

English has frequently been compared to Latin which flourished for centuries as an international language, even after the collapse of the Roman Empire, becoming a shared resource for much of the globe. One consequence is that non-native speakers may be better at using English with each other than native speakers. David Graddol, an applied linguist and consultant, observes: Conventional wisdom has it that native speakers must be best at communicating in English. That may not be true. English is rapidly becoming an international lingua franca, as it becomes the essential skill of any manager with ambition. What is more, the presence of native speakers may hinder communication within a group of non-native speakers. In fact, native speakers may be poor at using English as an international language. It is a language that in some ways is becoming separated from its origins.