
コミュニケーションのための英語

—非「英語母語」国民の観点から—

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次の英語論文は1991年11月28日、米国ビジネス・コミュニケーション学会の第56回年次大会（於ホノルル）で行った口頭発表を基にまとめたものである。

今日、英語は英米その他の英語を母国語とする人達が使う National English（国語としての英語）と International English（国際語としての英語）に二大別することができる。

International English を「国際英語」の意味で使う場合は英米以外の「英語母語」国民が使うカナダ英語、オーストラリア英語などと、英語を第二言語として使うインド英語、シンガポール英語、フィリピン英語などを合わせた“varieties of English”（英語の変種）を指す。

後者は第2次世界大戦前に大英帝国の傘下や英米の植民地であった国で、今日第三世界に属していて、そこで使われる英語を“New Englishes”（新英語——複数形）と総称することもある。これらの国では、英語はインテリ層から一般庶民までを含めた国民の大多数の人達にとっての「第二国語」として機能していることが多い。

（注）本稿では、よく使われる英語国民、非英語国民の代りに、「英語母語」国民、非「英語母語」国民と、厳格な呼称を用いた。

1. 英語学習の足を引っばる日本の環境

日本の場合「国際英語」を使っている国々とは大分事情を異にしている。明治の文物輸入から始まった外国文献の翻訳と第二次大戦の敗戦から立ち直った経済発展のおかげで、大学生を含めた大方の日本人は今日英語による著作を直接読みこなす必要が殆どない。

また、日本国内では英語を日常的に話す必要性は、一部の人を除けば殆どない。日本における英語は最有力な第一外国語として不動の地位を誇っているが、第三世界の幾つかの国々と違って、「第二国語」では全くないのである。

日本ではテレビ、ラジオ、録音テープなど英語を身に付けるための道具立ては十分整っているが、肝腎な英語と接触する時間が少なくまた増やそうと努力しないから、なかなか英語をものにすることができない。ましてやリーディング、ライティングといったら日本の学生は如何程も時間をかけていないし、忍耐のいる英文法学習などは避けて通る。

一方、平均的な日本の英語教師は英会話は得手でないので、学校では会話は余り重視されない。英作文の授業は若手教員や外部講師に廻される。英文科を除いた一般の大学生は、結局高校の延長のような英文解釈と英文法を教えられ、専門書の匂いをかがされただけで終わる。英語の授業の大部分が日本語による授業になっているのである。

それでも若者は外国文化に興味を持つので、英語との直接の接触を求めて英会話学校に行く。金髪のネイティブを集めた英会話学校が林立するのは日本独特の文化現象である。しかし、これとても車内の宙吊り広告にあるように、英語が話せるようになる“夢”を売るのであって、自分自身が時間をかけなければ結果は大して変りない。

日本では日常的には英語は殆ど必要がない。カタカナ英語は巷に氾濫して

いるが、サラリーマンも家庭の主婦も殆どの人が一年に一度も英語を話す必要がない。生活に一向に困らないのである。英語が必要なのは大学入試に英語の科目があり、大学で英語の授業があり、英書講読があるからである。

勿論、その目的は国際人の養成にあり、国際コミュニケーションの場で英語を駆使できるように指導するところにある。事実、国内では英語は殆ど必要ないのに、外国人と打合せするなどいざという時は相当なレベルの英語が要求される。普段は動機付けの材料に乏しくてコンスタントに勉強する気になれないのに、である。

観光旅行といった“お遊び”は別である。買い物ならリッチな日本人向け専門の土産物屋の売り子が日本語を使って応対してくれるし、日本人の店員もいる。しかし、海外出張、中長期滞在となるとそうはいかない。挨拶英語や「3語でできる英会話」は、実際のネゴシエーションの場では物の用をなさない。

この様に、日本における英語学習は、英語が非日常的な所でしか必要とされず、しかもそのレベルは一挙に一般的コミュニケーションのレベル以上のものが要求されるという学習者にとって甚だ難しい環境にあるのである。

2. どのような英語を学ぶべきなのか

では、そのような日本人あるいは非「英語母語」国民が学ぶべき英語がどのような英語であるべきなのか。そもそも、その元は British English であるべきなのか、American English であるべきなのか。非「英語母語」国民の間でこの辺の議論はなくはないが、一步進めた研究となると殆どない。まとまった著述となると皆無とっていい。

一方、「英語母語」国民の側の意見はどうか。英米人とも自分達の英語を外国人に合わせて易しくし、それを自分達も使おうという気はさらさらないのである。いわゆる Controlled English の使用である。そこまで苦勞せ

ずとも自分達の英語で大いばりして通るのである。たまに難しい単語を混じえたり、スラングを言って相手を煙にまく位がオチである。

日本の英会話学校では“ネイティブの生の英語”が売り物であり、学生は「学校英語とは違う。これこそ本当の英語だ」と喜ぶ。アメリカの語学研修も同じである。American English のイディオムやスラングを売り物にしている。しかし、集まる学生は英語の下手な外国人や日本人同士だったりして失望させられることが多い。

そもそも「ニューヨーク直送のこれぞ American English だ」を学ばなければ仕事はできないか。そんなことは全くないのである。国際コミュニケーション一般からビジネス・コミュニケーションの立場に問題を絞って考えると、そういったイディオムやスラングは全く不要といい。特に非「英語母語」国民同士の間でうろおぼえのスラングなど使われるのはコミュニケーションの邪魔になるだけである。

考えてもご覧あれ。アメリカ人が“べらんめい調”の日本語を話したら、「日本生まれの外人だな」と思われる。日本人がペラペラと英語でまくし立てたらかえって信用がなくなる。ディーラーの英語などは一部の専門家に委せておけばいい。コマーシャルの英語が書けなくたって、金を払って書いて貰って、こちらがその良し、悪しをある程度判断できれば用が済むのである。

英米人のビジネスマンに Plain English を期待するのは無理な相談であろう。会話の中で分らない表現があったら、「何ですか」と質問すればいい。英米人が書いてくる手紙は辞書を引けば大抵は分る。海外駐在だからといって、何も辞書なしで新聞が読めるようになり、テレビの冗談も分るという所まで勉強する必要はない。その他にしなければならない仕事一杯があるのである。

たしかに、戦後の日本では“外人かぶれ”が多かった。アメリカ文化へのあこがれもあった。今と違って金もなければヒマもない。働き蜂である。そもそも簡単に外国に行けない時代である。“洋行”帰りやフルブライト奨学

金の元留学生が肩で風を切っていた。英語教師の中にも“えせ”アメリカ人、イギリス人といった人種がいた。

しかし、今日は状況は全く異なる。英米だけが相手ではない。日本人は非「英語母語」国民の国々、第三世界の国々にも目を向けている。その事情は世界の他の国々にとっても同様であろう。逆に、日本が各国から「経済超大国」としてのありようを注目されている状況が現出し、また、日本国内外で日本語学習熱が高まっているのである。

3. 国際語としての英語

International English は一方では varieties of English (英語の変種) を意味するが、ここでは「国際語としての英語」の方を指す。非「英語母語」国民が使う英語は、英米人などのネイティブの英語に対するある意味でのアンチテーゼ (反説) である。

この英語論文では日本人を中心とする非「英語母語」国民側からの問題意識、論点を極力幅広く集約した。そしてその上に立って、羽田三郎氏 (青山学院大学名誉教授) が提唱している“Universal English”(普遍的英語) の考え方を支持する形で私見を述べた。International English が二つの意味を持つのに比べて、この Universal English の方がより理解されやすかろう。

考え方は「国際語としての英語」が、英米用法のいずれにもあまりとらわれない、許容度の高い英語を言わんとしているのと同様である。Universal English という言葉の持つ「広く世界に通ずる英語」というニュアンスから、英米いずれにも偏らない“中立的英語”という思想が、International English よりも明確に示される。そして当面、ビジネス・コミュニケーションがその核となる可能性が高い。

私が行ったこのような問題提起に対して、米国人教師達は概ね無関心であり、議論をすればする程反撥してくる。自国文化を背景にしたイディオムや

独特のスラングを除去すれば、それは American English でなくなる。教師として「教えてやるんだ」と一歩高い所にもいられなくなる。“失業”の危険にさらされるのだから、「賛成しろ」といっても無理かも知れない。

しかし、大多数の日本人は若い時のあこがれは別として、英米文化を学んでイギリス人やアメリカ人の真似をしたくて英語を学習するのではない。非「英語母語」国民は一般に国際コミュニケーションの「道具としての英語」(Instrumental English) を学ぼうとしている。そして彼等は日本人のようにちょっとした間違いは全然気にしていない。日本人はパーフェクトを求め過ぎるのである。

人工語のエスペラントは最大言語人口の英語を基盤にしなかったので殆ど広がっていない。英語を簡易化する試みには、戦前の Basic English (18の動詞と850語の基本語による) があった。今アメリカでは Plain English の運動がある。官庁用語の平易化で、多民族国家の反映でもある。このような努力もないわけではない。

しかし、基本的には非「英語母語」国民側から、例えば

- (1) アングロ・サクソン語源の二語動詞・三語動詞
- (2) 文化的背景から来るイディオム表現
- (3) 野放図に使われている語彙(ごい)
- (4) 文法の中での極めて不規制な部分

の使用制限を決めて、用語集、用例集、辞書(特に Writing Dictionary) など基盤作りをしないと共通の議論の場が出来そうにない。

このためには、Academic English (学問のための英語)、Occupational English (職業のための英語) も有力な材料になる。「経済超大国」の日本の文部省がこのような研究に予算を配分することは、国際化・世界の平和のために大いに寄与しよう。

戦前は宗主国の英国が幅を利かせ、戦後は世界の警察官・民主主義のセー

ルスマン米国の時代であったが、今その余裕はあまりないようである。エコノミック・アニマルとさげすまれた日本が、国連でそしてロシアへの金の出し手として期待されている。大国には批判はつきものである。日本人が少し物を言いだすと、“傲慢”（ごうまん）だと直ぐ叩かれる。そして日本の自称“識者”が「日本人は謙虚であらねば……」と悪乗りする。

小稿もその枠内に入れられかねないが、ぜひ中味のあるご批判に期待したいものである。

ENGLISH AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

— Viewpoints of Non-Native Speakers of English —

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ABSTRACT

Heretofore, English has been taught by native English speakers and learned by non-native speakers. However, various English adaptations have emerged among the people of Asia and elsewhere. As a means of communication, English should not necessarily be restricted to that has been spoken by Americans or British.

Words and phrases of Anglo-Saxon origin and certain irregularities in English grammar sometimes hinder communications among native and non-native English speakers. Therefore, scholars and professionals are encouraged to develop a “Universal English” that would serve as a more effective means of business communication.

This article is based on an oral presentation made at the 56th Annual Convention of the Association for Business Communication held in Honolulu, Hawaii from November 27, 1991 to December 1, 1991.

INTRODUCTION

Today, the English-speaking population is said to have grown to 2 billion, of which, for more than 300 million people, English is their mother tongue. For 1 billion people, English is their second language. Besides, there are 700 million people who use English as a foreign language for international communication. (Crystal, 1985) Accordingly, two out of five persons in the world speak English somehow or other. Therefore, English has invariably become the most extensively used international common language of the world.

It must be noted, however, that American English or British English is not necessarily in use all over the world. On the contrary, there are varieties of English. Those whose mother tongues are English, such as Americans, British, Canadians and Australians, also speak English peculiar to each nation. Likewise, the peoples of Asia, Africa and Europe, whose native tongues are not English, use varieties of English with certain distinctive features. (Honna, 1990)

In this connection, Takao Suzuki of Keio University, Japan, asserts that the language which is generally called and known as "English" should be treated as two different languages ; one is "National English" and the other is "International English," or, as he names it, *Englic*. (Suzuki, 1985) However, there is a general misconception that "National English" has been elevated untouched to "International English."

As varieties of English exist in a number of countries around the globe, International English is not a synonym for either American English or British English. Because the English language has only attained the status of a de facto international language, as differentiated from French or German, it has assumed a peculiar double character, National English and International English.

INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH FORMATION

Needless to say, there was a history of imperialism or expansionism before English became an international common language. Under the British Empire, there were 32 overseas colonies — those countries except Great Britain such as Australia, Canada, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Singapore, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. Also, the Philippines was a protectorate of the United States of America before 1946. (Tsuda, 1990)

English actually achieved the position of a world language after the Second World War, chiefly due to the influences of the United States, which has played a leading role in the postwar world.

One finds it rather strange that, among the former colonial countries, English has been given greater importance, rather than being expelled from such countries. This may be partly due to the fact that certain local languages had not linguistically grown sufficiently to handle the requirements for sophisticated communication in society, education, foreign trade, etc.

It may also be attributable to the fact that, as seen in India, a particular country has more than one language, since it is composed of plural numbers of races and tribes. Under the circumstances, although English was the language of a former suzerain country, English remained as another official language, because of its neutral character and for the sake of national unification. (Suzuki, 1985)

Thus, International English includes such varieties of English as Indian English, Singaporean English, and Philippine English. Many politicians and social leaders in Asian and African countries speak English or French fluently. This means that English or French is actually a national language, as well as an international language, in those countries.

In the Third World countries, which are ex-colonies of Great Britain or America, peculiar “New Englishes” were born, as peoples use English as a second language and adapt it to each country’s historical, social and cultural needs. (Honna, 1990)

Furthermore, Braj Kachru points out as follows : It is obvious, in the Third World countries, that the choice of functions, uses and models of English has to be determined on a pragmatic basis, keeping in view the local conditions and needs. (Kachru, 1976)

JUSTIFIABILITY FOR THE NON-NATIVE SPEAKER ENGLISH

As has been seen, more and more people have come to use English as

a second language or a foreign language as the non-native speaker English.

Nobuyuki Honna of Aoyama Gakuin University, Japan quotes, “English belongs to the world, and every nation which uses it does so with different tone, color, and quality. English is an international auxiliary language. . . . We may use it for different purposes and for different lengths of time on different occasions, . . . No one needs to become more like Americans, British, Australians, Canadians or any other English speaker, in order to lay claim on the language.” (Larry Smith, 1983)

However, the non-native English or International English speaker has individual weaknesses, in that such language is subject to wide variations and, as a result, lacks normative laws. Therefore, for mutual understanding among the speakers, which is an important function of any language, it does not have a very high understandability level. But, the case is not much different from the conversation exchanged between a native English speaker and a person who does not have a good command of English.

An international language, of itself, should be equally shared by the people who use it in both-way exchanges of ideas. Accordingly, each nation, where English is used in international communication, is, to a large extent, free to use it of its own volition.

One may claim that such a wayward use of the English language is sure to degrade the dignity of English, making it still further difficult for such people to understand each other. This is, however, a case of cultural

arrogance on the part of the speaker. If we decide to adopt a particular English (National English) as a common medium of international communication, it will offer enormous privileges to those who use that kind of English as their mother tongue.

On the contrary, those people who use other languages as their native tongues will be heavily burdened with the task of becoming proficient in another nation's particular National English, which is next to impossible. In every respect, this is a very unfair solution. (Suzuki, 1985)

Furthermore, we know, from experience, that non-native English speakers from different countries do not have great difficulty in making each other understood, through the use of their respective "Englishes." Like the movement for the new international finger language, I feel that an international common language can be materialized by consolidating and upgrading the so-called "International English."

"STANDARD ENGLISH" AND CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

There are many dialects and English language variations, both in England and America. Which one of them is to be considered "standard" may be determined by the power relationship within each country's society.

Asked what is the standard English in the United States, according to Takesato Watanabe of Kyoto Sangyo University, Japan, American intellectuals including linguists, without exception, had a hard time trying to

give a concrete answer.

In America, there are distinct regional differences among the northern, eastern, southern, and western regions. Even in New York City, the middle class and the very poor class, for example, some of those living in the Bronx, use different kinds of English. Also, immigrants from various parts of the world speak English with a mother country's accent. (Watanabe, 1983) The same can be said about the Japanese language in Japan, though.

Therefore, it is difficult to describe what American English is exactly like. It is neither the pronunciation of a television news anchor person nor the English of the Eastern Establishment, that is "standard." The same can be said of British English. Indeed, "Standard English" is an imaginary product, as standard Japanese is an imaginary product.

Hence, we need not blindly follow American or British English. When non-native English speakers begin to learn English for cross-cultural communication, it should be a kind of English which stands on an equal footing with each other nations, free from linguistic colonialism or great power mentality. (Watanabe, 1983)

Both Americans and British are not totally unaware of the fact that English is pronounced in a way different from theirs, and vocabularies rather unfamiliar to them have come into existence. What is even worse, queer usages have crept in, and certain grammatical differences, which are intolerable to native speakers, also came into being.

With the exception of some professional linguists, most American and English people feel that such a transfiguration of the English language is an undesirable degradation of their own language. That is, there is a certain sentiment as to the order of importance attached to the English language where, in foreign countries or in colonies, English is being mistakenly used and deteriorated.

Many people feel that English is the privileged language of the two nations, Americans and British, and that other people of the world should learn the norms and mentality of the native English speakers. (Suzuki, 1985) This is nothing else than "cultural imperialism," which holds true in any dialect debate in any country in the world.

In this connection, the World Esperanto Congress held in Stockholm in 1980 rightfully identified the following points: When either one of the two different language groups are compelled to learn and use the other group's language, language discrimination presents itself. Likewise, in getting in touch with a speaker of a different language, every one who uses his or her own language and resultantly compels the other to use that language brings forth language discrimination. (Tsuda, 1990) The only correct solution in cross-cultural communication is to maintain the principle of using the local language.

LINGUISTIC INTOLERANCE AND INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH

The usage of English can be divided into three major categories; ENL (English as a native language), ESL (English as a second language),

and EFL (English as a foreign language). From the 1970s, the study of International English has been gaining in power, in company with the changing structure of international society. The representative ones are English as an International Language (EIL) and English as an Auxiliary Language (EAL), as advocated by Larry Smith in 1983.

M. Lester says : When sufficient skill has been developed to meet the learner's communication needs, there may be little motivation for the learner to master increasingly idiosyncratic details, ... The second factor is the need to maintain a balance between linguistic and cultural roles. ... The great advantage of international English is that it is not readily identified with a single country. (Lester, 1978) In this regard, Japan's Yukihiro Nakayama is advocating "Multinational Englishes." (Nakayama, 1989)

However, there remain a large number of linguistic chauvinists, who are intolerant to the non-native use of English, thinking that non-natives are degrading their native English. For the native English speakers, their language is something they take pride in, in point of history, society, culture, tradition, thought, etc. Many non-natives, on the contrary, aim at obtaining a means of international business communication, without being too much involved in learning the culture or history of Great Britain or the United States.

Some of the native English speakers (although we know there have been many arguments as to who are really the "native speakers") think that non-natives are wishing to learn English in order to know them and

their culture — a case of Messianism or officious kindness.

In this connection, Shunichi Oishi introduces interesting episodes. The British, according to a Russian writer, seem to be extremely tolerant and broad-minded in regard to foreigners' speaking English, but this concept is a great misunderstanding. Actually, they think that English should, by its very nature, be understood by the people of the world. On the other hand, they seem to retain the right and privilege of not being required to speak any other language but English. Therefore, British tolerance to other peoples using English is the reverse side of colossal confidence and arrogance on the part of the British people.

Another episode regards the case of an English woman teacher in Wien (Vienna) who boasted that she thought everyone appreciated her speaking English. A similar instance is CEO's and ambassadors coming to Japan, who would not learn Japanese and do not even greet with a "ohayo-gozaïmasu (Good Morning!)." (Oishi, 1990) Such persons would often "bad mouth" the Japanese people they met, saying that Japanese are poor English speakers.

SITUATIONS IN JAPAN AND JAPANESE ENGLISH

Japan is quite different from those countries where English is used as a second language and where many people speak fluent English. Japan has been happy to modernize herself without going through the stage of a colony of any great power. The lower level of the oral fluency of the Japanese comes from the fact that Japan is a highly civilized country in

the Far East. Japanese students now can read countless books translated into Japanese practically on all subjects they want to investigate.

This phenomenon may be evidenced by the very low level of circulation of English newspapers in Japan ; the readers may be business people, students, foreign nationals residing in Japan. The largest single daily circulation has been attained by the Japan Times, which has only 60,000 readers. As for other papers, some estimate that Mainichi has 46,000, Asahi (evening) 40,000, and Yomiuri 20,000. Nikkei has issued an English weekly with a circulation of only about 10,000. With nearly half of high school graduates going on to college, English newspapers in Japan have a total paid circulation of less than 200,000.

Except for some professionals engaged in the study of linguistics or English and American literature, English is nothing more than a means or an instrument of communication for most Japanese. There are many countries in the world, besides America and England, and many people may need to gather information from Japanese language literature, without lingering over original texts written in English.

On the other hand, English is worthwhile as a medium of communication with various peoples of the world, including Americans and the British. This is the main reason why Japanese students are eager to learn English, and “English conversation” schools are doing a thriving business, employing “natives” with a handsome remuneration — another aspect of native “believers.”

Meanwhile, there have been several attempts in Japanese academic circles toward consolidating International English, including *Englic* (Suzuki, 1985) and *Japalish* (Watanabe, 1983). These attempts may, in some way, correspond to Randolph Quirk's proposal regarding "Nuclear English." (Quirk, 1982) Quirk gave the basic idea of "Nuclear English" that would serve as the "common core" of English, but further studies and experiments may be necessary for formulating related grammar and vocabulary. In addition, his idea seems to lack in the understanding of locally grown kinds of English. (Yano, 1990)

In this connection, Mary Tay of Singapore states, "The average educated Singaporeans . . . consider it important to aim at a standard indistinguishable from standard British English in the area of syntax, but not in the area of phonology (pronunciation, rhythm, stress, and intonation) and vocabulary. It is the phonology and vocabulary, rather than the grammar, that identify a speaker as distinctly Singaporean. (Tay, 1982) — a remark worthy of note.

TOWARD A "UNIVERSAL ENGLISH"

This paper does not intend to clarify the merits and demerits of New Englishes used as varieties of English. Rather, through the study of International English, I propose to develop a "Universal English" that would serve as a more effective means of business communication. In this study, American and British scholars and professionals are enabled to take more active roles than ever before.

As early as 1930, C. K. Ogden introduced “Basic English” and he decided that 18 verbs would be used : come, get, give, go, keep, let, make, put, seem, take ; be, do, have; say, see, send; may, will. These words, as well as other Basic English vocabulary on things, qualities, operations, etc., are indeed simple.

However, core English words and phrases, mainly of Anglo-Saxon origin, seem easy to remember, but are difficult to use. Take such phrasal verbs as “make out” or “turn down” for example. In fact, it is much easier for foreigners to employ a word like “understand” or “reject” instead. Further, it is hard to tell how “come up to” and “come up with” should be used.

Saburo Haneda points out : For pronunciation, American staccato tone and even stress are easier to follow, in comparison with British glissando type. Vocabulary control should be exercised, so that we can appropriately choose words with specific meanings (usually “big words” of Latin origin) over idiomatic expressions. Lastly, for grammar, some kinds of simplification may be considered, wherever necessary.

Haneda aims at English which can be used to express one’s intention logically, using rather formal sentences and with slow and distinct pronunciation. Idiomatic, colloquial expressions using slang, from time to time, are not considered to be appropriate for international communication. English education in non-native countries, therefore, should be directed to the attainment of a means of communication without aiming endlessly at approaching a native level. (Haneda, 1990)

CONCLUSION

The Association for Business Communication was farsighted enough to drop the word "American" from its name in 1983. As far as I can see, however, not much emphasis has been laid on the subject of international business communication. Within the recent few years, only five papers or so dealing with international subjects have been published.

In this regard, it is a welcome development to find the Journal of Business Communication is calling for papers devoted to the subject of international and intercultural business communication for Fall 1992.

The study for the consolidation of International English is a field in which natives and non-natives are equally able to take part. I welcome this development of the Association very much.

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