

Business English and Motivation in Asia: Language policy and planning in Singapore, Malaysia, Japan and Korea

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Abstract

English as a *lingua franca* has prosperous history especially from 19th century and there are the possibility of growing the number of speakers, which includes ENL (English as a national language) speakers, ESL (English as a second language) speakers and EFL (English as a foreign language) speakers. Among them the number of ESL and EFL speakers is even greater than ENL speakers, and presently, Asia is known to have the largest population of English speakers and the trend is likely to continue and perhaps even increase in the future.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the significant differences in terms of usage-based English communication skills in Singapore and Malaysia, as opposed to those in Korea and Japan, where those in Singapore and Malaysia noticeably exceeded the skills of those in Korea and Japan. While recognizing that there are many independent variables that affect language learning, and that cultural, ethnic, aptitude and other diverse influences all conspire to produce different outcomes in education, I have sought to focus on one basic factor that clearly plays a role in the learning of a second and foreign language, namely, motivation.

Motivation can be sub-divided into at least two specific types, the *instrumental* motivation and the *integrative* motivation (Gardner and Lambert, 1959). I have tried to show the roles these kinds of motivations play in education, and have looked at these from the perspective of *language policy* and implementation, as well as from the learner's perspectives of individual needs, desires, values and so forth. In the early study of comparing two types of motivation, the *integrative* motivation seemed to be superior to the *instrumental* motivation. However, it has become clear that the *instrumental* motivation plays more important role for the process of language acquisition. When it comes to the factors vastly influence on the learner's motivation, I considered *language policy* and *language planning* mainly of national level. With referring to the situation of the four countries, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea and Japan, including *language policies*, such as education systems, my study indicates that while *instrumental* motivation may be positively correlated to English language acquisition and proficiency, *integrative* motivation appears to have a limited effect, in the resulting acquisition of English as a second or foreign language. Both Singapore's and Malaysia's language policies are *instrumental*, while the language policies of both Korea and Japan are not actually.

In the forth chapter, I refer to Japanese companies which attempt to improve employees' English capability from the management point of view, where *instrumental motivation*. This indicates the possibilities of improving the English capabilities by means of changing the motivation from *integrative* to *instrumental*.

I argue that if Korea and Japan hope to increase the English language skills of its citizenry, a reorientation of *language policy*, and educational principles, must be enacted in order to align them more closely to the ideals engendered by programs driven by *instrumental* motivation, where *language policy* and *planning* recognize and develop the importance that English plays for the successful student of today, and the potential workers of tomorrow, where the workplace is no longer restricted by national boundaries, but in fact is located globally, where at present, English occupies the primary position of the world's first global "*lingua franca*".