

TAKE IT FROM ME

GRAMMAR

1 Read the article and answer the questions.

- Who decided to implement a new study skill?
- Who learnt English to meet new acquaintances?
- Who was greatly influenced by an unanticipated encounter?
- Who was encouraged to learn for commercial reasons?
- Who was initially reluctant to learn English?
- Who felt upset about their lack of communication skills?



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Saeed

I first **had** arrived here with my parents when I was eight. I was really worried about living in a new country, especially as I wasn't knowing the language at all. Not a word! I soon discovered that it had been impossible to make friends without being able to chat to them in any way, so I had been forcing myself to do it, even though I couldn't get my ideas across at all. But I made some amazing friends. Looking back, the best thing about it was how much they helped me – I had never regretted pushing myself out of my comfort zone.

Jules

By the time I left school, I was studying English for about six years, on and off, but not with any real interest. To tell you the truth, I looked forward to never saying another word in English. That summer, I went on holiday with my parents, and we had stayed in the same hotel as this Scottish family. The son, Nigel, was about my age. I never met anyone like him before, he was so open to adventure and had such a free spirit. I spent so much time talking to him about life, and what we both had hoped to get from it, I decided there and then to move to Scotland.

Johan

My parents were really wanting me to get better at English so I could become involved their business. I registered for an online course and immediately was getting to work on my new language skills. Soon, my parents took me to a meeting with an Australian businessman who has been working with our company for several years. I couldn't understand a word, but knew immediately that I have been finding it so difficult to get what he was saying because I had never written anything down during my course, not a single word of vocabulary. I had improved since then, obviously!



4

2 Find and correct five past verb form mistakes in each section of the article. The first one has been done for you.

I first arrived here ...

3 Rearrange the words in bold to form correct sentences.

1 There is little doubt that the city **busier / become / will / increasingly** over the next five years.

2 I **over / heading / to / hopefully / am** my sister's this evening.

3 What time should we meet? I think **starts / film / at / the / eight thirty**.

4 I'm afraid there are no places left, but **you / sure / stay / will / make / on / we** the waiting list.

5 The rain has been terrible all day, but I **far / to / is / going / it / worse / get / suspect** before it gets better.

6 For your party next week, **everyone / inviting / be / you / will** from work?

4 Correct the mistakes in the sentences, then match them to the descriptions (A–E).

- I'd love to come to your party, but I'm not sure if I can. I'm letting you know tomorrow.
- Markus says that he'll be here at five, unless the traffic is going to be dreadful.
- Have you heard about that amazing new restaurant in town? We go at the weekend.
- Suki will have her driving test at 11.00 tomorrow. That explains why she's so nervous.
- I'm sure I make friends when I start college, but I still don't want to go.

- Expressing a future intention, desire, or promise.
- Making a prediction about the future.
- Using the present simple to describe a scheduled event at a known time in the future.
- Using the present simple in first conditional clauses after the condition or time word.
- Using the present continuous to talk about a fixed plan or arrangement.

VOCABULARY


Correct the spelling or word choice mistakes in the sentences. Tick (✓) any sentences which are correct.

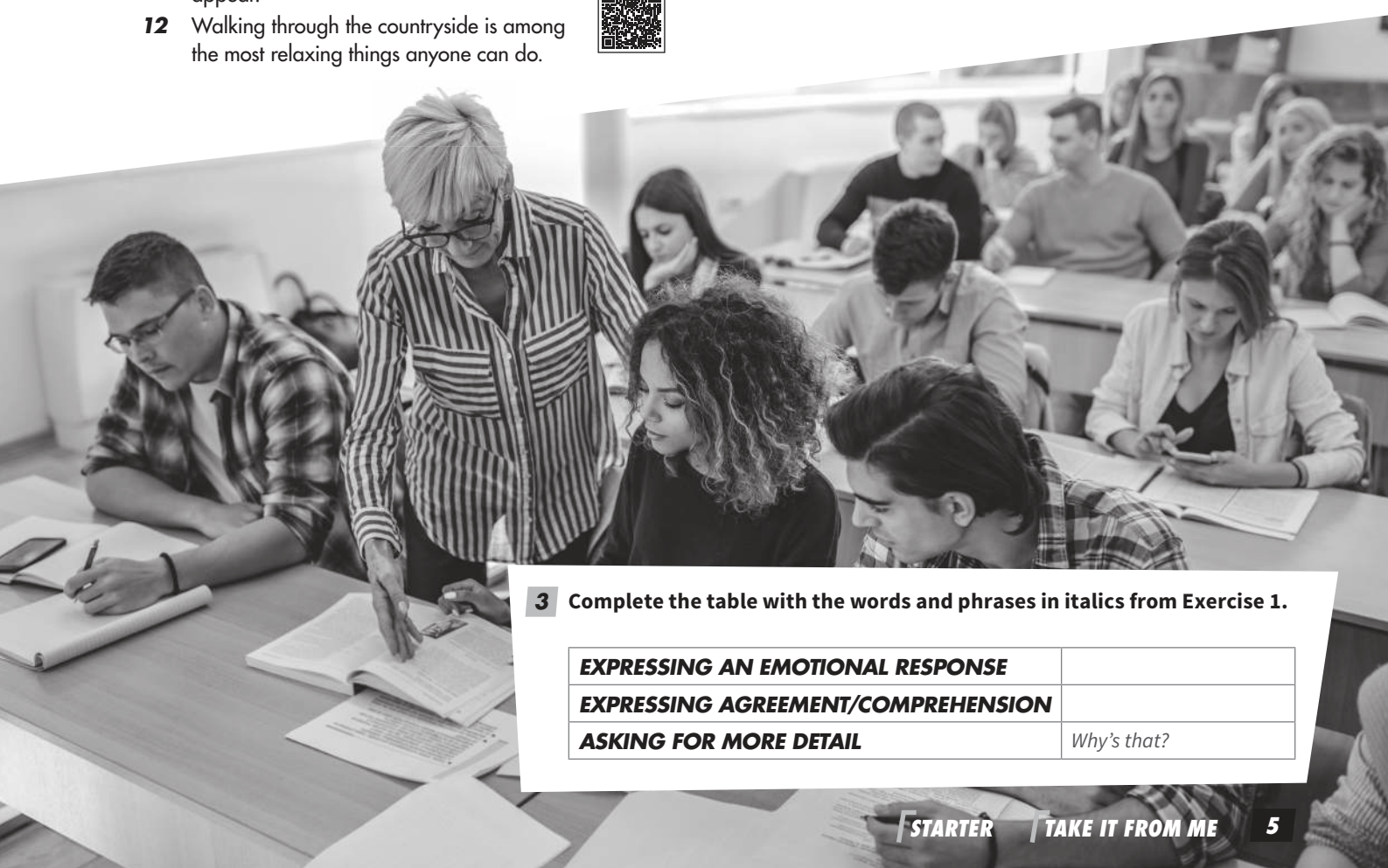
- 1 Although we are so different, my best friend and I complement each other very well.
- 2 Ben was sitting among his parents when his university acceptance letter arrived.
- 3 I'd love to get some work experience at the gym, but I'm not sure whose the best person to contact.
- 4 I get nervous talking to the principle, but she always listens to what you're saying.
- 5 It's so much better when receipts are emailed to you – the paper ones are too easy to lose.
- 6 My school runs entirely on the principle that the harder you study, the better your grades.
- 7 My teacher told me I was the most opinionated student she had ever had. I took it as a complement.
- 8 Now that the rain has finally stopped, I'm feeling all together more optimistic than I was yesterday.
- 9 It doesn't matter whose fault it was, we need to make sure we fix this mess quickly.
- 10 That was a wonderful meal – the chef is fantastic! I'd love to get the receipt for my main course.
- 11 The wedding guests were gathered all together, waiting for the bride and groom to appear.
- 12 Walking through the countryside is among the most relaxing things anyone can do.

SPEAKING

1 Complete the dialogue with the correct options.

- A** I'm really enjoying our English lessons at the moment. The new teacher is really pushing us to improve with some of the activities we do, isn't she?
- B** (1) *Why's that? / Like what?*
- A** Well, getting us to use more idiomatic language in our speaking, for one thing. I feel like my conversations are starting to sound much more natural.
- B** (2) *That's true / I know what you mean.* I never realised how important that sort of thing is, if you're aiming to get to a really advanced level.
- A** (3) *No way! / Me neither.* I mean, when I started learning English, the teacher I had just made us do grammar exercises in every class. We never studied vocabulary and we certainly never practised our speaking.
- B** (4) *Really? / What a nightmare!*
- A** It was, but I just tried to keep reading as much as I could in English and kept a really good vocabulary notebook, even though the teacher never checked it.
- B** (5) *That sounds amazing, / That must have been frustrating,* especially because you were a student who really wanted to improve. My first teacher was nothing like that. In fact, every one of our classes was just focused on speaking.
- A** (6) *You're having me on! / You're so lucky!*
- B** Well, I'm not sure I'd say that. I don't think we learnt much vocabulary in his class, either. He certainly never got us to take notes. Anyway, at least we're both with a great teacher now.
- A** (7) *Exactly! / Me too!*

2  02 Listen and check your answers to Exercise 1.



3 Complete the table with the words and phrases in italics from Exercise 1.

EXPRESSING AN EMOTIONAL RESPONSE	
EXPRESSING AGREEMENT/COMPREHENSION	
ASKING FOR MORE DETAIL	<i>Why's that?</i>



READING

1 Choose the correct heading for each of the sections (A–D).

- 1 The appeal of simplicity and accessibility
- 2 A victim of its own popularity
- 3 The more things change, the more they stay the same
- 4 Modern techniques are only useful in the right hands

A



Native speakers of English are today in the minority, outnumbered five to one by those who use it as a second, third or even fourth language. With this has come a number of changes in the way the language is spoken, as people from across the world come together to communicate as best they possibly can, even with low levels of ability. It has led to some interesting transformations. For example, we have seen the emergence of *Spanglish* and *Singlish*; English mixed with, respectively, Spanish and Singaporean, in many cases creating elements of an entirely new language. Additionally, huge numbers of traditional ‘mistakes’ in grammar or vocabulary have tended to be disregarded, becoming entirely acceptable in conversation, even ‘correct’. For these reasons, some people believe that, a hundred years from now, English will have become completely unrecognisable from the way in which it is currently used.

C



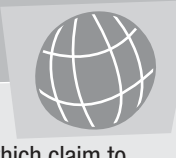
Globally, there is a growing proportion of people who have adopted English in addition to their own language, and this trend looks set to continue. A decade ago, it was expected that Chinese would soon replace English as the primary global language of communication, and a huge number of well-respected educators started encouraging schools to teach it to children from the age of four. Yet this development never quite happened and, in fact, some researchers now suggest that China is – or will soon become – the nation with the highest number of inhabitants who speak some form of English. Perhaps it is because the language is considered to be relatively easy to learn in comparison with most others spoken across the world. Indeed, given how easy it is to watch movies and TV shows in English, many people claim that they have learnt the language alone, in front of a screen. Equally importantly, though, most linguists believe that if you want to convey a simple message in simple terms, there is no better language available than English.

B



Another school of thought is that although English will change, particularly as native speakers are no longer the dominant group, it is conceivable that on the whole it will probably remain fundamentally the same. For one thing, as mobile technology becomes increasingly popular worldwide, texting is having a huge effect on the way we ‘talk’ to one another. Far from being, as many critics argue, an excessive oversimplification of the language, all texting has actually done is provide people with another form in which to communicate. It helps to make some of the more involved aspects of English less difficult, yet at the same time allows for a huge range of expression and creativity. So, in the future, the *medium* of communication will undergo huge changes, not the language itself.

D



English is, for many, also the global language of business. There are hundreds of apps available which claim to provide a reliable, instantaneous translation service, and thus can help anyone who wants to become an international business executive, even if they have only a beginner level of English. But how effective are these apps for the businessperson of the future? In high-level meetings, where decisions often need to be made quickly and decisively, would it not seem unprofessional to frequently stop a discussion to translate something you want to say through an app on your phone? There is also a strong case to argue that translation apps, while indisputably useful for tourists, will always lack accuracy and reliability when it comes to business situations where exactness is key and misunderstanding should be avoided where possible. While there is no doubt that improvements in technology can help more people to communicate in English, it needs to be used wisely.

2 Which section in the text:

- 1 suggests that technology can be unreliable in certain situations?
- 2 disagrees with B about whether English will survive in the future?
- 3 mentions the idea that English benefits from its lack of complexity?
- 4 praises the flexibility that technology can bring to conversations?
- 5 describes a prediction that did not come true?

3 Find words or phrases in the text that mean:

- 1 ignored (para A)
- 2 believable (para B)
- 3 essentially (para B)
- 4 complicated (para B)
- 5 comparatively (para C)
- 6 deliver (para C)
- 7 immediate (para D)
- 8 unquestionably (para D)

LISTENING

1 **03 Listen to Speakers A–C talking about their experiences of language learning. Which speaker mentions:**

- 1 their intention to meet new people?
- 2 being able to resolve a frustrating situation?
- 3 making a sudden, unexpected decision?
- 4 sensing that a friendship has been improved because of their studies?
- 5 a lack of practice opportunities?
- 6 feeling a greater self-belief in their abilities?

2 **03 Replace the underlined phrases in sentences 1–6 with the phrases in the box. Then listen again and check your answers.**

more often than not really took off out loud
 word-perfect immerse yourself in tall order

- 1 To be honest, making any sort of progress in either was a real challenge.
- 2 ... the more you understand of a language, the more you can relax and integrate completely into the local culture.
- 3 I find it really helps me to focus. Well, most of the time!
- 4 My language skills improved very quickly from the first class.
- 5 I was really anxious and thought I'd just freeze if I said it so everyone else could hear.
- 6 Not 100% correct, but enough to get the point across.

WRITING

1 Complete the table with the pairs of matching formal and informal words and phrases in the box.

after-all a great number of by way of example
 entirely confused far more demanding
 far superior huge influence it's no great shock
 it is little wonder I mean loads and loads of
 massive effect much harder so much better
 totally baffled ultimately

FORMAL	INFORMAL
ultimately	after all

2 Complete texts A and B with the correct words and phrases from the box.

Text A

Reply Forward

Hi Antonio,

Good to hear from you, and thanks for asking how my Spanish lessons are going. If I'm being honest, a lot of the time I'm (1) about how to use all those verb forms correctly. (2), in English, there aren't that many changes you can make to the form of a regular verb, but now I'm realising that there are (3) ways you need to transform a verb in Spanish if you want people to understand you properly. But (4) that I'm not making progress as quickly as I'd hoped. (5), just the fact that I'm an adult makes things (6), I read this article the other day about how kids are (7) than older people at learning a second or third language. Apparently, as you age, your first language has a (8) on the way you learn another one, but kids don't have that. Maybe I'll just go into my next class and pretend I'm six!

Speak soon,
 Colin

Text B

The difficulties of language learning in 'teenagehood'

In terms of learning a second or third language, the majority of research on the subject seems to prove that, (1), children are (2) to teenagers in their ability to understand and absorb language in a way that they can produce it themselves. Most teenagers find learning a language (3) than children do, and (4) that this is the case. (5), while a regular verb in English might only be altered in four ways (e.g. *work, works, working, worked*), in Spanish there are (6) verb transformations that could occur if one wishes to be correctly understood. In this way, there is every reason for teenage students to find themselves (7) by the new ways in which verb forms are used in the language they are attempting to learn – at this point in their lives, they have already developed a full language system, and this tends to have a (8) on the learning process.

