Toward a Sociology of English in Japan

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I would like to focus primarily on Japan, which holds a unique position in Asia, and provides important insights for understanding various methodological, attitudinal, and ideological issues about the uses and users of English. In the East Asian region Japan has been one of the first countries to articulate positions about the acceptance of English and an identity with it, and about the rejection of the language and proposing a distance with it. The case study of Japan and its ongoing love-hate relationship with the language has a lesson for us all. A large body of such writing is in Japanese and therefore is not as well-known as it ought to be in Asia and elsewhere.

(Kachuru 1997: 68)

I. Introduction

The above quote says it all about what I want to discuss in this paper. Many people in Japan today often discuss how to learn English more efficiently and effectively for practical reasons, but very few debate the rationale behind the country's "language policy" ; as yet there has been no public debate on the issues around English education since the early 1970s (Hiraizumi and Watanabe 1975).[1] While extensive descriptive work has been done

on *Eigaku* or "the English Studies" (see Watanabe 1990: vii), very little research has been conducted in a comprehensive way on the socio-economic, ethno-cultural and political aspects of the problem of the English language in Japan. Furthermore, English, under the name of "globalization," *is* taken for granted nowadays so much so that there are few scholars who try to look at the "big language" issue from methodological, attitudinal, ideological, ontological, teleological, epistemological, and hermeneutical perspectives. In fact, there is no sufficient theoretical framework available that makes it possible for the Japanese to accommodate English without compromising their national, cultural and personal integrity. As a consequence, when faced with the problems associated with English, people tend to feel so powerless that they think there is no alternative but to accept the "global language" (Crystal 1997) as the inevitable corollary of the US-Britain military, economic, and cultural hegemony of the world.

If we look at the history of modern Japan, however, we will find that quite a few intellectuals "articulated positions about the acceptance of English and an identity with it, and about the rejection of the language and proposing a distance with it." Kachuru (1997) is doubly right when he says that Japan is one of the first countries that tackled head on the "English language" problem (hereafter the EL problem), and that he aptly takes up as a starting point for discussion Mori Arinori's (1847–89) discourse on English and Japanese. Mori's idea for the introduction of a "simplified" English into Japan is worthy of remark because it would have been an unprecedented attempt at English orthographic reform by a non-English speaking nation in world history. Given the "unique" history

of modern (Meiji) Japan and the geopolitics of the Japanese language, it is worth examining how Meiji intellectuals, like Mori Arinori, looked at English as they approached the issue of the national language in terms of nation-state building (Kobayashi 2001).

There has been a large number of the English studies that deal with the EL problem abroad. Yet very few serious attempts have been made by foreign scholars to examine issues to do with English in Japan. Whereas there are some distinguished Japanese scholars (Tsuda 1990; Oishi 1990) who are interested in figuring out synchronically how the hegemony (or the dominant use) of English contributes to language inequality and distorted communication in international settings, studying Japan's politics of language in relation to English linguistic hegemony from a historical or diachronic perspective will help us gain more insight into the EL problem facing the Japanese today. In order to understand in much greater depth the "big language" problem for the Japanese, we need to develop our understanding of how English has been historically and geopolitically situated in Japan since the opening of the country in the mid-nineteenth century.

In this paper I would like to discuss Nakamura Kei's (1980; 1982; 1989; 1993) *Eigo shakai ron* (a sociology of English) as an effective approach to uncovering the social, political, cultural, and historical factors behind the ambiguous linguistic attitude of the Japanese toward English, and thereby getting into the heart of the EL problem in Japan. First I shall try to characterize Nakamura's work by comparison and contrast with Joshua Fishman's (1977) study of English in society and then to take a critical look at the classical and conventional approach to historical studies of English in Japan.

And lastly, as a way of showing an enormous academic potential *Eigo shakai ron* has for the 21st century students of "language in Japanese society," I want to draw on Nakamura's work to develop a theory that may serve as a new explanatory model for the geopolitics of language in modern and present-day Japan.

This paper is intended mainly for Japanese students of English studies.[2] As we shall see at the end of the discussion, the reason why I, as a Japanese, write this in English chiefly for my countrypeople is that the very act of the Japanese arguing about the EL problem in Japan by means of the "problematic" language itself is part and parcel of the strategic solution that I want to propose in this treatise.

II. New English studies in Japan

Methodology of Nakamura's SEJ

Remarkably little research has been conducted on the historical and cultural significance of the introduction of English into Japan and its contemporary relevance.[3] In order to find ways of understanding problems connected with English in Japanese society, Nakamura put forward "a sociology of English" in 1982.[4] Nakamura's work reminds us of the U.S. leading linguist Joshua Fishman, who is famous as the pioneer in *the sociology of English as an additional language*—hereafter called SEAL (Joshua A. Fishman 1977). Here I want to make a terminological distinction for the sake of clarity and argument: I shall henceforth refer to Nakamura's as *the sociology of English in Japan* (abbreviated as SEJ) for the reason that the main purpose of SEJ, unlike SEAL, is to deal with the EL problem in

Japan from a *Japanese* perspective. In the following discussion, I would like to explain in more detail the difference in methodology between SEJ and SEAL.

As a beginning, we will begin by considering the fact that the study of language and society generally falls into the disciplines called sociolinguistics and the sociology of language. Edwards (1995: viv) defines the latter as implying "emphasis upon social behavior elucidated through the study of language," while the former "tends to stress the linguistic variation presented in different context...In practice, they are used loosely and sometimes interchangeably." In addition, it may be more useful to look at a clearer distinction made in more broader terms by Romaine (1994):

> ... the field is subdivided into two broad headings: *macro-and micro-sociolinguistics*, with *the macro domain* sometimes also referred to as *the 'sociology of language'*. Macro-sociolinguistics takes society as its starting-point and deals with language as a pivotal factor in the organization of communities. Micro-sociolinguistics begins with language and treats social forces as essential factors influencing the structure of languages. (viii) (italics mine)

According to this classification, SEJ and SEAL can be seen rather as belonging in macro-sociolinguistics. Indeed, they both place more emphasis on the external (social) aspect of the use of English than on the internal (linguistic). And yet, as I shall discuss in the rest of this section, SEJ tries to embrace not only internal but also *external micro-sociolinguistic* aspects of English within the realm of macro-sociolinguistics. (By "external micro-sociolinguistic aspects" I mean interdisciplinary factors involved in the local linguistic

context: psychological, attitudinal, ideological, ontological, teleological, and epistemological.) Before we can enter into a detailed discussion of Nakamura's SEJ, we must make a little further distinction between SEJ and SEAL here.

Schlieben-Lange provides a helpful explanation that "like sociology, it is now common in socio-linguistic methodology to clearly distinguish between statistical and hermeneutical approaches" (1996:197). This helps to characterize SEJ and SEAL better; the former is hermeneutical, the latter statistical.[5] The reason for the difference in methodology between SEJ and SEAL is that they are setting different goals in the same discipline. As Schlieben-Lange makes clear:

> In statistical approach, the data collected are standardized to the greatest possible extent and accumulated to be used later for quantitative analysis, while the central aim of hermeneutical approach is not to treat data as a complete set (though it is not impossible to use it for statistical use) but rather to try to "get at the bottom of the (sociolinguistic) situation" to the extent possible and thereby gain an understanding of the combined representation of reality. (ibid.:197)

In SEAL Fishman often uses numerical data in looking at the social factors involved in the spread and use of English in the world today. Thus we can understand SEAL as statistical, descriptive, and synchronic. But while micro-sociolinguistics tends to take a hermeneutical approach in working on an individual case study, a statistical approach employed in macro-sociolinguistics often involves "extensive research in which there is a survey of a large number of people in all walks of life by way of illustration" (Schlieben-Lange

1996: 199). Although using a statistical approach does enable us to find out when and why non-English speaking people have to/want to use English in the global context, yet it does not clarify what problems they have come to have along the way, and how they have been culturally, politically, and historically conditioned to accept English linguistic hegemony. Thus, it is not enough to use a statistical approach alone if we want to gain insight into the EL problem facing "non-native" English speakers today.

In spite of its descriptive comprehensiveness, Fishman's SEAL, backed by a number of facts and figures, fails to explain what it is that propels and lies behind the global spread of English. This is largely because his SEAL theory is based on the hypothetical assumption that English is the *de facto* global language today. From this point of view, we can see that that the primary purpose of Fishman's SEAL is to describe statistically (and thus perpetuate) the spread of English as *the* "language of wider communication" in the world (on this point, see Phillipson 1992: 82-85).

Meanwhile, Fishman suggests that as compared to the sociology of language (macro-sociolinguistics), "the (micro-)sociolinguistic enterprises are undergoing a mid-life crisis because it is trying to move ahead primarily on the linguistic front while merely shuffling on the social" (quoted in Romaine 1994: viii). And yet, I shall argue that whether it is focused on the micro-linguistic or the macro-social analysis, a statistical and synchronically/internally descriptive approach would not allow for a better "understanding of the combined representation of reality" that embraces a more broader range of cultural, political, and ethnic issues. In this respect, Fishman is right when he himself acknowledges the

weakness of SEAL by saying that "we still have no study encompassing all of these factors and viewing the acquisition of English as an additional language as a process which interacts with the major social, cultural, economic, and political processes of the national (let alone the international) context" (Fishman 1977:116).

Nakamura's SEJ, on the other hand, adopts a hermeneutical approach in trying to look at the spread of English that causes many problems both at home (in Japan) and abroad. The reason is that as Schlieben-Lange cogently argues (1996:199), "in the final analysis, it is a hermeneutical (not statistical) approach that will make it possible to connect an individual case with its underlying structure." While a statistical approach is often used to examine correlative subjects in an attempt to "categorize social and linguistic structures separately," the important task using a hermeneutical approach is to "link the social phenomenon to the linguistic," treating an individual case as an "integrated subject of study" (ibid.: 199-200). In this way Nakamura aims at locating the case of Japan (local phenomenon) in the global context of the diffusion of the English language.

Another important feature of Nakamura's SEJ is that it differs from SEAL in that it is diachronic/historical as well as hermeneutical. Nakamura takes the position that it is history that determines the essence of current socio-linguistic phenomenon; therefore it is very important to incorporate a diachronic perspective into a synchronic study of English and society. Thus, Nakamura is interested in exploring the past in order to understand the present sociolinguistic realities in Japan. He goes as far back as the nineteenth century Japan when the Japanese first encountered what might be called the "English impact" and experienced a linguistic paradigm shift in

foreign language policy from once-powerful Dutch to now-ubiquitous English. A vast amount of scholarship which has been devoted in Japanese over the past century to *Eigaku* (the English studies) and English education in Japan has uncovered a huge number of historical facts about Japanese active involvement in the acquisition of the "world" language. Very few serious attempts, however, have been made to give a hermeneutical (social, cultural, economic, political, etc.) explanation of how the Japanese have dealt with the English language. Nakamura criticizes such overly descriptive treatment of *Eigaku* by saying:

> The traditional methodology that has long been employed in historical studies of *Eigaku*—a chronologically and pedagogically descriptive approach—seems hardly conducive to shedding light on the historical continuity of English as a social problem in Japan. (Nakamura 2001a: 4)

Here we can see Nakamura trying to open the way for a broader perspective on the relation between English and the Japanese. Given that there is room for considerably more work to be done in this area, it is very important to examine the ways in which the Japanese linguistic behavior has transformed in accommodating the English language. To understand the pertinent facts in depth, we first need to find a way of formulating a unified theory of historical change in social structure. As regards the need to go beyond the static view of society, Immanuel Wallerstein, who is noted for his World System theory, stresses the importance of developing a cooperative relation between historical study and sociology:

In history, the conviction gained some ground that the received profile of the discipline no longer fully served modern needs. Historians had been better in studying past politics than past social and economic life. Historical studies had tended to concentrate on events, and on the motives of individuals and institutions, and they had been less well equipped for analyzing the more anonymous processes and structures that were located in the *longue durée*. Structures and processes seemed to have been neglected. All this was to be changed by broadening the scope of historical studies: by adding more economic and social history, in its own right, and as a key to understanding history in general. (Wallerstein et al.1996: 41)

In looking diachronically at the EL problem in Japan, we need frequently to remind ourselves of Wallerstein's above-mentioned remark; what we need in the twenty first century historical studies of *Eigaku* is a socio-historical or "historical-structural" (Tollefson 1991: 32) approach [6] that throws light upon the "more anonymous processes and structures" of a changing society.

More important is the need to locate the history of Japan in the context of world history. As Okada (2001: 14-29) points out, one of the gravest problems in the study of history in Japan is that there has been an *intra*-disciplinary segmentation between Japanese history and world history. And he goes on to suggest that Japanese view of history has been rather distorted by the introduction of Westerners-complied history of "the world" into Meiji Japan, which the Japanese took at face value without question. He convincingly argues, then, for reconfiguration of our ready-made version of world history :

That is to say, if we separate Japanese history from world history at all, it

is vital that we look at the domestic phenomenon of the past from a *Japanese* point of view, and also focus only on the significant world events and other peoples' experiences that had any impact on Japan. Again, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that there is no such thing as "world history" without *our own* version of Japanese history. (ibid.: 28) (italics mine)

As for Japanese history, he continues:

> ...... Strangely enough, both Japanese history and world history, completely separated from each other, have been taught in the department of history at Japanese universities since the Meiji period without the former affecting the latter (and vice versa) at all.... It is a global perspective that is lacking here; there have been no such studies done of Japan's population, the establishment of money economy in Japan, and the structures of big commercial cities (Edo, Sakai and others) in comparison with other nations' contemporary counterparts. Most Japanese historians seem to be always preoccupied with self-contained, exclusive, and inquisitive reviews within the micro world of Japan, never wanting to place the location of their country in a larger context of the world. Thus they are unable to understand Japan in the conventional paradigm, and only end up talking of the Emperor system as the single biggest feature that sets Japan apart from other nations. (ibid.:17-18)

From these remarks one general point becomes very clear: for the Japanese, history, whether of Japan or of the world, does not mean anything unless it is understood from a Japanese perspective. It is from this standpoint that Nakamura's SEJ seeks to identify the EL problem in the history of *Eigaku*, thus capturing the essence of the

sociolinguistic realities in Japan and the world today.

Furthermore, Nakamura sees hermeneutical and socio-historical /historical-structural approaches as an important methodological device to connect personal experiences with the target of study. In fact, Nakamura's SEJ is inextricably linked to his own experience at home and abroad (see Nakamura 2000b and 2001b). What I want to suggest here is that in exploring the issues of language *in* society , we need what C.W. Mills (1959) called the "sociological imagination," precisely because "neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both" (ibid.: 3). Mills maintains that "the history that now affects every man is world history," and that it is only the sociological imagination that "enables its possessor to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals" and also to "grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society" (ibid.: 4-6). This attitude of Mill's to scholarship is very much akin to Nakamura's attitude to SEJ, which Fishman's SEAL seems to lack only because of his discriptive and positivistic methodology. The point I wish to emphasize here is that as Nishibe argues:

> in analyzing social phenomenon, we must always bring our own literary sensibility into play ...... which involves taking in our belief and philosophy along with our contemporary and personal experiences ... that make (social and personal) analysis and integration simultaneously possible. (1989: 71-72)

The same may be said, no doubt, of historical studies of *Eigaku*

and English education in Japan. While these descriptive studies contribute to uncovering and quantifying a large number of historical facts about English and the Japanese, they do not provide further insights into what problems people came up against and struggled to surmount in their cross-linguistic-and-cultural experiences. The lack of qualitative and hermeneutical analysis in their conventional (positivistic) approach is due in large measure to the absence of "political awareness" that encompasses a wider range of social, cultural and ethnic issues that cut straight to the heart of the English language education in Japan.

Most Japanese scholars and teachers of English today seem to forget the very fact that English was originally introduced into the country as a means of gaining and maintaining political, economic, cultural and linguistic independence from western powers. It is not surprising, therefore, that they tend to make light of the fact that English education has much to do with Western colonialism/imperialism; the global spread of English was (and still is) propelled by U.S. and British political, economic and cultural hegemony (see Philipson 1992). The truth, which came to be less recognized in the post-war period, is that in modern Japan, English, among other Western languages,[7] was strategically used to attain *linguistic independence* by creating *Kokugo* (the national language of Japan), and that English was to be phased out in the "public sphere" of the Japanese (see Kobayashi 2001; 2002).

From this point of view, it could be argued that "language *is* power" (John Honey 1997) in the socio-linguistic and ethno-cultural context. If we accept the premise, then we should consider the EL problem in Japan as an essential part of the politics of the Japanese

national language; it is all a question of the balance of power between English and Japanese. And this is, I believe, where Japanese historians of language and society should come in.

However, as Okada (2001: 23) states, there is a "fatal flaw in historical studies in Japan. It is "their reluctance to touch on the political aspect of history" that makes it rather difficult for Japanese scholars of English to understand the issues involved in the politics of English teaching and learning in Japan. The reason why they avoid talking about the political aspect of English language acquisition is that they are not cognizant of what might be called "linguistic coercion" that the hegemony of English almost always brings into play in the many non-English speaking countries. Again, this only goes to show that they have little understanding of (the history of) the politics of language in Japan. We can ascribe this insufficient academic treatment of issues around language and power to their "political unconscious" (Jameson 1981). As Okada explains:

> Japanese historians are not generally good at understanding political mechanism. Thus they have not even come to grips with the simple fact that the power system is being established based on the subject people's desire to be governed. (2001: 23)

This leads to another crucial aspect of "English linguistic hegemony" (Phillipson 1993: 73-76). As Kasuya observes, "it is politically native to think that if the subject people 'spontaneously' consented to the hegemony of a big language, there would be no inequality and dominance relationship in the society. This is too superficial a way of looking at the phenomenon" (Kasuya 2000: 278).

Historically, there were two sides to Japanese "spontaneous consent" to English linguistic hegemony. On one hand, in spite of the impending linguistic crisis, intellectuals in nineteenth century Japan were proactive (not reactive) in approaching the English language. They did have a definite goal in mind; national, political, economic, cultural and linguistic independence. Thus, as we shall see later in the next section, they had a *strategic* attitude to English. On the other, they were forced to run a risk of "auto-colonization of the mind" (Komori 2001: 8) through learning English (see also Ngugi 1994). One of the major concerns in Nakamura's SEJ is such "doubly bound" political (un)consciousness that dictates the nature of Japanese consent to English linguistic hegemony and its consequences.

In light of much of what I have written about Nakamura's SEJ so far, Fishman's (1977: 302-26) statement that English is "not ideologically encumbered" is rather surprising and disconcerting. It is clear that Fishman's SEAL fails to analyze political ideology behind the global spread of English. In English studies abroad, however, apart from the important work by Kachuru, many other scholars such as Fairclough (1989), Tollefson (1991), Phillipson (1992), and Pennycook (1994) raised issues to do with English, power, ideology and inequality. What has been demonstrated in their studies is that the global diffusion of English is closely intertwined with colonialism and racism. Nakamura's SEJ, by definition, includes these postcolonial studies and cultural studies that deal with nation, race and the English language from the perspective of the oppressed (Nakamura 2002).

In "post-colonial English" movement, Kachuru (1983; 1984;

1986a; 1986b) conducted a critical study of the politics of "native English" in relation to indigenized English in India, and thus blazed the way to new English studies of *World Englishes*. More recently, as Wimal Dissanayake(1997) has remarked, the issues surrounding World Englishes have come to be considered in connection with cultural studies (see, for example, Alistair Pennycook 1994; 1998; 2001). Yet, even in the ever-evolving (new) English studies abroad, which revolve around the notion of resistance to imperialism and colonialism, the case of Japan has seldom been dealt with in spite of a wealth of related material available in Japanese. It is, as I shall argue later, largely due to lack of linguistic reciprocity in English-dominated academic arena that most non-Japanese scholars (especially in the English-speaking world) seem to have difficulty understanding the unique geopolitical position of Japan that has determined the nature of the Japanese language and people's language attitude (see Sakai 1996).

By the same token, it would appear that although their work is crucial to further development of the relatively new fields in Japan, most Japanese scholars of postcolonial studies and cultural studies tend to either become preoccupied with introducing into the country a variety of news ideas, opinions, and theories presented by foreign scholars as well as other nations' colonial experiences, or concentrate their discussions only on the negative side of modern and present-day Japan's geopolitics and its ideology, thus losing perspective on the total picture. (as in, for example, Yoshimi et al. 2000; Kang Sang-Jung et al. 2001).

Consequently, no straightforward explanation for the complexity of the geopolitics of the national language exists in post-colonial and

cultural studies both at home and abroad; little attention has been paid to the crucial issue of modern Japan's resistance to Western imperial languages. Many scholars look on the pre-war and wartime language policy as impelialistic, analyzing the political, social, and cultural implications of modern Japan's colonial linguistic rule in neighboring nations. While they provide an illuminating explanation for the consequences of modern Japan's resistance to Western linguistic imperialism (see, in particular, Lee 1996, Yasuda 2000 and Komori 2001), their work alone will not enlighten us about the larger truth behind the geopolitics of the Japanese language (Kobayashi 2001: 43-44).

It must also be noted that before Nakamura's SEJ emerged in the early 1980s, English studies in Japan had rarely been conducted in such a new postcolonial theoretical framework as the "cultural-politics" of language, primarily because descriptive and statistical approaches are often taken as a standard and orthodox way of analyzing Japanese "English experiences" of the past and the present. It is not surprising, then, that Japanese historians and sociolinguists have failed to view the EL problem as part of the political-cultural issues in the geopolitics of the Japanese language in East Asia. As I pointed out elsewhere (Kobayashi 2002: 66-69), the history of modern Japan's resistance to English has long been buried in oblivion since the 1945 defeat in what used to be called the Greater East Asian War. It is worth noting, in passing, that the last war broke out chiefly because of economic sanctions imposed on Japan by the West. In the early twentieth century, the English-speaking nations began to expand their politico-economic bloc into East Asia on a massive scale. And there was an economic friction

between Japan and the English-speaking nations (especially the U.S.). Japan protested, negotiated and compromised on their own terms, but the Britain-US alliance aimed at shutting Japan out of their ever-expanding sphere of influence in the region, which eventually led to full-scale hostilities. Mears correctly observed the shift in the balance of power between Japan and the two English-speaking nations in the 1920s:

> When, however, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was broken, in 1921, by pressure from the United States, the situation became very different. The balance of power was drastically altered to produce what the Japanese saw as a closer association between British Empire and the United States, and growing isolation for them. As the Japanese saw it, there began to emerge, as increasingly dominant in the Far East, an *English-speaking bloc*, with Britain and its Empire and Commonwealth, and the United States, maintaining a united front composed of themselves and all the other nations and areas they jointly controlled and dominated. (Mears 1948: 280) (italics mine)

This clearly suggests that the English-speaking nations' politico-economic bloc in East Asia constituted their English-*speaking* bloc, too. Not surprisingly, Japan objected to their political, economic, and linguistic hegemony in the region. (As I shall explain in the next section, this is why Japan had to form its own political and economic and linguistic bloc to counter their hegemonistic imperialism.) What I want to argue here is that we also need a political-economic perspective in discussing the EL problem in Japan. From this standpoint, Nakamura's SEJ draws on Phillipson's (1992) economic-structural model to examine how Japanese attitude to English has

been formed in the context of capitalism or Western economic imperialism (Nakamura 2002).

Thus, with a broader range of Nakamura's concerns, SEJ necessitates careful re-examination of modern Japan's recognition of colonialism/imperialism. In trying to place it in a proper chronological perspective, we need to establish a new theoretical framework; it may be helpful, then, to redefine the conventional usage of some technical terminology here. Using the terms "colonial" and "post-colonial" in the original sense in the context of Japan only makes it difficult for us to comprehend the Japanese historical and geopolitical situation.

If we look at the history of early modern Japan, it is clear that she was being "half-colonized" under the unequal treaties imposed in 1853–4 by the great Western powers, but not totally colonized like India. That was when the Japanese had to put up a desperate resistance, which I would like to call the "*pre-colonial* period" with the word "pre-colonial" implying that Japan was on the verge of being colonized by the Western powers.

This pre-colonial period continued until the late 1890s when Japan became more and more independent *and* imperialistic as she began to colonize neighboring nations. All this came about as a result of her resistance to Western colonialism/imperialism; in 1895 Taiwan was ceded to Japan after the victory in the 1894 Sino-Japanese war (colonization in Asia); in 1899 she succeeded in abolishing Western extraterritorial rights in Japan (resistance to Western colonialism); in 1910 she annexed the Korean peninsula (colonization in Asia); in 1911 she finally restored her own tariff autonomy and thus fully revised unequal treaties (resistance to

Western colonialism); in the 1920s-30s she "advanced" to mainland China and founded Manchukuo (colonization in Asia); in the 1930s–40s she went to war with China and the U.S. including other western powers. (colonization in Asia and resistance to Western colonialism). Here we have what can be termed a "spiral structure" of resistance and colonization. Thus the geopolitics of modern Japan in East Asia was driven by her desire to gain independence through colonization in Asia and resistance to Western colonialism. This I would like to call the *independent* period which means Japan being independent of the West as well as colonizing Asia.[8]

After the end of World War II in 1945, Japan eventually fell under the control of the U.S. which directly "colonized" the country for 7 years. In contrast to the preceding independent period, this was when Japan lost independence as her resistance to the West and colonization in Asia were completely nullified. Therefore it was the *post-independent-colonial* period which involved the U.S. playing the role of the "colonizer" and Japan being deprived of her political autonomy.

And yet, Japan officially regained her independence in 1952. Over the next 40 years she was to made another attempt to challenge Western powers by virtue of economic (not military) strength. Again, the logical analysis, then, categorizes this period as "*post*-colonial" in Japan. Strictly speaking, however, unlike other Asian and African nations' post-colonial experiences, it should be seen rather as the "*post-independent-colonial*" period since it was after Japan had once had independence and control of the former colonies that she became "colonized" and then independent once again. (But it is still debatable whether Japan is politically, economically,

and culturally independent of the U.S even in the "post-independent-colonial" period.)

Viewed in this light, we are now able to recognize that modern Japan underwent four different experiences in the age of imperialism and colonialism. To apply the term "post-colonial" without reservation to the analysis of the four overdetermined phases of modern Japan's geopolitics is at best to overlook the other (positive) side of national acculturation in its own right, and at worse to obscure the whole truth of resistance and colonization as her independence movement.[9]

To elucidate objectively the dual nature of the geopolitics of her independence, then, we need to start by examining the *pre*-colonial period in which modern Japan's counter-imperialism, as I shall argue in the next section, was to emerge in response to (Chinese and) Western imperialism. Yet the *post*-colonial studies at home and abroad neglect the all-important problem how and when and where Japan's counter-imperialism went wrong and got out of control in the *independent* period. It is important to constantly bear in mind that *pre*-colonial Japan objected to and resisted Western colonialism/ imperialism in her own way different from how *post*-colonial Asian and African nations did so. Then it is appropriate that there should be Japan's *pre*-colonial studies in contrast to *post*-colonial studies in general which have come out of other Asian and African peoples' colonial experiences after they saw modern Japan's resistance to Western colonialism (see Fukada 1991).

Focusing on the pre-colonial and independent period will enable us to give a clearer explanation of how Japanese language attitude to English has been developed since the introduction of the language

into the country. In pre-colonial and independent times, there were not a few people in Japan who penetrated the politics of English and raised objections against the colonial aspects of the language (Kobayashi 2001). Although modern Japan's linguistic resistance movement was seemingly discontinued by the Allied Occupation during and after the post-independent-colonial period, Suzuki Takao (1971; 1975) officially resumed the debate on the geopolitics of Japanese in connection with the EL problem in Japan in the 1970s. Aside from differences in position and perspective, Nakamura's SEJ as well as Suzuki's work can be seen as part of the tradition of pre-colonial and independent Japan's resistance to Western colonialism.[10] In his *My view of English Education in Japan*, Nakamura (1980) tried to give a general overview of post-war English education and thereby take a critical look at how the Japanese have taught and learned the language. In his *What is English?* (1989) he also attempted to formulate an explanatory model for analyzing the EL problem in Japan by placing it in the global and historical context of Western colonialism. Furthermore, he sought to show in his *Foreign Education and its Ideology* (1993) how we can and should conduct an in-depth analysis of the social (and colonial) attributes of English teaching and learning.

Thus SEJ sets out to provide us a theoretical and hermeneutical base for putting in its socio-political and ethno-cultural context Japanese resistance to and assimilation into "English linguistic hegemony." Drawing on past national experiences, Nakamura views Japan's pre-colonial period as the beginning of Japanese conflict between the English and Japanese languages (Nakamura 2000a). His interest here is in exploring how the Japanese had approached

English as the language of Other; how they interpreted and represented English while experiencing a sociolinguistic conflict between *their* language (English) and *our* language (Japanese); and what aporias they came to confront in the process. In this way, he seeks to look from a Japanese perspective at linguistic situations at home without losing the track of the global context. He tries to map out ways in which English linguistic hegemony has been historically situated both in Japan and in the world (Nakamura 1982). In so doing he attempts to establish the "Micro-Macro Link" (Alexander et al. 1987) that will make it possible for the Japanese to consider issues around English abroad in the context of the politics of language in modern and present-day Japan. Similar methodology can be found in Pennycook (1990; 2001)'s CALX (Critical Applied Linguistics); as Pennycook states in his CALX, we need to "find ways of mapping micro and macro relations, ways of understanding a relation between concepts of society, ideology, global capitalism, colonialism, education, gender, racism, sexuality, class, and classroom utterances, translations, conversations, genres, second language acquisition, media texts" (Pennycook 2001: 5). By employing the notion of the "worldliness of English," Pennycook (1994; 1998) talks about new horizons of English studies.

In spite of his appealing arguments in CALX, Pennycook only directs his attention to the cases of Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong save Japan. (The same is true of other foreign scholars in new English studies.) As far as I can gather from my research, Kachuru is the first non-Japanese sociolinguist in the English "discourse community" (Watts 1999: 43)[11] to draw attention to English linguistic situation in Japan. Kachuru deserves much credit for his academic

treatment of the long-neglected case of Japan in the field of English studies abroad; with important Japanese writings on the subject listed in the bibliography of his paper *Past imperfect: The Other Side of English in Asia,* Kachuru states that "a large body of such writing is in Japanese and therefore is not as well-known as it ought to be in Asia and elsewhere" (1997: 68).

While Kachuru's work is really important, his attitude to non-English academic achievements becomes slightly problematic when he once again comments without careful consideration that "a majority of these studies are written in Japanese and are not available in English" (ibid.: 85). Here he is missing the whole point of the geopolitics of language in Japan: it is the very paucity of papers written in English by the Japanese scholars that most reflects their language attitude to English. Clearly, Kachuru's position on the use of English "in Asia and elsewhere" is untenable particularly because it has much to do with what Phillipson (1992: 47) terms "linguicism" or linguistic discrimination. Kachuru, who contributed enormously to resisting the Standard English and thus rectifying linguistic discrimination against "World Englishes," unwittingly reveals his rather discriminatory attitude to the Japanese language. With disregard to the issues of linguistic reciprocity and language rights, Kachuru seems unaware that he virtually winds up rejecting Japanese earlier writings in World Englishes studies while trying to make them known in the English discourse community (for a relevant discussion, see Nakamura 1992: 164-168).

Consequently, while non-Japanese scholars of English studies often refers to the Chinese language, they are not well-informed of complex issues to do with the politics of language in Japan. As

Huntington (1996: 45) has observed, Japan is a "distinct civilization which was the offspring of Chinese civilization, emerging during the period between A.D. 100 and 400." Despite (or because of) its unique geopolitical position and cultural contact in East Asia, Japan tends to be treated abroad as an isolated example in the field of political and social sciences. This is true of the sociology of language as well. Coupled with the fact that the case of Japan is apt to be a blind spot, the unavailability of Japanese earlier writings in English owing to their negligence of reciprocal language learning makes it even more difficult for non-Japanese sociolinguists to look into geopolitical factors behind the Japanese language attitude to English.

Similarly, there is a problem with the academic situation at home (in Japan). Taking it by and large, Japanese scholars still have a strong inclination to seek authority abroad and swear by foreign academic achievements; they are quick to appreciate work by non-Japanese scholars but slower to give due credit for important work by Japanese scholars. SEJ is not an exception. Nakamura objects to such intellectual snobbism (see, for example, Miura 2000).[12] Given that for the past 20 years he has established theoretical and foundations of SEJ expanding the area of study into post-colonial and cultural studies, he does have a right to claim his independent approach to and spontaneous insight into the EL problem in Japan.

To summarize the methodological features of SEJ that have been mentioned so far, Nakamura sees

1) English as being intertwined with a globalizing society
(socio-linguistic)
2) individual "English-ridden" situation in Japan as stemming

from English hegemony in the world (hermeneutical)

3) present English linguistic situation in Japan as historically conditioned by the Japanese language contact in the past

(socio-historical)

4) Japanese psychological conflict between English and *Kokugo* as closely bound up with Western colonialism

(politico-cultural)

5) the spread of English in Japan as having being perpetuated by the expanding English-speaking economic bloc.

(politico-economic)

With these transdisciplinary perspectives incorporated into SEJ, we will be able to provide an alternative interpretation of how modern Japan came to grips with the English language in the pre-colonial period. Using the methodology and framework of SEJ, I re-examined Mori Arinori's 1872-3 proposal for the adoption of alphabets and simplified English as a case study to focus on the politics of language in modern Japan (Kobayashi 2001). In the next section I shall explain the new interpretive framework I developed for a new theory of the geopolitics of Japanese in relation to Chinese and English in East Asia.

III. An SEJ-based explanatory model for the geopolitics of language in Japan

The Imperial Language Triangle (ILT)

Here I shall try to use a theoretical framework of Nakamura's

SEJ as a basis for analyzing the geopolitics of language in Japan. One of the most important hypotheses in SEJ states that *Koukoku gengo* (the Japanese imperial language) was created to resist and compete with the biggest Western imperial language (English) (Nakamura 2000a: 27). This proposition, in other words, implies that modern Japanese emerged as a counter-imperial language against English. It is important, then, to verify this hypothesis in order to bring about a better understanding of "modern Japan's language recognition."[13]

What we are concerned with here is the geopolitical position of Japan that defines language attitude and choice of the Japanese. As Huntington (1996:135; 197-202) points out, "Japanese civilization is virtually identical with the single Japanese core state" which has been caught between Western and Chinese civilizations since the pre-colonial period. Indeed, the emergence of Japan as a "counter civilization" (Okada 2001b: 24) made her geographical location a site of the clash of Chinese and Western civilizations in the mid-nineteenth century. The logical conclusion, is that in order for Japan to gain politico-cultural independence there needed to be a counter imperial Japanese language that challenges the two Eastern and Western imperial languages: Chinese and English. The rationale behind the politics of imperial language was a new epistemological dichotomization of Us and Them or Our language and Their language in the age of nationalism (Mazrui 1999: 13; see also Kobayashi 2001; 98-102). Here we find that the geopolitics of Japan involved experiencing an imperial linguistic configuration in East Asia with the Japanese confronting the two big languages. I would like to call this geopolitical site of trilateral linguistic battle

"the Imperial Language Triangle" (hereafter referred to as the ILT). This notion of the ILT helps establish a diachronic and geopolitico-linguistic perspective in SEJ.

Japanese "pre-colonial" linguistic strategy

Another important notion that I find useful in conducting an in-depth analysis of modern Japan's countervailing language policy is *thymos* or "spiritedness" that produces human "desire for recognition" (Fukuyama 1992a).[14] Fukuyama argues that "an understanding of the importance of the desire for recognition as the motor of history allows us to reinterpret many phenomena that are otherwise seemingly familiar to us, such as culture, religion, work, nationalism, and war" (ibid.: xix). And he goes on to suggest that the evolution of world history has been driven by human *thymos* which consists of *isothymia* (desire to stand on an equal footing with others) and *megalothymia* (desire to excel others). These two concepts enable us to explain well the ethos of modern Japanese statesmen and intellectuals who believed in Bushido (the code of the *samurai*). Indeed, the soul of the warriors gave them *kigai* (the Japanese ethos equivalent to *thymos*) which dictated their behavior as moral imperatives (Nitobe 1989: 157-165; see also Fukuyama 1992b: 19); Meiji government's goal was both to surpass China and to rank equally with Western nations. By employing Fukuyama's notion of *isothymia* and *megalothymia* we can interpret theoretically the dual nature of modern Japan's geopolitical challenges in the ILT.

As I argued elsewhere (Kobayashi 2001), when the first Japanese Education Minister Mori Arinori contemplated the creation of the

new Imperial Japanese language (not the "abolition" of the native language) in the aforementioned proposal, what he was trying to do was to seek out ways of competing with both Eastern and Western Imperialist Powers (China and Britain/the U.S.) for linguistic superiority and equality (Kobayashi 2001). The most salient feature of Mori's countervailing linguistic strategy, as I shall aruge later, is marked by its "dialectic duality" that operates in such a way as to accommodate linguistic resistance and assimilation (ibid.). Japan was and still is geopolitically situated in a site of contest for linguistic hegemony in the ILT where she has had no choice but to keep her native language evolving strategically and dialectically just to "stay alive." The point to observe here is that modern Japan eventually chose to adopt dialectic (both-East-and-West or neither-East-nor-West), not dichotomous (either-East-or-West) approach in making a cross-cultural breakthrough. What we have here is the reciprocating ethno-cultural construction whereby Japan becomes Janus-faced with a Western front when looking at the East, and an Eastern front at the West. The reason for this is that "by reasserting its own cultural identity", as Huntington (1996: 107) remarks, "Japan emphasizes its uniqueness and its differences from both Western and other Asian cultures." Once again, we must not forget that this geopolitics of modern Japan applies in principle to the matter of national linguistic strategy.

Many scholars, Japanese or non-Japanese, believe that the cultural politics of modern Japan shifted from Chinese to Western civilization when she had worked out the national strategy "*Datsua Nyuu-oh*" (Leave Asia and Enter the West). Yet it would be misleading to interpret the national slogan to mean Japan's complete turnabout

on language policy. Kachuru, therefore, is wrong when he concludes that:

> There is thus a need for shifts in paradigm and in attitude. There was a time when the politically astute philosophers of the Meiji era (1868–1912) argued for "secession" from Asia and identification with the Western Powers. That phase has been characterized as *Datsu-ah, Nyuu-oh* "Leave Asia and enter the West." And now the phase that has been ushered in is *Datsu-oh, Nyuu-ah* "Leave the West and enter Asia." This indeed would mean a swing in another direction. What is preferable, of course, is the Buddhist middle path, *madhyam marga,* and that would mean: *Nyuu-oh, Datsu-oh (sic),* "Enter Asia and enter the West." (1997: 82)

Here it is clear that Kachuru argument is based on the assumption that Japan's cross-cultural approach was too dichotomous to follow a middle course today. While we must appreciate Kachuru's contribution to bringing the politics of English in Japan up for discussion in the English discourse community, I should point out that he misunderstands the geopolitics of language in Japan and thus gives a distorted account of the above-mentioned Mori's linguistic strategy by forming a hasty conclusion that "perhaps Japan is the only Asian country in which a proposal was made over a century ago to abandon Japanese and 'adopt instead some better, richer, stronger, language, such as English or French'" (1997: 70). The truth of the matter, however, is that Mori considered implementing 1) script and stylistic reform of the Japanese language with the abolition of Chinese characters and the adoption of Roman alphabets, and 2) orthographical reform of the English language for the purpose

of the introduction of simplified English into Japan. He thus aimed at creating a new imperial Japanese language which was to be characterized as both Eastern and Western or as neither Eastern nor Western, and which would surpass both Chinese and English in linguistic efficiency and richness. Although he soon found the "means" of implementation (Roman alphabet-based compromise method) impracticable, he relentlessly continued to achieve his end with an alternative (Chinese-character based) translation method (Kobayashi 2001: 115-127).

Thus, we can recognize from what has been said that modern Japan's language policy in the cultural politics of *Datsua Nyuu-oh* was not only to leave (transcend) Chinese civilization (ie., feudalism) and the Chinese language by entering the West, but also even to "emulate (transcend) Western civilization (ie., modernism)" and the English language while strategically taking advantage of the Chinese tradition (see Matsumoto 1994: 222). From this point of view, I found that there are three phases "leave (transcend) Asia, enter and transcend Europe"[15] constituting Mori's discourse on language (Koabayashi: 2001). Accordingly, in light of post-colonial English studies, Kachuru's interpretation of Mori's language policy should be corrected by saying that perhaps Japan is the only Asian country—the first non-English speaking nation in the world, for that matter—in which a proposal was made over a century ago to challenge the standard English language with its unique (dialectic) linguistic strategy.

Regardless of whether or not Mori's original proposal might have been feasible enough, the new Imperial Japanese language, as noted above, was to be later invented by means of "translation

method." Nakamura's SEJ ascribes the success of the national project to intellectual transposition of *yomikae* (Chinese-based reading of English) (Nakamura 1993: 139-152); from a strategic standpoint, the cultured scholar class interpreted Western ethos in comparison and contrast to the Chinese counterpart so that they might make a linguistic compromise and thereby coin new terms for the new Japanese language. What needs to be emphasized here is that in creating a new Japanese language, their subjectivity was being located between English and Chinese wherein there was a clash of these two imperial languages in the process of translation and word-formation. Here we find the Japanese trying to put their subjectivity on a higher plane by virtue of cultural and linguistic eclecticism and open "the third way" (Giddens 2000) dialectically toward the creation of a new language. As Nakamura Yujiro (2000: 189-215) has observed, eclecticism was a "most characteristic feature of Japanese culture" that contributed to the idea of modern Japan's *Kindai no chokoku* (challenge of transcending Western modernism) (see also Tsurumi 1960). Nakamura refers to the notion of what Japanese postmodern architect Isozaki Arata's (1985) terms "schizophrenic eclecticism," suggesting that the term "eclecticism," combined with the adjective "schizophrenic," begins to take on an international and modern nature in this day and age. Here I would like to lay special emphasis on the key word "eclecticism", for it was (and has long been) Japan's traditional cross-cultural approach that can be seen as a "strategically schizophrenic" way of spontaneous assimilation into and resistance to a higher civilization.

While a strategic approach was taken to dialectically "redefine its civilizational identity," the fact remains that the geopolitics of

modern Japan eventually made her a "torn country" causing national and cultural identity problems (Huntington 1996:139). Relevant to this point is Huntington's following remark:

> Political leaders imbued with the hubris to think that they can fundamentally reshape the culture of their societies are destined to fail. While they can introduce elements of Western culture, they are unable permanently to surpass or to eliminate the core elements of their indigenous culture. Conversely, the Western virus, once it is lodged in another society, is difficult to expunge. The virus persists but is not fatal; the patient survives but is never whole. Political leaders can make history but they cannot escape history. They produce torn countries; they do not create Western societies. They infect their country with a cultural schizophrenia which becomes its continuing and defining characteristic." (ibid.; 154)

Modern Japan certainly evolved in the pre-colonial and independent period as a nation-state (which resists and assimilates) and a colonial empire (which expands and governs). As a consequence, modern Japan was compelled to develop its "dual character" (Yamamuro 2000). In considering modern Japan's geopolitics of language, it is very important to keep this historical fact in mind because it was due to its dual polity that determined the duality of her linguistic identity. In fact, what Meiji Japan did was to try to secure its geopolitico-linguistic position in the ILT through translation, thereby attempting to transcend the other two conflicting imperial languages: hence, the new imperial Japanese underpinned by what I term "inter-imperial subjectivity" and countervailing colonialism/imperialism. Thus, translation not only created Meiji Japan's national

language but also caused dialectic interpretation and re-configuration of its national subjectivity and cultural identity (see Sakai 1997). The point I wish to stress here is that it was none other than Meiji Japan's *thymos* that triggered dialectic translation of East-West inter-imperial subjectivity which prevented the West controling the Japanese native language and the people's mind in the pre-colonial and independent periods. To ignore this hard fact is to lose perspective on the historical construction of modern Japan's language recognition.

With this explanatory model for Meiji Japan's geopolitics of language in the ILT, we are now able to make better sense theoretically of one of the SEJ propositions that "imperial language awareness of the Japanese today derives from their big nation/ language mentality"; their "imperial" language attitude was formed, as I have already suggested, in the pre-colonial and independent period when the Japanese went all out to claim and protect their "language right" by securing a "countervailing politico-linguistic public sphere" (Nakamura 1993: 99-100; 2000a: 26-27: see also Lee 2000: 347-348). (This alternative linguistic public sphere only existed within modern Japan's *Daitoa kyouei ken* (Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere) which collapsed at the end of the independent period in 1945.)

Viewed in this light, we are also in a better position to understand modern Japan's movement for the abolition of Chinese and English (Kobayashi 2001: 45-52). In the pre-colonial period, Japanese inter-imperial linguistic subjectivity aspired to break away from Chinese linguistic hegemony by getting rid of ideography and identifying with phonetic alphabets and English. In the independent period, the Japanese in turn decided to use the Chinese characters

as a means of translation striving to set the national language free from English linguistic hegemony. Moreover, intellectuals in the forefront of the geopolitics of the ILT went so far as to propose the adoption of Esperanto as an ultimate national language policy in order to transcend both of the two imperial languages (ibid.; see also Okakura 1937: 19-20). I must reiterate my point here that it was modern Japan's *thymos* that led to strategic translation of Western imperialism into her own *pseudo*-imperial subjectivity in the ILT for resistance, assimilation, and transcendence; obviously such strategic linguistic strategy was reflected in Mori's proposal for a new imperial language (Kobayashi 2001).

The same argument holds true even today. The fact that the Japanese often transpose the Chinese characters used in Japan with *katakana* English (represented by the angular Japanese phonetic syllabary) and vice versa, is indicative of their prototypical alternating linguistic behavior in the ILT where their inter-imperial linguistic subjectivity comes into play in maintaining its "equilibrium position" between the two big imperial languages.[16]

Given the geopolitics of language in the ILT, we can explain why the Japanese have long since translated actively from English to Japanese (inward translation) but rarely from Japanese to English (outward translation) except in the field of natural science. This linguistic behavior can be regarded as an act of Japanese imperial linguistic resistance to English linguistic hegemony and its discourse community. The implication in this language attitude is that the Japanese discourse community silently but strongly urges the English-speaking people not only to translate from Japanese to English as much as the Japanese do from English to Japanese but

also to read Japanese writings in the original as the Japanese people often do so with English. As has been mentioned earlier, Kachuru (1997) fails to realize that this is how the Japanese see the politics of English writing within the Japanese discourse community.

There is one further important point that Kachuru seems to overlook. It is the fact that the precursor of the post-colonial English movement can be found in the pre-colonial geopolitico-linguistic conduct of modern Japan. Admittedly, in the post-colonial theory of English literatures and World Englishes, many scholars have been trying to seek ways to resist imposed "standard" English within the English discourse community by arguing for the denial and rejection of the metropolitan privilege of English (abrogation/diremption), and the creation of new usages and a separation from the site of colonial privilege (appropriation/redemption) (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1995: Pennycook 1994). Yet, as have been suggested earlier, long before these post-colonial attempts, modern Japan had already challenged "standard" English in 1872 when Mori Arinori advanced a suggestion as follows:

> I propose to banish from the English language, for the use of the Japanese nation, all or most of the exceptions, which render English so difficult of acquisition by English-speaking people, and which discourage most foreigners, who have the hardihood to attempt to master it, from persevering to success ...... Not only English speaking people, but the world at large, would greatly benefited by a thorough re-cast of English orthography. (Okubo 1972: 308)

Thus Mori put forward a daring proposal for "simplified English" as he "wrote back" in English to the English discourse community.[17]

What he attempted to do in his bold plan was to try to revamp "standard" English orthography—the denial of the norm of the language (abrogation/diremption)—and to make it easier for non-speaking nations and non-standard English-speaking peoples alike to learn and use the language more comfortably—(a form of appropriation/redemption). As Ivan Hall has remarked, it was so radical that it can be seen as "virtually the same as the abolition of the English language" (see Okubo 1972: 94)

An important point to note here is that Mori came up with the idea of simplified English not just for the sake of English as the first or second language in Japan, but with the aim of creating a new national language, although Mori later changed his tactics and started considering translation instead of simplified English as a better way of approaching Chinese, English and Japanese. Unlike in Japan, however, in post-colonial (English) studies abroad, translation is not generally seen as a possible solution to sociolinguistic problems. The main reason for this is that the linguistic and historical background of Japan is vastly different form that of former Western colonies from which post-colonial studies derived. As a consequence, little attention has been given by non-Japanese scholars to the historical significance of translation in the case of Japan.[18] By contrast, in English studies in Japan, translation has long been considered as the standard approach to dealing with foreign languages in terms of the national language and identity.

Nakamura's SEJ directs our attention to the historical, socio-linguistic ethno-cultural significance of translation in pre-and independent Japan. (1993:138-148). Unlike conventional post-colonial English studies, SEJ not only includes linguistic strategies

(abrogation/appropriation and diremption/redemption) which are effective in the English discourse community (EDC), but also embraces the strategic use of the native language and the translation approach within the Japanese discourse community (JDC). And as I shall explain in more detail in the next section, Nakamura propounds a "counter-theory and a disempowering/accommodating theory" as "operative (ideal and pragmatic) solutions" for the EL problem in Japan (Nakamura 1999: 78-81). The way Nakamura gets engaged in the linguistic battle has to do with the question of how the Japanese can maintain their subjectivity and *thymos* between EDC and JDC. To this end, for the past quarter century, Nakamura himself has practiced "critical pedagogy" (Pennycook 1994: 297-300) in English education in JDC by writing and speaking in Japanese in combination with the translation approach. And he is now ready to write back in English to EDC (see Nakamura 2003). (This is distinctly different from the post-colonial linguistic strategy employed and practiced only in English in EDC by such scholars as Kachuru and Pennycook.)

One of the reasons why Nakamura has sought ways of dealing with the EL problem in Japan, by means of both Japanese and English is that his attitude to English is akin to that of *Eigakusha* (early Meiji scholars of the English studies) who knew that the most effective way of *relativizing* English is by translating the Western "big language" into their native language and thereby enriching its own (equivalent) vocabulary so as to counter English linguistic hegemony in Japan (Nakamura 1993: 143-147). This is how Meiji intellectuals coped with the cross-cultural linguistic interpretation when they experienced the "Western impact" (Hirakawa 1997). If

we place it in the pre-colonial context of modern Japan, then we will be able to see it as Japanese "strategic assimilation and resistance" in the struggle against the hegemony of English; in this respect, Kachuru (1997) is right in stating that Japan neither *totally* rejected nor accepted the English language in Japan.

In order to fulfill and maintain her *thymos* in the ILT, modern Japan strove to rise above the Eastern and Western Imperial absolutes "trying for the middle" through translation. Indeed, her strategic approach to surviving Western colonialism and linguistic imperialism was to adopt eclecticism for better or for worse, which could open the way for linguistic relativity (equality) and excellence in the face of (Chinese and) English linguistic imperialism. Of particular relevance here is Pennycook (2001: 71) statement that we need to start thinking of "what is produced in cultural encounters, not just homogeneity or heterogeneity or imperialism or resistance, but rather what *third cultures or third spaces* are constantly created." And he goes on to suggest that we work toward a "postcolonial performative view of language" (ibid). Drawing on Canagarajah's (1999: 76) analysis of resistance in English language teaching, Pennycook also stresses the need to " appropriate English to dynamically negotiate meaning, identity, and status in contextually suitable and socially strategic ways, and in the process modifies the communicative and linguistic rules of English according to local cultural and ideological imperatives." Furthermore, quoting Venturi's (1997) work in post-colonial translation studies, Pennycook emphasizes "the need for an approach to translation based on an *ethics of difference* [italics in original]" (ibid.; 14).

Once again, I must point out here that all these ideas Pennycook

discussed as part of his idea of "postcolonial performativity" (ibid.,: 71-73) are central to Mori's 1872 proposal for the adoption of simplified English in Japan (see Kobayashi 2001). Although Pennycook does not take up Japan as a case in point, Mori made an unprecedented attempt to create "third cultures or third spaces" eclectically and dialectically (through translation) in the ILT that might allow for inter-imperial subjectivity and the new imperial Japanese language. It should now be clear that Mori's strategic assimilation into and resistance to English (and Chinese) were explicit in his pre-colonial linguistic performativity. The important point to note here is that while *post*-colonial performativity abroad often operates (in English) within the EDC paradigm in a bid to deconstruct the colonial legacies of the metropolitan/standard English, Japan's *pre*-colonial performativity involved a reconstitution of both the native language and English within JDC paradigm with a view to creating a new national language. Thus it is obvious that there was a "pre-colonial" performative view of language in modern Japan.

It should be concluded, from what has been said above, that it is imperative that post-colonial English studies at home and abroad give due consideration to the case of modern Japan as the first and probably the only nation in "periphery-English countries" or "expanding and outer circles" (Phillipson 1992: 17; Kachuru 1985: 12) that challenged English linguistic hegemony on an international scale in its own fashion and so addressed various questions around English and modernization in the wake of its pre-colonial linguistic performativity. "If non-Western societies are to modernize," Huntington (1996: 154) suggests, "they must do it their own way not

the Western way and, emulating Japan, build upon and employ their own traditions, institutions, and values." This statement contains an element of truth, although I do not entirely endorse it without qualification.

Clearly, Huntington (ibid.: 62) leaves out of account the implications and ramifications of socio-linguistic and politico-economic-cultural aspects of the global spread of English that comes with globalization and modernization. Huntington is in agreement with Fishman's (1977: 118) argument that English as an additional language is ethically and ideologically unencumbered. After pointing out "de-ethinicization of English," Huntington goes on to suggest that a "torn country" will benefit from "the use of English for intercultural communication" and that "it helps to maintain and, indeed, reinforces peoples' separate cultural identities. Precisely because people want to preserve their own culture they use English to communicate with peoples of other cultures." In this respect, Huntington shares Kachuru's view about "World Englishes." Whereas Huntington admits that there exist social and linguistic inequalities and identity fragmentation between English-educated elites and non-English-educated masses, he only ends his discussion about the globalization of English and the resultant local sociolinguistic situations by merely stating that "as power diffuses Babelization spread." Here he notices such serious socio linguistic problems and nonetheless offers no solution (Huntington: 1996: 63-64). As Fishman himself observed, "*international* bilingualism may be well and good in its place, but it can have rather unexpected and undesired *intranational* consequences as well" (1977: 330). It may be worth pointing out, in passing, that it was as early as the

1870s when pre-colonial Japanese intellectuals such as Mori Arinori and Baba Tatsui had already warned the people that the domestic spread of English would lead to not only linguistic discrimination but also social polarization (Kobayashi 2002: 53-57). We need to examine modern Japan's linguistic recognition all the more because they had had such pre-colonial politico-linguistic awareness more than a hundred years ago.

Keeping the duality of Japanese language problems in perspective

In examining the EL problem in Japan, it is essential to develop a better understanding of both the upside and the downside of the dialectic duality of Japanese language attitude to English. To condemn one-sidedly the downside of modern Japan's "oppressive linguistic rule" in Asia merely as unethical means ignoring the other side of the same coin, that is, (the historical significance of) national linguistic resistance and defense. This is not to say, of course, that the upside is in essence more important than the downside. What I am trying to suggest here is that many Japanese scholars of language and society have hitherto been unable to get at the larger truth about the geopolitics of language in Japan chiefly because of their intellectual self-restraint in looking at the "anathematic" logic of the pre-war linguistic resistance to English that resulted in expanding an alternative (Japanese) linguistic sphere in Asia at the expense of the local peoples' language rights. Rather than merely problematizing the effect without locating the exact cause, we first need to establish a balanced perspective on the geopolitics of language in Japan so that

we may better understand the quintessence of the reciprocating structure of the ILT that requires that the Japanese perform the balancing act of utilizing Japanese (kana), Chinese (kanji), and English (alphabets). Then we should seek ways of reconciling resistive and discriminatory awareness in connection with competition and equality in the site of the linguistic battle in the ILT. The first choice of English for "progress" in modern and present-day Japan's foreign education policy should not be seen as a question of whether it was ethically good or bad but rather as a matter of how Japanese *thymos* comes into play when the Japanese struggle for survival (namely, independence) in the face of Western colonialism/linguistic imperialism. In fact, Japanese linguistic imperialism in the independent period was essentially a product of the nation's *strategic* resistance to and assimilation into Chinese and English linguistic imperialism. It should be stressed once again that although Japanese linguistic imperialism eventually expanded into the "Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere," it emerged not necessarily because it was intended to invade its neighboring countries and violate their language rights, but rather because, to use a post-colonial or post-modern term, it attempted to "deconstruct" Chinese and English linguistic imperialism in the pre-colonial and independent periods. It was Japan's dual (inter-imperial) subjectivity in the ILT that left her with no choice but to try to find the third way by creating a new (imperial) language eclectically and dialectically in order to protect its national and cultural integrity and autonomy. (And in practical terms there was no alternative but to unify the colonies in the imperial Japanese language under the circumstances.)

Based on the SEJ-based theory of the ILT, we can afford neither

to outpace reality indulging in "linguistic utopianism"[19] nor to glorify the English-driven society affirming the sociolinguistic reality. Rather we should make greater efforts to work out an ideal *and* pragmatic solution by securing a "strategic location" (Said 1979: 20) in the ILT. I say "strategic" because the ultimate aim of SEJ is to empower the Japanese not only to relativize English but also to know, in the words of Said, "how to get hold of it, how to approach it, how not to be defeated or overwhelmed by its sublimity, its scope, its awful dimensions" (ibid.; see also Kajii 2002; Mitrai 2003; Dixit 1991). This drives us to the question how we can live better in the world of linguistic inequality/discrimination. Here we may recall Fukuzawa Yukichi's existential philosophy of "independence and self-respect" (Keio Gijyuku 2001) that may fulfill our *thymos* in figuring out how to compete better with English-speaking peoples for much-needed equality and healthy superiority in the pursuit of our language rights.

As indicated already, Nakamura's SEJ provides us with an "ideal and pragmatic approach"[20] solutions: a) counter theory/strategy and b) disempowering or accommodating theory/strategy. On one hand, the former option deals with theoretical, synchronic, and diachronic tactics to deal with English monolingualism, which involves a head-on confrontation between English and Japanese: it encourages us to take advantage of, make the best of, and translate both native Japanese and native English bilaterally, thereby trying to critically address problems stemming from the global spread of English in the best way possible. The latter, on the other, employs "guerrilla-like," ethonomethodological tactics to work out a compromise on not only granting "citizenship" to World Englishes but also directing

more attention to multilingualism in school English textbooks.

These "ideal and pragmatic" solutions in SEJ would allow us to express, change, and negotiate our voices in the ILT on equal terms both in Japanese and in English while exploring and furthering a whole host of possibilities of multilingualism at home and abroad at the same time. Thus Nakamura criticizes and challenges English monolingualism within the system by adopting such an ideal *and* pragmatic approach. After even warning us of the theoretical pitfalls in implementing the solutions Nakamura also argues as follows:

> Counter-theory/strategy often runs the danger of sliding into nationalism, while disempowering (or accommodating) theory/ strategy can serve as an instrument of English linguistic imperialism and English monolingualism. In order to find a (better) solution to the immediate problem without slipping into a nationalistic and ethnocentric mode, there seems to be no other option but to use both concomitantly, thereby domesticating English in such a way that we can deal with problems that surround the language most effectively. (1993:81)

Here Nakamura is trying to find ways of keeping a cautious distance from English so that he will neither have to reject the biggest language in the world as an "absolute evil" nor submit to it as a "necessary (or inevitable) evil." By the same token, it would be misleading to look at *Kokugo* (the national language of Japan) as if it was an absolute evil in Asia without considering it in the context of the ILT (see Lee 1996). Given the geopolitical and historical conditions in which modern Japan could and should survive English (and Chinese) linguistic hegemony in the ILT, we should

not overemphasize the imperial side of *Kokugo* that is the consequence of strategic assimilation into and resistance to English and Chinese. Rather we should problematize the immediate cause of what I call the "unbridled imperial language offensive," which was triggered by the *thymos* at work in the ILT.

With their healthy *thymos* as a driving force behind the pre-colonial movement for linguistic transformation, many intellectuals in late-Edo and Meiji Japan had approached the EL problem by means of translation strategically. Yet they had their share of problems; while they succeeded in laying the groundwork for the new language of Japan, they were not capable of going beyond the Anglo-Saxon cultures in the end (Nakamura 1993: 148). They chose the best possible method (translation) for creating third cultures or third spaces in the ILT where they also were prone to develope their inter-imperial subjectivity in the Japanese language through translation as a way of strategically transcending English and Chinese linguistic imperialism.[21] As it turned out, however, their "provisional and relative" imperialism went wrong somewhere along the line and it seems to have turned into "absolute" imperialism as the geopolitics of Japan became more and more complex; the means became an end itself. Thus it became rather difficult to maintain the equilibrium of their *thymos* in the ILT: their pseudo-absolute imperial subjectivity had to be fed with a false sense of absolute superiority until it got out of control. Theoretically, if the *thymos* effect goes wrong, the people involved will wind up with "inflated imperial ego" and "damaged imperial hubris."

Taking into consideration the disruption of their *thymos* equilibrium, it could be argued that it is the geopolitics of language

in the ILT that has long since contributed to the continuity of *strategic yet non-reflexive* linguistic imperialism into the present day in Japan. In retrospect, it should have been *strategic and reflexive* linguistic imperialism if Japan was ever to surmount English and Chinese linguistic hegemony with the higher principle of "nobles oblige," which requires the balancing act of *megalothymia* and *isothymia* in the ILT for the benefits of other language minority groups in the world. In the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere (which was officially the Japanese linguistic public sphere), there was much linguistic oppression but not enough cooperation in the pursuit of liberty and happiness for all, although we should not hold Japan solely accountable for its concomitant actions for historical and geopolitical reasons. It is easy to "second-guess" all the might-have-beens and should-have-have-beens, but we should nonetheless learn lessons from the social history of English and Japanese; it is worth listening to what Nakamura has to say about how linguistic oppression and discrimination occurs:

> We are all prone to become arrogant if we have a "superior" language. Even if native speakers of the big language think they mean well in international or cross cultural settings, their patronizing attitude would not make for equal communication where language has a great deal to do with man's dignity. (Nakamura 1993: 169-170)

In the final analysis, the ultimate goal of modern Japan's "linguistic transcendence" in the ILT should have been achieved by seeking *strategic and reflexive* linguistic imperialism[22] in which she could have aimed at strategic assimilation and resistance toward bigger nations

and "self-reflexivity" toward smaller nations (Pennycook 2001: 8).

Thus what I have been trying to show is that the real question is not how to impute modern Japan's linguistic oppression in neighboring countries to the historical fact that Japanese inter-imperial linguistic attitude has been constructed and maintained in the geopolitical position of Japan, but rather how to dislodge the "unbridled pseudo-imperial language offensive" and work out a better strategy for dealing with Japan's geopolitico-linguistic situation. Is it possible at all to pursuit more equality and less (unhealthy) superiority at the same time in the ILT? Or should we drop everything and aim at realizing a "linguistic utopia" where there would be no human *thymos* or linguistic competition? Since it is theoretically impossible to resolve the *thymos* (superiority-equality) dilemma[23] as long as we live in this capitalist world,[24] it may be only our critical and strategic attitude of mind that helps us to do everything humanly possible to improve the situation as we live with the problem.

In theory as well as in practice, once we endorse capitalism (given the reality, there is no rejecting it flatly anyway, although not impossible to keep objecting to the way it is), then, we are automatically forced to compete within the system for both full equality and healthy superiority in any way we can if we are to resist and challenge the status quo so as to surmount the problem of linguistic discrimination stemming from the English-dominated world order. This is, I believe, where the Japanese need to give more consideration to the possibilities of "strategic *and* reflexive linguistic assimilation and resistance" to fulfill their *thymos* as they stand up for their own and other peoples' linguistic (/human) rights in the

English-dominated world order.[25]

VI. Conclusion

By way of conclusion, I would like to advance a new proposal on how to break out of the linguistic aporia that the Japanese have experienced over the past century. A better solution that we can figure out from the SEJ standpoint is to develop a "geostrategic framework" (Brzezinski 1986) for *existential and ethical* linguistic conduct of the Japanese in the ILT by promoting:

(a) the competitiveness effects
(*megalothymia* and *isothymia*)   – existential
(b) the cooperativeness effects
(self-reflexivity and multilingualism)   – ethical

The Japanese intellectuals (especially scholars of the politics of English) should work more on (b) toward the English-speaking nations in English; they should also work on both (a) and (b) toward the Japanese people not only in Japanese but also in English.[26] And furthermore, if possible, it is desirable that they promote both (a) and (b) toward the neighboring nations not only in Japanese but also in their languages. The combination of these three types of linguistic behavior[27] constitutes what might be called the "ontologically necessary competitive-cooperative linguistic geostrategy"[28] that may accommodate different positions that the Japanese could and should take alternatively in the ILT in opening the Third Way toward transcending monolingual linguistic imperialism in the real sense of

the word. This geostrategic location will help the Japanese to change their linguistic conduct from the strategic use of big languages for monolingual nation-state building to the strategic use of both big and small languages for multilingual nation-building in twenty-first century Japan.

So far I have tried to show how we can develop Nakamura's interpretive framework of SEJ for formulating a new theory of the ILT to explain a hitherto-untouched aspect of the EL problem in Japan—this is only an example of the application and expansion of SEJ theoretical foundations which cover a broader range of topics. The future direction of this study of the ILT will be one that explores in much greater depth how Japanese linguistic behavior has transformed in the continuity of *thymos*-driven inter-imperial linguistic attitude and choice, how we can work out practical programs based on the ontologically necessary competitive-cooperative linguistic geostrategy, and how effective the Japanese dialectic and eclectic linguistic strategy[29] can be when applied to other nations as a way of deconstructing English linguistic imperialism. Last but not least, I hope that more and more scholars in the field of English studies at home and abroad will give SEJ a chance to make the world a better place for all speakers of smaller languages.

* Except where otherwise noted, all quotations from the works by Japanese scholars are translated by the present writer. And I am solely responsible for any typographical, spelling or other errors that may have occurred in the translation.
* This paper owes much to the thoughtful and helpful comments of proffesor Nakamura who devoted the past twenty years to blazing a trail in the Sociology of English in Japan.

NOTES

1. A quarter of a century later, Funabashi Yoichi (2000) tried to rekindle the debate by proposing that Japan adopt English as a second official language. But public interest in the topic petered out soon after the former prime minister Obuchi died suddenly just when his government was about to give consideration to Hunabashi's proposal.

2. The target audience I mean by "students of English studies" here include not only English teachers in general but also people who study linguistics, applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and the sociology of language.

3. There is such earlier literature as Ota's (1995) that deals with a social history of "English and the Japanese." While it deserve much credit for its bird's eye view analysis of modern and present Japanese recognition of English, it does not provide us with any definite theoretical framework for understanding how the Japanese have come to see "English" in the ever-changing society over the past century.

4. According to Nakamura's (1982) definition of a "sociology of English," it is based on the theoretical framework for: (a) establishing a typological model for tracing the history of the ideology of English and its linguistic aggression as well as analyzing the discourses on

English; (b) conducting a study of cultural-semantics of English vocabulary; and (c) elucidating the social function of English. The purpose of (a) is to examine diachronically and synchronically how the ideology of English has been constructed and perpetuated in the social, economic, and political context by speakers of English as a mother tongue (SEM), speakers of English as a second language (SES), and speakers of English as a performance language (SEP). In this way, Nakamura tires to go beyond the apolitical TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) approach to the study of the EL problem in Japan. The aim of (b) and (c) is to look at how SEM, SES, and SEP use varieties of English from a socio-cultural point of view, and also to investigate how the use of English is determined in terms of differences in class, region, gender, and other variables in order to find out how SEM, SES, and SEP use their Englishes. Nakamura is currently working mainly on (a).

5. This dichotomous categorization may be a little simplistic. Nonetheless, it is still helpful in contrasting SEJ with SEAL.

6. In analyzing linguistic discrimination embedded in a country's language policy, James Tollefson (1991) employs a historical-structural approach, which is practically the same as Wallerstein's socio-historical approach. The Japanese historians can also learn a great deal from earlier literature in Japan such as Tsutsui's (1998) which is a prime example of historical studies done with a socio-historical approach of Japanese education.

7. It goes without saying that there were other influential Western languages in Japan except for English. Of particular importance is German which arguably had a significant impact on the Japanese mind and their language. But the fuller study of German influence on the Japanese lies outside the scope of this paper (see Yamazaki and Maruya 2002: 61-63).

8. Whilst Lee (1996)'s work highlights modern Japan in the

independent period, it fails to give the larger picture of the politico-cultural continuity from the pre-colonial period.

9. Komori uses the term "post-colonial" ambiguously on purpose, arguing that "if employed with no modified object attached to it, the term will gives us a more strategic advantage." He claims to do so in order to "criticize modern Japan's colonialism and its legacies on my own initiative" (2001: v). Ironically, however, it is just because of his "strategic usage of the word that he has not succeeded in caputuring the essence of modern Japan's "strategic" attitude to Western colonialism/ imperialism. Komori (ibid.: x) is right when he argues that we should view the late-Edo and early-Meiji Japan as operating within "the political unconscious of the 'colonial/colonized' contradictory frame of mind." Yet Komori's observation is unsatisfactory on two accounts. First, he fails to appreciate the historical significance of the *pre-colonial* Japan's "strategic" challenge to Western civilization and imperialism in terms of national resistance and active transformation (assimilation/ acculturation). Secondly, while Komori understands modern Japan's dual logic of their reciprocating and compensating behavior of resistance and colonization for independence, it seems to me that when he criticizes past Japanese experiences from a "post-colonial" (present-day) point of view, he has little empathy with the modern Japanese who experienced such aporia and tried their limits exploring other political and cultural possibilities. Thus he ends up looking only at the downside of the dual logic of modern Japan.

10. Suzuki's earlier work on the deconstruction of Standard English deserves more credit than it does now largely because his 1971 proposal for "Englic" (a de-Anglo-Saxonized English) for the benefits of non-native speakers of English definitely precedes Nakamura's SEJ and Kachuru's World Englishes movement in the 1980's. Clearly, Suzuki's language attitude is remarkably similar to that of Mori Arinori, a pre-colonial Meiji intellectual statesman, who seriously considered

the problem of the Japanese language in relation to the English language and made a proposal for the introduction of a "simplified English" in 1872 as a counter-linguistic strategy in the face of the Standard English (see Kobayashi 2001).

11. Watts (1999: 43) defines the term "discourse community" as "a set of individuals who can be interpreted as constituting a community on the basis of the ways in which their oral and written discourse practices reveal common interests, goals and beliefs, i.e. on the degree of institutionalization that their discourse displays." I want to develop this notion of "discourse community" into one that represents the English linguistic "public sphere" embracing what Kachuru (1985) himself terms "English inner/expanding/outer circles."

12. Nakamura problematized the way in which Miura and Kasuya takes up the issue of English linguistic imperialism in their book *What is linguistic imperialism?* (Miura and Kasuya 2000) on the grounds that they do not include any article by Japanese scholars on the EL problem in Japan, and instead carry Robert Phillipson's paper on the topic alone (**http://mls.c.u-tokyo.ac.jp/010/report14-1.html**). In response to Nakamura's questions, Miura, one of the editors of the book, gave an account of how they selected the contributed articles and why they did not ask Nakamura, the leading authority on the subject in Japan, to write for the book (http://mls.c.u-tokyo.ac.jp /010/report 14-2.html). Miura says that he thought it would be "rude to ask Nakamura to fill in for Phillipson" who was not able to fully cooperate with the project for the book and attend the symposium for personal reasons. But this only goes to show that they had had Phillipson as *the* writer for the topic, eliminating Nakamura from the planning stage. In the first place, if the Japanese ever talk about linguistic imperialism in Japan at all, they must first look at the issue by themselves before asking non-Japanese scholars for their opinions. And in the second place, the EL problem is arguably of paramount

importance to the Japanese. (It goes without saying ,of course, that there are many other important problems relating to the "national language" which arise from the bigger issue of English as an international language.) Yet there is not a good enough article dealing with the EL problem in the book. As for English linguistic imperialism, why should they rely on a foreign authority who does not know much about the EL problem facing the Japanese today? (With both Nakamura and Phillipson in the project, they could have done justice to the topic, though.) On the whole, I must say that whatever the reason may be, Miura and Kasuya are defeating the whole purpose of the book when they make such a poor excuse for neglecting the most urgent language problem for the Japanese.

13. Lee (1996) examines how the once-small Japanese language developed into *Kokugo* or the Japanese imperial language in the independent period, and how the then-expanding Kokugo caused linguistic oppression in Korea. To be sure, modern Japan's language policy, as Lee points out, was intended to assimilate peoples in the colonies in Japanese instead of making use of their own languages through translation, which is certainly a problem that the Japanese today need to reflect on. But in my view, Lee analyzes the "effect" of modern Japan's resistance to Western imperialism/colonialism without giving a full and particular account of the "cause." Thus she fails to explain the cause-effect sequence of events from the pre-colonial to the independent period in terms of the Japanese linguistic resistance to English hegemony. Japanese scholars, therefore, are expected to do more research on the beginning of the Japanese linguistic imperialism (as well as the English counterpart) so that we may have a clearer understanding of how it came about the way it did and what it meant not only to the colonized people but also to the Japanese people (Kobayashi 2001: 91).

14. Although I do not neccessarily endorse Fukuyama's Hegelian view of

world history, I share his argument that it is human *thymos* that drives people as they make history.

15. "Europe" here represents Western countries in general, including the United Sates of America.

16. See, for example, the article on the most recent example of the official movement for "politico-linguistic correctness" in Japan (*Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, 26 December 2002; http://www.kokken.go. jp/public/gairaigo/gairaigo.html).

17. Regarding the public interests of English discourse community, Whitney, in response to Mori's proposal for simplified English, remarked that " I think that any alteration, in the process of adoption, of the essential structure of English, would constitute an interference. You cannot join the community of English speakers without frankly accepting English speech as they have made it, and now use it. All change of that speech, such as you propose, would be a barrier between the Japanese and English speaker of English, and would shut out the former from access to the English literature." (Kaminuma et al. 1999: 336)

18. Only recently, however, scholars in Japan have begun to consider from a post-colonial perspective the political and cultural implications and ramifications of translation for the former Japanese colonies, although they tend to overemphasize the negative legacy of modern Japan, and seem to dismiss the logic of Japanese pre-colonial resistance to Western imperialism as an issue of secondary importance (see Komori 2001; Sakai 1997; Kang 2001: 186-187; Kato, et al. 2000; 472-473).

19. Although Oishi's (1997) idea of linguistic utopianism helps a great deal to identify the problems of the global spread of English, it does not verify that it is possible to get rid of our human *thymos* in terms of linguistic and ethnic diversity before realizing the completely equitable world where there is only one language for all mankind. Pennycook

(2001:8-9) categorizes this type of "utopian" version of alternative reality as an argument based on the notion of "preferred future." There is no denying the sobering fact that neither wishing for a universal language nor contriving a fanciful and radical solution will empower language minorities in a meaningful and practical way. (See Tanaka 2000: 172-182)

20.　On the face of it, these two adjectives "ideal and pragmatic," combined to modify the word "approach," seem to be a contradiction in terms. But in my view, they can be compatible with each other; the semantic effect is aimed not so much at uncompromising national language policy-making as at an individual's inherently paradoxical (and therefore flexible) language attitude. Thus, an "ideal and pragmatic approach" here means seeking ways of developing a proactive (not reactive) and strategic attitude toward linguistic differentiation and discrimination in the real world. I believe that such a language attitude gives an impetus to one's survival instinct in spite of all socio-linguistic difficulties. And it is not impossible to assume a "proactive and strategic" language attitude that is at once "ideal and pragmatic." At the end of the day, only in the inevitable conflict of *thymos* in inter-lingual and cross-cultural situations lies an existential and ontological solution.

21.　For an explanation of this point, see Kobayashi 2001: 45.

22.　This is not to say that I myself endorse "(counter-) linguistic imperialism" as *the* way of solving the problem. What I am trying to suggest here is that if we look at the age of imperialism in the nineteenth and early twentieth century from a today's point of view, we should be careful not to slip easily into a colonial-accusatory mode before ascertaining the cause that produced the effect. If most of modern Japanese politicians and intellectuals had decided to use counter-imperialism as the best possible measure in confronting Western imperialism, then, we must first understand the logic of events within the paradigm of the time and then determine the cause-and-

effect relationship. Only after we have really understood how they struggled to cope with the national crisis can we criticize past events in order to learn form their mistakes.

23. Given the human nature or *thymos*, it could be argued that in maintaining our self-esteem we can tolerate neither omniparity (full equality in anything and everyting) nor blatent discrimination; humans are prone to evaluate and recognise one's worth by comparing themselves to others in every aspect of life. Even if we believe we have every intention of letting go of our egos and fulfilling our noblesse oblige, we nontheless cannot help been driven by our *thymos* regardless of our egaritarian motive; being well-meaning is no justification for our claim that we are really "selfless" in the pursuit of altruistic ideal. The reason is simple: one one hand, when *isothemia* is not satisfied, one tends not only to seek fuller equality in a social hierarchy but also almost always (tries to) compensate for insufficient gratification of *megalothymia* by (consciously or unconsciously) "capitalizing" on the vulnerability of the weaker/less powerful to the power. On the other, even if *megalothymia* is relatively fulfilled, one cannot get enough and never stop wanting more of it because of the never-ending "*thymos*" effect; hence, his or her arrogance and hubris. The important point to note here is that interestingly enough, both the strong and the weak are, by nature, inclined to seek power for the same reason: *thymos* or the will to power. Indeed, the strong need power to compete for superiority in order to to feel safer (or much better) about themselves with the lesser group of people in the lower strata of society, while the weak need as much (or more) power to strive for equality so that they may feel less inferior (or much better) about themselves by protesting various forms of discrimination coming from the upper social group. That is what the power game in society is all about. In either case, power is what it takes to feel good about oneself in this *thymos*-driven world. Therefore, we can safely sate that power per se is neither good

nor bad. The real problem lies in the way in which (or the extent to which) we feel good about ourselves. We all need public recognition to boost our self-esteem. But other things being equal, we often want to feel superior to others (the lesser people) in order to alleviate our inferiority complex. This logic accounts for the mechanism of the "reciprocating" sysmem of linguistic hegemony: the native and non-native speakers of a big language both play an important role in perpetuating the hierarchical structure of "social-linguistic discrimination coming not only from above but also from below" in an uequal society; the stronger tend to maintain the status quo because they can thereby secure the site for gratification of their *megalothymia*; similarly, the weaker are either conditioned to endorse the system without question or compelled to accpet it before they can do anything to satisfy their *thymos*—whether it be *isothymia* or *megolothymia*—in their own place. Thus, people seek power to satisfy thier ego one way or the other. And it is plain to see that it is when they overdo it that the problem of socio-linguistic discrimination in society occurs. Therefore, in order to prevent us from going overboard about *thymos*-based recognition of self, we should check our insatiable hunger for power. And it is self-control with the higher principle (noblesse oblige) with respect to the game of the politics of language, that is the key to maintaning our self-esteem while assuaging our unhealthy inferiority complex and gratifying our healthy superiority complex; after all, the real self-esteem is a by-product of balanced self-control.

24. In the explanatory notes on Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* (Japanese translation), Watanabe Shoichi summarizes the gist of the book by saying that since the human "desire for recognition" that is marked by *megalothymia* and *isothymia* "poses a theoretically insoluble dilemma," various kinds of problems arising from *thymos* may erupt in the foreseeable future. And he goes on to argue that it is absolutely necessary to use Fukuyama's explanatory theory in looking

at the history of modern Japan (Fukuyama 1992b: 11-29). In addition, it is worth considering another helpful theory that Watanabe (1989) propounds in his own book *The Peasant Soul of Japan* in explaining the Japanese mentality: the politics of envy in an agrarian society. Envy, as Watanabe observes, is certainly a major factor in the shaping of a village-like society in Japan where "neighbors" seldom change and "a nail that sticks out gets hammered in." Watanabe is correct to recognize envy as contributing to the Japanese propensity for the sameness in a society. I want to carry this idea one step further. By inquiring into the politics of envy combined with the notion of human *thymos* (*megalothymia / isothymia*), we are better able to understand why many Japanese are inclined to "habitualize or internalize" the English language so much. Regarding the bottom cause of the English craze in Japan, we can posit the following hypothesis: 1) living in the "envy society," the Japanese are prone to want to feel *megalothymia* among the Japanese (and towards other non-white nations, for that matter). They oftentimes become sick and tired of the sameness in Japan where they tend to feel that they all look alike and talk about pretty much the same things in the same language. And they think English helps them to change, progress, stand out, and become different from just another Japanese in the same old community and in the "parochial" sphere (= Asia) in order to satisfy their *megalothymia* (desire to excel others); 2) they are also prone to want to feel *isothymia* among the Japanese and towards Westerners, too. They become sick and tired of being "left behind" and having to be discriminated against just because they remain relatively the same in the old Japanese society and in the ever-changing metropolitan sphere. And they begin to learn English because they know they want to change, progress, catch up, and identify themselves not only with the next Japanese person who is "ahead of the game" in the new community but also with the English-speaking people in general. In this way, they can fulfill their *isothymia*

(desire to stand on an equal footing with others). Thus, in terms of the politics of envy and thymos, it could be argued that the reason why the Japanese are eager to learn English so much is that metaphorically speaking, they want to "overwrite their 'mind-body' program that can re-define their identity" in the hopes of spiritual progress (as well as political and social advantages/privileges) and material progress (as well as economic and cultural advantages/privileges). At the end of the day, only by changing with the changing environments and making progress can they feel less envy and meet their *thymos* fully at home and abroad.

25. Miura (2000: 16) maintains that "theoretically there are only three strategies for minority language groups to deal with the dominant language: assimilation or resistance or coexistence. These options allows us to; (a) abandon one's own language and assimilate into the dominant language (subordinative assimilation); (b) refuse and resist the dominant language by means of national language (resistance for independence); (c) use the dominant language as well as one's mother tongue according to private and public occasions (passive coexistence); (d) develop minority language into one that has an official status as the dominant language (active coexistence). In my interpretation, however, modern and present-day Japan has adopted none of those options listed above. The way the Japanese contended with the dominant world language (that is, English) was and still is to try to simultaneously resist and assimilate into the big language through translating new values and borrowing new words into their own language without giving up their cultural and linguistic integrity. In other words, Japan has so far made an attempt to pave the Third Way for "strategic assimilation and resistance" in the face of the world language (although at the same time she has brought on knotty problems of modernization in Asia and so found herself in an embarrassing and problematic position in her relationship with

neighboring countries). The reason why Miura does not mention Japan's strategic assimilation and resistance as an alternative option in coping with the dominant language is probably because he does not consider the language problem for the Japanese in terms of human *thymos*—the desire for recognition (*megalothymia* and *isothymia*).

26. For this purpose, I write this paper in English mainly to the Japanese readers as an SEJ- based performative act of going beyond the monolingual outcry against English monolingualism in Japan. Interestingly enough, in pre-colonial Japan Mori Arinori had already performed the same act of writing in English as a bilingual interlocutor to the Japanese with a view to addressing cross cultural problems between JDC and EDC. Oishi, a Japanese scholar of English, suggests that the Japanese should think twice about writing papers in English because it poses an ethical question in terms of language rights (1997: 249-272). I basically agree with him as far as the Japanese in general are concerned; I do acknowledge that even Japanese scholars of English have a right not to write in English in Japan for legitimate reasons. Nonetheless, in my opinion, if they want to protest "English linguistic imperialism" like Oishi, they also have a social and moral obligation to do so not only in Japanese but also in English on behalf of the general public who do not know English well in Japan. The total denial of English writing will only make things worse in the linguistic battle. To write in English or not to write in English? After all, the latter choice is the lesser of two evils for the scholars of English linguistic imperialism in Japan.

27. This approach should be applied to sociolinguistic differentiation and discrimination involved in the "big langauge" issues in both international and intranational contexts (eg. foreign language vs "national" langauge; national/standard language vs "dialect"/indigenous language).

28. In formulating this linguistic strategy for unifying Japanese conflicting and self-contradictory *thymos* in the ILT, I used modern Japanese

philosopher Nishida Kitaro's notion of "zettai mujyunteki jikodouitsu" (the self-identity of absolute contradictories, or unity of opposites) as a possible solution to the EL problem in Japan. Between 1927 and 1945 Nishida (1870–1945) worked out this theory of "dialectically" synthesizing contradictions and paradoxes in one's self in a given *Ba* (topos)." Even though many scholars have stayed clear of Nishida's philosophy which was connected and associated with the pre-war legacy of "Japanocentrism," Nakamura Yujiro (2000) gives due credit (if not without reservations) to Nishida for his monumental contribution to the development of Japanese philosophy in comparison and contrast to the Western counterpart. In terms of attempting to make a philosophical and epistemological breakthrough in the cross-cultural topos, there are certain parallels between Nishida's idea of "zettai mujyunteki jikodouitsu" and Isozaki's (1985) concept of "schizophrenic eclecticism"; they both dared to "attempt the impossible" by negotiating or creating a "new Japanese identity" in "third cultures or third spaces "where the East and the West may not only conflict but also integrate (see also Pennycook 2001: 68-73). In view of what I have argued so far, the ILT can be seen as the virtual site (or topos) for "third cultures and third spaces" that cause "Japanese" *thymos* to vary from *megalothymia* to *isothymia* (and vice versa), reciprocating in the dynamics of universalism vs particularism or globalization vs nationalism: hence, the ontological solution—a linguistic geostrategy that entails both competitiveness and cooperativeness in the healthy pursuit of self-and public recognition in the ILT. This solution is marked by its eclectic-dialectic approach to existential and epistemological aspects of the socio-linguistic realities for "the Japanese."

29. All this has to do with the "Creole traits of the Japanese language" (Tanaka 1999: 205-206) and what Kato (1997: 321-327) calls *zaxshusei* (hybridity) of the Japanese culture. Indeed, as Kaganoi (2002) observes, "the Japanese language keeps evolving," perhaps because of its

dialectic and eclectic nature determined by the geopolitics of Japan. Therefore, we need to explore further into the analysis of how the Japanese have sought intersubjectivity in their language as the Third Way in the ILT. Based on the concept of multilingualism, Miura (2000: 24) tries to settle the issue of linguistic imperialism, arguing for the importance of shifting our position on language in society "from inter-lingual to intra-lingual plurality," and changing "from the homogeneous and static closed system of langue to the open and dynamic system of langue." Admittedly, Miura's argument is more or less correct, nevertheless I would suggest that it is not convincing enough to get to the heart of the matter, largely because it only touches upon one aspect of *thymos* (= human will to power) —namely *isothymia*—, overlooking the other aspect or *megalothymia*, which has much to do with the question of one's inter-and intra-lingual "superiority." Apparently, Miura discusses the point at issue without considering carefully both necessary and sufficient conditions of language in relation to humans and society; while it is true that what he means by plurality constitutes a necessary condition of ideal linguistic equality, it does not necessarily mean its sufficient condition of healthy maintenance of one's self-esteem that is made only possible by *thymos*-driven competition for superiority as well as equality in the game of language in society. Thus, whether inter- or intra-lingual, the idea of "plurality for equality" alone leaves many questions unanswered regarding the total picture of language and languages in society. It is worth pointing out, in passing, that despite the hard fact that the linguistic hierarchy in the world causes social discrimination, we have to admit that it is the state of linguistic plurality or diversity that is the very cause of differentiation resulting in the unequal treatment of "equal languages." It follows from this that plurality not only discourages but also often encourages linguistic discrimination (see Sakai 1996: 175-176). Furthermore, if we look closely at the

sociolinguistic and multicultural reality, it is plain to see that there is no such thing as "the homogeneous, static and closed system of langue" (see Coseriu 1981). Apart from theoretical conditions, it is difficult to dispute the idea that every language is more or less subject to change due to the ever-changing outside environment that accommodates linguistic plurality and diversity. From this point of view, Miura's argument becomes a little odd when it focuses too much on the obvious reality of the "open and dynamic system of langue" (which can be seen even in Japan) by referring to the foreign-derived theory of Creole. The reasons for this are twofold: first, he seems to presuppose that the theoretical concept of the "homogeneous, static and closed system of langue" resisting structural change overrides the sociolinguistic and multilingual reality of the "open and dynamic system of langue" slowly but surely adapting to the external changes; second, he seems to not only view the external factors (such as ideology behind monolingualism) as the prime cause of the inner closed nature of language (and languages?), but also conversely to see the recognition and realization of the inherent openness and dynamic nature of language (or languages?) as representing a step on the way to a true "multilingual society." Once again, I must point out that Miura confuses the internal state of language and the external state of languages here. (When I speak of the logical fallacy of his reasoning, I do not mean to deny the legitimacy of Miura's argument which I do agree with in principle.) There is another important point that requires clarification. Miura maintains that multilingualism should be seen not merely as "representing a sum total of a number of languages put together in parallel," but as "providing a basis for realizing linguistic plurality and hybridity within a language." And he goes on to argue that "every language is a product of creolization." Assuming it to be true, we can say that the Japanese language, as Tanaka (1999) suggests, is a creolized language. Indeed, we might call the modern Japanese

language a "pseudo-Creole" which was created by eclectically incorporating Chinese and Western languages. And the "creolized" Japanese language, which had its "built-in" (internal) linguistic plurality and hybridity, was later to develop into Kokugo (the national language) taking on a political ideology which excludes external linguistic diversity at home and abroad (in the Greater East Asia co-prosperity sphere). Thus, the modern Japanese language was at once open and closed. The reason why an internally open, dynamic and Creole-like langue had turned into an externally closed, static, and ideological langue is because of the *thymos* effects brought into play when the langue underwent a serious language conflict between bigger languages in the ILT: on one hand, when the Japanese sought linguistic equality among the Western languages, *isothymia* came into play; on the other, as they had the urge to satisfy their *isothymia* in the face of Western linguistic imperialism, they had to simultaneously fulfill their *megalothymia* by disempowering not only Chinese but also English linguistic hegemony in East Asia (see Kobayashi 2001 and Nakamura 1999). As a result, other people's languages in the Greater East Asia co-prosperity sphere were uniformized or represented by the creolized (and thus "modernized") Japanese language. Since those languages were set free from the Japanese Imperial language in 1945, some scholars have begun to take a critical look at modern Japan and its Kokugo (the national language) in the same way as the Japanese did to Chinese and Western Imperial language in the pre-war period (see, in particular, Lee 1996). Their criticism, however, seems to be leveled only at the Japanese language (not at the Chinese and Western languages) for some reason. In addition, these critics seem to downplay the historical significance of Japanese strategic linguistic assimilation into and resistance to Western colonialism and linguistic imperialism. Furthermore, they do not take into consideration the hard fact that their independence from and resistance to Japan (and Western
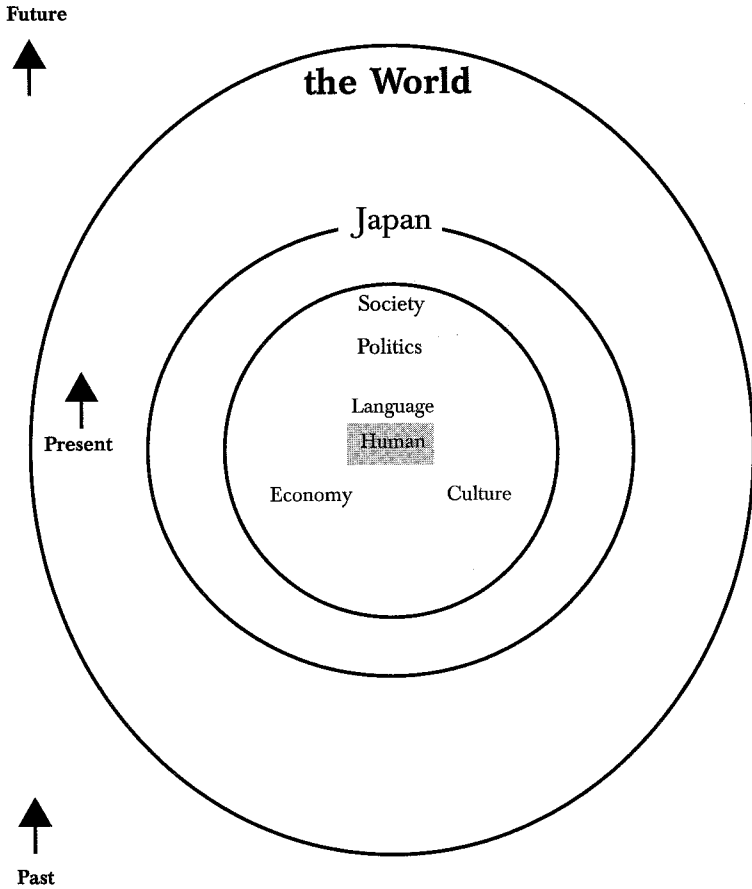
countries, for that matter) would not have been made possible without modern Japan's challenge to Western colonization (and modernization) and its defeat in the battle for political, economic, and linguistic independence from great Western powers. Admittedly, they have every reason to criticize the downside of modern Japan's colonial rule and its linguistic oppression in Asia. Nonetheless I want to argue that if they do not work out for themselves a better solution to the problem of how to fulfill their *isothymia* in the process of modernization or Westernization without feeling any *megalothymia* in the international linguistic contest, their act of accusing Japan of satisfying its linguistic *megalothymia* in Asia for political, economic, and cultural reasons is at best morally justifiable and at worst essentially untenable; at least, modern Japan made an attempt to reason out the problem of (and act out the belief in) maintaining human *thymos* in the international politics of language, although as a consequence she opened a Pandora's box of the *thymos* problem in the course of modernization for better or for worse. Of course, this is not to say that the Japanese have reason to justify their "wrongdoings" in their colonial rule in Asia. What I want to suggest is that in keeping the problem in perspective we need to consider both sides of modern Japan's performative act of developing the Creole-like nature of Japanese culture into strategic assimilation and resistance as a third way of disempowering and transcending Western imperialism. And we must not forget that this sort of politico-cultural strategy was possible simply because many Japanese politicians and intellectuals had their *thymos* to act on. By the same token, it is chiefly because of their *thymos* that led the Japanese to tread on other smaller nations who themselves are not foreign to the problem either. Taken in this light, it is clear that although Miura's assertion that the Creole theory helps us to understand intra-lingual plurality and hybridity is persuasive to some extent, the history of modern Japan shows that it is not enough to use the logic of Creole hybridity or

eclecticism alone in trying to solve the *thymos* (superiority-equality) dilemma in the game of language in society (see Sakai 1996:189-190). In order to delve into the essence of the dilemma, we need to understand how the problem of "inequalities in the pursuit of equality" arises from the existing system of liberal democracy and capitalism. Generally, when we speak of equality, it is understood to mean equal opportunity for (or status between) men and women or rich and poor. It goes without saying that unjust discrimination should be eliminated for legal, moral, and ethical reasons. I want to develop this idea a little further and consider the following hypothetical question: can social equality and cultural plurality really be the answer to the problem of the *thymos* dilemma? It is not hard to imagine that competition for equality will make one's *isothymia* satisfied. But what comes next points to the truer nature of the problem. Once their *isothymia* is fulfilled, there will be another competition where people tend to begin to gratify their *megalothymia* in one way or another by displaying their ability to the full. As a result, they find themselves becoming different (therefore not equal) from one another; here we have unequal abilities and unequal results in spite of equal opportunity. Thus, the resultant (not causal) "unequal treatment of equals" in social activities is approved based on the principle of liberal democracy and capitalism. This, once again, is inherently connected to the paradoxical, complimentary, and reciprocating structure of *thymos* whereby there should be double competition. *Megalothymia* in the upper social stratum inevitably results in social inequality (unequal opportunity); this in turn evokes *isothymia* in the people who are reduced to the lower position in society because of the competition for *megalothymia* in the upper strata. The point to note here is that as soon as their *isothymia* comes into play the structure of upward mobility automatically compels (or allows) them to use people in the much lower social position as a structural "steppingstone" to their own pursuit of

megalothymia. Thus, as irony would have it, full realization of *isothymia* is only guaranteed by relative satisfaction of *megalothymia*. The converse is also true; full realization of *megalothymia* is made possible by relative satisfaction of *isothymia*. (This is the very mechanism in which modern Japan's language recognition is marked by its *Datsua Nyuoh Chouoh* strategy that can be driven by the *megalothymia-isothymia-megalothymia* sequence.) (see Kobayashi 2001). This theory can apply to the issue of linguistic inequality. In reality, willingly or not, we are compelled to live in this liberal democratic and capitalist system as we compete for both equality and superiority. And all this eventually leads to social differentiation and discrimination. This, then, drives us to the question of how much scholars of big languages and bilingual intellectuals who enjoy much social and economic benefit from the existing system can criticize the negative side of the system they themselves silently if not willingly endorse. When they do not (try to) flatly refuse to accept all the benefits they can receive from the system by completely checking their *thymos* (especially *megalothymia*), do they have a right to tell other people wanting to acquire big languages and have their *thymos* fulfilled to stop playing the *thymos* game simply because their upward mobility only exacerbates the whole situation? What is important here is that the critics who "have got it made" thanks to their English ability should always keep in mind that when debating the issue of linguistic inequality in society they have to examine how they themselves have established and maintained their social position before they can problematize the social system they owe their existence to. With this in mind, Japanese scholars of big languages such as English and French need to reconsider their position on the issue of linguistic imperialism in order to be able to develop a geostrategic language attitude in the ILT as a more "ideal and pragmatic" way of dealing with *isothymia* and *megalothymia* at the same time and thereby making a difference in the

existing system. To this end, rather than dichotomizing the paradoxical nature of human *thymos* in terms of cause-and-effect relationship, we need to try to explain it in such a way that we can understand it as the whole that works both ways depending on the circumstances. Only then will we be able to live better with the paradox that constitutes the complex socio-linguistic realities at home and abroad.

– The Sociological Imagination of SEJ –

Future

↑

the World

Japan

Society

Politics

Language

Human

↑

Present

Economy   Culture

↑

Past

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– The Sociology of English in Japan (SEJ) –
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Hypothetical assumptions

- The hegemony (or the dominance use) of English causes social inequality, acculturation, identity fragmentation of a nation or an individual.
- There is a definite mechanism for the spread of a nation's tongue (i.e. English) as the global language.
- English hegemony in East Asia triggered *Koukoku gengo* (the Japanese imperial language) as a "counter language."

Methodology

- Diachronic/Synchronic
- Theoretical
- Philological
- Positivistic

- Socio-linguistic
- Hermeneutical
- Socio-historical
- Politico-cultural
- Politico-economic

Basic data

population dynamics/register/users

Subjects of basic research

English and:
>the language rights/English education policy/the World Order/nation-state and the speaker's identity

Areas of study

English and:
>formation of one's ego/one's view of the world (and the Other)/school English textbooks/ideological discourse-formation/ (history of) public perceptions of English/ relations between natives speakers and non-natives/ definitions of English/socio-linguistic position/ethnic minorities' languages/ its history (linguistic, socio-linguistic, socio-political)

Interdisciplines

linguistics/sociology of language/historical studies of language/ politics/economics/environmentology/studies of language policy/ women's studies

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