared to 56% of European Union citizens. (In the "credit for trying department," I spent an hour composing two emails in French yesterday, an effort my Parisian colleague declared "adorable.")

The ability to speak a second (or third) language is clearly important for becoming a global leader, as I've previously written. But – for better or worse – it seems that English may be the most essential language for global business success at the moment. Indeed, even in powerhouse China, more people are currently studying English than in any other country. An incredible 100,000 native English speakers are currently teaching there.

Here are the most intriguing takeaways from EF's study, which have potential implications for future global development.

- **Women speak better English than men – in almost every country worldwide.** Increasing numbers of women are attending college, and they're often over-represented in humanities classes compared to men. The net result? Women are speaking better English, and may find themselves well positioned to succeed in the global economy.
- **International sectors use English, and local sectors don't.** If someone works in travel and tourism, for an international consulting firm, or in telecom, there's a good chance they speak English. For instance, the Finnish telecom concern Nokia and the German business software company SAP both use English as their official language. In retail, not so much (which is why it's so devilishly hard to communicate with shop clerks while traveling).

- **European countries speak great English, Asian countries are in the middle, and everyone else lags.** English speakers: do you ever get the sense that Scandinavians speak better English than you do? You're probably right (as evinced by my attempt, years ago, to order an ice cream in Norwegian from a teenage streetcart vendor in Oslo, only to have him fire back – in perfect English – that I “probably ought to stick to English”). Scandinavians and the Dutch are the English-as-a-Second-Language superstars; as you move south through Europe, rates of proficiency decline but are still good. Asian countries, led by Singapore and Malaysia, scored solidly in the middle rung. And if you're planning to visit Panama, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, or Libya, which bring up the rear, make sure you have your Google Translate app with you.

The hegemony of English is no excuse for monolingual native speakers to slack off (as I've written about here). But at least we'll know, as we struggle to write our “adorable” emails in a foreign tongue, that our global colleagues will be making the same effort in reverse – and hopefully, in the end, we'll all understand each other a bit better.