Lingua Franca

English
Language Diffusion

- Language as promoted by empires (Chinese, Roman) or nation-states
- Language as promoted by religion or invention (Gutenberg printing press)
Lingua Franca

- People from different cultures need to be able to communicate
- Lingua Franca is language spoken for purposes of commerce
- Sometimes, it will be a *pidgin language* — a combination of two or more languages with a simplified structure
  - When this pidgin language becomes widely spoken, even as a first language, a *creole language* has been created
  - Both languages are simple, and can therefore diffuse quickly
English as a Lingua Franca

- English as a lingua franca in the world today
  - Business
  - Mass Media and consumables
  - Science and medicine
  - 400+ million native speakers
    - 1.9 billion speakers
  - Most often studied 2nd language
    - 89% of kids in EU
    - Law in China
  - Present in over 100 countries
English as a Lingua Franca
Questions

1. Briefly explain three of the forces of linguistic diffusion over the past 2000 years.
3. Create a short list of similarities and differences between the terms in question 2.
4. What are common factors that would lead to a degree of multilingualism in a state?
5. Why would a country adopt an official language? How might this be similar to a lingua franca? What potential risks are there for a state to adopt an official language?
6. Does English have the status as a truly global language? Explain.