

This takes courage but is well worth the effort. One of my friends went to study in England and got an English boyfriend. Her English improved dramatically in just a few months, so arguably that's the best way!

Examiner: Why are some people seemingly better at learning languages than others?

Candidate: It's true that some people seem to pick up language really easily. Being bilingual from a young age certainly helps because the more languages you speak, the more easily you acquire a new one. Another major factor is motivation: two people can study the same materials for the same number of hours but the person who is more motivated will learn more and remember better what they've learnt. I really believe that the more you *care* about learning a language, the more effortlessly you will pick it up.

Examiner: How do people in your country feel about English being the world language?

Candidate: I don't think most people *feel* anything exactly; they just see it as something inevitable. They don't fight it because that would just leave them trailing behind other countries that embrace English as the global lingua franca. Not learning English would leave us economically disadvantaged.

Examiner: Do you think the culture of English-speaking countries, as well as the English language, dominate the world?

Candidate: The rise of the Internet has certainly increased the dominance of English, and therefore also the spread of English and American ways of seeing the world. I think we are all expected to conform. Also, the majority of young people in my country like to watch American films and listen to American music: it's considered trendy to do so. So, yes, I would definitely say that the culture of English-speaking countries holds much sway all over the world.

Examiner: Why do you think people feel it is important to continue speaking their local languages?

Candidate: There is a backlash in some quarters against the spread of English. One way this is expressed is by the insistence on maintaining local languages. A local language is more than just words. It links a community with its past, with its heritage, and so if you stop speaking your language, you lose a part of yourself.

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Examiner: Which language do you think is generally considered the most beautiful?

Candidate: Well, I think Italian is generally considered the most beautiful European language. It's probably because of the, um, the music of the language, the way speakers sound like they're singing. Personally, er, I prefer Spanish.

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Examiner: So, everyone in your country speaks English?

Candidate: Actually, no they don't. It is primarily young people who learn English at school. The older generation tend to speak only our native language.

Examiner: American music is more popular than other forms of music, is it?

Candidate: Not exactly, no. Japanese music is also extremely popular.

Track 38

What do you use the Internet for?

Does everyone have access to the Internet in your country?

Do you think older people are scared of new technology?

Do you think young children should have mobile phones?