

GLOBAL ENGLISH

As English Spreads, Speakers Morph it into World Tongue.

1 In India, people created the word "pre-pone" as the obvious opposite of postpone. On the Internet, a form of cyber-English has sprouted with such words as "net surfing." On MTV Latino, the word *coolismo* defines hip for a continent.

2 Meanwhile in Britain, editors of the Oxford English Dictionary are struggling to keep up with this "morphing" of the mother tongue. What centuries of British colonialism and decades of Esperanto couldn't do, a few years of free trade, MTV, and the Internet has. "English is probably changing faster than any other language," says Alan Firth, a linguist at the University of Aalborg in Denmark, "because so many people are using it."

3 It is believed that English is merging with native languages to create 'hybrid Englishes' worldwide. But this uncontrolled, global germination of so many "Englishes" has some worried. English purists, led by Britain's Prince Charles, bemoan the degradation of the language as **they** see it, lashing out at Americans for cheapening **it** with bad grammar.

4 However those who seek to preserve native cultures warn that in many parts of the world, English is taking more than it is giving. Multiculturalists say the blitzkrieg-like spread of English effectively commits "linguistic genocide" by killing off dozens other languages. Education, mass media, and religion stigmatize many non-white native languages, even if **they** are an offshoot of English, as backward and primitive, tribal and traditional, as ... dialects rather than languages.

5 These differing views lead to the question: Is the world taking English by storm or is English taking the world by storm?

6 Danish Professor Firth, who studies conversations between non-native speakers when **they** conduct business, says businessmen tend to be blunt, humorless, use simplified grammar, and develop and use **their** own English terms to cut a deal. "People develop their own ways of doing business with each other, of talking and even writing ... that native speakers might not understand," Firth says. "Surprisingly, **the latter** join in and start to speak that way also."

7 Oxford Companion editor McArthur says the spread of English can't be halted. The globalization of the world, mostly driven by economics, is inevitable. "It's the [world's] need for a unified language of trade, politics, and culture," he says. "We're going to lose a lot of languages around the world, but if it's not English, it's something else."

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1. Choose the correct option to complete the following sentences.

1.1. The aim of the first paragraph of the text is to show
(A) how fast the English language is spreading around the world.

(B) that the English language is changing.

(C) that as a world language English influences other languages.

1.2. Some people believe that "hybrid Englishes"

(A) enrich the English language.

(B) eradicate other native languages.

(C) destroy the true essence of the English language.

1.3. Many non-white native languages

(A) are disapproved of because they are an offshoot of English.

(B) are often dismissed as simple dialects.

(C) are considered languages in their own right.

1.4. English will probably keep its status as a global language because

(A) it's an important tool for international communication.

(B) of the economic power of the nations that speak it.

(C) we are going to lose a lot of languages around the world.

2. Answer the following on the text. Use your own words as far as possible.

- Which aspects have contributed to the major changes in the English language?
- Identify and explain the two opposing views on the evolution of the English language.
- In what way do non-native businessmen affect the way English native-speakers use their language?

3. Finding evidence - quote from the text one sentence for each of the statements below.

- a variety of English has emerged from technology.
- the expansion of the English language has a deadly effect on other languages.

5. What do the underlined words in the text refer to?

- they
- it
- they
- they
- their
- the latter

For items a – j, choose a word in the box on the right best fits each gap.

4. Explain the meaning of the following in your own words.

Is the world taking English by storm or is English taking the world by storm? (5th paragraph)

Match the words in Column A with their meanings in Column C. Write the correct letters in Column B.

A	B	C
1. justifiable		a) causing something to happen
2. impose		b) taking up or following a particular course of action
3. neutral		c) having power or influence over others
4. imperialistic		d) between different countries
5. dominant		e) unbiased, impartial, not taking sides
6. threatened		f) absorbing into a cultural tradition or language
7. instrumental		g) endangered, at risk
8. adopting		h) legitimate, right, acceptable
9. cross-border		i) wanting to gain political or economic power over another country
10. assimilating		j) force something on someone

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Choose the correct words from the box on the right to fill the gaps a-j.

Is English a 'Killer Language'?

Two different theories have been constructed concerning the role English can play as a world language. It can either act in an **-a-** manner (exploitation theory) or it can take on a neutral role enabling **-b-** communication (grass roots theory).

Languages are merely **-c-**, functioning only according to the social, political, cultural and historical factors of their current society. Consequently, other than the historical circumstances which promoted the English speaking culture to a world power, there is no **-d-** reason why any other language could not have acted in the same way as English. Several case studies show that on the one hand English acts as a killer language. On the other hand English can be considered to be **-e-**, enabling different societies to communicate with each other without **-f-** the second language.

Finally it must be taken into account that English itself is actually **-g-**, continually evolving and changing. The English language does not only **-h-** its vocabulary on other languages, but is also constantly **-i-** expressions from other languages and cultures as well. Therefore, English cannot be said to be a killer language in such general term. English acts according to the situation at hand, this can be in a neutral or in a **-j-** way.

1. justifiable
2. impose
3. neutral
4. imperialistic
5. dominant
6. threatened
7. instrumental
8. adopting
9. cross-border
10. assimilating

1. **CONNECTORS** - Join the following sentences by using the appropriate linking words. Don't forget the punctuation where it is necessary. There are three that do not apply.

- a. English has taken its place as the world's *lingua franca*
- b. The English language is always changing
- c. Language change has accelerated
- d. Language learners are aware of the different varieties of English

although
as
however
because
due to
despite
in order to

1. adapt to the needs of its users.
2. the predominance of American influence globally.
3. it is not pushing out other languages.
4. non-native English speakers have increased enormously.

2. WORD FORMATION -

Choose the correct form of the words in brackets to fill the gaps.

It is estimated that, if nothing is done, half of the 6000 languages spoken today will disappear by the end of this century. With the **-a-** (**appear**) of unwritten and undocumented languages, **-b-** (**human**) would lose not only a cultural wealth but also important ancestral **-c-** (**know**) embedded, in particular, in indigenous languages. However, this process is neither inevitable nor **-d-** (**reverse**). The aim of UNESCO's Endangered Languages Programme is to support communities, experts and governments by producing, coordinating and disseminating: 1) tools for **-e-** (**assess**) of status and trends in linguistic diversity. 2) services such as policy advice, technical **-f-** (**expert**) and training.

3. REPHRASING - Rewrite these sentences without changing their meaning.

a. Prince Charles regrets the changes in the English language. He is such a purist.

If Prince Charles wasn't such a purist, ...

b. Some people say that hybrid Englishes will compromise standard English.

Hybrid Englishes are said ...

c. Alan went to London to study English. He met his girlfriend Sonya.

While Alan ...

d. The spread of English can't be halted.

Hardly ...

e. English purists hope to put an end to the "morphing" of the English language.

English purists look forward ...

f. If English became the only world language, many native tongues would disappear. *Were English...*