



SPEAKING

In pairs look at these newspaper stands and try to identify the languages used. Is it French, German or English?



How much do you know about languages and language learning? Answer the following questions to find out.

1. Which is the oldest written language in the world? **Egyptian**
2. Which language in the world is spoken by most people? **Chinese**
3. Which language has the largest vocabulary? **English**

You can find the answers on the next page.



LISTENING

You are going to listen to a part of a radio programme about the English language. While listening, answer the following questions, or put a tick () or a cross (X).

1. How do many people feel about learning English?
They feel it's a waste of time, energy and money.

2. What other disadvantage does Professor Ross mention about the English language?
It is not an easy language to learn!
(There is the problem of spelling, of many exceptions to every rule, it is idiomatic and the prepositions are very difficult.)

3. Which of the following are mentioned about the English language?

- a. spelling (**yes**)
- b. vocabulary (**no**)
- c. grammar (**yes** -in the last dialogue, not specific about the English language, but it's ok)
- d. pronunciation (**no**)
- e. prepositions (**yes**)

4. Why do many people give up learning English?

Because it seems easy in the beginning, but as you go on, it becomes more and more difficult to bridge the gap between basic knowledge and mastery of the language.

KEY - SPEAKING (page 6)

- 1. Egyptian
- 2. Chinese
- 3. English

READING

1

Read this article about the English language and underline its main points. Then compare it with what you listened to in the listening task. What's your point of view?

English as an International Language

What made English become an international language? Did English spread **globally** because it serves many needs and purposes? Whatever the answer, almost everybody accepts the fact that the enormous growth of international communication, social needs and the role of foreign languages in education have changed.

Nowadays people in many countries all over the world must speak more languages than their **native** language only. Not only are university students expected to speak a foreign language well, but also professional people from the working force of a country need it for practical purposes.

Among foreign languages English is the language much more used today than in the past. It is **widely** known that the number of people that use English now is more than 600 million. Of these

speakers, 300 million are native speakers, while the other 300 million are speakers who use English as an additional means of communication for different purposes.

It seems that English has the biggest number of users of any of the world languages who are not native speakers of English. In some countries English is used in education (e.g. in science), in **the mass media**, in government, and partly for some **literary purposes** of the local language. There are more magazines, newspapers and leaflets written in English nowadays. English is used in international politics and in entertainment (cinema, television, sport, **the press**, transport, marketing, advertising, technology and computer science). It seems that the use of English **worldwide** is here to stay and its growth will continue. Its **obligatory** teaching in

education aims at helping pupils - the international **citizens** of tomorrow - to learn a language which is important as a

world language and an international means of communication.

[2] Find a word or phrase in the text that means the following.

local = *native, indigenous*

mother = *native (mother tongue)*

internationally = *globally, worldwide (widely)*

journalism = *the press (newspapers, magazines), the mass media*

creative writing = *literary purposes*

brochures = *leaflets*

necessary = *obligatory*

people = *citizens*

3 Read the text again and decide if the following are true (T), false (F) or possible (P).

1. English is spread globally because it serves many needs and purposes.

P

2. Nowadays people all over the world must speak their native language only.

F

3. English as a foreign language is much more used today than in the past.

T

4. English seems to have the biggest number of users among non-native speakers of English.

T

5. Only professional people are supposed to speak a foreign language.

F

6. The use of English worldwide will continue to grow.

T

7. People are forced to use English mainly in education.

T