

I'm good!



"How are you?"

"I'm good."

What kind of language is *that*?

Someone asks you *how* you are – and you speak about how *good* you are. How pretentious! Shouldn't you answer : "I'm well" or "I'm fine". Because, you may be well but

not *good* and the other way round.

Americans have been betraying their own language for a while, thinking that speaking correct language didn't matter. It has brought America to the acme of civilization : "Hi ! Yeah ! Okay ! Y'know... like... I mean... Y'know !"

Here is the report of an interview with young American musicians from a band : "It's like, y'know, cool to be...like...the first on stage, and y'know we're kinda like always on the move, y'know, like...'cause we believe like we're lucky to have this opportunity, y'know, it's real cool... "

Obviously they have reached a peak in oral brilliance. A potency in expression the size of the nation !

If you add to that gems such as "He must have drank too much.", or "Thats what I want!", or "Its great to know that...", you understand why the French are – supposedly – trying to salvage whatever is left from their beloved language.

"There's a lot of people" instead of "There are..." certainly places the American language ahead of any kind of competitor in terms of speed and efficiency, in just the same way as one says "Problem is... Fact is... ". Why bother with articles? It's too tiring. Same thing with prepositions : "We're talking politics." Instead of "We're talking *about* politics." And, to top it all, no verbs anymore! " You been long. You a doctor ?"

Until recently, Americans didn't do anything to protect what stands as the #1 vector of identity : the national language. It comes as no surprise, since English was never recognized as the official language. Which explains why Spanish has become so pervasive. Why not include Chinese, and then Arabic, and then other "minority languages" and end up with a situation like that of the Babel Tower, where mankind spoke so many different languages that they could no longer understand, nor communicate with each other? Don't misunderstand me : learning foreign languages is great. It is a sign of opening to the world. It broadens the mind. But correct use of one's mother tongue is paramount.

The pathetic use of current American English sounds like a sign of decadence. And even though being decadent is so chic, one should not forget that mistreating language is step One to the relinquishment of basic values. How could one expect to lead the world when "Globish" becomes the standard and when civilized English is set aside as an old rag? Perhaps Americans should turn off their computers and turn their eyes to *books* again. According to the latest statistics, Americans don't *read anymore*. Literature? Ugh!

Do you remember William Safire's chronicles ? Its – oops! – *It's* about time the Language Maven stroke again! Otherwise language will become so poor that it will reflect negatively on the very image America wishes to convey.