

Translation Practice

“El español ganará al inglés en el 2050 como lengua materna”, de Goyo García Maestro

Un estudio pronostica “cambios drásticos” en el orden lingüístico internacional.

El inglés dejará de ser una “lengua extranjera”. Igual que el sol sale cada mañana por el este, el mundo, o mejor dicho, la mitad del globo (unos 3.000 millones), utilizará esta lengua con pasmosa naturalidad en el año 2050. Ahora bien, no hablamos del inglés tradicional, el que se enseña en las escuelas, sino del “inglés global”, un hijo bastardo cocido a fuego lento en países como China, India y en los estados árabes, fundamentalmente.

Si tenemos en cuenta el número de hablantes nativos, la lectura es muy distinta: el inglés está perdiendo importancia. Actualmente, el 9% de la población mundial lo utiliza como lengua materna, pero en el 2050 la cifra quedará reducida al 5%, y se verá sobrepasado en número de hablantes por el español, el hindi y hasta por el árabe. A quien nadie podrá toser es al mandarín. Como sucede ahora, el chino seguirá siendo el idioma con más hablantes nativos, y, además, su influencia crecerá más allá del mundo asiático. ¿Indicios? En Canadá, la lengua del país del arroz es la tercera después del inglés y el francés.

Quien pronostica este cambio de tendencias es el reconocido lingüista británico David Graddol, autor de *English Next*, un informe encargado por el British Council (de momento aún no traducido al español) que dibuja el perfil del nuevo orden lingüístico internacional, un mapa inquietante que tiene mucho que ver con los imparable cambios demográficos y el uso de nuevas tecnologías. Ya no será un mundo unilateral como el inglés como idioma primordial en los negocios. El español –por su extensión en Estados Unidos– y el mandarín –debido al crecimiento comercial de China–, ejercerán de contrapunto a un mundo polarizado también en el plano lingüístico.

El declive del inglés nativo también se deja ver en Internet, “donde su predominio está desvaneciéndose a medida que proliferan otros idiomas, incluyendo algunos con pocos hablantes”. Más datos. En quince años, el número de personas que están aprendiendo la lengua de Shakespeare alcanzará su techo (serán 2.000 millones de estudiantes en todo el mundo): “A partir de ese momento disminuirá”, sentencia Graddol.

(362 words)

Suggested translation:

"In 2050 Spanish will beat/take over English as (a) mother tongue"

A study forecasts "drastic changes" in the international linguistic order/arena

English will no longer be/cease to be a "foreign language". As true/sure as the sun rises (every morning) in the east, the world, or rather/better said/better put/better yet/more specifically/more precisely, half the globe/planet (about 3,000 million people), will use this language with amazing/astonishing/startling/astounding naturalness/easiness // without giving it a second thought by the year 2050. Yet/Still/However, we are not talking about traditional English, of the type/the one taught at schools, but about "global English", a(n) bastard/illegitimate child stewing over a slow fire in countries like China, India, and in the Arab states, mainly/basically.

If we bear in mind/account for/bargain for the number of native speakers, the reading/explanation/interpretation is quite different / the message reads (quite) differently: English is losing (its) importance/ground. Currently/today, 9% of the world population uses it as (a) mother tongue, but in 2050 the figure will drop to (a) 5%, and it will be outnumbered by Spanish, Hindi and even Arabic speakers. The language that no one will be able to question is Mandarin / Nobody will dare question Mandarin / Nobody will be able to stand up to Mandarin. Like now/As happens now, Chinese will still be the language with most native speakers and, what's more, its influence will grow/spread // it will exert its influence beyond Asiatic countries/the Asian world. (Any) signs/hints? In Canada, the language of the land of the rising sun/of the country of rice comes third after English and French.

It is the famous/acknowledged/reputed/notable/prestigious British linguist, David Graddol, who forecasts this change of tendencies/trends. He is the author of *English Next*, a report commissioned/assigned by the British Council (and yet to be translated into Spanish / which has not as yet been translated into Spanish / not as yet translated into Spanish) and which draws/depicts/portrays the profile of the new international linguistic order/scenario, a disturbing/unsettling/intriguing map which has a lot to do with/which is closely related to unstoppable demographic changes and the use of new technologies. A unilateral/one-sided world with English as the primary language in business will no longer exist. Spanish –because of its extension/spread in the United States– and Mandarin –due to the commercial growth of China–, will act as counterbalance/readdress the balance in a world also polarized in the linguistic field/axis/realm/sphere.

The decline/downturn/decrease (in the status) of native English is also seen/may also be seen/is also visible/noticeable/observable on the Internet, "where its predominance is disappearing/fading before the proliferation/emergence of other languages/as other languages take over/gain ground, including some with few speakers". More facts/data/figures: in fifteen years' time/fifteen years from now, the number of people (who are) learning the language of Shakespeare will reach its peak (there will be 2,000 million students worldwide): "From that moment/then on(wards), the number will decrease", Graddol sentences/concludes/argues.

Comentado [Office1]: Careful with the difference between *win* and *beat*. You *win sth*, but *beat sb*.

Comentado [Office2]: There's a slight difference in meaning between *foresee* and *forecast*.

Comentado [Office3]: *In the east*. We would use *on* if it were *on the east coast*. No initial capital needed.

Comentado [Office4]: Never in the plural. Only in the expression "*millions and millions (of...)*".

Comentado [Office5]: "naturalness" does not exist in English.

Comentado [Office6]: Careful! *A bastard child* is one thing; *a bastard* is quite another.

Comentado [Office7]: The original says *hijo*, which is the unmarked term in Spanish. In English we should go for *child*, not *son*, which is marked masculine.

Comentado [Office8]: *Arab* is the nationality. The language is *Arabic*.

Comentado [Office9]: *Mandarin / Mandarin Chinese*. Both are possible.

Comentado [Office10]: *Evidence/proof* have a different meaning + they're uncountable.

Comentado [Office11]: The country of the rice language / the rice country language / the rice language → inappropriate.

Comentado [Office12]: *Financed/funded* have a different meaning.

Comentado [Office13]: *Worrying* has a different meaning.

Comentado [Office14]: Careful if you used *will*; it's actually the present tense.

Comentado [Office15]: The collocation is *reach its peak*, not *reach its top*.