

Would it be better if we all spoke the same language?

Over 6000 different languages are spoken across the world. Learning a new language can give your brain a workout and help you learn about other cultures. Would it be easier if we all spoke the same language? No more misunderstandings could be a possible result, but there could be serious consequences (e.g. loss of cultural identity).



Presently, there are ~7000 languages spoken in the world.

This number is constantly changing as languages go extinct and more languages are discovered. Despite this huge number, only 23 languages are spoken by half the world's population and around one third of languages are in danger of going extinct.

A lingua franca describes a language used to make communication possible between people who speak different native languages. The term originates from the Mediterranean Lingua Franca – an Italian-based language created to facilitate trade around the Mediterranean from the 11th – 19th centuries.



How were certain words created?

By knowing the original Latin or Greek words, this helps with making sense of words that are used today.

Examples:

Office = officium – duty – Latin

Scholar = schole – leisure – Greek

Orthodontist = orthos (straight) dont (tooth) – both Greek

Photography = phos (light) graphein (to write) – both Greek



Even if you only speak one language, you're probably multilingual, states Professor of German Literature, Katrin Kohl. Professor Kohl explains that whether with friends, your family, or at work, you're likely communicating differently. Prof Kohl says, "For each group you talk with, you'll use different languages." In particular with twins, they may not just use slang but actually their own secret language.



"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart".

—Nelson Mandela



A loanword is a word adopted from one language and used in another with little or no translation.

For example, 'faux pas' which is a French term used to describe an embarrassing or tactless act or remark in a social situation.

"As a mathematician, I'm going to jump right in and say that we already do all speak the same language: the language of maths. It's often referred to as the 'language of the universe' and for good reason. It's certainly universal across any culture, country, society, race, religion and maybe even any planet... Think about it, we all understand that $1 + 1 = 2$."

-Dr Tom Crawford

<https://explore.org/question-detail/would-it-be-better-if-we-all-spoke-the-same-language#1804>

**Some languages (e.g. Yiddish, Kelabit, and Dusner) could soon become extinct.
Could social media be the answer to
saving minority languages?**

There can be distinct dialects of a language based on the region that it is spoken. What examples of this do you see within the UK?

As technology evolves and presents innovations for translating languages, is there a need for us all to speak the same language?