

What Are You Trying To Get ?

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Why are you studying English? Because you simply like it? Considering that you are all here in this hall, and listening to our speeches, each of you must have your own purposes. I would like to ask you one thing. What is your purpose? To be an English teacher? To be a sightseeing guide? Or simultaneous interpreter? Especially, a simultaneous interpreter is drawing much attention in these days. The advantages of that kind of work are high-salary, a good position and something like that. Besides, we can use our English ability effectively in such work. But wait a minute, please. To get these types of job, does it only mean to get much money?

The more I study English, the more, on the contrary, I have come to think of Japan and the Japanese language.

Recently many advertising words are written in English, most of which are mixture with Japanese. For example, "Now na young gentlemen and girls! Kotoshi look de let's go" "Guu na sense up de on parade!" What do you think of these words? Can you take the words without any hesitation? Even if they seem very attractive for young people, I still wonder what on earth these words are.

After World War II, Japan was under the allied military occupation for several years. As a natural course of event, the Japanese came to get acquainted with English words better than

before the war. And at the same time so-called Japanese-English began to mushroom.

The consequence was an inferiority complex towards foreigners and foreign languages. This complex still lies in the Japanese' mind unconsciously. So, those who can speak foreign languages are likely to have some strange superiority over the others. What languages do you like to speak; English, French, or any Asian languages?

My father can speak Korean fairly well. Because he was in Korea during the war, and he has taken several business trips to the country after the war. On his return, each time without fail, he tells us what surprised him most was the behavior of the Japanese business men in Korea. They stay aloof from the Korean people and they never try to get to know the Korean people, nor join them. They never make any effort to speak the Korean language. However, when they go to America or European countries, can they really act as they do in Korea? But strange to say, it was my father who was really upset and strongly refused my request to go to Korea. Yes, he has a "prejudice" without knowing what he is saying and actually doing adverse towards the Korean people.

The idea that things western are much superior to Asian ones still exists in your mind, doesn't it? For instance, you start a day with "Colgate" tooth-paste and "Feather" shaving cream and sit down for breakfast with "Nescafé" and "Kellogg's" corn-flakes. We feel more pleasure in using the imported goods from western countries than our own home products.

So, the advertisements in Japanese-English appeal more to those

“prejudice” minded Japanese public.

Now, young ladies and gentlemen, sooner or later, you are going to play an active part in the various fields as a citizen of the world. That is to say, as a “cosmopolitan”!

To become an interpreter, a translator or an English teacher is good indeed. But if you do not have any cosmopolitan mind in those jobs, and as long as you have “prejudice” to everything, the work itself will be no more than that of a machine with excellent English ability! I never want to be just a machine. Because I am a human being! In order to live as a human being, what should we do? Yes, that is to know and understand one another and the world situation to begin with. Do you not agree with me? If you are really serious to become an expert in English, and act as a cosmopolitan, will you consider your own purpose once more?

When you are an expert, what are you trying to get from it?