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Songs with non-English lyrics are becoming more popular – 16th March 2026

Level 4

Since the start of rock 'n' roll, American and British songs have dominated music. Both countries benefited a lot from hit songs in English. However, the dominance of English-language songs is under threat. The music streaming giant Spotify said English songs were losing their stranglehold. There is now a huge demand for songs sung in Spanish, Korean, and Arabic. The number of non-English songs in the charts more than doubled in the past five years.

A prime example of the rise in non-English songs is the popularity of Bad Bunny. He sings only in Spanish. He was Spotify's most streamed artist in 2025. In addition, Spanish singer Rosalia made an award-winning album on which she sings in 13 different languages. Three music genres have seen their chart presence rise by 30 per cent or more in the past five years. These are Brazilian Funk, K-pop, and Trap Latino.

Level 5

Since the start of rock 'n' roll in the 1950s, songs from the USA and UK have dominated music charts. Both countries benefited a lot from hit songs with English lyrics. However, the dominance of English-language songs is under threat from non-English songs. This is according to the music streaming giant Spotify. The company said English-language music was losing its stranglehold. There has been a huge demand for songs sung in Spanish, Korean, Arabic, and other languages. The number of non-English songs in the charts more than doubled in the past five years.

A prime example of the rise in non-English songs is the popularity of Puerto Rican singer Bad Bunny. He sings only in Spanish. He was Spotify's most streamed artist in 2025. Meanwhile, Spanish artist Rosalia created an award-winning album on which she sings in 13 different languages. Spotify said three music genres have seen their chart presence rise by 30 per cent or more in the past five years. These are Brazilian Funk, K-pop, and Trap Latino. The music website NME said: "The trend is likely to continue growing further into 2026."

Level 6

Since the advent of rock 'n' roll in the 1950s, music from the USA and UK has dominated global music charts. Both countries have benefited considerably from the "soft power" of hit songs with English lyrics. However, the English-language dominance of the music industry is under threat from songs from non-English-speaking countries. This is according to the music streaming giant Spotify. The company said English-language music was losing its long-time stranglehold. There has been a surge in demand for songs sung in Spanish, Korean, Arabic, and other languages. Spotify said the number of non-English songs in the charts more than doubled between 2020 and 2025.

A prime example of how English is losing its hegemony is the worldwide popularity of the Puerto Rican singer Bad Bunny. He sings exclusively in Spanish and was Spotify's most streamed artist globally in 2025. Meanwhile, Spanish artist Rosalia astounded the music world with her award-winning album "Lux," on which she sings in 13 different languages. Spotify said three music genres have seen their chart presence rise by 30 per cent or more in the past five years. These are Brazilian Funk, K-pop, and Trap Latino. Their streams increased by 36 per cent, 31 per cent, and 30 per cent respectively. The music website NME said: "The trend is likely to continue growing further into 2026."