Korean Adult Learners' Perception and Attitude toward English as a World Language*

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I. Introduction

1.1 Necessity and Goals of the Study

With rapidly changing conditions in international politics, society, and the economy, the age of globalism has come. The fact that English has secured a global status as the Lingua Franca and an international language in this global society derives from the historic expansion of Great Britain and the appearance of America as an economically powerful country (Crystal, 2003). English has also become the world language because the number of English speakers who use English as a second or a foreign language (Sewell, 2005).

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Crystal (2003) suggested that English entered into a new state because of its worldwide expansion. The status of English has changed and transformed by the various users' needs of speaking as a means of communication.

The main characteristic among the 21st century phenomena is the globalism paradigm of formation of a new global village culture zone. Globalism means people live together like a family in a community of the Earth. Therefore, English is no longer a language only for native English speakers. It is a means of communication for all people all over the world. We have to communicate with each other in English as a common language (Lee, 2011). This trend has brought about various Englishes characterized by the regional users of English, for example, Chinglish/Chinese English, Japlish/Japanese English, Singlish/Singaporean English, and Spanglish/Spanish English.

These days, we have more opportunity to communicate nationally and internationally in English. Under these conditions, to enhance intelligible linguistic function, global English should be recognized. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the perceptions of Korean college students and professionals on World Englishes and present directions for future English education.

1.2 Research Questions

In a situation where a new view towards English and changes in English education are desperately needed, it is important to consider the perception of English by Korean learners. This study aims to consider perception of world Englishes and to present answers to the following questions through analyzing learners' attitudes and perception of various concepts and phenomena in English.

First, what perception do Korean college students and professionals have of World Englishes?

Second, what perception do Korean college students and professionals have on the ownership of English?