

Authentic Listening

James McElvenny of the Linguistics Department at the University of Sydney joins in this week with his take on pidginisation, constructed languages and international communication.

Before listening to the radio programme, make sure you understand the following words and ideas mentioned in the text

Pidgin – <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pidgin>
Constructed languages - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constructed_languages
Babel (The Tower of Babel) - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tower_of_Babel
Nationalism <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationalism>

Part 1. Introduction

1. What are the three solutions mentioned to the problem of lack of common language?

A _____

B _____

C _____

2. According to the speaker, all three solutions mentioned present a serious problem. What is it?

3. When was the boom of nationalism in Europe and what were the prevailing ideas at that time with respect to education and languages?

4. Why did idea of constructed languages seem attractive at the time of nationalism?

Part 2. Overview of the early history of constructed languages.

Below are some of the proper nouns that should help you understand the talk.

George Dalgarno

John Wilkins
Johann Schleyer Martin

Volapük /'vɒləpʊk/

5. What was the main developments and prevailing ideas in the 17th century as far as constructed languages were concerned?

6. 19th century (the developments and ideas behind constructed languages)

7. What happened in 1880?

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8. Describe some of the features of Volapük.

Main features: _____

Pronunciation: _____

Grammar: _____

Vocabulary: _____

Part 2. Esperanto and its development. (Note-taking)

Below are some of the proper nouns that should help you understand this part of the talk and take notes.

Ludovic Zamenhof

Otto Jespersen

the League of Nations

Ido

9. Listen to the next part of the lecture and take notes on Esperanto, its inventor/s and the features of the languages.

10. Constructed languages and the world's reaction and aspirations

Part 3. The decline. (Note-taking)

11. Factors leading to the decline of constructed languages.

12. What is the difference between constructed languages and pidgin languages in the way they develop?

Part 4. Lingua Franca and pidgin languages

13. Who, when and where used Lingua Franca?

14. What were the reasons for pidgin being spoken in many parts of the world?

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15. Briefly describe the process of the development of pidgin.

16. If constructed languages and pidgins have a lot in common, why are pidgins not adopted as the international auxiliary language? (give two reasons)

A. _____

B. _____

17. What is the status of pidgins nowadays? What makes a pidgin Creole?

Part 5. Conclusion
