



PODCAST

TRANSCRIPT

Episode 88:

Title: English as a Global Language

Duration: 22:33

How to use this transcript:

1. Print this transcript:

We try to reduce our paper consumption, but we really recommend that you print out this document.

2. Write on it and take notes:

Circle, highlight and note anything that you want. We have even provided space for you to do so!

3. Listen first **without** the transcript:

Don't worry about understanding every single word. Just focus on training your ears to the sound of English.

4. Listen again **with** the transcript:

Listen a second time with the transcript, pausing whenever you want to

00:00	<p>Welcome to the Déclis Anglais Podcast, THE podcast for intermediate, French-speaking learners of English. This podcast is like a steppingstone (<i>un tremplin</i>) to help you understand more advanced materials in English. There is a transcript (<i>une transcription</i>) available for this and every episode of this podcast. You can download the transcript for free from the link in the description of this episode. Or go to www.declisanglais.com/podcast.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
01:05	<p>Hello there, dear listeners. This is Tom from the Déclis Anglais Podcast. Welcome to this episode, number 88. I hope you're all well and having a good day so far.</p> <p>Let me begin by asking you a question: "How many people speak English as a first language? (<i>Combien de personnes parlent l'anglais comme langue maternelle ?</i>) How many native speakers of English are there?"</p> <p>Haha, I can hear some of you counting: "<i>Il y a Tom, bien sûr. Donc un. Il y a le roi Charles, ça fait deux. Brad Pitt, il parle anglais aussi, non ? Ça fait trois.</i>"</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
02:02	<p>Let me give you a clue (<i>un indice</i>). The number of English native speakers in the world today is in the hundreds of millions. Approximately 373 million people in 2023. For reference, there are approximately 80 million French native speakers. So there are over four times more native anglophones than native francophones.</p> <p>And this number gets even more incredible when you see the number of people who speak English as a second language. There are 373 million native speakers, and over one billion people who speak English as a second language.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

03:11 *Qu'est-ce que tu veux dire Tom avec "second language"?*

Well, "first language" means your native language. It's your strongest language, and usually the language that you speak with your family. Some people have two first languages, especially if they grew up in a bilingual family. But "second language" means it's your second-strongest language. And usually when we talk about a second language, we mean that you speak it **FLUENTLY**; you have a very strong command of that language. It can sometimes be the case that you use your second language every day, like at your job. Or maybe you live in a multilingual country, like Belgium or Switzerland. So you speak more than one language well. For example, let's take someone living in Geneva in Switzerland might speak only French at home. But they also speak German or Italian as a second, auxiliary language (because Swiss German and Italian are also official languages of Switzerland). This would therefore make German or Italian their second language.

(Ecrivez vos notes ici).

04:53 So going back to English, there are 373 million native speakers. But over a billion second-language speakers. That, dear listeners, is a LOT of people. For comparison, French has only around 235 million second-language speakers. If you include all of the native speakers, all of the second-language speakers, this actually makes English the most-spoken language in the world - more than Mandarin Chinese!

(Ecrivez vos notes ici).

05:44	<p>English is also an official language in numerous international organisations. It's one of the official languages of the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union, the Organisation of Islamic Communities, NATO, and many, many more.</p> <p>English is also the international language of civil aviation. Let's imagine that you take an aeroplane from Paris and fly across Europe to Turkey. Your pilot will probably use some English when talking to the air-traffic controllers (<i>les contrôleurs aériens</i>) as you fly over various European countries.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
06:48	<p>Everywhere you go today you hear and see English. Everything related to business, commerce, finance, technology, media... Everything is in English.</p> <p>I have taught French people English for their jobs, not to speak to their British or American customers, oh no! I have taught French people English, so they can talk to talk to their Serbian customers, their Chinese customers.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

07:29	<p>I once taught English at a large bank in Strasbourg. And the people in this bank were not learning English to do business in the United Kingdom, oh no. It was for their business in Germany. The French generally don't speak German, and the Germans generally don't speak French. So what's the alternative? English!</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
08:01	<p>And it doesn't stop at a professional level. Even in the French language, we see a lot of anglicisms (English words being integrated into French), especially being used among the younger generations. We hear so much English in France that the <i>Académie Française</i> panics, thinking that English is taking over.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
08:36	<p>And what about travel? Let's imagine that you, as a French person travel to Stockholm in Sweden. And in Stockholm, let's imagine that you go into a restaurant, you want to order food. Unfortunately, you don't speak Swedish (<i>le suédois</i>) and the waiter (<i>le serveur</i>) doesn't speak French. So, what language do you try? Well, probably English! And in maybe 90% of cases, it works!</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

09:22 *J'ai eu la chance de voyager dans de nombreux pays à travers le monde. Dans tous ces pays, si je ne pouvais pas me faire comprendre dans la langue maternelle du pays (je parle l'espagnol comme une vache anglaise), l'anglais était la première solution - ou du moins une forme très basique d'anglais. Et généralement, l'anglais fonctionne toujours.*

English is the global language, at least for the moment. Why is that?

Why has English become this sort of international language used by non-anglophone countries to talk to other non-anglophone countries?

(Pourquoi la langue anglaise est-elle devenue une sorte de langue internationale utilisée par beaucoup de pays non anglophones pour communiquer avec d'autres pays non anglophones ?)

(Ecrivez vos notes ici).

10:25 Well, it's a long story, and to answer this question, we must go back in time to the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During this time, the major European countries like the United Kingdom, France, Spain, the Netherlands, were all in competition. They were competing for territory, for resources, for power and influence.

(Ecrivez vos notes ici).

11:01	<p>The British Empire became the largest empire in the world. At its peak (<i>à son apogée</i>) in the early twentieth century, almost a quarter of the world population (<i>presque un quart de la population mondiale</i>) lived under the British Empire.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
11:34	<p>The British Empire exported the English language around the world. Take a look at look at the map today and look at how many English-speaking countries there are. Today, there are 59 sovereign states that use English as an official language. 59 countries! You have places like the USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand. But the anglosphere – the English-speaking world – is much, much bigger. Take for example very populous countries like Nigeria or India: They were British colonies and today they are independent countries. But both of these countries still use English as an official language – this is the legacy of the British Empire.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
12:46	<p>The British Empire ultimately went into decline, it came to an end during the twentieth century after the Second World War. Its many colonies and territories became independent countries and the United Kingdom itself lost much of its power and influence.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

13:14

But if the British Empire disappeared, why is English still so prevalent today?

One answer is comprised of three letters: U.S.A.

A great success of the English language was to become the main language of a powerful country like the United States of America. Believe it or not, the USA almost chose GERMAN as an official language. The world might have sounded a lot different if this had happened. But that's a story for a different episode.

(Ecrivez vos notes ici).

14:06

After the Second World War, the USA was one of two so-called superpowers (*des superpuissances*). The USA was (and still is) not just a military superpower, but also an economic superpower.

While Europe was still repairing itself after the war, the USA experienced an economic boom. It was and still is a powerhouse (*un moteur*) of innovation and development. Think about all the technology you use today. You turn on your iPhone (created by an American company), you open Google (also an American company), you maybe then move over to Instagram or Facebook (also American platforms). You see what I mean?

(Ecrivez vos notes ici).

15:21	<p>And the USA is also a cultural superpower. Turn on your TV, turn on your radio, what do you see or hear? American music, American movies, American TV series. Dear listeners, it is no coincidence that YOU have watched the <i>Spiderman</i> or <i>Batman</i> movies, but American people don't know about <i>Les Bronzés Font du Ski</i>.</p> <p>It is no coincidence that you know about Elvis Presley or Michael Jackson, but most American people probably don't know anything about Johnny Hallyday. And it's no coincidence that at Marne la Vallée we have <i>Euro Disney</i> (an American brand and an American company), but there is no French or European equivalent in the USA.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
16:34	<p>So, is the prevalence, the dominance of English because of America, then? Is English everywhere because the Americans are just pushing and pushing the English language?</p> <p>Well, yes and no. I would say that today it's not so much the Americans pushing, it's more that the world is PULLING. <i>(Ce ne sont pas tellement les Américains qui imposent l'anglais, c'est plutôt le monde entier qui tire l'anglais à soi).</i> I would say that the prevalence of English started with the British Empire. It was then expanded by the Americans. And this started a kind of snowball effect <i>(un effet boule de neige)</i> in the world.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

17:38	<p>English has become the language of global discourse, the language of global communication. The prevalence of English made it an ideal candidate for talking about our common issues. Our planet is faced with a number of issues right now, from new diseases such as Covid-19, to global warming. These are problems that face the entire planet, not just one country. And therefore, the English language has become a kind of tool (<i>un outil</i>) that let's people from different countries talk about their common problems.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
18:35	<p><i>Mais Tom, cela signifie-t-il que l'anglais finira par remplacer toutes les autres langues ?</i></p> <p>No, absolutely not. English will never replace French, Spanish, or any other major language. We will probably see more anglicisms in French, but that's a topic for another episode. For now, anyone from the <i>Académie Française</i> listening to this podcast can relax, they can rest easy: English will <i>never</i> replace French.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

19:23 I mean, English never completely replaced Welsh (*le gallois*) in my homeland, even though Wales was annexed into England. The Welsh language and culture were brutally persecuted. But if you go to a Welsh football match, you might hear the Welsh fans sing:

*Ry'n ni yma o hyd!
Er gwaetha pawb a phopeth,
Ry'n ni yma o hyd!*

We are still here!
Despite everything and everyone,
We are still here!

So if a tiny nation like Wales can keep its ancient language alive and kicking though the centuries, the French language will be absolutely fine.

(Ecrivez vos notes ici).

20:25 Your native language will always be your native language. But when it comes to international problem-solving, finding solutions to our planet's problems, English will almost always be the language of choice. Will it ever change? Hmm, probably. But at least for the foreseeable future (*dans l'immédiat, jusqu'à nouvel ordre*), English will remain the global language for solving global issues.

(Ecrivez vos notes ici).

21:11 Alright then, dear listeners. I hope you have enjoyed this episode. Don't forget, if you would like to take part in global discussions using English, sign up to *The Déclic Anglais Club*, our e-learning platform. *The Déclic Anglais Club* proposes interactive listening and reading comprehension exercises based on episodes of this podcast. You can even practice your writing skills with our online dictation exercises (*nos dictées en ligne*). And don't forget our fun group conversation classes where you can practice speaking English with other motivated learners. If you would like to know more, just go to www.declicananglais.com.

Have a lovely day, dear listeners. And I'll see you at the next episode! Bye for now.

(Ecrivez vos notes ici).

How did it go?

Take a moment to revisit the notes that you took.

List here 3 words or expressions (minimum) that you would like to remember from this podcast. We recommend that you consult a free, online dictionary like www.wordreference.com to ensure that you have the correct definition and context.

WORDS/EXPRESSIONS THAT I WANT TO REMEMBER:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.