

Essay One (edited version)

The advance of English as a world language threatens the existence of less widely spoken European languages, including Dutch.

During the globalization which took place at the beginning of the twentieth century, England, with its maritime supremacy and numerous colonies, became one of the world's leading countries. English became the most important language of international trade and remains so to-day.

In the future, countries such as the Netherlands will become largely urbanized and the villages and rural areas, once the strongholds of local languages and dialects, will disappear. In Amsterdam and other major cities English is rapidly developing into the principal language, assisted by the globalization of these cities. It can be said that the Dutch language, and other aspects of local culture, are being threatened by this urbanization.

With the increasing use of the English language on television, Dutch youth have become greatly influenced by it. Dutch TV youth programmes adopt the English language to create an atmosphere in which youth can communicate with each other in a "cool" way. By adopting English, they use the language of these programmes to impress their friends and peers, frequently using English words and expressions instead of their Dutch equivalents.

Culture is an important aspect that should be taken into account. As there will always be people who have an interest in their culture, a language will never completely die out. A language such as Dutch, a relatively widely-spoken language, is more likely to gain importance rather than lose it.

The number of people speaking Dutch as a first language may decrease in the future; however, “language patriotism” will ensure its continuing existence. Urbanization and globalization, together with the influence of the media, may promote English to the position of a shared first, rather than a second, language.