

Volume 7, Issue 4, April 2019

# International Journal of Advance Research in Computer Science and Management Studies

Research Article / Survey Paper / Case Study

Available online at: [www.ijarcsms.com](http://www.ijarcsms.com)

## *Why is English required in Asian Countries?*

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*Abstract: English language education in Asian cultures and the history of the English language are examined in this article. In the first part of this research, a historical overview of the distribution and history of English in Asian countries is conducted. The second half of the research focuses on the policy of English language education in Asian countries. For non-native English speakers, English is a crucial medium of communication in the increasing circle of countries. This section provides an overview of English language education in Asian countries. Section 3 focuses on the relevance and future of English teaching in Asian countries. Additionally, this section addresses the importance of English for cross-cultural interaction as well as its position as a global language. The goal of English-language education in Asia is to develop students who are not only proficient speakers of the English language, but also experts in their particular subjects.*

*Keywords: Asian countries, English, language, role, etc.*

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The history of the English language in Asia is essential to understanding the contrasts between English language education in Asian countries and those in the Inner Circle. In order to define the purposes of English language education in the area for Asian Englishes, an in-depth knowledge of their historical background is necessary. Study investigates expansion of English in Asian countries, including Singapore, the Philippines, Hong Kong and China. It also looks at schooling in these countries for English as a second language.

One of the objectives of this study is to track the growth and development of English in Asian nations from the 18th century. Another objective is to demonstrate how English language education policies have evolved and changed in Asian nations. It's also important to emphasise the relevance of English education in Asian nations and its future. The conclusions of this research are based on information gleaned from textbooks and educational materials produced by Asian countries

### II. HISTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THE ASIAN CONTEXT

There are two sorts of English dispersals in Asia, and their histories are linked. People from the southern and eastern portions of England left for the United States and Australia in huge numbers in the first half of the twentieth century. The spread of colonialism to Asia and Africa resulted in an explosion of new dialects of the primary language. English colonists first arrived in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific in the second part of the eighteenth century. Among the countries involved were Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and the Philippines. Stamford Raffles, the administrator of the British East India Company, was instrumental in establishing Singapore as a British colonial colony in 1819. During this time period, British colonies were also formed in Malaysia and Hong Kong. After a conflict with Spain in the late 19th century, the Philippines became part of the United States. In the course of history, English has a considerable impact on numerous Asian countries.

### III. FUTURE OF ENGLISH

English is widely spoken as a second or major foreign language in Southeast Asia for a variety of linguistic, economic, and political reasons. This must be taken into account when looking at the future of English both in Southeast Asia and throughout the world.

#### 3.1 Future of English in the World

It's widely accepted that English is now the most widely spoken language in the world. That being said, the issue remains: Will it maintain such sway in the future? Graddol believes that English has a promising future since the globe is undergoing a substantial social, economic, and demographic transition. English is unlikely to be supplanted as the most widely spoken language in the world any time soon. Although the future is more difficult and uncertain than many people believe, it is not impossible.

Languages and power have always had a close link, according to history. There has only ever been one cause for a language to become universally spoken: the power of its people. International communication 2,000 years ago relied on Greek, since Alexander's soldiers were so strong in the Mediterranean and Middle East. Because of the Roman troops, Latin expanded over Europe. The expansion of Arabic across North Africa and the Middle East may be traced back to the rise of Islam in the Iberian Peninsula, which was aided by the might of the Moorish armies beginning in the eighth century. Europe's colonial expansion was spurred by the aggressive colonial policies of Renaissance kings and queens, which were carried out with ruthlessness throughout the known world. The rise of British colonial authority and the rise of the United States in economic, military, and political dominance were major elements in the rise of English as a global language.

Despite the United States' ascent as a global power, English has remained the most commonly spoken language in the world. To top it all off, Graddol points out that the "unstoppable" trend of English becoming the global language might shift suddenly and dramatically due to even the smallest shift in global events. A loss in American military, economic, and cultural might would have a direct effect on the global reputation of the English language. The many millions of people who are learning English will begin to look elsewhere and quickly establish new linguistic allegiances in order to get access to this power.

#### 3.2 Southeast Asia's future in English

According to Graddol, a substantial movement in the international position of the United States and the corresponding adjustment in the global status of English will have an impact on English use and appeal among persons for whom it is not their first language. We can only speculate on the long-term influence of English on Southeast Asia by looking at where the language is today and where it's going.

Despite this, English will continue to rise in importance in the region. Bautista and Gonzalez make the following forecasts for the future of English in the region:

- (1) Higher education and the workplace will increasingly employ English as a common commercial, commerce, and diplomatic language.
- (2) It is acceptable to say that English is Singapore's official language since the country's official language policy and practise are openly pro-English and English is considered as an equalising and unifying force.
- (3) It's now seeing a resurgence in Malaysia after a long time of neglect owing to the country's national unity and building.
- (4) For example, even though many Filipinos think that their English proficiency is diminishing, the market for foreign language instruction in English continues to be strong.

According to Bautista and Gonzalez, the media, the Internet, mobile phones, and educational institutions will put pressure on the region to standardise English. A group of "acrolect-level local varieties of English" will arise, according to Yano. However, Yano maintains that the World Englishes movement is still in its infancy and that many ESL varieties of English, such as Singapore English or Philippine English or Malaysian English, are already on their way down this path.

There will be standardisation and divergence of English dialects in Southeast Asia. Graddol (1997) projected that people outside the Inner Circle would become increasingly conscious that they don't have to use English in the same way as those within the Circle. Speakers will choose the future direction of English as a global language, rather than it dictating their every move. As a consequence, their English will take on a regional slant, style, and meaning unique to that location. The phenomena of English being spoken in Southeast Asia and other Asian and African nations has been referred to as "GLOCAL language" by Pakir (2000). In this approach, the concepts of "global" and "local" are brought together in a novel way.

#### IV. ASEAN'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE POLICY

The nations in the Outer Circle, such as Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, and the Philippines, will be discussed first, followed by those of the Expanding Circle of ASEAN countries in terms of English language policy.

##### 4.1 Outer Circle ASEAN countries

###### ✓ **Malaysia**

It is not uncommon for Malaysia's language regulations to "flip-flop," since the country has alternated between speaking Malay and English throughout its history and governmental power. In 1786, the East India Company seized Penang and so started British colonisation of the Malay Peninsula. It wasn't until 1819 that Singapore and Malacca were taken over by the British after Penang had been taken over by the British for a little more than 30 years. In 1826, the British founded the Straits Settlements, which comprised Penang, Singapore, and Malacca. In the early 19th century, the Straits Settlements administrative region needed to build English-medium schools to satisfy the demands of the English-speaking government. The establishment of these institutions ushered in a new era for the spread of the English language.

###### ✓ **Singapore**

Despite the brief period of united governance between the two nations, known as the "merger," after Singapore's independence in 1965, Malaysia's English language policy took an entirely different course. English, along with Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil, became one of Singapore's four official languages after the country's independence in 1965. Multilingual education was advocated by an All-Party Committee formed by the government in 1959 to address the issue of multi-ethnic and multi-cultural diversity in Singapore. As a result of the original bilingual education system, students were required to learn a second language that was given to them based on their ethnic background if English was their primary language of instruction. If the MoI was Chinese, Malay, or Tamil, then those who attended vernacular schools had to learn English as a second language. Since English was considered as an ethnically neutral language that belonging to none of the ethnic groups, interethnic communication became easier.

###### ✓ **Brunei**

In 1984, when Brunei became an independent state, English was the primary language of teaching. During the 1960s, the number of schools, teachers, and pupils of all languages — Malay and English — increased. Though many institutions are debating the merits of utilising a variety of MoI, there is no consensus. Malay and English were used as MoI in Malaysian government schools; British textbooks for English-medium schools, and Malaysian textbooks for Malay-medium schools, were used. The Arabic language was also taught as the MoI to a small number of students in religious schools, using textbooks that were sent in from Taiwan for the benefit of the local Chinese population. There was a long delay before the Ministry of Information (MoI) received any attention. Additionally, Malaysia's government emphasised the significance of English for

global competitiveness in its drive to construct a more cohesive country. Malay-English bilingual education was introduced instead of a solely Malay educational method. Brunei's higher education commission found that since 1984, "the majority of programmes in [the] institutions [of higher learning] are English medium, reflecting the genuine demand from students and employers.

#### ✓ **The Philippines**

The English language in the Philippines is unique from that of other countries in the area since it was colonised by the United States. After more than 300 years of Spanish dominance, English's quick ascent in the Philippines was considered as unmatched. An intriguing contrast was done by academics between 1901 and 1918, when roughly 47% of Filipinos stated they could speak and 55.6 percent said they could read and write English. In 1901, no Filipinos claimed to be able to converse in English. No longer were children as young as one taught in English, despite the fact that English was still their official language of government and education. It was in 1974 that the Ministry of Information (MoI) began to use English alongside Filipino as the official language. Aspirations for nationalism and a desire to keep English as a common language in order to have greater access to the advantages of science and technology via a second language were the driving motivations behind the United States' policy of bilingual education. First through fourth grade students were taught in Filipino and English as the media of instruction (MoIs) for different academic subjects. All other subjects were taught in Filipino, with the exception of math and science, which were taught in English. Yet the Ministry of Information (MoI) remains a major topic of debate despite this strategy. On the whole, these debates may be summed up succinctly in Koo (2008). There are many who say that English is the most important language in the world, that it unites Filipinos, and that moving away from English would create issues, while others who oppose the programme argue that English is a colonising instrument and that it has negative impacts on Filipino culture.

### **V. ENGLISH IS IN ASIA AND THE PROFICIENCY CONCERNS**

Diverse Asian Englishes have risen to prominence in recent years, significantly altering the global perception of English. Asian sociolinguistic reality is constantly changing, making it difficult for academic observers to keep up. Determining how "Asia" came to be used to encompass everything from the Middle East to Central Asia, as far east as India, and as far west of Japan or Korea has been a key issue throughout this tale. Our focus in this article is on South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia, which are home to the most "outer-circle" English-speaking civilizations and some of the world's most populous English-speaking countries.

#### **5.1 Asian cultures in flux: the periphery and the apex**

For the Asian setting, there is also a well-established difference between English-using civilizations in the "outer circle" (those in which English is, at the very least, a second language with significant intranational usage) and those in the "growing circle" (where English has traditionally had the status of a foreign language). South Asian countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, as well as Southeast Asian nations like Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore, are all considered part of Asia's outer-ring society, as is East Asian powerhouse Hong Kong. When it comes to Myanmar (Burma), the difference between an outer circle and an expanding circle might be hazy at best.

All of the outer-circle Asian cultures were formerly colonised by Anglophone colonial powers in the past. Brunei and Hong Kong are two examples of British colonies that became independent between 1947 and 1963; the rest of the countries in this group, including larger India, Malaysia, Myanmar and Singapore, earned their independence between 1947 and 1997. The Philippines was the only US colony in Asia, which was ruled by Spain from c. 1565 until 1898, then by the United States from 1946 to 1946. Almost all of these nations have kept English as their primary language for internal purposes after independence, and in most outer-circle countries, English is de jure recognised in administration, law and education. Even the most affluent countries in the world have a vibrant daily newspaper and an English literary heritage in the form of fiction, poetry and other forms of creative writing based on the English language. English-language radio and television are common in places like Hong

Kong, Singapore, and the Philippines in addition to print media. Furthermore, these cultures are characterised by a high frequency of code-switching and code-mixing in the informal and intimate realms, as well as the functional distinction of indigenous languages and English.

## **5.2 Second language English is becoming used across Asia**

English language statistics throughout the world rely on a range of sources with varying degrees of reliability. This is an imperfect science. Hong Kong and the Philippines, two countries with regular language censuses and surveys, both allow for discussion and interpretation of official figures. There's no further information on how well they can speak a language or how many different purposes it is used for in language censuses, as a general rule of thumb.

## **VI. INTERCULTURAL LITERACY AND THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A MULTI-CULTURAL LANGUAGE IN ASIA**

English is now described to as a global language or an international language, depending on who you ask. Do we really understand what we're talking about when we say this? This is a vitally important question that we in Japan must now ask ourselves in light of the "developing Japanese with English abilities" (MEXT) programmes established in 2003 to improve Japan's English language instruction: Is it worth it? (ELT). Many of the logical conclusions that may be derived from the current state of the English language seem to be beyond the grasp of the ordinary individual. When it comes to the contemporary world, English is a separate language, both in terms of its function and in terms of its appearance. Non-native speakers of English have taken note of the fact that a great number of countries in the Asia-Pacific, Africa-Pacific, and other areas have adopted English as their official or associate official language. In light of the present situation, millions of students are learning English as a second language in order to communicate effectively. Japanese language experts conducted a survey in 1999, and they discovered that people all around the globe consider English to be the most helpful language for global communication and collaboration. A consequence of this is that, while dealing with individuals from the United States, the United Kingdom, or any other English-speaking nation, English should not be the only language we should use, according to the Japanese viewpoint. Instead, while speaking with individuals from China, Korea, Brunei, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and other Asian nations, we should utilise English as our primary medium of communication. This is the language that we must utilise in order to connect with people all around the globe. Given that English is now a globally recognised language, it is safe to assume that it is being used to communicate by people from all over the globe.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

Because of this study, we can see just how important English language instruction is in Asian cultures. As a two-way street: Using both English and the mother languages of each cultural and ethnic group in Asian settings, the initial role of this paradigm is to identify the identity of each cultural and ethnic group. In addition, individuals may perceive the world via English's lens. Teaching the language as an aid to economic progress and understanding different cultures, as well as teaching English as an international communication tool in a globalised world, are all vital roles Asian Englishes may play in this process of opening the world's window.

Increasing numbers of people in Asian countries are becoming competent in English, which has a major influence on worldwide communication. In order to determine the duties of Asian Englishes and set goals for the direction of English education in Asian settings, an examination of Asian Englishes is required. So, to summarise, this research on English language growth in Asia and its role in defining the duties associated with English language education might significantly affect the sector.

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