



Ideology in Foreign Language Learning

Foreign Language
Acquisition &
Communication II
Class 6

Ideologies

- “dominant ways of thinking that organize and stabilize societies while simultaneously determining modes of inclusion and exclusion” (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 72).
 - Language ideologies privilege English.
 - “Legitimate authority enables the arbitrary to be misrecognized as the natural order. As this order organizes and regulates, it constructs modes of inclusion and exclusion, and learners are positioned in multiple ways before they even speak.” (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 43)
- Influencing their communicative events in English: power relations between native speakers and non-native speakers

Influential factors on language ideology in Japan

- Historical factors:
 - No colonization, no invasion (Suzuki, 2006) → Plausibly easily cultivating native myth
- Social factors
 - Native language = Japanese
 - National language (国語) = Japanese
 - Official language = Japanese
- Lack of awareness of language identity: strong belief of monolingual
- Educational factors
 - Goal = acquiring native competence
 - Model = Native speakers and their English



Unspoken rules
Social ideology

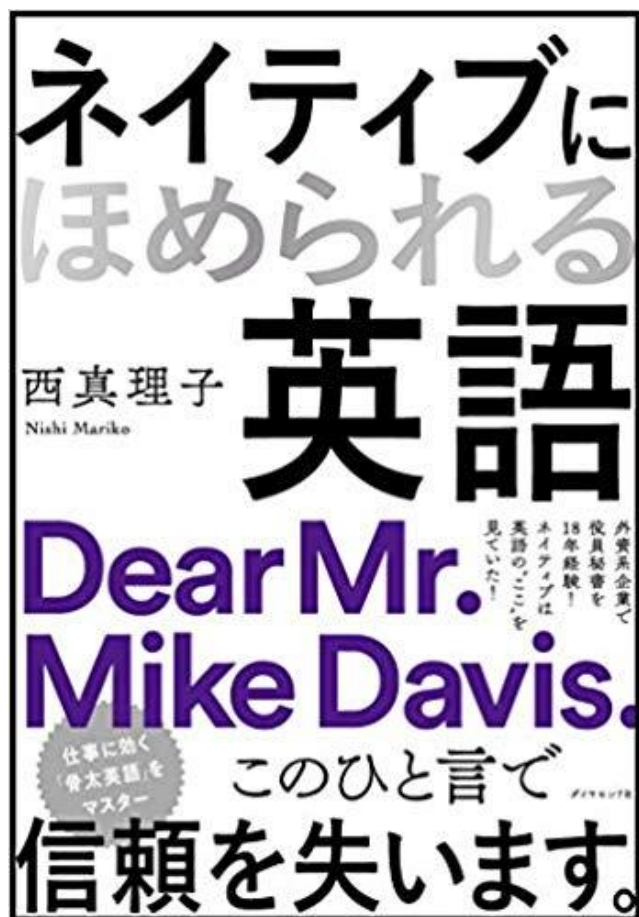
Popular discourse on Japanese English in the Japanese general-interest publishing market (Shiroza, 2014)

- *Horrible Japan English* (Utsunomiya, 1982*)
- *Farewell to Japanese English* (Hisama, 1995*)
- *Japanese English Riddled with Errors* (Kanesaka, 2003*)
- *Embarrassing Made-in-Japan English* (Walsh, 2005*)
- *A Native English Speaker Would Say It This Way* (Williamson & Katsuki, 2005)
- *How Your English Sounds to Native Speakers* (Thayne & Koike, 2008)

* The original title in Japanese is translated by Shiroza.

Shiroza (cont.)

- Assumption = Japanese English is a set of “errors” to be corrected to meet a native-speaker standard.
- 148 book titles (69%) refer to native speakers of English, who are in almost all cases referred to as *neitibu*.
- A *wasei-eigo* word *Neitibu* = native speaker of English (without ‘English’)
- *Common Mistakes of Japanese English Speakers: The Book for Learning the Native Speakers’ Conversational Expressions* (Kobayashi, 1998*)
- *Mistakes in Japanese English: Conclusions by 100 Native Speakers* (Kawamura, 2006*)
- *A Native English Speaker Wouldn’t Say It That Way: Strategies to Get Out of Japanese English* (Tada & Vogt, 2004*)
- *It’s Grammatically Correct But Pragmatically Not: The Japanese English That Native Speakers Don’t Understand* (Tada & Vogt, 2008*)



2019



2013

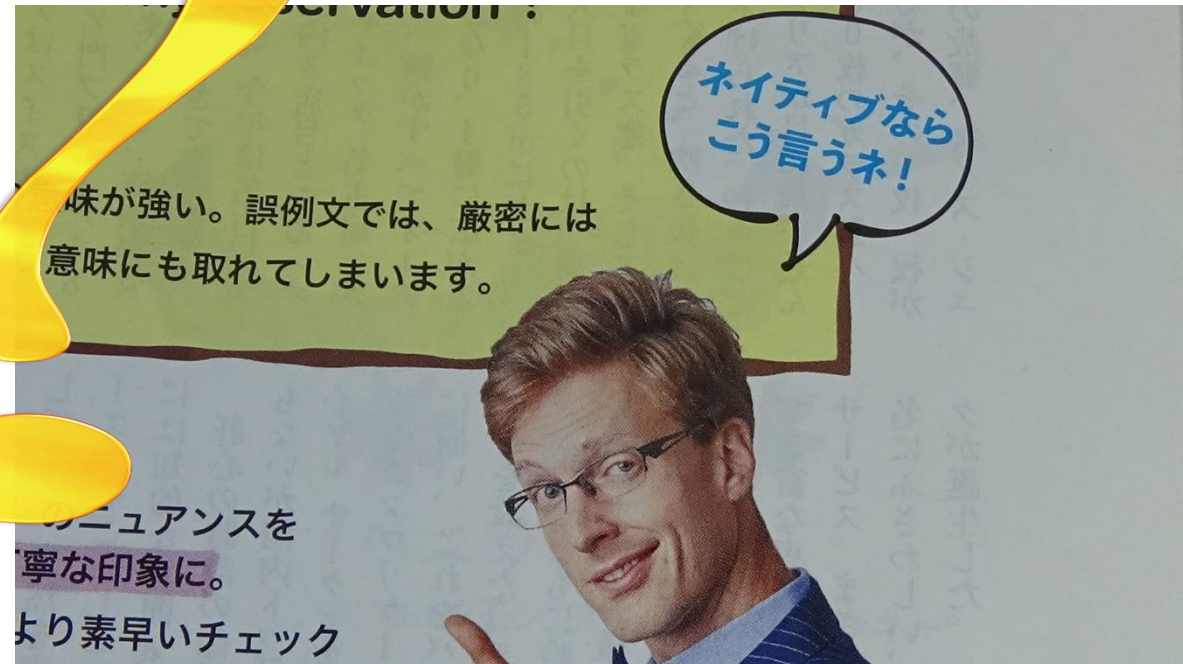
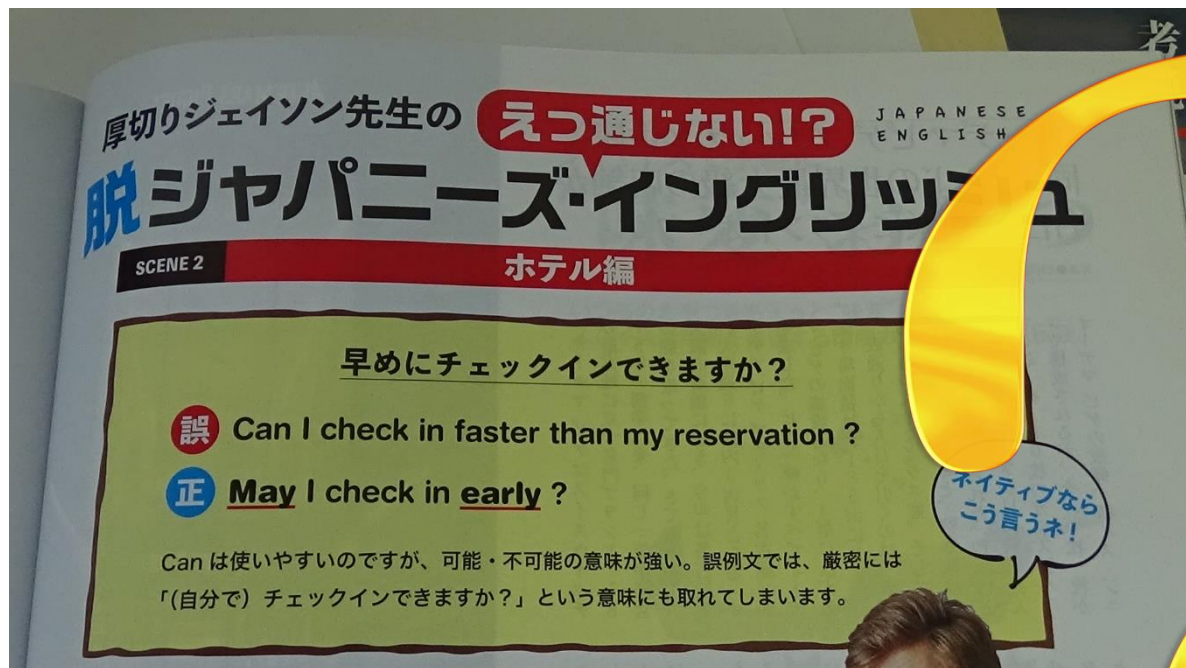


2017



2019

This is the way native speakers say !



Kubota R., & Takeda, Y. (2020). Language-in-education policies in Japan versus transnational workers' voices: Two faces of neoliberal communication competence. *TESOL quarterly*, 55(2), 458-485.

1. What did they investigate?
2. How did they address the research questions?
3. What did you learn from their research?

Whose ideas?

“Their [Japanese students/learners] communication skills as part of human capital are deemed essential for academic and career success. Moreover, the ability to communicate in English is considered to be crucial for demonstrating their value in the global market” (Kubota & Takeda, 2021, p. 459).

Global *jinzai* (human resources)

- those who are rooted in their identity as Japanese as by in-depth understanding of the Japanese culture and can thrive in a variety of fields with (a) **high levels of language ability and communication competence**, (b) autonomy and proactiveness, and (c) a spirit of intercultural understanding. (MIC, 2017, p. 13 in Kuboata & Takeda, 2021, p. 466)

MIC= Ministry of International Affairs = English ication

Two contradictory trends: fixity and fluidity

- “On the one hand, language-in-education policies highlight the teaching of English, often exclusively, recognizing its role in facilitating international activities. Standardized tests are widely used to assess English language skills, reinforcing the perceived importance of acquiring standardized forms of English. On the other hand, today’s globalization has increased linguistic diversity, as seen in greater scholarly attention to the multiplicity, plurality, and hybridity of linguistic forms and communicative practices. These two trends mirror a tension between fixity and fluidity in sociolinguistic inquiry (Jaspers & Madsen, 2019)” (Kubota & Takeda, 2021, p. 459).
- An ultimate goal of their research: “We suggest policymakers and language professionals reconceptualize the teaching of English to foster skills for genuine communication in the multilingual world (ibid).

Controversial outcomes of globalization

- Globalization: pushing homogenization and heterogenization
- Homogenization: Standardized English as the solo language for international communication
- Heterogeneity in the form and use of English in reality

Mutual understanding of the key concepts?

- Human capital, skills, communication
- Communicative competence: what is it? Barely questioned in the ELT field → Everyone seems to have the same interpretation of the concept (Shibata, 2018)
- Transmission model of communication: the one-way transfer of information from the speaker to the listener (p. 465)
 - The sender should be responsible for making the meaning clear for the receiver.
 - Any communication breakdown is attributed to the L2 speaker's lack of linguistic competence (ibid). → See Shibata (2021).
 - Reinforcing the L2 speaker's deficit ideology

Study

- Japanese policymakers vs. Japanese transnational workers
- Perception of the Communication Competence
- *Gurobaru jinzai no ikusei suishin ni kansuru seisaku hyokasho*
(*Evaluation of the Policies for Developing Global Human Resources*,
2017, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC, 総務省) → Political discourse analysis (PDA)
- Interviews with Japanese transnational corporate workers in China (11), South Korea (12), and Thailand (12) → focusing on the notion of communication

Findings: the governmental report

- See Figure 1 in p. 469.
- Main points
 - the need for outward economic expansion overseas leads the development of global *jinzai*, who learn English as a global language and have English ability (standardized forms).
 - Language ability and communication competence are reduced to English ability measurable by standardized testing.

Communication in workplace (responses to open-ended questions)

- Communicative competence \neq native-like language proficiency
- Communicative competence = strategic competence
- Speaking English and being able to work are different.
- English = a tool to accomplish job tasks
- Professional knowledge rather than language ability
- Learning local languages

Actual language use in overseas workplace

- Ungrammatical sentences may not always stop communication.
- Learning local languages → more use than English
- “Basically, we don’t consider language skills as the goal” (Excerpt 13, p. 477)

Border-crossing communication (Kubota & Takeda, 2021, p. 477)

- (1) ability to communicate, including not only knowledge of language but also strategic competence;
 - (2) communicative dispositions, such as willingness to communicate and mutual accommodation (Lippi-Green, 2012);
 - (3) foundational dispositions, including the attitudes to building positive human relationships; and
 - (4) cultural knowledge (see figure 2)
- Language (i.e., English) part of communicative competence

Neoliberal communication competence

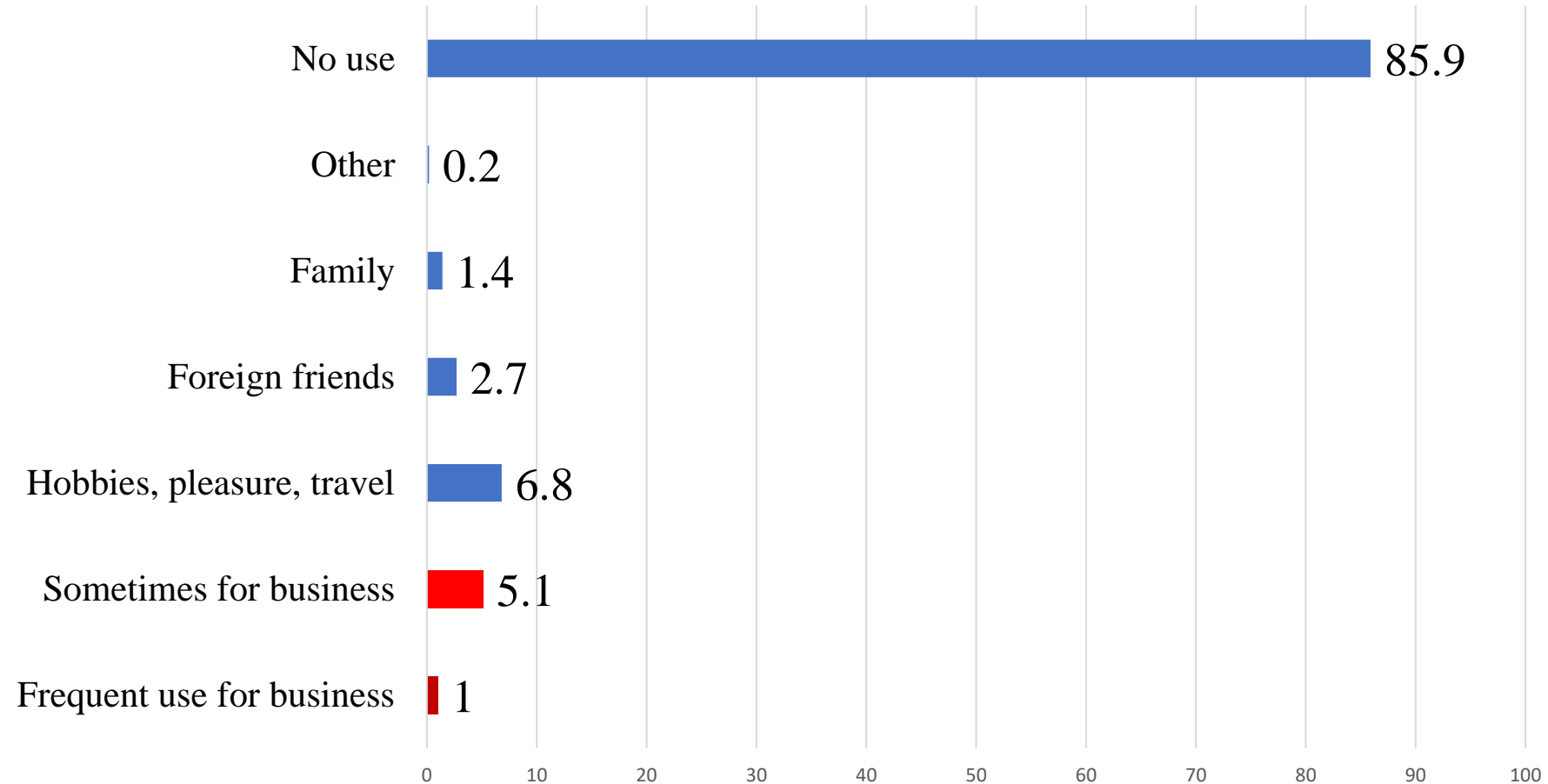
Language-in-education

- The language ideology of English: exclusively focusing on English in ELT
- Speaking skills
- Standardized testing to measure the four skills

Language practice in actual communication

- Difficult to access the competence
- Fluid and dynamic → context-dependent
- Multilingual reality

How often do the Japaense use English?



Terasawa, 2015:80

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