Exercise – English as a World Language

Below you find an excerpt from an article about English becoming a world language, written by David Graddol. Discuss consequences of this development by referring to the excerpt, including both positive and negative aspects of English becoming a world language.

The widespread use of English as a language of wider communication will continue to exert pressure toward global uniformity as well as give rise to anxieties about 'declining' standards, language change, and the loss of geolinguistic diversity. But as English shifts from foreign-language to second-language status for an increasing number of people, we can also expect to see English develop a larger number of local varieties.

These contradictory tensions arise because English has two main functions in the world: it provides a vehicular language for international communication and it forms the basis for constructing cultural identities. The former function requires mutual intelligibility and common standards. The latter encourages the development of local forms and hybrid varieties. As English plays an ever more important role in the first of these functions, it simultaneously finds itself acting as a language of identity for larger numbers of people around the world."


http://grammar.about.com/od/fh/g/GlobalEnglishterm.htm

Sources from NDLA to be included
