

# **Lingua Francas in Higher Education in Northeast Asia and ASEAN Countries: Implications for Regional Cooperation on Languages**

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## ***Abstract***

*This research aims to analyze the issues and challenges of language as a medium of instruction in institutions of higher education in East Asian countries in the context of student mobility and internationalization of higher education. It also explores the possibility of forging regional cooperation among Northeast Asian and ASEAN countries. In the age of globalization, we are facing the challenge of coexistence between national languages and with English as the medium of instruction in institutions of higher education. Language as a medium of instruction is a driving force for student mobility within this region, students' motivation for learning and upward social mobility. Instructional language is also tied to the raising of cultural awareness and may also influence the creation of regional identity. That is, language is not just a tool for education but it also may have a huge impact on the people of East Asia in terms of facilitating cross-cultural experiences and creating a future regional identity through regional cooperation and integration.*

*This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of globalization on language issues, such as the dominant role of English in each country's approach to the internationalization of higher education. The article also looks at the experience of the European Union and ASEAN as regional collaboration models, with a main focus on the two organizations' positions on English and multilingualism in regional dialogue and policy harmonization, i.e., the relationship between English and other languages, in their respective regions. Thirdly, the focus of the discussion shifts to the issue of language in Northeast Asian countries such as Japan, South Korea and China. The comparison with the EU and ASEAN cases allows us to offer some observations about the specific situation of language as a medium of instruction in higher education and the trends in student mobility and language policy in Northeast Asia. It is hypothesized that language as a medium of instruction impacts students' motivation to learn, seek mutual understanding and secure social mobility and future careers, as well as their views of the countries in which they choose to study.*

*Finally, this research is an attempt to highlight the implications for dialogue and regional cooperation toward the development of a regional language framework as an element of East Asian regional integration.*