



# Beyond Babel Programme 4

## ACTUALITY NASA CLIPS

'We choose to go to the moon in this decade because that goal will serve to organise and measure the best of our energies and skills'

'Roger, I've got 3 fuel cells.... Disconnecting...'

'Houston, try.....'

### Narrator

The twentieth century witnessed the greatest period of scientific advance in recorded history.

Fuelled by the economic power of Britain's Industrial Revolution and America's subsequent development into the world's most powerful industrial nation, the English-speaking world became the centre of a scientific renaissance. And English the language of scientific communication and discovery....

### Actuality NASA Clips

'That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind...'

### Prof. David Crystal

#### Cambridge Encyclopaedia of the English Language

One of the reasons why English became a global language is without a doubt the fact that it became the medium of expression for so much scientific and technological development. Something like a half or two thirds of the scientists and technologists who made that revolution worked through the medium of English, and what this meant of course was that if you wanted, if you were interested in, in the new techniques of road building or steam locomotion or textiles and you were on the continent of Europe, you had to come to England to find out about these things, you had to learn how to build the machines. The maintenance instructions were in English, you had to learn English in order to acquire the knowledge that the science and technology made available to you.

If you now look at the vocabulary of modern English, something like three-quarters of that vocabulary is scientific or technological. The terminology of chemistry, the terminology of botany, the terminology of medicine, this is all English vocabulary, English in a sense, of course it all came from Latin and Greek and ... were amalgams of other languages, but the vocabulary of English became the dominant voice of science and technology very, very quickly.

### Actuality Documentary On Early Computers

'Of all major inventions the computer is the first to extend not the strength of man's muscles but the power of his brain...'

## **Narrator**

Nowhere has the importance of English been more evident than in the development of the computer and its subsequent growth into the Internet.

## **Dr. Vinton Cerf Senior Vice President, WorldCom Corporation**

The language of discourse during the development of the Internet was indeed English and the software implementations used English as the basic language because the bulk of the users in fact were English speaking. So it's no surprise that most of its manifestations showed in English language formats.

## **Geoff Nunberg Principal Scientist, Xerox PARC**

There's no question that English is right now the dominant language on the Internet, as 70 to 80% of discourse on the Internet is carried out in English. And you hear on the one hand this kind of triumphalist smug pride on the part of Anglophones sometimes about the Internet as another road down which English will march on its inevitable course of world conquest then on the hand you hear from the French or the Russians or the Germans cries of alarm. President Chirac of France called the English domination of the Internet "A major risk for humanity", French humanity but that goes without saying.

## **David Crystal**

The statistics illustrate that English was the original language of the internet, still the dominant voice of the internet, but of course it's proportion is steadily falling as increasing numbers of countries come on line.

## **Rosabeth Moss Kanter Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School**

A high proportion all of all Internet transmissions are in English. For a while it was well over 90%. Now there are more channels using local languages but I think that helps spread English as well. English is an Internet language. English is a language of instructions we're coining the new words for the web. I think the Web will also keep alive a lot of dying little languages that only have ten speakers anywhere in the world. They'll find each other and they'll e-mail constantly. But at the same time they'll be exposed through their search engines to this enormous wealth of English language oriented culture.

## **Narrator**

On the Internet English speakers can now enjoy unimagined sources of information and access the collections of universities and national libraries in ways once only possible for the privileged.

## **Craig D'Ooge Library of Congress**

The Library of Congress is probably the largest collection of information and knowledge in recorded history and basically what has happened over 200 years of

the library, we've been collecting and systematically organising a record of the world's cultural and intellectual output.

Libraries were originally founded on the notion that you'd have all the stuff in one place and one time and people would then come to use it there. Now thanks to new technologies, for the first time we're able to bring this to people rather than having people come here so we've created something called the national digital library which is on our web site and we have loaded approximately 5 million items from our collections on to this site. There's movies. There are audio clips, photographs, prints, just a wide variety of special formats. And the idea is that after years of having to make a pilgrimage to Washington to come and use this material, this material can now come to you.

One of the areas that we first did was with the American memory project and this was to put primarily American materials. So you go on our home page and clicked American Memory and then if you're want to just skip to today in history for example. This is a little feature where we've taken things out of the collection and it tells you what happened on a certain day together with some examples. Here's a panoramic photograph that you can then zoom in and, some of these things are just filled with all sorts of information about industrial history or society, or culture and fashion and all that.

### **Narrator**

While the digital library may question the traditional means of accessing information, for many the experience of reading is still inextricably associated with books. At the British Library in London, digital technology is being utilized to bring priceless texts into the hands of the public.

### **Alice Prochaska The British Library**

What we've done is to make digital images of six, so far, of our greatest treasures. We have here the Diamond Sutra, and if you touch the screen this brings up the original scroll. Touch the screen again and it begins to unroll. It's the earliest piece of dated printing known to have survived in the world. And it comes from the ninth century, from ancient China. This is a chant of the text of the original Buddhist devotional work. That was created for us by monks in Taiwan.

Now the other thing that we can do with this is we can zoom in on a particular part of the manuscript or treasure. Here you can really see close up the artistry of the original print or manuscript.

Now there are many different examples. Let me show you an example of a book. This is The Lateral Salter. A devotional work of Psalms created for a wealthy family in the late thirteenth, very early fourteenth century. And if we open it up, beginning with the bookplate that shows who it belonged to before it came to the British Library. If you turn some more pages you come to jousting scenes, some rather challenging performance art. The other thing that really fascinates me about this technology is that you can look in such fine detail at the way the scribes and artists actually made the manuscript.

### **Narrator**

The possibilities offered by digital access to information promise to change the nature of libraries, but their existence in cyberspace may ultimately be limited.

## **Alice Prochaska**

It is fundamentally changing the nature of what a library is, in the sense that more and more people are turning first to the Internet. But I cannot myself foresee a time when any library could afford to digitise more than a small proportion of all the material it holds. We worked out once, not long ago that it would take all of the British Library's two and a half thousand staff, four hundred years to digitise the holdings that we have here at the moment.

## **Narrator**

But while the hi-tech resources, which the Internet offers to people in developed cultures, grow apace, large portions of the world remain excluded from the digital revolution through poverty and a lack of technological infrastructure.

## **Milton Nkosi**

**Africa Bureau Editor, BBC News**

There's an infrastructure problem in Africa. There are no telephones. Someone said the majority of African people have never made a telephone call. There is some statistic that says that there are more telephone calls in Manhattan in New York than in the rest of the continent so even before we get to the debate about whether English is influencing the internet users there's a problem that people can not even access the internet.

## **Vinton Cerf**

Unless you do something yourself, you don't internalise it, it doesn't become part of your understanding and your normal daily affairs. And so the most successful efforts that I've seen in bridging the digital divide have been efforts that teach people in countries where Internet hasn't spread, how to operate pieces of the Internet and how to make it a business.

## **Narrator**

As more of the global economy goes on-line, the issue of exclusion from the Internet has potentially disastrous implications for countries like South Africa.

## **Sizwe Mthembu**

**DOT.ZA Centre**

There's this perception that people still have about computers and the internet that it has been created to sustain, for an example, oppressive systems and so forth and so on. People think that these computers are meant to take away what they used to do and that is thinking. We need to demystify that process so that people could be able to start appreciating the use and the assistance that the system could bring to them.

## **Narrator**

In a grass roots effort to bridge the digital divide, the South African government has established the DOT.ZA initiative to bring Internet access to some of the poorest people in the society.

## **Sizwe Mthembu**

The basic intentions of the centre is to allow communities who are from disadvantaged backgrounds to have access to computer resources, to also be able to get information through the internet and use that information to uplift the standard of living in semi-rural communities and what we previously called Shanty towns.

## **Narrator**

The difficulties of bringing IT to a poor part of Africa are vividly illustrated here in Tembisa (on the outskirts of Johannesburg). DOT.ZA's electrical power cable has been stolen and a temporary generator has to be brought in.

## **Sizwe Mthembu**

Firstly, all the people who are running the centre are people who are literate when it comes to the English language but also secondly the students that we get, we always make sure that although they might not have a proper command of the language but at least they have the basic knowledge of the language such that when they use the system that they are able to interpret various things and be able to access various information and be able to use that information. We think that with the sort of high unemployment rate in the country, people could be able to get job opportunities through the Internet and stuff like that so it is important, it's very important for people to have access to such information.

## **Narrator**

Many visitors to the centre are disappointed though, as the generator only creates enough power to run three computers.

## **Sizwe Mthembu**

We hope that by the end of the year some of the centres will be established in other communities. We believe that it is very important in the sense that we have to increase the number of people who have access to information because if that is the only way in which you can be able to deal with other societal problems such as crime, illiteracy rate and so forth and so on so.

## **Narrator**

In many respects India faces similar problems to South Africa, with the majority of its one billion people having little opportunity to access the technology of the Internet. However, the adoption of English as a second language by a large proportion of its middle class has given India a unique and unexpected advantage in the field of IT.

## **N R Narayana Murthy Infosys Technologies**

There is no doubt at all that English has a lot to do with the progress that India has made in the area of IT. English is the universal language in Hi-tech and if India has to succeed in Hi-tech then India has to embrace English.

**Andy Ranaweera**  
**Mahindra - British Telecom**

India has, as you know, a large population, nearly a billion, and we have a very strong and good educational system. We produce over one hundred thousand engineers a year.

**N Murthy**

Because we missed the industrial revolution, the Indian intellectual has always been very comfortable with conceptualisation with pen and paper, with algorithmics. Now this is one area, which affords considerable opportunity for exercising the power of mental act, just using algorithms, using concepts, using ideas, using instructions.

**Actuality Children Rehearsing**

'... five, six, seven, eight...'

**N Murthy**

Even if you look at a small percentage of Indians having the expertise in terms of conceptualisation. Even if it's only one percent we're talking ten million people. Now we believe that India's strength at this point in time is in producing a large number of English speaking technical talent.

**Narrator**

The inevitable consequence of this is that India is losing some of its brightest IT graduates to foreign companies.

**Andy Ranaweera**

Foreign companies can now come to Indian employees and recruit them directly and that's competition for us. When Americans come and wave the dollars and we wave the rupees, you know which side the students will take. The up side to that is that these guys get exposed to all the new developments that happens in the UK, US and other places, and they will bring that know-how back into India.

**Narrator**

But while India's English speaking software engineers migrate to Silicon Valley. America's continued technological domination of the digital world is by no means assured.

**John Seely Brown**  
**Director, Xerox PARC**

I happen to think of the US happens to be a third world country when it comes to wireless communication I mean Europe and Asia are far ahead of the United States. So it is conceivable to me that the last ten years has been kind of the pinnacle of technology prowess for the United States. But you may actually see countries like Japan being the leading edge in terms of playing into how the wireless media actually impact, how teenagers think, how teenagers communicate.

## **Vinton Cerf**

In Japan in particular there is a very very rapid growth of Internet access by means of mobile telephones. Something like 16 million of these devices have been sold in the last 15 to 18 months in Japan so it's very popular especially among teenagers.

### **Narrator**

The immense popularity of mobile phone Internet access among Japanese teenagers, has led electronics giant Sony to consider an even more ambitious development for the wireless Internet.

## **Masahiro Nagakubo** **Chief Producer, So-Net**

We start thinking about the future of broadcasting and young people in Japan. Broadcasting, younger people really get tired of it. And the people are more and more inclined and going into their cellular phones.

And they talk, they watch, they do about everything on this. So then why not make a content for this size. Then something came into my mind, let's make 3 minute content, but within that 3 minutes, we can put almost everything, sports, drama, everything.

Simultaneously we broadcast the same content on the Internet screen. We have ten characters, covers lifestyle totally. So even say eight, ten years old, boys can understand the philosophy.

## **John Seely Brown**

There's an obsession with creating the next cool thing that actually tries to help peoples lives, more may be emphasis on cool things and copy peoples lives, you tend to get those sometimes confused. But you create cool thing that cool thing propagates by itself and the way that we talk about that cool thing moves with the artefact itself. After all culture you know, culture does grow up around artefacts well in today's world many of those artefacts are technological artefacts.

### **Narrator**

Although So-Net currently broadcasts in Japanese, access to wider audiences will inevitably require change.

## **Masahiro Nagakubo**

My final goal is making that three-minute content in English. Not high sophisticated English, but English like my language I speak. So by watching that three minutes they can imagine what's going on with very limited English assistance.

## **John Seely Brown**

I think as we move to broadband communication you're going to find a notion of literacy shifting from just being text based literacy to text plus image type based literacy, screen based literacy and so on, multimedia is by the way multiple media

and had multiple kinds of literacy combined. I think we're going to be inventing genres you can't even believe right now.

## **Narrator**

But even if the future Internet moves away from text to more visual forms, the issues of language and accessibility remain. So can we look forward to the day when computers will solve this problem too...

## **Geoff Nunberg**

People say that we are going to have perfected machine translation in 15 years and they've been saying that since 1960 and in the year 2050 I think they're going to be saying, 'Just 15 years from now we will have got it down'. It's an enormously difficult problem to translate, not just poetry which resists translation but the simplest texts. If you want to say, 'Remove the spark plug' in German you use one verb. If you are saying, 'Remove the fanbelt' you use another verb. If you're saying, 'Remove the carburettor' you use another verb and that's very difficult for a machine to master.

## **Narrator**

There are however, less sophisticated systems currently available on the Internet, and at British Telecom's research centre, Adastral Park, another step is being taken towards the ultimate goal.

## **Steve Appleby BT Adastral Park**

We're developing a machine translation system called Pen Pal and it's different to most other translation systems in that it tries to get at the meaning behind text and not just process it in a very superficial way. When you type in a sentence it analyses the sentence to check for ambiguities. If I click on the word 'I' here it asks whether I'm male or female because that could be important to translation. The word 'see' could have several meanings, in this case we mean to see by sight, but it could say be a doctor seeing a patient, in which case it might be a different translation in different languages. It wants to know if the 'cat' is male or female as that might have an effect too on the translation. It's now got an unambiguous representation of this phrase. And there's the translation into French. It's currently an experimental system and we haven't reached the prototype stage yet really, but we would like to productize it if possible or incorporate it into other systems where it could be useful to anybody trying to communicate with somebody that doesn't speak the same language as them.

## **Geoff Nunberg**

The technology can do amazing things and it's already being used by lots of people who can make do with something less than a perfect translation. If I go onto the Internet and I want to find out if the hotel in Milan takes visa cards, if I receive a letter from somebody in Greece that I don't know how to translate I can at least get an idea of what the letter's about and I think those uses of the technology will continue to spread. The technology will improve but if we're looking for a perfect colloquial translation from Chinese to English or Greek to German I don't see that happening at any time in the next fifty, sixty, seventy...I mean what's an eternity given the rate of development of the technology.



## **Narrator**

In the meantime even the English-speaking world is coming to accept the fact that in order to communicate effectively the future has to be multilingual.

## **David Crystal**

The world is moving towards an increasingly multi-lingual future. The most obvious benefit is that it enables you to see the world from a number of different points of view, and it makes you a more open minded individual, there's no shadow of a doubt about that. As one assimilates the culture you become part of it and you suddenly see that your own way is just one way of many ways of seeing the world, it's an immensely strong force for tolerance.

## **Narrator**

The BBC World Service was the first global English language broadcaster. They now produce programmes in forty-three languages, a policy, which enables them to connect with their audience far more effectively.

## **Bob Jobbins**

### **Director, BBC World Service News**

We broadcast because we think free information is a sort of, an important aspect of democracy. That has to be again one of the touchstones of what we do. Different countries go through different situations, which make what we do more important or less important to them. So if you look say at Afghanistan currently, almost every adult Afghan listens to the BBC in either Persian or Pushtu because nobody else is broadcasting the range of information that we give.

## **Actuality BBC World Service, Swahili**

## **Ben Malor**

### **Focus on Africa**

Because we speak in a local language, fine if somebody's not educated and can therefore not speak or hear English, they're able to, you know, listen to BBC material without necessarily having to understand English. So yes, in that way we cater for an audience, which English would not have been able to reach.

## **Narrator**

For the World Service foreign language broadcasts has become an essential compliment to their English language service and an important recognition of the value of multi-lingualism. It is a policy, which is now attracting other international broadcasters. CNN too have begun producing regional language programming which enables them to focus on local issues alongside their English language international service.

## **Chris Cramer**

### **President, CNN International**

We realised maybe five or six years ago it was no longer possible to have one single global version of CNN going out to all parts, to all men to all women, not possible.

We had to produce international news through regional eyeballs, and to swoop down to local language. That's been the strategy for the last three or four years.

### **Actuality CNN Spanish Report**

**Chris Cramer**

We have a Spanish language channel for Latin America, a version for Mexico. We have a 24 hr Spanish channel in Spain itself.

### **Actuality CNN Spanish Report**

**Chris Cramer**

We are majority shareholder of a German language version of CNN in Germany.

### **Actuality CNN German Report**

**Chris Cramer**

We have CNN Turk, which broadcasts 24 hours, a day in Turkey and several other plans at the moment for other television versions of CNN. We have nine or ten versions of CNN on the website and we'll be doubling that number in the next six to twelve months.

### **Actuality CNN Website Commercial**

'CNN dot Co dot JP. Up to the minute news from CNN in Japanese...Log on today...'

**Narrator**

But ironically the increasing availability of local language programming has had little impact on the growth of English as a lingua franca.

In Asia the move towards becoming bilingual in English has been enthusiastically embraced. There are now more people learning English as a foreign language in China than there are native speakers in America.

And in Japan where English has traditionally been regarded as a threat to Japanese culture, there is a growing focus on the importance of acquiring the language.

**Yoichi Funabashi**  
**The Asahi Shimbun**

Asia is becoming English speaking Asia, very much rapid, and yet if Japan would just seclude itself and just want to maintain its purity, quote unquote, then how can Japan communicate with the neighbouring countries and societies. English is not just Anglo Saxon English these days; English has become to be second language for many societies.

**Narrator**

Japan currently has one of the lowest levels of English literacy in Asia and has begun to recognise the potential cost to its economy if bi-lingualism isn't

encouraged. In Tokyo, the Foreign Press Association recently hosted a conference to discuss the economic importance of English as a common language in the region.

**Kathryn Tolbert**  
**The Washington Post**

There's a kind of panic in Japan over English and a real sense of crisis that didn't exist before. English always played a big role in Japan. But Japan has a kind of a translation culture, where it takes what it wants from the West and translates it into Japanese. Or it takes everything it thinks it needs and translates it into Japanese. But Japan can't communicate its views effectively because there aren't enough people who can do that fluently in English.

**Actuality Press Conference**

**Kathryn Tolbert**

There was a Japanese professor at Kao who said 'we shouldn't have to apologise for using Japanese English. The notion that English belongs to the Americans or Britons is narrow minded. English is now the language of the world.' And so people are saying you know, it belongs to us and we will change it and use it.'

**Chongkittavorn Kavi**

'You don't want everybody to speak with a British accent or American accent. It's good to have Thai accent, Indonesian accent, Japanese accent. But when they get together they speak in the English that is intelligible, because you need to have identity of the speaker. You don't want to have Asian face and then everybody speak Oxbridge accent.'

**Kathryn Tolbert**

The number of non-native speakers has really boomed and have taken the language for themselves. And they say, you know, this is our language and we're going to change it and use it. So that has definitely taken place. And I think that American English or British English, you know, it was the starting point, it's no longer the standard.

**Actuality Press Conference**

**Kathryn Tolbert**

'I have a question for our other panellists about Chinese. There are three times as many Chinese speakers in the world as English speakers. And I wonder if Chinese could become the lingua franca in Asia.'

**Yuen Ying Chan**

'I appreciate the nice thought but I don't think it will happen...'

**Yoichi Funabashi**

It's a very, very laborious task, for non-Chinese to learn Chinese characters, and you cannot just learn that language without learning Chinese characters, so I think this is a serious block, inhibition. I don't think Chinese will become a lingua franca.

## **Actuality Press Conference**

### **Yuen Ying Chan**

'To not have alphabet is a big problem, you know for the Chinese. I mean how do you sort. I mean you talking about IT right, I can't even organise my phone book in Chinese. Do you go by strokes, you know. You can't order. So when you can't order you can't sort right, and it becomes really inefficient.'

### **Yuen Ying Chan**

#### **University of Hong Kong**

I think we're moving towards a bi-lingual, multi-cultural world. United States itself, which has been quite insular in terms of language, is promoting more multi-lingual, also multi-cultural values. And so there's a convergence.

### **Kathryn Tolbert**

We thought we had this huge advantage being native speakers of English and now with so many people bi-lingual around the world. And with English having changed that unless Americans are also bi-lingual, we're not going to be able to communicate.

### **Mariko Fujiwara**

#### **Hakuhodo Institute of Life and Living**

In this day and age you have to accept the fact that we need a language through which you should be able to communicate with an increasing number of people, and if your language is not the one and unluckily Japanese isn't the language, then the only way you can expand your horizon is to, is to learn another language, and I'm probably a bit sorry it has to be English because, as I said, it is not an easy language to learn, but if it were Swedish or French or German, you know those languages might have their own peculiarities that would make it difficult to learn.

### **Narrator**

English language education has in fact been a regular feature in the Japanese curriculum since the end of the Second World War. However teaching methods have relied on grammatical instruction with little attention paid to the spoken language.

### **Tom Trinkle**

#### **Nichibeikaiwa Gakuin**

The problem is they're still using the grammar translation system. It has never changed in all these years. You come in to...after graduation they have six years of English in the High School system, but they still can't speak English. They understand, but they can't say it.

### **Narrator**

Tom Trinkle is one of a growing number of language teachers working in the private sector in Japan trying to raise the standards of spoken English.

## **Actuality Classroom**

'Practise with a partner...'

### **Tom Trinkle**

You come here you're doing five, six hours a day, everyday and we're going what, six months, and their English was fine. They can carry a conversation with you.

## **Actuality Classroom**

'I'd like to give her something different this time...'  
'Have you considered buying jewellery for her birthday?'  
'That's an idea....'

### **Tom Trinkle**

For me my life is this school and my students. And my family's very much a part of what I do. They are excited to talk to my children because my children and bi-lingual, bi-cultural. They are what the students want to be.

## **Actuality Classroom**

'What do you usually give your mother for her birthday?'  
'Sometimes a box of chocolates and sometimes flowers.'

### **Tom Trinkle**

I went to university in 1970/71. I had an old Japanese teacher who told me Japanese is a dying language. And this was an old Japanese woman and she said, "today there is no more new kanji. All the new words coming into the language are foreign words so what I see is more and more the influence of foreign culture coming into Japan.

## **Actuality Classroom**

'So what's the difference? Can I help you, may I help you?'  
'We use made... we use may... more polite, I think.'

### **Mariko Fujiwara**

For foreigners like myself English is a very difficult language to perfect because it has so many exceptions to the rule and the spelling is impossible. So learning a language, learning a foreign language is like learning a completely different framework separate from your own and that's quite challenging.

### **Narrator**

In Osaka, the Doshisha Women's College has been staging an annual Shakespeare production for the past 50 years. Students studying English tackle the language in its most complex form producing a unique amalgam of Japanese culture and 16th Century English.

**Professor Makoto Ozaki**  
**Doshisha Women's College**

It's a formidable tradition of doing Shakespeare in English in Japan. This was started 50 years ago by the teachers and they thought it's a good idea to let the students perform a part of the play they were reading at the time. It's much more fun and much more easy to understand by performing Shakespeare than just reading in the classroom.

**Actuality Rehearsal 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'**

'I pray thee gentle mortal sing again. My ears are much enamoured by thy notes and so my eyes to they shape..'

**Makoto Ozaki**

They are 4th year students so they have a good background in English.

**Actuality Rehearsal 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'**

'... To swear I love thee.'

**Student Interview**

'I play Bottom. I have to be the most masculine man in the play so that I could be stupid without any juice of the flower.'  
'I play Hippolyta and Titania.'

**Actuality Rehearsal 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'**

'... on the courtesies of this gentleman, feed him with apricots and strawberries, with purple grapes.....'

**Student Interviews**

'It's very difficult for me to speak classical English.'

'The language is not familiar, it's too old and it's something you never speak so all I had to do was to just memorise the text. I wanted to speak out in the modern way like you people do so I didn't want to make it sound old.'

**Makoto Ozaki**

Shakespeare is the basis of modern English in many ways. You find many expressions in modern English, which Shakespeare himself used or invented. To get into the world of Shakespeare is very good for them for modern English training.

**Actuality Performance 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'**

'"... Goodnight unto you all. Give me your hands and if you be friends and shall restore amends.'

## **Narrator**

While millions around the world struggle with the daunting task of learning English, the benefits of bi-lingualism have begun to be appreciated in Britain, the home of the language. In these valleys one of the most successful revivals of a minority language is being enthusiastically pursued. For the people of Wales, the future is determinedly bi-lingual.

## **David Crystal**

This is one of the success stories of the 20th century. In the case of Welsh, we have both a strong grass roots movement which began in the sixties and seventies, which led eventually to the provision of a Welsh language television channel and all sorts of other good things and then, top down, the government has introduced two language acts and there is some movement towards a third, aiming to protect the language. As a consequence, Welsh is the only Celtic language in the 20th century to have stopped its steady decline down towards going through the floor, to have evened out and actually to show signs of growth.

## **Narrator**

An integral part of the language revival was the introduction of Welsh Language Acts, which gave the language official status in government and legally established a bilingual society.

## **Actuality Welsh Assembly**

### **Rhodri Williams Welsh Language Board**

Welsh has been the language of Wales for very many centuries. Its certainly been around longer than English has in this part of the United Kingdom. There are also benefits, I think, in terms of cultural diversity. That people realise that most people in the world are bi-lingual, many of them have English as their second language, but many are bi-lingual in other languages. And that, in the sense that it opens one's windows on the world, the advantages that it gives. The appreciation of diversity that that creates, we think are all positive benefits.

## **Actuality Tregarth Nursery School**

'See Saw, Jackdaw.....'

### **Meriel Parry Ysgol Gynradd Tregarth**

We tend to sort of drown them in Welsh. If the children don't understand of course, we translate. But all formal education is done through the medium of Welsh and its surprising how the children pick the language up.

You have two different cultures, two different traditions. You have all the poetry in English and Welsh that they can appreciate. And there's all the extra knowledge they get. It's exactly like looking at the world through two different windows. But it is a constant battle. We have to work very, very hard to make sure that the children are bi-lingual. The parents are very supportive in this area.

## **Parent Interview**

I understand from the nursery that she can understand through the medium of Welsh but her vocabulary at the moment is quite limited. So it would be things like colours, numbers, thank you, please. And occasionally she's talking to herself, and she's definitely talking in Welsh but at the moment I don't understand what she's saying.

## **Rhodri Williams**

Bi-lingual education really has only become a reality in Wales during the last half of the 20th century. But by now bi-lingual education is within grasp of people in all parts of Wales. And the demand for bi-lingual education is encouraging.

## **Narrator**

The media has also played a crucial role in the promotion of the Welsh language.

## **Keith Jones BBC Wales**

This is the set of Pobol Y Cwm. This is actually the BBC's longest running soap opera. It's in the Welsh language and it's produced by BBC Wales here in Cardiff.

On television we produce around ten hours of programming a week in the Welsh language. And that includes Pobol y Cwm it includes news, it includes sport, and factual programming and arts and music.

## **Actuality Pobol Y Cwm Rehearsal**

'Stand by for rehearsal. And action.'

## **Keith Jones**

BBC Wales was the pioneer in broadcasting in the Welsh language. And since 1982 with the creation of the Welsh language channel, all of that programming has appeared on that channel. And then on radio we have our own radio service. It's a full eighteen-hour a day radio service, and that's all in the Welsh language, so that commitment is pretty solid.

## **Narrator**

The success of the Welsh in establishing a bilingual society reflects a firm commitment to a cultural heritage, which happily co-exists alongside an acceptance of the usefulness of English.

In South Africa, with its eleven official languages, this process is much further advanced with multi-lingualism a practical reality.

## **David Crystal**

If you go to Africa where people speak four or five languages, they don't use them for the same purpose, they use one language in the home, another language perhaps in the street, another language if they go to church, another language



perhaps in, in some political arena, and so on and so forth, they use the different languages for different purposes, that's what multi-linguism is really like.

## **Narrator**

This situation is aptly reflected in South Africa's most popular soap opera, Isidingo which is produced, directed and acted by a multiracial, multilingual team. In the programme characters converse in a bewildering hybrid of languages that reflect the reality of South African life.

## **Darlington Michaels Actor, Isidingo**

If we had only one language in this programme it would feel unprotected with other languages. It is good that it has other languages in, which of course there is that protection. We know there is this language spoken in this programme. This and that and that, Zulu, Xhosa, Sesotho, Twisitana, English and it balances.

## **Ramolao Makhene Actor, Isidingo**

What the programme does is it wants to tap into almost all languages and tap in on everybody else so that people know that even though there is lots of English in it, but somewhere my language is going to be spoken. And something in the way that I appreciate is going to be said.

The type of character he is is the wise guy. He speaks almost every language, but mostly the language he uses is the street language, what we call Twisitana, which is a mixture of Afrikaans and every other language. For example, 'My Baby', he won't say my baby, he says 'Eh Me Bambino'. And Bambino is not English language, is it Italian or French? Things like 'comprehende' didn't you understand?

## **Actuality Isidingo Clip**

'Last week was a bumper week.....'

## **Ramolao Makhene**

He uses Tswana, Zulu and English. So the more comfortable he is with any language, he goes with it.

## **Actuality Isidingo Clip**

'I just had some interesting news'  
'Doesn't a closed door mean anything to you. Kera KoKo'

## **Ilse van Hemert Director, Isidingo**

There's a lot more confidence coming from people who are speaking the minority languages to use those languages whenever they feel like it. And it's then the prerogative of the other person to say 'I'm not with you, can you say that again in another language', which puts the power back in the hands of the people with the minority languages.

Sometimes it's quite tricky when people start to ad lib and you've got a director who doesn't understand all the vernacular, you're in trouble. And that's really our problem, we should be more clued up with languages, because in fact our black actors all are perfectly...understand Afrikaans and English perfectly well. And so we're the ones who are further behind, but I must say one gets used to it, and after a while you start to understand, although you don't know the language. Because there are certain stock expressions and we start using them badly. So we've accommodated for that over time.

### **Ramolao Makhene**

Every time I meet people in the street, they say, you said something the other day and I really really like it. It's true; this is what happens in my culture. And once you tell stories that are South African about South Africans, they love them more. And I think that's what makes Isidingo tick so much with people.

### **Narrator**

The English spoken by the characters on Isidingo with its diverse local vocabulary is typical of the many varieties of the language that are springing up around the world. With native speakers of English now in the minority is the language destined to fragment into mutually unintelligible dialects? And if so, what place does English have in our globalised world?

### **Geoff Nunberg**

It's interesting there's almost two English's, there's this English that we Americans speak for the most part and the British speak and so on and that's a native language that has a rich literature and that we think we own in some sense and then there's this other English. When I lived in Rome I used to think of it as Euro English though I suppose I should think of it as world English and it was sort of like the Euro Dollar, this currency that had burst forth from its national boundaries and was establishing a life of its own. I would sit in the Piazza Navona and watch some Italian guys hitting on some Danish women who were tourists there speaking this English that I had no possible way of understanding but that seemed to work for them and there is a sense in which the effectiveness of English as a world language has to a certain extent profited from the fact that English speakers really tend to be less intense about protecting its correctness than say the French are.

### **Mahesh Bhatt**

English is now looked as an Indian language. It's no longer a foreign language. It's a language, which we have grown up with, we have twisted it. We speak it in our own way. It's as much my language as the language of the guy who is there in England. And the world is perhaps richer with this language and I think English is here to stay and I think that is going to be resonating in the hearts for a long long time.

### **Mathatha Tsedu**

I still have to find out why the English have been able to con the world like this but that is the reality whether you are in Russia or in China or in Japan or in the US wherever you go you will be able to log on in English and get onto some web site and update yourself on what has happened in the world.

## **David Crystal**

Nobody can predict the future of the English language, or of any language really, but English in particular. There has never been a language spoken by so many people in so many places. There has never been a language that has been subjected to so many influences by so many people in so many places. I see the future of English as being a world where everybody will be developing multi-dialectism in the English language. It'll be a much more varied kind of English, still a very universal English but one in which there is a balance between intelligibility and identity.

## **Narrator**

One thing is clear, whatever the fate of English, it is now a world language that belongs to all of the billion or more people who use it everyday. And who through their daily discourse contribute to its immense richness and diversity.