

**“Englishisation” of Higher Education in Asia:
The Flow of Overseas Students and the Role of Cultural Intermediaries**

Kosaku Yoshino
University of Tokyo

Abstract

The issue of the English language is becoming noticeably significant in the increasingly globalised world. In fact, “Englishisation”, or the spread of English, often occurs side by side with globalisation. Previous accounts of Englishisation are confined either to an ideological critique of “English language imperialism” or celebration of varieties of international English. This study aims to be sociological and empirical, attempting to look into the ways in which English works as a medium in transforming or consolidating social relations and networks at transnational levels. Taking up the notion of Malaysia as a regional hub for higher education, the paper examines how the Englishisation of higher education in Malaysia affects the flow of movement of students from mainland China as well as other countries and regions of the world to their destinations of study. Attention is drawn to Malaysia’s multiethnicity and the ways in which Malaysia’s bi-lingual and “bi-cultural” staff in the education industry serve as transnational cultural intermediaries, for example, between PRC Chinese and Malaysian Chinese, and between Middle Easterners and Malays-Muslims. The implications of their role in influencing the flow of overseas students are examined.