**Writing a Method and Discussion Section**

1. **Your assignment task is to write a method and a discussion section as part of a research report.**
2. **You are provided with a complete introduction (divided into two sections entitled *Introduction and Background*), the notes for a method section and a complete results section of a research report.**
3. **The research report is entitled, “Korean University Students’ Perspectives in the Learning of English.”**

**Method Section (5 marks)**

**Instructions**

1. Read the sections entitled “I.Introduction and II.Background”.
2. Read the notes provided for the section entitled“III.Method”.
3. This section is divided into two sub-sections, the first section is entitled “Subjects” and the second is entitled “Materials and Procedures”.
4. Write paragraphs by **re-wording** the notes into sentences.
5. Use a variety of sentence structures and change the vocabulary in the notes where possible.
6. **Use bare participles and participial phrases where possible (NOT relative clauses).**
7. **Do not add any information. Do not leave out any information. There is no word limit.**
8. Use Times New Roman or Calibri (Body) 12pt font, 1.5 spacing with a wide (5cm margin) on the left.

**Discussion Section (20 marks)**

**Instructions**

1. Read the section entitled “IV.Results”.
2. Write the “V. Discussion” section based on the results of the research, making use of the course materials.
3. Use the following to guide you. Write your discussion in the order given.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | Write an introductory paragraph referring back to the main purpose and summarizing the research questions for the study | (Paragraph 1)  2-3 sentences |
| B | For each research question, review the **general** findings **(answer the research questions)** and explain them **(what do they show?)** | (Paragraph 2)  (200 – 250 words) |
| C | Point out limitations of the study | (Paragraph 3)  1-2 sentences |
| D | Point out implications of the study for the teaching and learning of EFL in Korea | (Paragraph 4)  (100 – 150 words) |
| E | Suggest possible further research (to build on from this study) | (Paragraph 5)  1-2 sentences |
| F | A concluding statement reflecting on the motivation for learning English | (Paragraph 5)   * 1. sentences |

1. Write between **400 – 600** **words** in total for the discussion section. **Include a word count.**
2. Use Times New Roman or Calibri (Body) 12pt font, 1.5 spacing with a wide (5cm margin) on the left.
3. Submit your assignment to TURNITIN.
4. **Staple the *Assessment Criteria Assignment 2* sheet (pages 8 and 9) to the back of your assignment before you submit.**
5. **N. B. This is an individual project – do not discuss it with classmates (TURNITIN will assess the originality of your writing against classmates as well as internet sources).**

**KOREAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ PERSPECTIVES IN THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH**

**I. Introduction**

This paper reports an investigation into Korean students’ attitudes towards, and motivation to learn, English. Attitudes and motivation are topics of some interest, since English teachers in Korea are frequently taken aback by the low levels of university achievement despite the comparative difficulty of the university entrance exams. Teachers are often unsure what strategies to adopt to compensate for the mismatch between their students’ memorized chunks of formalized and obscure English on the one hand, and their abysmal grasp of how the language is actually used on the other. Student motivation to learn also appears to be mixed, often combining a generalized enthusiasm with an uncharacteristic lack of rigor and application. The situation is so anomalous, in fact, that a variety of explanations have been proposed. These range from general social-psychological theories (e.g. Hildebrandt and Giles, 1980) to educational accounts which blame specific learning strategies acquired in junior and senior high schools (e.g. Hino, 1988; Pauson, 1988).

For example, in a comparative study of American and Korean students’ attitudes towards a variety of global and educational problems, Coogan et al (1988) included questions probing attitudes towards foreign language study. They found substantial differences between the students of the two countries. “The results show that most of the Koreans tested do not believe that foreign language study is especially important for them personally.” (p. 295)*.* The authors go on to suggest that Koreans regard foreign language study as an academic pursuit, rather than one to be valued for utilitarian purposes or even personal enrichment.

Whether true or not such comments, together with the experiences of English teachers in Korea (see Wornell, 1985), have led researchers to explore the motivation and attitudes that lie behind the country’s institutionalized preoccupation with English. Attitudes are here taken in the meaning advocated by Sarnoff (1970: 279): “a disposition to react favourably or unfavourably to a class of objects.” However reactions are rarely made out of context: for adults, learning a foreign language is frequently a choice; for schoolchildren it is to usually not, although they may be offered several options. In Korea, schoolchildren are virtually given a Hobson’s choice\*: English. The attitudes they develop, therefore, are not just towards the English language itself, but reflect all the subjective and impressionistic feelings associated with learning a new subject. These negative, positive, or mixed attitudes, engendered by high-school experiences of English, remain intact into the early years of university study, since very little has occurred to change them.

Attitudes and motivation are not causally related, but many teachers feel that there is a connection between the two. Gardner (1985:10) has recently attempted to make this connection clear: “Motivation … refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language.” He therefore brackets “effort”, “desire to achieve”, and “favourable attitudes” together in a loose configuration, adding that effort alone is not enough. In the Korean situation, considerable effort is often expended, but whether or not the other elements are present is questionable.

*\* Hobson’s choice = no choice at all*

**II. Background**

The work of Gardner and Lambert (1972) offered an impetus to the study of language attitudes and motivation that had previously been lacking. Regarding motivation, they proposed that it might be termed either “instrumental” (“if the purposes of language study reflect the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement”, p. 3) or “integrative” (“if the student wishes to learn more about the other cultural community foreign because he is interested in it in an open-minded way, to the point of eventually being accepted as a member of that other group”, p. 3). This terminology has been adopted by a number of researchers (Cooper and Fishman, 1977; Chester and Smith, 1978; Shaw, 1983), though with varying interpretations of the terms “instrumental” and “integrative.” Indeed, the words may be unsatisfactory as descriptors, a point which will be taken up later.

“Instrumental” motivation for learning English implies a practical orientation towards it. For example, Cooper and Fishman’s (1977) study of high-school students in Jerusalem showed that the top three reasons offered were (a) to read textbooks assigned in universities or other institutions of higher learning, (b) to get along when abroad, and (c) to become broadly educated. Shaw (1983) found similar instrumental reasons in his analysis of final-year B.A. students in Singapore, Hyderabad, and Bangkok.

“Integrative” reasons for learning English imply the eventual integration of the learner into the society of the target language. Cooper and Fishman (1977) found that the three *least popular* reasons for studying student English were all “integrative”: (a) to learn foreign points of view on Israel, (b) to know tourists better, and (c) to know English-speaking immigrants better. Shaw (1983) had similar results, leading him to suggest that the English students are not learning English “so that they can change themselves and become like native speakers” (p.24). He goes on to question the validity of the instrumental - integrative dichotomy in the light of his findings. The terms were originally used in the Canadian context, where they were readily applicable to the social milieu. But in the EFL situation, the term “integrative” has scarcely any application in its original sense. A more appropriate rendering of “integrative” in the EFL context would be that it represents, on the part of the learner, a desire to become bilingual and bicultural, through the addition of another language and culture to their own.

In addition to the two types of motivation already mentioned - instrumental and integrative - a third has been added for the analysis of the EFL situation in Korea. A good number of students have been observed to be interested in English for reasons which could not realistically be termed either instrumental or integrative. These include, for example, pleasure at being able to read English and enjoyment of entertainment in English. These reasons may be termed “personal”, since they appear to relate to individual development and satisfaction. In this study, therefore, the three terms “instrumental”, “integrative”, and “personal” will be used.

In Chester and Smith’s (1978) study of adult EFL learners in Seoul, the students were asked to give their reasons for studying English. Personal and integrative reasons were most highly valued: instrumental reasons were not. When asked to rate their own EFL skills, the students placed reading and writing above understanding and speaking. Finally, the study showed that in the Korean family the father’s English was rated superior to the mother’s, possibly a reflection of the use of English in the Korean workplace, a largely male domain.

In a recent survey of Taiwanese freshmen, Bernstein and Rosh (1989), found that “the overall intensity of motivation of the college students reasons was low” (p. 206). Their study attempted to identify changes in attitude towards English taking place over time. But even after a 150-hour program, only “limited development” (p. 193) in attitudes was noted. They suggest that motivation towards English peaks in the last year of high school, as the entrance exams approach, suffers a decline through university life, but may well re-ascend during adulthood: “Adult motivation… forms a clear contrast with the motivational wasteland among university entrants” (p. 207). However, in defense of the university students, the authors find that an “experiential dimension...begins to replace the entirely instrumental motivation that preceded it” (p. 207). This may include a wish to study abroad, and the belief that the study of English widens one’s horizons.

Regarding the situations in which English is used in Korea, Stanlaw (1987:106) has indicated the “professional” ones involving foreigners are the most common. This suggests a wide range of language functions, though Morrow (1987) finds only a restricted set in actual use. Specifically, he identifies the “imaginative/innovative” function, by which he means the use of English loanwords in Korean, the use of English in advertising, in the media, and in other forms of entertainment generally. However this neglects the extent of English in the educational world in Korea, which has been estimated at approximately 99% in middle school, 70% in high school, and 20% at university (Stanlash, 1987:100).Whatever their motivations and attitudes, students in Korea find themselves caught up in a massive language-teaching exercise whose full implications may be unclear to them.

The aims of this survey may now be formulated through the following research questions. The word “students” will here be used to mean Korean university freshmen.

1. Do social factors, such as parental use of English, play any part in their motivation? What is the extent of the students’ exposure to English other than in the school context?

2. How do the students rate their skills in English?

3. What is the primary motivation for the students to study English? Are they instrumentally, integratively, or personally motivated?

4. What functions do the students see English as performing?

**III. Method**

**Subjects**

*Notes for paragraph*

1. 311 freshmen (private university in Korea) – 5 page survey – on attitudes toward English
2. 144 female, 167 male – aged 18 -24, average age 18.4
3. Mainly from 3 Faculties – Humanities (54%), Commerce (30.2%) Law (13.5%) – (97.7% of total sample)
4. Selection criteria – convenience + availability
5. All students previously from Korean education system - 6 years of English study before university

**Materials and Procedures**

*Notes for paragraph one*

1. Survey designed – given to students early on (freshman year)
2. Answers – overallpicture of attitudes towards English language of Korean students – on entry to university study?

*Notes for paragraph two*

1. Part 1 of survey – biographical information + Part 2 student evaluation of English aptitude
2. Part 3 “Why study English?” look at motivation for English study
3. Students – set of 12 reasons (tailored to Korean situation) – from Cooper and Fishman 1977:252
4. Instructions – top 3 reasons (“most important”) – numbers 1-3 next to chosen reasons + bottom 3 (“least important”) – numbers 10-12
5. Totals for each reason – positive type (“most important”) + negative type (“least important”)
6. For report – only first and last selections discussed

*Notes for paragraph three*

1. Data from surveys – coded + moved to spreadsheet
2. Both – in completed surveys and researcher coding – lower numbers (e.g. 1) = highest or best, - higher numbers (e.g. 4) = the lowest or worst

**IV. Results**

**Experience with English**

In the following paragraphs a profile is offered of the students’ experiences with English. The indicators used include the extent of parental involvement with English, the number of visits made to English-speaking countries, the students’ use of English outside the classroom, a self-rating of English ability, plus a number of other *ad hoc* measures.

Parental involvement with English was mentioned by some 38 (12.2%) students. Of these, 16 reported that their mothers used English either with friends (7), at home (6), or at work (3). On the other hand, 36 students reported that their fathers used English either at work (27), with friends (8), or at home (3). Fourteen of these students reported that both parents used English. Only 11(3.5%)students reported having visited an English-speaking country. These visits were mostly of one to two weeks, most frequently to the U.S. Only one extended stay was reported: one girl had lived in the United States for a year and a half.

Regarding the use of English outside the classroom, 37 (11.9%) students answered positively. Again, males (23) led females (14), though both groups indicated that they used “unstructured” settings (e.g., with other students, in club activities, or listening to the radio) far more frequently than “structured” ones (e.g., another school setting).

**Self-rating of English Skills**

Thestudents were asked to rate their own English under the headings of understanding, speaking, reading, and writing. The results (Table 1) showed that they rated themselves much lower on understanding and speaking than on reading and writing. Some 52.1% felt that they understood English “Not well”, and almost 50% felt that they could speak English only “A little”. Most confidence was expressed for reading, where 35.1% placed themselves in the “Fairly well” category. Writing was the most evenly spread, though 44.2% placed themselves in the “Not well” category. Aggregating the positive totals (“Very well” and “Fairly well”) the self-rated order of skills of the group was: 1. Reading; 2. Writing; 3. Understanding; 4. Speaking.

In a following question, the students were asked, “Could you write a reasonably correct letter in English?” To this only 29 (9.3%) responded affirmatively. In other words, almost 90% of the freshman group felt incapable of writing a letter in English; despite the relatively high rating they had earlier given their own writing.

**Table 1: Self-Rating of English Ability (**n=311)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Skill | Very Well | Fairly Well | Not Well | A Little |
| Understanding | 1(0.3%) | 39 (12.7%) | 160 (52.1%) | 107 (34,9%) |
| Speaking | 0 (0.0%) | 26 (8.4%) | 128 (41.6%) | 154 (50.0%) |
| Reading | 9 (2.9%) | 108 (35.1 %) | 136 (44.2%) | 55 (17.9%) |
| Writing | 7 (2.3%) | 86 (27.9%) | 136 (44.2%) | 79 (25.6%) |

**Motivation for Studying English**

Tables 2 and 3 show the results of responses to the section concerning motivation for studying English. Table 2 gives the first choices by the students, that is, the notion which considered number one, or “most important”. The figures show that 18.25% chose the instrumental reason “easier to get along in other countries”, followed by the integrative reason, “allows me to understand how foreigners think and behave.” The personal reason, “allows me to enjoy entertainment more” came next.

**Table 2: Most Important Reasons for Studying English (#1 Choices) (n=241)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reasons | No. | (%) |
| Knowing English... |  |  |
| 1. makes it easier to get along in other countries | 44 | (18.25) |
| 2. allows me to understand how foreigners think | 37 | (15.35) |
| 3. allows me to enjoy entertainment more - personal | 34 | (14.10) |
| 4. helps a person to get a better job | 26 | (10.78) |
| 5. makes it possible to become broadly educated | 19 | (7.88) |
| 6. is required to pass university exams | 18 | (7.46) |
| 7. allows.., friends among Eng.-speaking people | 17 | (7.05) |
| 8. allows me to get to know tourists better | 15 | (6.22) |
| 9. gives me personal satisfaction | 12 | (4.97) |
| 10. allows me to learn foreign points of view on Korea | 11 | (4.56) |
| 11. allows me to read Eng. books for pleasure | 6 | (2.48) |
| 12. allows me to read textbooks assigned at university | 2 | (0.82) |

If we look at the data the other way, that is checking to see which notions were placed last by the students (No. 12 choices), we find a strong instrumental bias (Table 3, see next page). Two instrumental reasons, “knowing English is required to pass university exams” (24.12%), and “knowing English allows me to read textbooks assigned at university” (16.66%), were the most frequently selected. Whether or not the word “university” acted as a trigger for negative responses, or whether the students genuinely find no connection between a Korean university and the study of English, the fact remains that these were the two most negatively valued statements. The personal reason, “knowing English gives me personal satisfaction” (14.91%) was also firmly rejected by the group.

**Table 3: Least Important Reasons for Studying English (#12 Choices) (**n = 228)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reasons | No. | (%) |
| Knowing English... |  |  |
| 1. is required to pass university exams | 55 | (24. 12) |
| 2. allows me to read university textbooks | 38 | (16.66) |
| 3. gives me personal satisfaction | 34 | (14.91) |
| 4. helps a person to get a better job | 17 | (7.45) |
| 5. makes it possible to become broadly educated | 15 | (6.57) |
| 6. allows me... foreign points of view on Korea | 14 | (6.14) |
| 7. allows me... friends among Eng.-speaking people | 14 | (6.14) |
| 8. allows me to read English books for pleasure | 12 | (5.26) |
| 9. allows me to enjoy entertainment more | 10 | (4.38) |
| 10. allows me to get to know tourists better | 9 | (3.94) |
| 11. allows me to understand how foreigners think | 6 | (2.63) |
| 12. makes it easier to get along in other countries | 4 | (1.75) |

**Usefulness of English**

Students’ assessment of the usefulness of English for various purposes is shown in Table 4. Clear differences can be seen between reasons listed in the top half and in the bottom half of the table.

**Table 4: Usefulness of English for Various Purposes**

|  |
| --- |
| How useful is English... |
| 1. for international diplomacy? 1.20 |
| 2. for doing business? 1.52 |
| 3. for getting a high-paying job? 1.64 |
| 4. for working with computers? 1.68 |
| 5. for engaging in politics? 1.84 |
| 6. for doing office work? 1.87 |
| 7. for watching TV and movies? 1.89 |
| 8. for becoming a “salaryman”? 2.05 |
| 9. for studying science? 2.28 |
| 10. for living in a big city (e.g., Seoul)? 2.43 |
| 11. for being a salesman? 2.59 |
| 12. for bringing up children? 2.60 |
| 13. for enjoying sports? 2.66 |
| 14. for discussing farming? 2.74 |
| 15. for doing an part-time job? 2.77 |
| 16. for enjoying traditional festivals? 2.88 |
| 17. for religious purposes? 3.00 |
| 18. for getting married? 3.15 |
| 19. for talking to babies? 3.15 |
| 20. for talking to one’s family? 3.29 |