

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology: Division of Humanities/Center for Language Education

HUMA 1000: Cultures and Values: **Cover sheet for final essay**

Full name	
Student ID	
Writing workshop section number	
Writing workshop instructor	
Title of essay (please copy and paste from the document on Canvas)	Suppose you were the consultant for this intercultural family, what would you advise to be the family language(s) aside from Italian? English or Chinese? Or perhaps other alternatives?

Declaration: The attached essay represents my own work. I have read and understood the University's policies on academic honesty and I confirm that the attached work conforms to these policies.

Please type your name:

Response to feedback: note here the comments from your instructor you have responded to (you can copy these from your feedback sheet).

Body paragraph1: focus on the convenience of using English in UK
Body paragraph2:be specific and focus on how suitable is the English toward the child
Body paragraph3:focus on the global importance of English

An intercultural family in London, where the parents are from Italy and China, has a three-year-old son. They speak Italian and English in their daily life as the family languages that inherited by descents. Husband speaks Italian with his son as he thinks this is the language of their cultural heritage, and wants his wife to speak purely Chinese with son, since this can also benefit the son's future career. However, the wife wants to speak English with the son rather than Chinese, not only because of the convenience of communication in the neighborhood, but also the strong belief that English would be the dominant, mainstream language in their life in the U.K.. This essay will suggest English to be the family languages in this cause aside from Italian because learning English would bring a lot of advantages. This will be showed by arguing that using English would be convenient in daily life in London, English would be easier for people to learn than some other languages and English would be more widespread in career than Chinese.

A key argument suggesting English to be the family language is that using English would bring convenience in UK daily lives. In UK, people are speaking more than 20 languages, but English is the main language spoken in among of them. One study found that, more than 90% people are speaking English while the other languages are not more than 1% (Porter, 2013). It shows that English is mainly spoken in UK, people could cope with almost everything in daily lives by just speaking English as people speaking it wherever in UK. For examples, when making friends with different ethnicities, people could just communicate in English as they are mostly speaking it, as well as the neighbors, it would be very effective if there is no communication gap when communicating (Freebairn, 2001); when going outside, different flags in different places are mostly using English, whether stations, toilets, supermarkets, to name but a few, people could realize them all as long as they know English; when finding jobs, people who speak English are mostly easier as it would be easier to communicate with by using English. These indicate that using one single language could bring a lot of convenience. So, it is a good idea for the child to learn English as it is convenient when coping with daily lives.

The other key argument suggesting English to be the family language is that English would be easier for the child to learn than some other languages. In fact, English words are easy to memorize. The alphabet of English words only has 26 letters(a to z), and all of the English words can be formed by these 26 letters, it would be easy to memorize if the words are based on these limited letters but not some specific symbols(such as Chinese) which are uncountable. On the other hand, English language involve phonics that people could also memorize the words through the pronunciation but not only the spelling, it would be easier to memorize the words than those languages that can only memorize the typefaces(such as Chinese). These reasons make English words easier for people to memorize. Apart from the words, the language system of English is also easier to understand than most of other European languages. According to <<Gender Shifts in the History of English>>, some complicated grammar rules of English were disappeared over the years while most of other European languages remain, such as cases, gender, word agreement (CURZAN, 2003). It shows that the grammar of English

language is already simpler than the other European languages. Therefore, English language is easier for the child to learn. English

Someone said that Chinese will replace English which is the most widespread language of the world in the future because of the evolution. It is no doubt that China's economy is under a rapid evolution, it even become the second largest economy in the world. This phenomenon shows that Chinese would be valued and even replace English because of the enhancing of China's status. Hence, it suggests that the child should learn Chinese rather than English in order to take more advantages in future career. However, English would not be replaced easily as it consolidated the global importance. Most of the world's top leaders are good at English as it is the global language of the world, a study found that English occupy fifty six percent of the online content over the world, and more than 1.5 billion people are trying to learn English (Fisher, 2015). Even China, she recently announced a new five-year plan to enable all public servants can speak at least 100 English sentences (Nasser, 2010). These show that English is widespread, it already became the global language and being used between the countries, it is so widespread that not easy to be replaced even the Chinese. Thence, the child should learn English as it is still the most widespread language of the world.

In conclusion, learning English can take a lot of convenience in London daily lives, whenever making friends, going outside of finding jobs. Also, English would be easier for the child to learn than some other languages, whenever the limited components of the words or the simple grammar system, so that the child could learn it easily. Although Chinese is being valued as the enhancing of China's status, it is not enough to replace English as it is too important today, so English is still the most widespread language of the world. Therefore, the family should pick English as the family language in order to help the child learn English better.

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