

**Uit De Standaard (05/02/2005)**

***Going Global: The UK International Education Conference***

***The next full report on The Future of English will be published by the British Council in 2005. These interim findings will form the basis of David Graddol's presentation to the British Council Going Global Conference on international education in Edinburgh (8 – 10 December 2004).***

***David Graddol describes some preliminary results from a new forecast for international demand for English.***

**The growth of the English language and English language teaching**

[...]

**Native speakers of English should not be complacent**

- The fact that the world is fast adopting English as a second language is not particularly good news for native speakers - especially those who cannot speak another language
- The world is rapidly becoming multilingual and English is only one of the languages people in other countries are learning
- As English gets 'kicked downstairs' to younger ages, so a space is reopening in the foreign languages curriculum offered in secondary schools
- There are signs that people around the world are becoming interested in learning languages other than English again. Already there is a rush towards Chinese in some parts of the world, Arabic and **Spanish** are also key languages of the future.
- Fears that the spread of English will threaten local languages may prove to be misplaced
- In the next phase of globalisation we are likely to see a revival of national languages and local identities - not so much as a backlash against globalisation but because each country is finding it needs to develop its national brand and 'unique selling point' in the global market for tourism, educational services and outsourcing.

A note on the methodology

- The 'Future of English?' published projections for native-speaker numbers of the major world languages through to 2050 which have been widely accepted as plausible and well-founded
- These projections showed that Chinese would continue to be the largest of the world languages in terms of native speaker numbers, that English is in relative decline, and Arabic rising fast.
- Some of this data was published by Science Magazine in January 2004 and in the introduction to the new edition (October 2004) of the Encarta World English Dictionary published by Bloomsbury .
- The presentation by David Graddol at the Going Global conference provides the first preliminary results of a major development of the computer model, commissioned by the British Council
- The model uses the latest country by country demographic projections provided by the United Nations, estimates of participation rates in education around the world provided by UNESCO, an analysis of worldwide trends in government policies in respect to language

education, and the projections for international student mobility which emerged from a separate study commissioned by the British Council earlier this year

- The model allows us to chart likely numbers of learners in the world's classrooms through to 2050 and to estimate the impact of educational innovations and other developments which affect particular cohorts of the world population.

- These trends raise many significant economic, political, and cultural issues which will be explored in greater detail in a fuller analysis of the data arising from this research study, expected to be published by the British Council in 2005.

[...]

### **About David Graddol**

- David Graddol is Managing Director of The English Company (UK) Ltd which provides consultancy and publishing services in applied language studies

- He is well known as a writer, broadcaster and lecturer on issues related to global English

- David's publications include 'The Future of English?', a seminal research document commissioned by the British Council a commissioned article by Science magazine on 'The Future of Language'

- He is now working with the British Council on a major new analysis of global trends in English and English language education

- David is the Managing Editor of the new 'Journal of Applied Linguistics' and 'Linguistics and the Human Sciences' and is a member of the editorial boards of 'Language Planning and Language Problems' and the 'Journal of Visual Communication'.

- David worked for 25 years in the Faculty of Education and Language Studies at the UK Open University and is now an independent consultant with a special focus on eLearning

- David is interested in the way technology is being taken up by governments and institutions as a solution to perceived shortages in skilled English teachers

- Earlier this year, he helped the British Council develop an eELT strategy in the Middle East - after visiting ministries of education, schools and universities in the Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Jordan . Elsewhere he has undertaken educational consultancies in India, China , and Latin America .

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