1 A life of learning

1A A global language

Vocabulary  Language ability

1 a) Choose the correct words in these phrases. Check in Language Summary 1: p113.
   1 (my/your/last) language (is) ...
   2 be bilingual in/at ...
   3 be fluent at/in ...
   4 be reasonably good on/at ...
   5 can get to/br in ...
   6 know a little/few words of ...
   7 can't speak a word of/with ...
   8 can have/make a conversation in ...
   9 speak some ..., but it's a lot/bit rusty
   10 pick up/off a bit of ... on holiday

b) Choose five phrases from 1a).
   Use them to make sentences about yourself or people you know.
   My first language is Russian.

c) Work in groups. Take turns to tell each other your sentences. Ask follow-up questions if possible.

Reading and Grammar

2 a) How important is learning English in your country? Why?

b) Read the article about learning English around the world. Match headings a)–d) to paragraphs 1–4.
   a) Learn English 24 hours a day
   b) A changing language
   c) An English-speaking world
   d) A passport to employment

Who owns English?

1 More people speak English than any other language, but according to English language expert David Crystal, non-native speakers now outnumber native speakers by three to one. “There’s never before been a language that’s been spoken more as a second language than a first,” he says. By the end of last year, the number of adult English speakers in Asia had reached 350 million. And according to the British Council, in ten years’ time 2 billion people will study English and about half the world’s population will speak it.

2 Why such enthusiasm for English? In a word, jobs. “We always tell students they need two things to succeed – English and computers,” says Chetan Kumar, manager of a language school in Delhi. For the middle classes in India, English can mean a prized job in a call centre. And the story is the same in other parts of the world. At a Toyota factory in the Czech Republic, English was chosen as the working language of the Japanese, French and Czech staff. Many other multinational companies, like Samsung and LG Philips, have started moving towards an English-only email policy. Technology is a big factor in all this change – 80% of the world’s electronic information is stored in English.

3 The way that people study English is also changing. In South Korea, for example, the national government has been building English immersion schools all over the country, where teenagers live in an all-English environment for up to four weeks at a time. In these “English villages”, students check into their accommodation, go shopping, order food, go to the bank, take cooking classes or acting lessons – all in English. And they seem to enjoy the experience – when we visited one acting class, a student was pretending to be the film star Orlando Bloom, to the obvious amusement of his classmates.

4 However, these new English speakers aren’t just learning the language – they’re changing it. There are hundreds of different types of English in the world today, such as “Hinglish”, the Indian mix of Hindi and English. New words are being invented every day all over the world. As David Crystal says, “No one owns English now. What happens to it is on the shoulders of all of us.”

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3 Read the article again. What does it say about these people, numbers, things and places?

native speakers 350 million 2 billion a call centre
Toyota Samsung 80% South Korea Hinglish

Help with Grammar: The English verb system

1 a) Look at the article again. Match the words/phrases in blue to these verb forms.

Present Simple but
Past Simple
Present Perfect Simple
Past Perfect Simple

Present Continuous
Past Continuous
Present Perfect Continuous
Present Simple Passive
Past Simple Passive

b) Fill in the gaps in these rules with continuous, perfect, simple or passive.

- We usually use _________ verb forms to talk about things that are repeated, permanent or completed.
- We usually use _________ verb forms to talk about things that are in progress, temporary or unfinished.
- We usually use _________ verb forms to talk about things that connect two different time periods (the past and the present, etc.).
- We usually use _________ verb forms when we are more interested in what happens to somebody or something than in who or what does the action.

c) Look at the verb forms in pink in the article. Which are activity verbs? Which are state verbs? Then choose the correct word in this rule.

- We don’t usually use activity/state verbs in continuous verb forms.

d) Check in Language Summary 1 (g.1) p114.

5 Work in pairs. Name the verb forms in bold in these pairs of sentences. Discuss the difference in meaning between a) and b) in each pair.

1 a) They studied Portuguese for three years.
b) They’ve studied Portuguese for three years.
2 a) Kemal often watches DVDs.
b) Kemal’s watching a DVD at the moment.
3 a) Jo did her homework when I got home.
b) Jo was doing her homework when I got home.
4 a) She teaches English.
b) She’s teaching English while she’s in Berlin.
5 a) When we got there, the class started.
b) When we were there, the class started.
6 a) Antonio repaired his car last week.
b) Antonio’s car was repaired last week.

8 a) Read about Michelle’s language learning experiences. Choose the correct verb forms.

I’ve started/same started studying Spanish after I went/was going to Argentina on holiday last year. I’ve never been/never went to South America before and I couldn’t speak a word of Spanish. While I had travelled/was travelling around the country, I pick/picked up/ was picking up enough words and phrases to get by. I told/was told that my pronunciation was/was being quite good, so when I got home I decided/ was deciding to learn Spanish properly. A friend recommended/ was recommended a school and I thought/ve/ been going there for about six months. I always enjoy/’m always enjoying the lessons and the language is taught/taught in a communicative way. I think/’m thinking that I ‘m learning/’ve learned a lot since I started. It’s not all fun, though – at the moment I ‘m studying/’m studying for my first exam!

b) 31.1 Listen and check.