



School of Social Sciences  
University of Dundee

## Conversations with pupils learning English as an additional language

Andrea Goh & Lynne Duncan

ISSR, Psychology, University of Dundee, 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2018

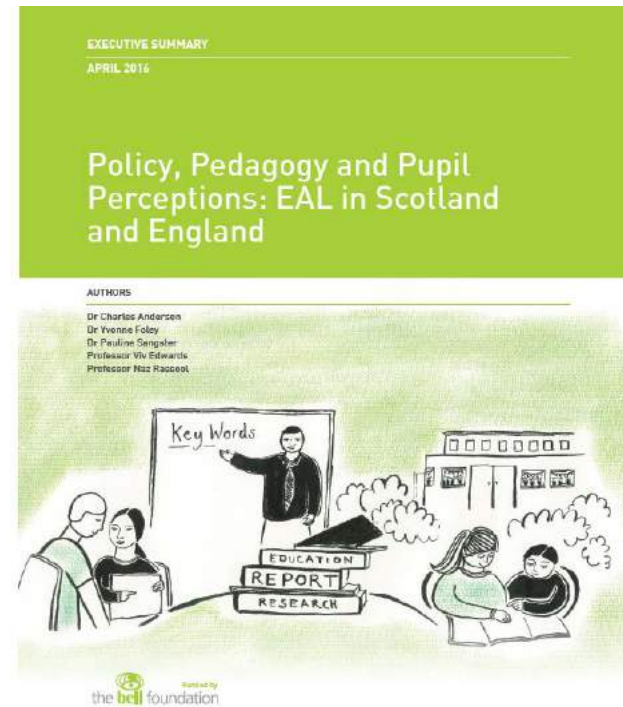


# Policy, Pedagogy and Pupil Perceptions

Anderson, Foley, Sangster, Edwards & Rassool (2016)

Urban secondary schools

→ 22 pupils aged 11–16 years



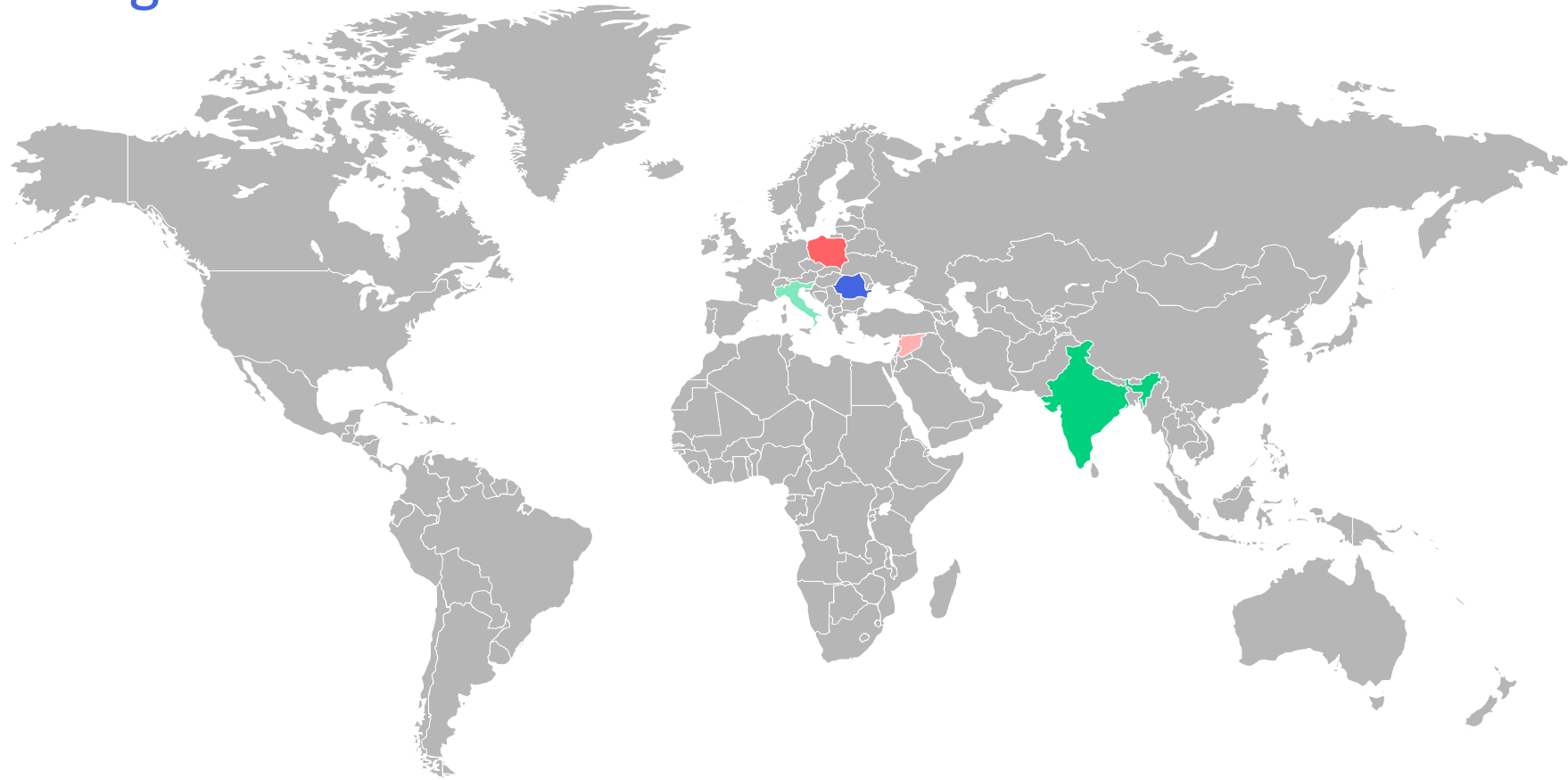
## Our study

Urban primary schools

5 pupils aged 9-12 years



# Diversity in migration





## Prior knowledge of English

- A little bit, I know how to say *Hi* and *Bye*
- I was bad and now I am good. I was saying *Hi, How are you?* and just listening
- It was bad. When I was in [Scotland], I could only understand a little English. When people would start speaking to me, I was only replying *yeah, yeah*, because I don't understand it
- I didn't really know anything and only said *yes, no* and *Hi*. At first half a year before I was 4, I was learning at home but I couldn't, it was too hard. My mother didn't know English and my dad spoke a little





## Learning English at school in UK

We played *under, beside*, we did a test. Whenever she said *under*, I would go *under* the chair and when she said *beside*, I would go *beside* the chair

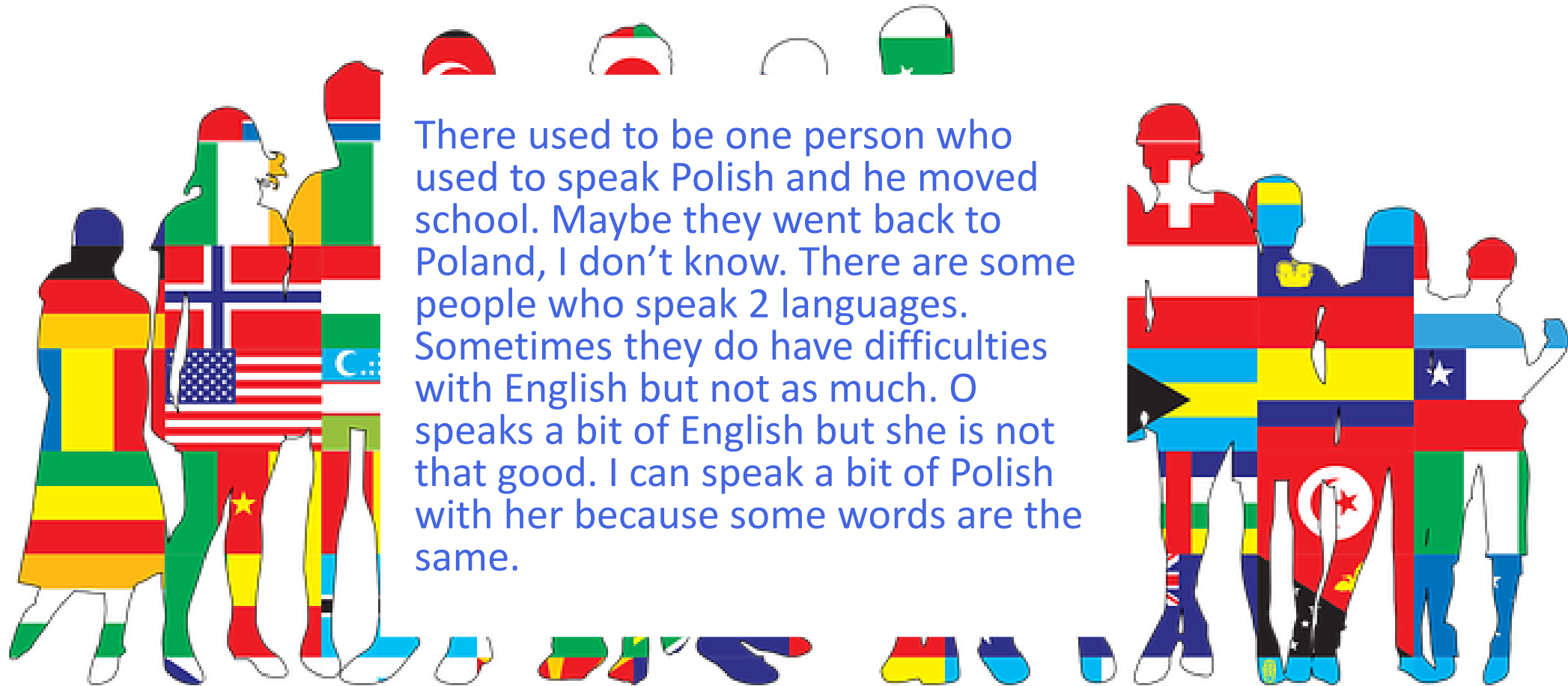
A game still with the Bilingual Support teachers. ...Talking about 'ed'. Taking words and putting them with 'ed'

We made cards which showed vocabulary in English and she did some things in Arabic as well....Sometimes she goes on the computer [google translate] to ask me things to explain and to understand some things as well

Some games. When I came the first time to school, I didn't know everyone's names. So, the games were like "*Hi, my name is... and your name is...*", and so I know everyone's names now

Polish teaching assistant

Arabic buddy (older child)



There used to be one person who used to speak Polish and he moved school. Maybe they went back to Poland, I don't know. There are some people who speak 2 languages. Sometimes they do have difficulties with English but not as much. O speaks a bit of English but she is not that good. I can speak a bit of Polish with her because some words are the same.



## Help from home

Every day, after school, I would tell my mum, “How do you say XXX?” My mum would answer and say the word in English. Yeah, my dad would be helping me in my English as well. My dad will be like my mum, answering my questions too. When I ask my mum questions, my big brother will also tell my mum what it is

Yes. How? [My parents] help me to write things [spelling and doing my homework]. Big brothers help as well

My mum and my dad would give me Polish homework sometimes and help me remember Polish. My dad sometimes would help me in English

4 of 5 children report that the language they speak at home is their best language



## Emotional and social challenges of transition

Because when you want to talk about something but you do not know how to talk about or how you are feeling

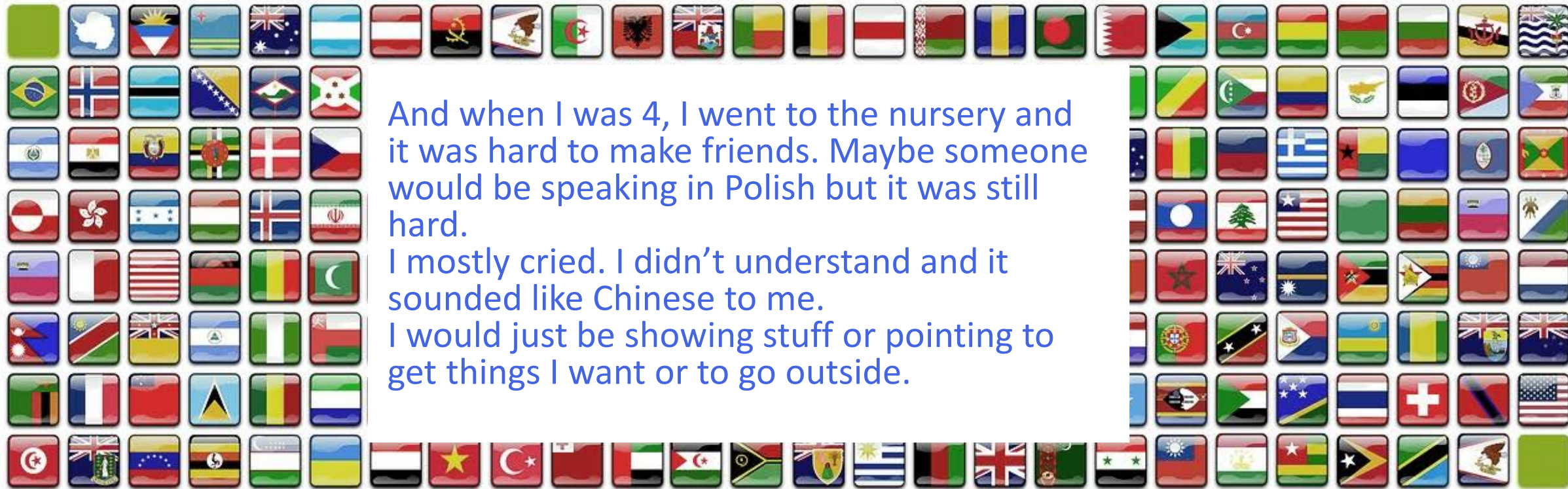
When I ask to do anything for example “when I ask to fill my water bottle”. And it was difficult to speak with my friends

Making friends is easier when I can speak English

I feel like I don't know what they were saying [classmates and teachers]

A lot that is why I always go to my sister and ask her to help me in English. So yes, it was difficult for me





And when I was 4, I went to the nursery and it was hard to make friends. Maybe someone would be speaking in Polish but it was still hard.

I mostly cried. I didn't understand and it sounded like Chinese to me.

I would just be showing stuff or pointing to get things I want or to go outside.



## Literacy in L1

I don't know how to read [in Romanian]

Yes, but I am not so good at Kurdish. I read Arabic every day but not Kurdish

When I was in Italy, I used to read Italian books but when I came here, it is quite difficult to read books because they are in English and my parents help me in English especially my sister

We do watch movies in other languages because my mum encourages me to speak and also watch Portuguese movies

We watch mostly Polish and also English movies but usually it is Polish.

Me as well. We usually watch both [Italian]



## Literacy in L2

I can read English a bit. I like to listen more [storybooks]

Spelling is a bit difficult. I do like grammar. And my friends and teachers do help

Sometimes spelling mistakes

I think it is better than before. I speak and read more

On spelling, I sometimes make mistakes and sometimes when I want to understand some things or spell somethings, I will just go to the teacher, or ask the teacher to spell it or repeat it to me and that is how I learn English



# Knowledge about language

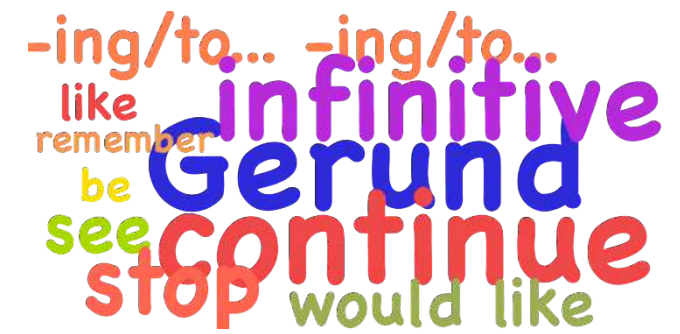
Talking about 'ed'. Taking words and putting them with 'ed'

I do like **grammar**

I remember looking at pictures and learning **adjectives** and **adverbs** *small, fast*

Chinese is difficult because they use **symbols** and they are different from the rest of the world. Polish have **letters** but we also have different letters that are added like a line in the letters.

English is simple because the words does not have any **accents** or things to add on as it is just the letters





## Interest from teachers & children

Sometimes they will ask me how to write their name in Arabic, how to say school in Arabic, how to say I hate school in Arabic. Just asking to say the things in words and also to write it out

Yeah. Because one of my friend ask about Romania and my teacher called me out. She asked me “What do we do?”

Sometimes. We were learning some things in class and [my teacher] would ask me “How do you say I love you in Italian?” and I would say ‘Ti amo’ and they would like the language, so it is interesting for him.

Not really but some people in class would ask me how do I say this word and how do I say that word something like ‘apple’ and I will tell them.



# English

I don't understand the English here, because they speak too fast. And I prefer the American English because it's easy sometimes, so English is more important for me because I can communicate with a lot of people here, so English is more important.

I think English is more important too because playing Playstation or Xbox and doing stuff throughout the world is going to be easier to communicate because most people would speak English than other languages like Japanese for example. So it is just easier to know.



## Identity and fitting in

Yes, I would like to learn my mother's language which is Bini and it is from Nigeria and it is quite difficult. When I was in LA and went to visit my cousin, I used to speak a little Bini but now I forgot and trying to relearn it. I want to learn Ghana because my father speaks Ghana and I would like to learn that language as well.

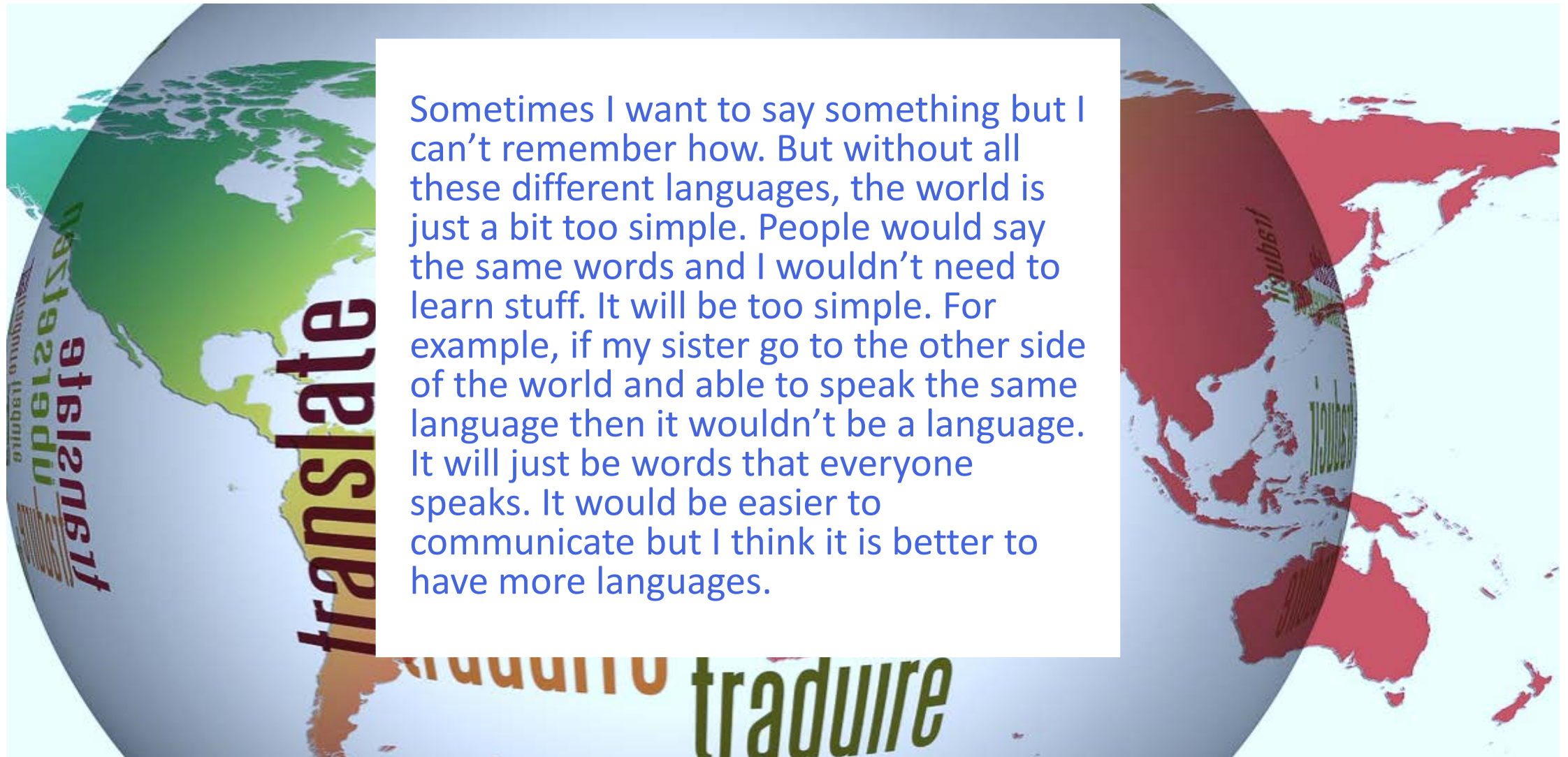
I always ask my friend how she speaks her language and when she speak it, it's quite funny and I laugh and it's because we have different languages

[Why is English more important?] I am now here and not back in Romania, and when back in Romania, Romanian is more important.

Are there bad things about being bilingual?

Maybe mixing up the languages in public.

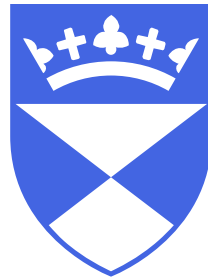
No. Not at all. But sometimes, I can get mixed up and when I speak with my friends, I am speaking in Arabic and they look at me like "what??"



Sometimes I want to say something but I can't remember how. But without all these different languages, the world is just a bit too simple. People would say the same words and I wouldn't need to learn stuff. It will be too simple. For example, if my sister go to the other side of the world and able to speak the same language then it wouldn't be a language. It will just be words that everyone speaks. It would be easier to communicate but I think it is better to have more languages.



спасибо 谢谢  
GRACIAS  
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