

Do you know...

- **how many languages are there in the world?**
- **how many languages are commonly used in the United Nations?**
- **what language is most widely used in the world?**
- **what language is used by the most people in the world?**

How many languages are there in the world?

There are about **6,000** languages in the world.



How many languages are commonly used in the United Nations?

There are **Six**.

They are **Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish and Arabian**.

They are the working languages in the UN.



What language is most widely used in the world?

English.

The common language of Britain and the United States is English, which is widely used by many members of the Commonwealth (英联邦) and former colonial countries.



What language has the largest number of users in the world?

Chinese has the largest number of users in the world.

China has a population of more than **137,000,000** (incl. HK, TW & Macao).

There are **55,000,000** overseas Chinese.

By 2010, about 100,000,000 foreigners had been Chinese learners.



However ...

**Some languages are dead or
disappearing ...**



Unit 4 Language

4.3

Disappearing Languages

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Aims and Demand

You are to

- practise listening to an interview and reading a text to extract specific information
- practise reading to learn why some languages are dead or disappearing
- revise or be introduced to the meaning and form of the first conditional
- practise their accuracy and fluency in speaking using the first conditional



READING

1 What is a dead language? Why do languages die out, do you think?

A dead language is one that is no longer spoken by any community. It may be spoken / understood by a few academics.

Vocabulary



2a Answer the questions. Read the first two paragraphs of the article to check your answers.

- c** 1 Which of these languages is more than 2,000 years old?
a) French b) English c) Greek
- c** 2 What percentage of languages have died out in the last 500 years?
a) 1.3% b) 1.9% c) 4.5%
- a** 3 How many languages are in danger of disappearing now?
a) Over 3,000 b) Over 300 c) Over 1,300



2b Read the rest of the article and answer the questions.

1 What four reasons are given in the text for languages disappearing?

- 1) fewer speakers;
- 2) people's migration;
- 3) natural disasters;
- 4) governments establishing "official languages"



2b Read the rest of the article and answer the questions.

2 Why do some people think there is no reason to worry about the death of languages?

Because they think it's part of human evolution and there are great benefits to people speaking one language.

3 According to the author, why should we care about languages dying out?

Because we also lose ways of life, knowledge and identity



2b Read the rest of the article and answer the questions.

4 What do the following, mentioned in the text, claim about languages?

a) Steve Sutherland b) The Ethnologue c) Ani Rauhihi

a) **Steve Sutherland:** in the past 500 years, 4.5% of languages have died out;

b) **The Ethnologue:** 417 languages are in the final stages of becoming extinct (dying out);

c) **Ani Rauhihi:** language and identify are linked



3 Read the article again and find the following.

- 1 a verb and a phrasal verb meaning “to stop existing” (lines 5 and 10) **disappear (v.), die out (phr. v.)**
- 2 a noun used for when something stops existing, usually used with plants, animals or volcanoes (line 7) **extinction**
- 3 the noun related to one of the verbs in 1 (line 16) **disappearance**
- 4 the adjective related to the noun in 2 (line 21) **extinct**
- 5 a verb meaning “to damage something very badly” (line 30)
devastate
- 6 an adjective meaning “very bad” or “ending in failure”, often used with the words consequences, results and effects (line 39)
disastrous



4 Work with a partner to discuss the following.

1 What languages are spoken in Scotland?

English and Scottish Gaelic are the official languages (Gaelic since 2005).

2 What could you do to prevent a language from disappearing?

Answers will depend on students' own ideas. Accept any reasonable suggestions (e.g. government documents in majority and minority languages; minority languages taught in schools, etc.)



5a 2.22 Listen to a radio interview with Bradana MacKinnon, spokesperson for the Society for the Promotion of Gaelic. Tick (✓) the things that are mentioned.



- ✓ 1 Bradana's name
- ✓ 2 statistics about people speaking Gaelic
- 3 the differences between Gaelic in Scotland and Ireland
- ✓ 4 the economy of the Gaelic-speaking community
- 5 investment in cultural events and festivals of Gaelic arts
- ✓ 6 training teachers of Gaelic



5b

2.22

Listen again and complete the sentences.

Script

- 1 If we have Gaelic-medium education at all levels, more people will speak Gaelic.
- 2 If we have more TV and radio programmes in Gaelic, more people may listen to the language.
- 3 Unless we all continue to promote Gaelic, there might not be a significant increase in speakers.
- 4 When we reach our targets, we'll invest in more Gaelic books in public libraries.
- 5 As soon as we get more Gaelic speakers involved, we'll run more Gaelic language classes.



GRAMMAR: first conditional

6 Look at the examples in Exercise 5b and choose the correct answer.

1 We use *if + present simple* / *past simple* in the *if*-clause, and *will* (*may, might, should, etc.*) in the main clause. (examples 1 and 2)

2 We use *unless* in the *if*-clause + *affirmative* verb to mean *if not* / *if*. (example 3)

3 After time expressions like *when* and *as soon as*, we use *will* / *the present simple*. (examples 4 and 5)

4 We use the first conditional to talk about *real possibilities* / *unreal situations* in the future. (all examples).



7a Match the beginnings and endings to make conditional sentences.

- 1 If languages die out, a) I might make fewer mistakes.
- 2 You will never learn a language well b) unless you know its grammar.
- 3 If foreign words enter a language, c) unless we protect them.
- 4 Languages will die out d) the world will be less interesting.
- 5 If I study French more, e) when I get home.
- 6 I'll go home f) as soon as the class finishes.
- 7 I'll revise g) they will damage it.



7b Work with a partner to discuss the first four statements from Exercise 7a.



SPEAKING

8a You are going to hold a debate about language.

This is the motion:

The government should spend more money on promoting languages used by a minority of the population.

Divide into two groups to prepare the arguments.

Group A (for the motion): turn to [page 158](#).

Group B (against the motion): turn to [page 161](#).



8b Now hold the debate. Follow the debate procedure.

- 1 The spokesperson from Group A speaks for the motion.
- 2 The spokesperson for Group B speaks against the motion.
- 3 Other people from both groups can speak and give their opinions for or against.
- 4 The groups vote on the motion. You can change your mind at this stage.



A bilingual road sign in Ireland



Summary and Assignment

1. Why some languages are dead or disappearing?
2. Why Chinese are active in the world?
3. Write an essay (around 150 words) to talk about why Chinese are so popular in the world?



Thank you!



LAST WORDS (1)

There are around 6,000 living languages in the world — and at least half of those are in danger. In every part of the world, languages are disappearing. In fact, one scientist has said that languages are in more danger of extinction than birds or mammals. Professor Steve Sutherland of the University of East Anglia calculated that in the past 500 years 4.5 percent of languages have died out — compared with 1.3 percent of birds, and 1.9 percent of mammals.



LAST WORDS (2)

Languages come and go, and thousands have done exactly that without leaving any trace. Only a very few — Basque, Greek and Latin among them — have lasted more than 2,000 years. But it seems that the **pace** of their **disappearance** is becoming quicker.



LAST WORDS (3)

The Ethnologue, a **database** of all the languages spoken in the world, **claims** that 417 languages are spoken by so few people that they are in the final stages of becoming extinct. There is one living speaker of Luo in Cameroon, and a **handful of** people that speak the Saami Pite language in Sweden and Norway. If very few people speak a language, it will probably die out.



LAST WORDS (4a)

Languages may be lost through **migration**, as people move from small **rural** communities to **urban** centres, or when environments are **destroyed** by the search for oil or wood. Natural disasters can also **devastate** populations, and along with them, their language — like the speakers of the Paulohi language in Maluku, Indonesia: only 50 survived after an earthquake and tidal wave some years ago.

...



LAST WORDS (4b)

... Governments also play a role in the extinction of languages. The need to establish “official languages”, for a country to educate its children, conduct its political affairs and carry out its business, had a disastrous effect on many small languages.



LAST WORDS (5)

What is lost if a language is lost? Some people argue that languages die as the human race evolves. Obviously there could be great benefits if everyone in the world spoke the same language — some industries already reflect this, with English essential for pilots and air traffic controllers. But there are more important things than convenience. As languages are lost, whole ways of life and knowledge may be lost along with them.



LAST WORDS (6)

Put simply, language expresses something about **identity**, about our place in the world. Ani Rauhihi, a Maori teacher in New Zealand's North Island, sums it up: “If you grow up not speaking your language, you won't know who you are.”

From “50 facts that should change the world”

by Jessica Williams



Framework of the Text (Outline)



Main Idea: the causes and consequences of language loss

Outline

Part 1 (Paras. 1-2) Introduction: dead and disappearing languages

1. Many dead;
2. Many disappearing

Part 2 (Paras. 3-4) Body: Reasons for language loss

1. Fewer speakers;
2. People's migration;
3. Natural disasters;
3. Policy of "official language"

Part 3 (Paras. 5-6) Conclusion: Consequence of language loss

1. Benefits;
2. Harm.



4.3 Learning Languages

Vocabulary

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calculate ['kælkjuleɪt] *v.* 计算；预测；认为；打算

claim *v.* 声称，宣称；索要；索取

conduct *v.* 组织，实施，进行；带领

convenience [kən'vi:niəns] *n.* 便利；便利的事物

database *n.* 数据库

destroy *vt.* 破坏；消灭；毁坏

devastate ['devəsteɪt] *vt.* 毁灭；毁坏

disappear *vi.* 消失；失踪；不复存在；*vt.* 使...不存在；使...消失

disappearance *n.* 消失

disaster *n.* 灾难；灾祸



disastrous *a.* 灾难性的，损失惨重的

essential *a.* 基本的，必要的，根本的，精髓的

establish *vt.* 建立；创立

evolve *v.* 发展，进化，演变

extinct *a.* 灭绝的，消失的； *vt.* 使熄灭

extinction *n.* 灭绝；消失；消灭；废止

handful *n.* 少数；一把

a handful of 少数……；一小部分……

identity *n.* 身份；同一性

mammal *n.* 哺乳动物

mention *vt.* 提到，谈到；提及



migration [maɪ'greɪʃn] *n.* 迁移；移民；移动

obviously *adv.* 明显地，显然

pace *n.* 一步；步速；步伐；速度

at a/the pace of ... 以.....的速度

I type at a snail's pace. 我打字忒慢。

reflect *v.* 反映，反射；反思

rural *a.* 乡村的 **反义词** **urban** *a.* 城市的

tidal wave 海啸 **近义词** **tsunami** *n.* 海啸

tidal *a.* 潮汐的；潮的 || **wave** *n.* 海浪；波浪

tide *n.* 潮水；潮汐；潮流；趋势 **tidy** *a.* 整齐的

Time and tide wait for no man. 岁月不等人。



trace *v.* (通过调查) 找到; 追溯; 追踪 *n.* 痕迹; 踪迹

volcano *n.* 火山

along with 连同.....一起

compared with 与.....相比

die out 灭绝, 消失

have a disastrous effect on 对.....有灾难性的影响

human race 人类

in danger (of ...) 处于(...的)危险中



natural disaster 自然灾害

official language 官方语言

play a role in 在.....中起作用 = play a **part** in

put simply 简单地说 = to put it simply

small languages 小语种

sum up 总之

without leaving any trace 不留任何痕迹





Sweden 瑞典

Norway 挪威

Indonesia 印度尼西亚

New Zealand 新西兰

Greek 希腊语，希腊人；希腊（人）的，希腊语的



Words and phrases for Listening



Gaelic ['geɪlɪk] *n.* 盖尔语

opinion poll 民意测验，民调

profile ['prəʊfaɪl] *n.* 侧面；轮廓；外形；**简况**

promising *adj.* 有希望的，有前途的

statistics [stə'tɪstɪks] *n.* 统计，统计学（**单数**）；统计资料，统计数字（**复数**）

