Master’s Degree programme in Language, Economics and Institutions of Asia and North Africa

Final Thesis

English language in globalizing Japan
‘Attitude transfer’ from Japanese to English

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要旨

本稿は日本での英語教育に言語イデオロギーや言語概念化等が与えた影響を取り上げて考察するものである。1997/1998年のTOEFL（外国語としての英語テスト）調査結果によるとアジアの国の中で日本が北朝鮮と同じく26位を記録したという問題が生じた。この結果を踏まえた上で、日本政府と文部科学省（MEXT）等は英語教育の拡充化を目指し、様々な計画を実施している。

現代においてグローバル化が進む中、交通手段、IT、新たな通信システムによって世界中の国々が近づいたと感じられるようになった。国際的なコミュニケーションをより急速かつ効率的にするために共通語が役に立つという前提で、様々な側面（化学、医学、情報学、アカデミックの世界等）で英語が使用されている。

日本では今後グローバル化に対応できるように英語教育が高度化されている。それと同時に、児童や生徒の英語による日本文化の発信、国際交流・ボランティア活動等で日本人としてのアイデンティティも育成されている。問題点はグローバルな共通言語としてのみ英語が普及しているにも関わらず、なぜ文化アイデンティティまで失う恐れが感じられているのかということである。

これまでの研究によれば、日本の英語教育を妨げる問題の一つは言語イデオロギーの影響である。言語イデオロギーとは、話者の言語概念であり、最終的に話者の話し方に影響を与える。本稿の目的は日本での英語に対する一般的な動向どのように単一言語という画一的な概念の影響を受けているかを検討することである。

まず第1節では先行研究の元で言語計画と言語イデオロギーについて指摘する。次に、第2節では英語の共通語としての国際的な必要性と、そのメリットとデメリットを研究し、言語の標準化、多様化、土着化等の過程を紹介する。続いて、第3節では特に日本の英語教育のあり方に注目し、英語を勉強する・英会話をする日本人の言語能力に日本語の言語概念が映ることがあると考えた。それは言語帝国主義と単一言語という言語イデオロギーが未だに主流だからである。以上により、言語と文化アイデンティティに切っても切れない密接なつながりがあるため、日本語も英語もそれぞれの言語がそれぞれの文化メッセージを発信する道具となる。その結果、言語が国民アイデンティティの一因となりうる一方で、他の言語共同体や第二言語話者等を周辺化する悪影響をもたらすとした。
最後に第4節では 2020 年東京オリンピック・パラリンピックに注目し、世界的なスポーツ大会向けの英語教育や英語活動の PR を考察する。現在の状況では、英会話の宣伝や促進が日本語と英語をお互いにライバルであるように提示する。したがって、米国と英国の母語話者が常に英語の持ち主である意見が残り、日本社会が英語を共通語からの利益を得ていない。

本稿では、政府、文部科学省、多国籍企業という権力のある団体が実施する言語政策に絡って議論を進める。つまり、トップダウン設計を理解することに集中したうえで問題を考察し、その改善策を提案する。本研究ではボトムアップ設計は今後の課題とし、応用言語学の研究は対象としない。

単一言語のイデオロギーは日本での英語概念に影響を与えるが、日本がなお一層グローバルになることを阻む。なぜなら、英会話を通じた文化的な内容やステレオタイプが寛容で偏見のない多文化コミュニケーションの実現を難しく考えられるからであるが、この事実に則してそれぞれの言語権が尊重されると、少数言語の価値が認められることが難しい。
Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to understand the role of language ideology in Japan in the rivalry between the Japanese language and the English language. Japan versus the West has been a mainstream theme in twenty-century literature about Japan, and beliefs bonding national identity to the language remain widespread. Ever since the introduction of English language in Japan, and due to the fact that English is said to be the global language, many scholars investigated the role it assumed in the country. The present work is articulated as follows. Chapter one includes the theoretical premises about language planning, language ideology and the Japanese context, while chapter two explores the globalization of English. In Chapter three, reflecting on the connection between beliefs about one's own language and those about other languages, the ideology of native-speakerism is traced back to the idea that the monolithic conceptualization of languages, affecting both Japanese and English language, sustains the vested interests hided in a monolingual social structure. Finally, in chapter four, the attainability of this idea will be verified through reasoning about the ideas behind English language teaching for 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics, to conclude with some conclusions about what needs to be improved and what remains to be studied.
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Introduction

Linguistic utilitarianism versus the value of learning languages in 21st Century

The first two decades of 21st Century has been demonstrating that the importance of learning languages is not taken for granted. Globalization resulted in an increasing demand for information sharing and, consequently, there is the need to communicate quickly and efficiently between places very distant to each other (geographically and also culturally). One of the key languages for the transfer of knowledge today is English, which is widely considered as a *global language*. However, the more people attempt overcoming to several ‘international issues’ through one common language, the more ‘identity issues’ emerge, together with concern for the dominant position of certain groups of people over others.

Last August I read an article written by Simon Jenkins for The Guardian, titled “Ignore the panic. There’s little point learning languages at school”\(^1\). The article exposes a viewpoint that urged me to reflect on the meaning of learning languages in contemporary global context, because this constituted the center of my education at university for 5 years. In the following table I explain some critical points of this article.

**Table 1 Simon Jenkins’ article - statements and critical points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Critical points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Pupils are not stupid. They take subjects they find relevant to their future lives. European languages are not that. Europe is universally adopting English as a lingua franca. Continental universities are increasingly English environments. In addition, translation, spoken as well as written, has (like maths) proved susceptible to</td>
<td>The basic assumption is <em>utilitarianism</em> of knowledge: pupils do not need to study things of uncertain practical use in contemporary global society. Since we have a global language, what’s the meaning of studying other languages? Moreover it seems that the usefulness of studying one subject ends when it is possible for humans to be substituted by</td>
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“Those who need to learn German to live or work there, can do so in an immersion lab faster, more efficiently and far more cheaply than by sitting in a schoolroom for an hour a week for years - the perfect way not to learn a language but to forget one.”

Here Jenkins affirms that the best way to learn a language(s) is through intensive courses and the interaction with native speakers; and the motivation for studying languages is reduced to situations in which one lives or works in strict contact to the related speech community.

“Germany is Europe’s most important country of our day. Teach its history, revel in its culture, analyze the strength of its economy. Visit its cities and countryside - and see how much better they are planned and protected than ours. In comparison, learning Germany’s language is not that important.”

He assumes that for accessing historical and cultural contents or understanding the economical power of other countries, language is not essential. This can be true: open-minded travellers can grasp a deep comprehension of countries they visit even without linguistic knowledge. But this vision underestimates the meaning of language learning.

Elaborated by the author

The logic of allocating value to different things through a comparison between their practical usefulness is exposed as if it was objective and universally correct; however, such a logic is dangerous for the future of education: how can be established a priori which subject is relevant and which one is not? Would it be possible to select some subjects to be included in school programs because of their universal usefulness for every possible future job, and should foreign language education submit to such utilitarianism? Moreover, the weakest point of the above article is that is in unconcerned with learners. People learn language for very different purposes; also languages have a number of diverse functions (which is why people are studying them – people are indeed not stupid).
Multilingualism versus ideological monolingual societies

The point Jenkins wanted to reach is that in formulating education programs it is better not to attribute importance only to measurable entities and phenomena, as he affirms that “the greatest of political fallacies [is] to make what is measurable important, not what is important measurable”\(^2\). This statement redirects to the issue of re-thinking the value of language learning and of multilingualism in contemporary international society, to demonstrate that languages are not just tools or an easy-to-test subject. This was the main topic of Salzburg Global Seminar, Session 586\(^3\), which contents of discussion are described in three newsletters about the five-day program. Participants to the session agreed considering the value of language education for “resolving ethnolinguistic conflicts, enhancing transnational and transcultural understanding, and strengthening cultural resilience for migrant population”\(^4\); however, it is evident that this is not recognized by everybody; and indeed, “convincing policymakers, communities, parents, and even the learners themselves of that value can remain a challenge in many contexts”\(^5\).

As will be examined in this thesis, other than being just a tool that enables communication between people, language is also a concept. This concept involves ideologies and beliefs that influence our linguistic behavior, and also our knowledge and identities. Jenkins’ article is representative of a viewpoint to which I refer as linguistic utilitarianism, which is a viewpoint that, stressing the practical usefulness of linguistic knowledge for international trade and cooperation and seeking standard ways to communicate effectively and faster, overlooks a value of language that goes beyond the logic. The viewpoint of linguistic utilitarianism suggests simplifying international and intercultural communication through the adoption of standard forms and norms, among

\(^{2}\) JENKINS, “Ignore the panic...”, cit.

\(^{3}\) “Springboard for Talent: Language Learning and Integration in a Globalized World”, Salzburg Global Seminar (Newsletter), 586, 1 (from now on abbreviated in SGS), 13 December 2017,

\(^{4}\) SGS, cit.

\(^{5}\) ibid.
which one internationally recognized lingua franca: (at present) English language. However, at local and/or at national level there are still widespread beliefs bonding language to cultural identity, as receptacle and transmitter of traditional values. The participant to Salzburg Global Seminar, Session 586 touched this point addressing attention to the fact that "[a]s language learning is frequently about power, leading some languages (such as English) to be valued higher than others, they encouraged a de-emphasizing of English as the default second language of bilingualism"6.

Phillipson described the hyper legitimation of English with the concept of English linguistic imperialism7, “one sub-type of linguicism”8 that involves the representation of the desirability, legitimacy and acceptability of a dominant language; subsequently other languages (represented as they were less useful) become dominated languages. English linguistic imperialism and linguicism generate discriminatory linguistic behaviors and for this reason it is necessary to institute some fundamental principles to safeguard the linguistic human rights9 of each individuals, formally contrasting the social injustice produced by such a unequal distribution of legitimacy between different languages and their speakers. However, political, economical and other vested interests enclosed in the ideological conceptualization of many contemporary societies make difficult achieving this balance without changing the status quo to which these interests rely on: without re-thinking also the legitimacy of intra-national community languages, those of minorities, foreign residents and many other sociolinguistic realities.

The economic, cultural and historical dominancy of the Anglophone western10 countries (specifically of UK and US) had several cultural and linguistic implications: it resulted in exporting worldwide concepts and values, lifestyles and ways of consumption. One of these was the language ideology of modern European nation-states: monolingualism, which is at the foundation of many contemporary societies, including Japanese society.

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6 SGS, cit.
8 PHILLIPSON, Linguistic Imperialism, cit., p. 55
10East is Japan on a Eurocentric viewpoint; as a counterpart West reflects western influence, image and stereotypes produced by European Imperialism in the 18th and 19th centuries.
Building a monolingual society is an ideological attempt to homogenize the diversity of the community living in a country or a region, to self-represent that community as homogeneous, cohesive and unite. As for the nation-states this goal was achieved through one national language, by promoting its desirability, legitimacy and acceptability over other vernacular languages, community-languages and variations. These are the same assumptions of English linguistic imperialism, and this is the reason why contrasting discriminatory linguistic behaviors, either internationally and nationally, is not unproblematic: contrasting the conceptualization for which mastering English language as a native speaker constitutes an element that empowers certain groups of people, while disempowering some others, also require re-thinking of our societies.

**Objective of this thesis**

The research question is to which extent monolingualism affects the conceptualization of language and the attitude towards English in Japan, for understanding the consequences on the legitimacy of linguistic minorities and on the intra-national linguistic diversity of the country. For this purpose I begin studying the theoretical foundation of language planning and language ideology by considering the work of scholars such as Kaplan and Baldauf, Heinrich, Seargeant, Gottlieb (and others). In chapter two I introduce the general topic that is ‘English language globalization’ discussing some of the most-well-known viewpoints about this phenomenon, referring to the work of Crystal, Kachru, Mesthrie, Honna; subsequently in chapter three I discuss in the specific the Japanese context. Reasoning on the conceptualization, history and role of English in the country, I restrict the focus of observation first on the competition between the English and Japanese languages; and then even more on the ideology founding monolingual national-states to argue that the conceptualization of English language in Japan reflects the dominant Japanese language ideology, with attitude transfers from language to language and sharing the same ideological common ground that secure the social structure with the self-image of a monolingual speech community.
Finally, in chapter four, I touch upon the case of English language for 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics as a case to shed light to the following questions:

1) What are the effects of the dominant language ideology on the idea of English for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic-Paralympic games?
2) What do the marketing campaigns of English-related organizations working in the commercial field tell us about the motivation for studying English in the so-called *global era*?
Chapter one: Theoretical premises about language planning and language ideology

The goal of chapter one is to clarify the terminology to be used in this work; first I introduce the definition of language planning and then explain the entire process through the question: who does what to whom (for what ends, in which circumstances, with what results)? The discussion continues with reasoning on how language can be managed, familiarizing with the concept of language ideology; to finally arrive on the specific Japanese context, providing some necessary facts and data useful for understanding the environment where language planning and policies occur.

1.1 Language planning

Oxford Living Dictionaries report different definitions of *language*, first referring to it as “the method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of words in a structured and conventional way; [then adding the concept of] a non-verbal method of expression or communication [such as body language]; a system of communication used by a particular country or community” \(^1\). *Communication* implies comprehension, as languages are codified systems that allow the actions of speaking and listening, writing and reading, explaining and understanding. The first linguistic behavior we put in practice is listening: when still infants we listen to adults speaking to us, and gradually learn to speak, calling things with their names and articulating our needs; the more we learn to speak, the more language becomes the tool to express our personality and correspondingly to the use we make of *linguistic signs*, other people would evaluate us as polite or rude, loquacious or shy. At school we move to the next step, learning how to read and write a language of instruction, often the *official* or *national* language, studying how to master the grammar and to sustain our opinions logically. In such a context language assumes new communicative functions: we talk with friends, teachers, adults of any kind, and every situation requires different codified linguistic behaviors; in this we are educated to use language as a means which connects individuals into a society, rendering the communication possible and also guaranteeing the cohesion and the order of our social structure. In addition, in almost every education system children study a foreign language, acknowledging that the world is

\(^1\) https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/language (accessed: 5 February 2018)
composed by other and different speech communities. Given their important role, the management of languages inside a certain speech community is entrusted to people with a certain degree of authority, and any decision to modify the status quo needs a careful process of planning.\(^2\)

As defined by Kaplan and Baldauf\(^3\) _language planning_ is “a body of ideas, laws and regulations (language policy), change rules, beliefs, and practices intended to achieve a planned change (or to stop change from happening) in the language use in one or more communities”. Put it simply, language planning means managing the linguistic behavior of one or more speech communities in order to achieve certain changes; this process occurs through the implementation of _language policies_, which means ideas, laws and regulations articulating the strategy for achieving the desired changes, or on the contrary to prevent undesired changes, in the language use.

According to a scheme proposed by Cooper\(^4\) (1989) language planning can be analyzed and explained through a restricted question: “who does what to whom?” Complemented with “under what circumstances, to what end, with what results?” The restricted question individuates the three main factors of the process: actor, action, and receiver.

**Who:** refers to the _actors_ of language planning; it means the elites, counter-elites, or non-elite policy implementers. The actors can be divided in four categories: 1) government agencies, 2) education agencies, 3) quasi-governmental or non-governmental organizations and 4) other sort of groups or individuals.

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\(^{3}\) Robert B. KAPLAN, Richard B. BALDAUF, _Language Planning, from practice to theory_, Bristol, Multilingual Matters, 1997; cit., p. 3

\(^{4}\) KAPLAN, BALDAUF, _Language Planning…_, cit., p. 54
Government agencies are involved in language planning due to their “power to legislate and the ability to foster incentive [or disincentive] structures to enforce planning decisions”\(^5\). They produce what is referred as 'official policies'. In most of the cases, governmental agencies operate jointly with education agencies, because one of the main channels used to spread language policies actually is the education system. For this reason education agencies are sometime requested to built and supervise the process of language planning in complete autonomy, notwithstanding the fact that their scope, resources and authority cannot be not extended beyond the schools\(^6\). Indeed, the policies produced by education agencies, which are referred as ‘language-in-education policies’, are specifically targeted to students and not to the speech community as a whole. Quasi-governmental and non-governmental organizations can either be institutes involved with the dissemination of languages, and so national language academies, or religious organizations and multinational corporations. The influence of multinational corporations in the process of language planning is a global reality, which became clear from the latter part of twentieth century, when these organizations assumed “some of the roles traditionally held by religious organizations [in their capability to] establish clear language policies dictating what languages are necessary for success both within the multinational structure and at the local level”\(^7\). In the case of contemporary Japan,

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\(^5\) KAPLAN, BALDAUF, *Language Planning* …, cit., p. 5

\(^6\) KAPLAN, BALDAUF, *Language Planning* …, cit., p. 8

\(^7\) KAPLAN, BALDAUF, *Language Planning* …, cit., p. 11
many Japanese multinational corporations adopted, or are adopting, policies (referred as ‘corporate polices’) that proactively support and promote the intensification of English practice in the country. The last category is made by other groups (or individuals) that accidentally or purposefully are involved in the production of language policies despite the fact that their primary mission is not language-related; thus I consider it as a receptacle of exceptional cases. Although these exceptional cases are equally relevant for changing linguistic behaviors, in this thesis I focus on the top-down oriented language planning, because in the majority of cases actors actually are “people with power and authority who make language related decisions for groups, often with little or no consultation with the ultimate learners and users”\(^8\).

Since language planning is a human decision-making\(^9\) process, the power of people has, inevitably, a great role in determining the authority of one’s voice, and the influence of one’s viewpoint about language. Power, authority and influence are very wide concepts, but many dictionaries help us in grasping what is generally meant by these terms. Oxford Living Dictionaries suggest that power is “the ability or capacity [1] to do something or act in a particular way; [2] to direct or influence the behavior of others or the course of events”\(^10\). This simple definition suggests that the source of power is an ability or capacity: the possession (or acquisition) of means, skills and knowledge to do or understand something. In other words power is the result of a means-skills-knowledge condition that renders someone able to do something. Such a condition constitutes an advantage that works not only inside an individual dimension, but also in the social one, as it allows influencing other people and their behavior. Influence is described as “the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something; [and also] the power to shape policy or ensure favorable treatment for someone especially through status, contacts, or wealth”\(^11\). The fact that influence is power makes the definition of power nearly tautological, exposing that power can essentially work for the self-preservation, because it is possible to use a certain means-skills-knowledge condition for safeguarding some specific favorable treatments, which are referred as vested interests. A similar discourse is valid for

\(^8\) KAPLAN, BALDAUF, *Language Planning*..., cit., p. 196

\(^9\) Terminology by LIDDICOAT, “Multilingual education...”, cit., p. 3


authority, which is explained as “the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience; [moreover, it also means] a person or organizations having political or administrative power and control”\textsuperscript{12}. Thus the concept of authority too derives from the same means-skills-knowledge condition that gives the possibility to influence other’s people behavior. One critical factor composing the means-skills-knowledge condition is language: language is a means of communication, a skill you can specialize in, and it is also a key for the transmission of knowledge. The implications of power on languages render the task of expert linguists so important: they attempt to find solutions for shaping a social system in which the power deriving from languages is employed in the respect and to the wealth of the entire community and not to serve vested interests. In the following chapters I study how the contemporary Japanese society and communities are portrayed by some major official policies, language in-education and corporate policies from the first decade of 21\textsuperscript{st} century until today, reasoning on the effect of power and vested interests on the management of linguistic behaviors.

What: refers to the \textit{actions} of managing linguistic behaviors, influencing language teaching, learning and practice, in the attempt to produce desired changes, or also to resist some undesired tendencies of change, in the use of language inside a speech community(s). It seems clear that “if linguistic behavior is to be changed, it is important to know not only what goals are to be achieved […], but also what the current language situation is in the polity so that process can be put in place to reach those objectives”\textsuperscript{13}. The process for changing the current language situation includes three fundamental phases: observation, implementation and evaluation. The starting point is observing the current situation, because without knowing the \textit{status quo} the \textit{actors} would not be able to understand the necessary changes, nor to decide the feasible ones. Once individuated the goals, the actors need to think about a strategy for achieving them; this strategy is expressed in language policy and its implementation represents the second phase of the process. During the implementation of language policies, the ideas and schemes for shaping a new linguistic behavior are putted into effect, and they are spread through

\textsuperscript{12} https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/authority (accessed: 30 January 2018)

\textsuperscript{13} KAPLAN, BALDAUF, \textit{Language Planning}…, cit., p. 87
many means, such as the education system, the mass media. The third phase is evaluating the results produced by the policies, and this usually occurs after a predetermined period of time, when the actors need to analyze again the situation, in order to understand what went as expected and what did not.

Among the actions for managing linguistic behavior, actors may attempt to change the language itself (language focus), or the environment where it is used (social focus); these two cases are explained in Haugen’s model (1983) under the names of corpus planning and status planning. Corpus planning is to change the structure of the language itself and "consists of linguistic decisions which need to be made to codify and elaborate a language or languages" through graphization, grammatication and lexication policies that functionally develop the language, with the result to provide a standard language form of it. Status planning is to modify the environment, the society or speech community where a language is used and "consists of those decisions a society must make about language selection and the implementation to choose and disseminate the language or languages selected" and that will be used for writing the laws, teaching at school, spreading information through the media. In other terms, status planning means to select a language(s) establishing “the particular linguistic form which is to be the norm and which is to have status within society”. Such a selection requires solving the identification problem, and choosing a language(s) that at the same time maintains the cohesion of the social groups and permits communication and exchanges with the outside world. Although the distinction between corpus and status planning may seem evident in theory, in reality it is difficult to separate the two things and, as the scholars affirm, there is “a growing awareness that corpus planning does not deal solely with linguistic issues [... and that it] operates in real-world contexts in conjunction with social, historical, cultural and political forces”.

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14 For example making journalists use certain words in newspapers, or making TV announcers speak in a certain way.


16 KAPLAN, BALDAUF, Language Planning..., cit., p. 29

17 ibid

18 KAPLAN, BALDAUF, Language Planning..., cit., p. 30

19 KAPLAN, BALDAUF, Language Planning..., cit., p. 48
Prestige planning is a third range of planning added by Haarmann (1990) to Haugen's model, and it corresponds to the efforts made to convey the legitimacy and adequacy of the proposed policy and the measures, representing “a receptive or value function which influences how corpus and status planning activities are acted upon by actors and received by people [...]”\(^{20}\). So prestige planning is not an action, but a factor influencing the acceptability of both corpus and status planning measures by the ultimate users of a language(s). Being language planning in most of the cases a process following a top-down orientation, the receptive/value function that determines the influence of policies, is tied to the authority of their actors. Thus the weight of prestige planning reveals not only in the capacity to create efficient policies, but also in the ability to persuade the users of adopting a certain linguistic behavior. So prestige planning exerts a force in convincing the speakers about the appropriateness of a standard form over other varieties, or about the desirability of studying a language over another. In other words, prestige planning, working in combination with corpus and status planning provisions, builds an ideal or commonsensical hierarchy which puts a language(s) over other vernacular languages, community-languages or foreign languages, as a consequence different ‘tongues’ are represented as they had different (higher or lower) legitimacy. Thus, the notion of prestige planning, as a receipted or value function that is connected to the influence of policies and the authority of actors, make us guess the implications of politico-economical power in the management of languages.

**To whom (and under what circumstances):** the receivers of policies; they are also referred as people and can indicate the general public, certain groups of individuals, workers, students of different school grades; moreover, they can be differentiated by age, social extraction, geographic area, and many other aspects. Despite receivers appear as a passive factor, they actually have a crucial role in the process of language planning: as said above, their linguistic behavior is the starting point of the language planning process, predetermining the effectiveness of any policies. For knowing the receivers, it is indispensible to analyze *under what circumstances* they live and speak, requiring a comprehension of the specific context where language planning occurs and in which the policies are to be implemented. Kaplan and Baldauf remind that actors must be conscious of this context for carefully managing “the language ecology of a

\(^{20}\) KAPLAN, BALDAUF, *Language Planning...*, cit., p. 50
particular language to support it within the vast cultural, educational, historical, demographic, political, social structure in which language policy formulation occurs every day”\textsuperscript{21}. This is to say that language policies have their impact on a complex social structure, and that they can produce tremendous effects on the communities composing this society; therefore, it is not possible to plan changes that would be respectful of the linguistic diversity without calibrating language policies on their receivers, carefully thinking not only about the desirable changes, but also about the sustainable ones. Accordingly, for reflecting on the policies that are implemented inside a speech community, we must be aware that they are integrated in a particular, complex and delicate context, and absorbed in a politico-economical dimension in which vested interests of certain groups of people have the power to influence the process; this leads to the emergence of obstacles to the evaluation of policies and also, in some cases, to hiding or denying undesired issues.

The evaluation issue is part of a further segment of the analysis of language planning that is \textbf{with what results}? Gottlieb points out that “[l]anguage policies are products of their times, based on particular decisions that dovetail with assumptions as to what a desired outcome will be [and t]hey should not be allowed to become flexed in amber but need to be revised to reflect contemporary realities”\textsuperscript{22}. In accord with a simple logic, if goals were not achieved through the language policy that has been implemented, the designated authority should carefully evaluate the issues, renovating the strategy. However evaluating language policies is very far from effortlessness; indeed, policies are rarely revised or re-adjusted during the implementation phase. This means that in most of the cases, even if policies were wrong or non-effective since an early stage they are not going to be revised in the short or mid-term, but at three, five or ten years. Furthermore, since it is common that official language policies are spread through the education system, their evaluation has a tendency to orbit around education programs, thus the data we collect “can be fraught with dangers of misinterpretation if there is an

\textsuperscript{21} KAPLAN, BALDAUF, \textit{Language Planning...}, cit., p. 13

\textsuperscript{22} Nanette GOTTLIEB, \textit{Language Policy in Japan - The Challenge of Change}, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012; cit., p. 31
attempt to use the results of such studies to answer larger language planning questions with narrower and focused language-in-education results”23.

Finally, for what ends? This question investigates the purposes of language planning, which can be changing language-related behaviors, and also the satisfaction or safeguard of non-language-related interests; among numerous possible scopes of language planning and language policies, in this thesis I touch only on standardization goal, regarding the analysis of the viewpoints about English as a global language (see chapter 2) and some critical phases of the Japanese language (see chapter 3); and on interlingual communication goal reasoning on the scope of an international lingua franca (see in chapter 2).

1.2 Conceptualizing languages: how can linguistic behavior be changed?

Before entering the specific Japanese context, a further question is to be studied: how can linguistic behavior be changed? To answer it, we need to know the elements influencing the use of a language(s).

The ideological context

Seargeant argues that “language exists not only as a medium of expression but also as a concept; that we talk not only via language but also about language; and that, in fact, our use of language is always influenced by the ideas we form of language”24. Language functions as a means of communication connecting people into a society; and society can be defined as an ecosystem of “people living in a particular country or region and having shared customs, laws, and organizations”25. Even if a common language is necessary to permit an intelligible communication between people and people, and also between people and organizations (authorities), the heterogeneity of the individuals living together in every country or region, results in a fundamental linguistic diversity and heterogeneity of any society. Moreover, every human society is essentially multilingual. To talk about data, there are 30 times as many languages as states around the world,

23 Kaplan, Baldauf, Language Planning..., cit., p. 91
which is 200 states for 6000 languages; thus “the majority of states are multilingual”\textsuperscript{26}. Language planning in real-world contexts is related to power, authority, influence, and vested interests: all of these are connected to some core beliefs that influence not only the way we perceive and speak languages, but also how we conceptualize our society.

"Language planning can work to promote multilingualism or it can work to constrain it. Much of the history to human decision-making about languages has in fact sort to constrain multilingualism and to manage linguistic diversity by establishing a small number of languages, often a single language, as the normal languages of the state, and hence of education." (Liddicoat, 2015: 3)

The development of language policies for both the promotion of multilingualism or its depromotion is an \textit{ideologically positioned process}; indeed, Liddicoat affirms “[t]he development of language policies is, in all societies, an ideologically positioned process in which prevailing discourses affect the language, focus and purpose of policies”\textsuperscript{27}. The importance of the ideological context of language planning is further explained by Gottlieb, who affirms that “[a]ny study of a society’s language policy must take into account the ideological context within which language functions because language ideologies always mediate and sometimes directly shape the formulation of such policy”\textsuperscript{28} and if we isolate language policies from national ideas about language we see \textit{only a part of the whole} picture. Moreover, it often happens that inside a speech community certain beliefs about language are taken for granted “without reflecting on the culturally and historically specific genesis of such beliefs and with a strong element of justification for the linguistic status quo when the national language is the focus”\textsuperscript{29}. This argumentation reveals that it is possible (or better frequent) to discover disseminated beliefs about language that alter, or do not transpose, the truthfulness of their cultural and historical origin.

\textsuperscript{26}Patrick HEINRICH, \textit{Making of Monolingual Japan: Language Ideology and Japanese Modernity}, "Multilingual Matters" 146, Bristol, Multilingual Matters, 2012; cit., p. 6
\textsuperscript{28}GOTTLIEB, \textit{Language Policy in Japan...}, cit., p. 1
\textsuperscript{29}GOTTLIEB, \textit{Language Policy in Japan...}, cit., p. 2
Language ideology

Heinrich defines language ideology as “a set of beliefs about the origin and effect of language structure and use, as well as the way in which these beliefs are promoted and spread beyond the social groups whose interests they serve”\(^{30}\). The first part of this definition describes the conviction of something about the language, and the second part describes the instrumental use made by someone of this conviction. People believe in something about a language(s), so they perceive, learn and practice the language in a certain way because of the influence played by certain beliefs, which were promoted for the interests of particular social groups. This definition is effective in the way it portraits the power of ideology when transposed in the framework of the relationships between language planning and the politico-economical power. Understanding ideologies and beliefs concerning a language is significant because they probably reflect the interests of some selected social groups; so whose interests are commonly behind the process of language planning? Heinrich adopts the term language ideology brokers to identify “those who are seen to have linguistic authority over others [...] which central activity is the dissemination and reproduction - rather than creation - of language ideologies”\(^{31}\). Yoshino refers to some new intellectuals\(^{32}\) who are gaining increasingly importance for their activity and ability to popularize ideas in the contemporary society. An example can be observed in the activity of the so-called influencers, celebrities, ‘VIP’ but also common people that work with the social media encouraging consumption of products and services through an emotional idea of lifestyle; in the case of language, analogously, people can be conquered by ideas when the message is transmitted in an effective way and this strategy that has being widely adopted in advertisement and marketing campaigns of commercial institutes and organizations which operate in the English-related business.

\(^{30}\) Patrick HEINRICH, “The debate on English as an official language in Japan”, in Florian Coulmas 2007 (a cura di), Future Prospects for German and English in Science, Economy and Politics, Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 115-139; cit., p. 124

\(^{31}\) HEINRICH, Making of Monolingual Japan..., cit., p. 19

Ideologies are connected to a power-game working at different levels: internationally, nationally, and at the community level. Since actors of language planning are mostly people with power and authority to make language-related decisions, correspondingly to the definition of power and authority, they automatically have the possibility to sustain certain viewpoints and discouraging certain others depending on their vested interests. These viewpoints consolidate the shape and the contents of language ideology; a shape that however is not to be thought as fixed but rather adaptable to the changes of this society.

“It is just such a flexible generation of permanently new meanings in changing contexts that makes language ideologies invisible, which makes ideologies appear to be common sense. Accordingly, language ideologies can never be rigidly defined, nor can they be replaced by ‘singling out’ contradictions. Ideology is always in the business of hiding or bridging the gap between what it claims, and what it neglects or simplifies in doing so.” (Heinrich, 2012: 120)

This explains that changing or replacing language ideologies is very complex, because they are not merely top-down-promoted beliefs, but instead consolidated conviction constituting a shared common sense. Thus, even when the dominant ideology is contested or challenged, some of the beliefs composing it and which are rooted in the established common sense, are going to persistently influence the behavior of the ultimate users and learners of languages. Thus linguistic crisis frequently arise, showing attempts to challenge some dominant; however, in moments like these, the intrinsic nature of ideologies (which is conviction) make them able to elude the questions, to adapt at the changed context, reformulating old concepts in new forms.

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33 Kaplan, Baldauf, Language Planning..., cit., p. 196
Table 4 Influences on linguistic behavior

Elaborated by the author

Ideas and ideologies are essentially multiple and “homogeneous speech community has never existed outside ideology\(^{34}\)”. Heinrich citing Bourdieu (1991) explains how language ideology makes possible the self-displaying of homogeneous national speech communities: this is due to the widespread acceptation to such an ideological viewpoint. This widespread acceptation is related to the notion of prestige planning that is a matter of conveying the legitimacy or the adequacy of the policies and the measures proposed by them. The desirability of a homogeneous speech community is generally connected to the ideal practical usefulness of one standard form responding to the ‘intelligibility issue’, but also to cultural-related and identity-related motives such as the diffusion of a sense of belongingness to one nation through one language, the national language. This is a little part of a wide discuss, to which I come back on the following chapters; what is to highlight here is that the desirability of homogeneity is an ideological discourse, generated in support of the power, authority and vested interests of the language ideology brokers and the new intellectual who are reproducing some homogeneity-related beliefs, which currently are also commonly accepted on the ground. In such a dimension, the power is transposed from language policies, to the language itself, that symbolize the legitimacy and the interest of certain individuals, and language becomes for real part of a means-skills-knowledge condition, at the benefit of some groups, rendering linguistic acquisition, linguistic proficiency and existentialistic

\(^{34}\) HEINRICH, Making of Monolingual Japan..., cit., p. 18
views such as linguistic nativism, some sources of social inequality that lead to linguistic domination35.

**Attitude and approach**

*Language attitude* is a further element to be considered for its role in shaping the linguistic behavior. Discussing the Japanese context, Reesor concluded that “the most recent curricular reforms stressing communicative English abilities [are] unsuccessful without first addressing widely held negative attitudes and discriminatory practices affecting Japanese English language speakers”36. The logic behind this statement sustains that attitudinal factors influence the practice of languages, and that negative ones constitute an obstacle to the efficacy of language policies. Attitude is the result of some institutionalized viewpoints plus individual viewpoints and personal experiences, which determine the linguistic behavior of the speakers and their disposition to language learning37. In this thesis I use the term attitude meaning a settled way of thinking or feeling about a language that produces some pre-oriented linguistic behaviors. Particularly, I focus on the general attitude towards English in Japan through the observation of the contemporary policies regarding English Language Teaching (ELT) and some other commercial English-related activities, clarifying to which extent they reveal the influence of the dominant language ideologies. In this dimension too we see the effect of power and authority, thus scholars suggest that to change negative attitudes first it is needed to engage in prestige planning.

“Haarmann (1986) argues that language planners have traditionally been unable to establish an interdependence between language planning and its secondary effects. These secondary effects include issues of identity, specifically self-categorization and categorization of others. He claims that in order to address these issues language planners need to engage in prestige planning [...]” (Reesor, 2003: 63, citing Haarmann, 1986)

Accordingly, negative attitudes toward a language(s) are frequently associated by secondary effects of language planning, which include attempts to solve the ‘identity issue’ by defining the ‘self’ in comparison, often rivalry, to the ‘other’; this seems particularly marked in Japan when considering the conceptualization of the Japanese

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35 Reasoning inspired by HEINRICH, Making of Monolingual Japan..., cit., pp. 16-18
37 REESOR, “Japanese Attitudes to English...”, cit., pp. 63-64
and the English languages (see chapters 3 and 4). To sum up, attitude is not a factor that shapes the linguistic behavior independently, but rather this occurs under the influence of and in combination to ideological beliefs, a receptive/value function that is at the basis of policies acceptability, and discourses about identity. So, the study of language attitude acquire importance for the purpose of better understanding the language ideology affecting it, but it does not seem constituting a factor to use in to change autonomously the current linguistic situation of a speech community.

Finally, there is the concept of *language approach*, which in theory could be the more malleable force influencing the linguistic behavior, while in practice it is untouchable without the will to modify the current hierarchy of status and legitimacy assigned to the various languages spoken inside a society. In order to improve the situation of ELT in Japan, Honna encourages Japanese students to speak English like Japanese speakers instead of trying reaching the proficiency of American English speakers, which is an unrealistic goal; in this suggestion inputs remain the same: Japanese students and English language, while output is totally different: learning the language to communicate *as good as you can*. Hypothetically, focusing on the approach could be the way to boost the change in the practice and learning of languages, but in reality many politico-economical implications weigh down on the entire process of reforming the linguistic behavior; thus for realizing the scheme by Honna, a new management of prestige planning is required, and this involves the promotion of the desirability of multilingualism inside the Japanese society.

1.3 The specific Japanese context

Now it is time to introduce the specific Japanese context for understanding where the language planning and policy-making processes, that are to be discussed in this thesis, take place. The following table includes some historical facts that built the political, economic, social/demographic/ecological structure of modern and contemporary Japan.

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Prehistoric, ancient, classic and medieval Japan: Japanese history is conventionally divided in periods, named *jidai* (時代). The prehistoric time is divided in the Jōmon (10,000 − 300 BC), the Yayoi (300 BC − 250-300 AD), and the Kofun period (250-300 AD − 710). First human beings were living in a hunter-gatherer society; then the social structure advanced by the development, or more probably the introduction, of agriculture; and finally social relationships became more complex and hierarchized as testified by the erection of enormous burial mounds. The necessary tool for recording history is writing, which had been introduced in Japan around the 6th Century from China, passing through the reign of Paekche (corresponding to Korean peninsula). The Chinese writing system and Buddhism were two crucial tools imported in Japan; they caused a further transformation to the social structure: a powerful élite concentrated in the Asuka region leading to the creation of an empire. The Nara period (710 − 784), named after the new capital, was characterized by the increasing influence of Buddhism and the subsequent commingling of religious and political interests. The Heian (794 − 1185) was the period of greater magnificence for the imperial court but it concluded with the complete transfer of real power in the hands of military élite and the beginning of Japanese feudalism (decentralized system of government); from the Kamakura (1185 − 1333), to the Muromachi (1338 −1573), and finally the Azuchi-Momoyama period (1573 − 1600).
Pre-modern and modern Japan:

Table 5 Pre-modern and modern history of Japan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Edo period</strong> (1603 – 1868)</td>
<td>After a long period of feudalism, a figurehead Emperor invested the Tokugawa Shogunate (or simplified the military élite) of the authority to govern Japan: this is the start of <strong>Edo period</strong>. Scholars use the word <em>sakoku</em> to describe the national isolation imposed by the government during this period, in which international contacts were limited and highly controlled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meiji period</strong> (1868 – 1912)</td>
<td>Such closure was no longer possible after the arrival of ‘western’ forces: in 1853, Commodore Perry (with the supremacy of US army) induced the opening of Japan to international trade. This event was a push into the modern era and the beginning of the <strong>Meiji period</strong>: a new élite, recognizing the urgency of modernizing the country, implemented a set of reforms for adapting ‘western’ models to the local identity. At the end of Meiji Japan was a modern, industrialized country; international relationships became tense for the rising of nationalism, the military conflicts with China and Russia and the subsequent Japanese expansionism (Ryūkyū Islands, Taiwan, Manchuria, Korea).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Taishō and Shōwa periods</strong> (1912 – 1945)</td>
<td>The <strong>Taishō period</strong> (1912 – 1926) was an era of international rivalry: USA, UK and France (after WW1) deprived Japan of some of territories conquered in China and imposed other limitations to the country. The economic crisis of 1929, constituted the bad beginning of the <strong>Shōwa period</strong> (1926 – 1989), together with a further raising of nationalism that exploded during WW2, or the Pacific war. The conflict concluded tragically with the two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shōwa period</strong> after 1945 until its end</td>
<td>As a consequence of Japan’s defeat, from September 1945 to April 1952 the country was occupied by the winning alliance. General MacArthur became the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), guiding Japan in the process of democratization (with a new constitution) and in realizing the economic recovery (through the liberalization of the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Despite the political responsibilities, the Emperor was excluded from the Tokyo Trials, he was not persecuted for crime wars and conserved his ceremonial role, losing ‘only’ his divine nature through the announcement known as _ningen sengen_, the Humanity Declaration; the opinions on these events are controversial, but the choice to protect the imperial family is said to reveal the symbolic meaning of the Emperor for embodying the social order and the national unity of Japan. After the end of the occupation period, Japan remained strictly bond with the US military forces.


Elaborated by the author

**The political context:** Currently, Japan is in the Heisei period (1989 – present), an era that is going to end soon, since in April 2019 Emperor Akihito is going “to become the first Japanese Emperor to abdicate in 200 years”\(^39\). Japan is a constitutional monarchy where the Emperor has only a ceremonial role, while the actual power is divided into three main organs: the Cabinet (Ministers and Prime Minister), National Diet and the Supreme Court, respectively the Executive, Legislative and Judicial authority. The current Prime Minister is Shinzō Abe, President of Liberal Democratic Party (LPD); he has been re-elected with the general election of October 2017, gaining his third-consecutive term (fourth in total). Contemporary main political issues are constitutional pacifism and military subordination to the USA, territorial disputes with Russia and China, diplomatic tension with North Korea.

**The socio-ideological, social and demographic context:** In an ideological dimension Japan is populated by ‘Japanese people’, while in reality different ethnic groups coexist in the country composing a heterogeneous society. This ideological homogeneous society is framed by the concept of ‘Japaneseness’ at the center _Nihonjinron_ (the

\(^39\) ENJOJI Kaori, and WESTCOTT Ben,
“Akihito to become first Japanese Emperor to abdicate in 200 years”, _CNN_, 1 December 2017,
question of the Japanese people). This debate opened soon after the war and it has been continuing until today with a series of publications, which sustain the homogeneity of Japanese society, exaggerating and mystifying some elements of cultural belongingness. Interestingly, a great contribution to the debate came from authors, writers and critics from US and Europe, whose observation was frequently affected by stereotyped or self-centered viewpoints. Although the homogeneity of Japanese society is contradicted in the reality, a myth re-elaborating the ancient history continued echoing in the construction of Japanese identity. The legendary foundation of Japanese Empire is dated 11th February 660 BF and attributed to Jinmu, a descendent of sun goddess Amaterasu; the myth is very emblematic as the Japanese Imperial family is supposed to had never interrupted such a divine ancestry and even when moving into modernity the Meiji administration choose to promulgate the Constitution of 1889 on 11th February: the anniversary of mythical constitution and even after WW2 the ceremonial role of the Emperor remained untouched. At present what remains is an ideological homogeneous Japanese society, where ethnic groups and immigrants are often marginalized. Another social group suffering a systematic discrimination is women, and the consequences of this unequal condition are reflected in some negative demographic changes such as the declining birth rate.

Table 6 Some data about Japanese lands and population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lands</th>
<th>Archipelago composed by more than 6,800 islands, the main ones: Hokkaidō, Honshū, Shikoku, Kyūshū and Okinawa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surface is approximately 380,000 km² correspondingly to 0.3% of the global land mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>67% of the nation's surface area is forestland, while urbanization is highly concentrated (in a 5% of building lands)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Population density | Total population in 2015 was 127.11 million (1.7 % of word’s total), distributed (euphemistically) in 47 prefectures on an average of 340.8 persons per square kilometer; |

40 LIDDICOAT, “The ideology of interculturality…”, cit., p. 7
41 Takie Sugiyama LEBRA, The Japanese self in cultural logic, Honolulu, University of Hawai’i Press, 2004
Among the prefectures Tokyo has the highest population density: 6,168 persons live squeezed in one square kilometer, which means 18 times the national average;

In 2015 around 23% of national total population was concentrated in 12 major cities.

**Population pyramid**

Population pyramid shows a singularity: the country experienced two “baby boom” periods, the first in 1947-49 and the second in 1971-74 so we observe two phases of expansions of birth rate.

Birth rate at present has been drastically decreasing and the country is aging: 26.7 % of total population is 65 or older. This causes worries about sustainability of welfare system in the near future.

**Source:** The Statistical Handbook of Japan of 2016

**Elaborated by the author**

**The cultural context:** the Japanese archipelago welcomed many cultural flows, first from China and then from the European countries and the US; on the other hand Japan experienced also some phases of seclusion. The two main periods for the definition of Japanese cultural identity were the Heian period (794 – 1185) and the Meiji restoration. The Heian period was the time of emancipation from Chinese culture with the diffusion of Japanese script and literature, sophisticated art and aesthetic, new religious movements (for example Shingon Buddhism). The Meiji restoration is often narrated as the westernization Japan, however under the slogan *wakon-yōsa* (Japanese spirit, western knowledge) the massive introduction of knowledge that occurred was a process characterized by a determination to naturalize the new concepts imported in the country, aiming to the edification of a Japanese national identity (exasperated by nationalist ideology). By 1980s the country was the second economy in of the world, prominent especially for its automotive and high technology industries; consequently efficiency, hi-tech engineering, robotics became some of the features for strengthening the ‘made in Japan’ brand. Today many global trends are originated in Japan: pop-

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culture, fashion but also cuisine and make-up, demonstrating that cultural flows are not (anymore) univocally from ‘western’ countries.
Chapter two: English as the dominant global language

In chapter two I introduce the concept of globalization, reflecting on its relationship with the English language; first I reason on the definition of globalization, and then on its association with English, analyzing scholar’s viewpoints about English as the dominant global language, English diversity, and its glocalization.

2.1 The relationship between globalization and the English language

**Globalization: greater proximity**

In early twenty-first century, we all have something to say about globalization, and it recalls to our mind many ideas: fast communication processes, open-mindedness, hyper connectivity, sustainability concerns and challenges, vanishing cultural boundaries, standardization. By looking for the word globalization in Google Scholar you will be offered over 2 billion results¹. It is clearly a topic of wide discussion, and also a phenomenon with many economical, socio-political, cultural, environmental implications that subsequently can be observed by very different points of view. The effects of globalization can be positive or negative, and our evaluation of the effects is likely to depend on what we gain and what we loose because of the phenomenon.

Providing a definition of globalization is not simple. Treccani, a famous Italian dictionary, provides a general definition of it as “a term used from 1990s, to identify a very wide set of phenomena, connected to the growth of economic, social and cultural integration between the different areas of the world”. Al-Rodhan³ and Stoudmann⁴ concluded a massive work organizing a great number of definitions that have been pronounced by critics and scholars. Among these, some concentrate on economy, other

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¹ At November 2017

² Author translation; original version in Italian language: “Termine adoperato, a partire dagli anni 1990, per indicare un insieme assai ampio di fenomeni, connessi con la crescita dell'integrazione economica, sociale e culturale tra le diverse aree del mondo” http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/globalizzazione (accessed: 4 February 2017)

³ Nayef R.F. Al-Rodhan is a philosopher, neuroscientist and geostrategist. Head of GCSP’s Geopolitics and Global Futures Programme.

emphasize social and human areas, and/or existentialist views of the phenomenon, still others emphasize the history of globalization. This collection of definitions reveals that many attempts to define globalization depend on the viewpoint of observation, and these viewpoints frequently become the filter for partially understanding a complex phenomenon. Filtering selection is often correlated to discursive goals in a way that the definitions of globalization become somehow reflective of what we are researching, so to highlight the existence and the effects of globalization inside a delimited area of study. This is why some critic voices affirm that globalization “has become a catchall word in a variety of academic and non academic domains”\(^5\); or “has become a catchword to describe and transform various facets of our contemporary society”\(^6\).

Sabanadze succeeded in providing an omni-comprehensive definition of globalization\(^7\), suggesting that it “means greater global closeness, both real and perceived, resulting from the intensification and extension of international interaction”. She explains that in this definition we find the elements of integration, interdependency and openness, together with the tendency of spatial compression, standardization and homogeneity. Globalization can be thought as a process, a condition, or a discourse: process indicates something going on; condition indicates the results; and discourse refers to the response through our behaviors and actions toward a cognitive phenomenon. On the one hand, the discursive approach allows observing the complexity and fluidity of globalization but it is also the reason why the term ended up meaning all and nothing, while on the other hand, thinking of it as a process or condition leads to a pragmatic observation.

The KOF Swiss Economic Institute constitutes an effort to convey the meaning of globalization into a more tangible dimension through the “KOF Globalization Index”. It is based on annual data of 207 countries, for a period that goes from 1970 to 2016 (at present); the index attempts to measure three big areas of globalization: economic, social and political area. The economic globalization is calculated through the analysis of international trade, FDI, and other economic records. The social globalization

\(^5\) SEARGEANT, *The Idea of English in Japan...*, cit., p. xi

\(^6\) KUBOTA Ryūko (Foreword) in Sachiko Horiguchi, Yuki Imoto, Gregory S. Poole (a cura di) “Foreign Language Education in Japan”, Springer, 2015, pp. vii-x

scrutinizes data such as international telephone calls, or the access of information; moreover the number of McDonald's and Ikea in each country is taken into consideration as an element revealing cultural proximity. Finally, the political globalization refers to the number of embassies, membership in international organization, participation to peace missions. According to the KOF Globalization Index published in 2016⁸ and based on the data collected in 2013 (year when the Japanese Government and the Ministry of Education adopted the measures for intensifying ELT to get ready for the Olympic Games) Japan occupied the 48th place of the ranking. However, by examining the detailed data we notice that it was actually the 124th country for economic globalization⁹. Apparently it is in the economic dimension of globalization that the country encounters some difficulties, and indeed, the actual flows in 2013 were considerably low (28.30%). On the contrary, the social globalization and cultural proximity were growing, underlining that the policies aiming to further globalize the country (which as we will see in chapter 4 is a recurrent motive in English-related schemes), would require to think about issues concerning the economic area of globalization, rather than the social one. In Japan the measures for corresponding to the phenomenon, frequently enclose the requirement to further globalize something: the economy in general, the education system, Japanese hospitality services; therefore in the title I adopted the term globalizing Japan, instead of globalized Japan, observing an on-going phenomenon and the related discourse.

Globalization: Glocalization = Standardization: Diversification

The definition of Sabanadze, and so describing globalization as “greater global closeness, both real and perceived, resulting from the intensification and extension of international interaction", already includes two important factors: global closeness, or proximity, and international interaction. Global closeness derives from advanced technologies, faster information sharing via the Internet or the new media; this closeness was produced by the intensification of international interactions that contributed to the generation of many cultural flows, echoing in far places of the globe. This is to say that the global closeness did result in a cultural proximity that can be

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⁹ Other detailed rankings: 53rd for social globalization and 30th for political globalization.
symbolized by global colossal companies such as Mac Donald's or Starbucks; yet the success of these companies is due to their interchangeable nature, adaptable to the local context. The tendency of multinational firms to calibrate their strategy on the local context has been described by scholars as glocalization. Glocalization\textsuperscript{10} refers to the simultaneous presence of universalizing and particularizing tendencies: the mutual interaction of global and local forces.

Globalization and glocalization describe the same greater global closeness, what does change is the fundamentally different viewpoint: standardization and diversification. These viewpoints constitute also the two focuses for examining the discussion and the studies about the worldwide diffusion of the English language; this language can be conceptualized either as a major symbol of globalization, representing the convergence to one standard and facilitating international/intercultural communication; or as a diverse language, adapting to local contexts by following the pattern of glocalization (see Honna, 2008; Choi, 2016).

2.2 English, the global language

\textbf{Linguistic domination?}

Many people and scholars assert that today English is the \textit{de facto} international lingua franca. A notable academic reference for studies on the topic is David Crystal who offers an important summary of what is needed by a language to acquire the \textit{global status}, which is achieved when “it develops a special role that is recognized in every country\textsuperscript{11}”. The decision to recognize or not such a special role to the common language is made by (or for) the communities through their political authorities, and this can occur in different ways: assigning an official role (also semi-official or second-official, or official in limited domains) to the language, but also establishing the priority of its learning within the education systems\textsuperscript{12}.

\textsuperscript{10}Terminology adopted by sociologist Roland Robertson (1995) for referring to mutual interaction of global and local forces; the origin of the word is from the Japanese \textit{dochakuka} (土著化 literally indigenization).


\textsuperscript{12}Crystal, \textit{English as a global language}, cit., p. 4
Historical events reveal that some languages of the past effectively became a lingua franca, and so a means of communication between people of different ‘mother tongue’; this had been the case of Ancient Greek and Latin and their success was due to “the power of its people - especially political and military power”\textsuperscript{13}. In contemporary globalized context, the English language recorded an unprecedented worldwide diffusion and this situation too is due to the international influence recognized to the countries that are at the origin of the diffusion of English: UK first and then US. The power of these countries has been the condition which determined the spread of English during the modern era, and it is part of the legacy that make it today the \textit{de facto} global language; thus, some scholars reflected on the threatening consequences resulting from the power held by English native speakers if the scenario is one in which language planning activities do not promote the respect of the linguistic rights of every speech communities. Indeed, one of the anxieties slowing the universal acceptation of English as the ‘global lingua franca’ is that its native speakers result automatically “in a position of power compared with those who have to learn it as an official, second or foreign language”\textsuperscript{14}. Phillipson describes this concept with the expression ‘English linguistic imperialism’, which is a form of linguistic domination, and also “one sub-type of linguicism”\textsuperscript{15} or linguistic discrimination. Similarly to sexism or racism, linguicism is a form of discrimination that undertakes through the representation of the desirability of a dominant language and undesirability of other dominated languages\textsuperscript{16}. Due to the fact that English linguistic imperialism and linguicism “operate within a wider socio-political structure which is always full of contradictions”, if in theory they seem explicit and unambiguous, in practice they continue manifesting in ambiguous and subtle ways so that they remain unsolved issues. This shed light on the importance to institute fundamental principles to safeguard linguistic human rights\textsuperscript{17}, to formally acknowledge and contrast an unjust and systematically unequal distribution of power and legitimacy to different languages and their speakers. However, the vested interests that are enclosed in the ideological construction of many contemporary societies make us guess

\textsuperscript{13} CRYSTAL, \textit{English as a global language}, cit., p. 9
\textsuperscript{14} CRYSTAL, \textit{English as a global language}, cit., p. 16
\textsuperscript{15} PHILLIPSON, \textit{Linguistic Imperialism}, cit. p. 55
\textsuperscript{16} \textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{17} PHILLIPSON, SKUTNABB-KANGAS, “Language rights and wrongs”, \textit{cit.}, pp. 456-464
the difficulty to achieve such a balance without changing the status quo to which these interests rely on, and without opening the discussion about the legitimacy of community languages, those of minorities, foreign residents and many other sociolinguistic realities marginalized by the national system.

**English diversity and globalization**

*One English?* The history of English is often narrated as “the unilinear progress of the standard variety”\(^\text{18}\), which center is co-occupied by British English and US English, but in reality the diffusion of the language is a history of great diversity. In the well-known model named after him, Kachru (1985) illustrated the three main categories of English forms as a concentric evolution of the language. The model consists of an inner circle, an outer circle and an expanding circle, which refer respectively to 1) the *traditional cultural and linguistic bases of English*, 2) the *institutionalized non-native varieties in the regions that have passed through extended periods of colonization*, and 3) the *varieties of the language used essentially in EFL (English as Foreign Language) contexts* (words in italics by Kachru, 1985: 366-7).

**Table 7 Model of three circles by Kachru, 1985**

![Diagram of three circles model](image)

Reproduction of Kachru’s model (Kachru 1985: 366-7)\(^\text{19}\)

The importance of Kachru’s model is that for the first time English is pluralized, becoming ‘World Englishes’.


\(^{19}\) In Andy KIRKPATRICK, *World Englishes: Implications for international communication and ELT*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, Chapter 3 "Models of World Englishes" pp. 27-37; cit. p. 28
"World Englishes approach that is associated with Kachru's name offers a pluricentric model of the English speaking world which accords legitimacy to stable varieties in diverse contexts, and combines a descriptive linguistic with an analysis of the politically inflected discourses of the language". (Seargeant, 2009: 23)

The model constituted an important step forward in the discussion about English diversity, but it had been also criticized for still transmitting an idea of subordination of the outer and expanding circles to the inner circle. Indeed, the model stimulated a beneficial debate concerning English diversification and it was the starting point for the multilingual narration of English proposed by Mesthrie, who refers to it not as a language but as a language complex. Mesthrie re-formulates the history of English focusing on its external evolution, conceding more space to regional, ethnic and social dialects, periods of bilingualism, and language-shift Englishes. This narration reveals how English has been a diversified language since the very beginning: such a trend is likely to continue in the future thus many scholars are forecasting the (future) birth of new “post-colonial or global standard varieties” such as the Euro-Englishes.

Table 8 Types of English described by Mesthrie

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Language Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(ex-inner circle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan standard varieties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pidgin Englishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jargon Englishes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Author's elaboration of the ELC's subtypes (Mesthrie, 2016: 382-383)

Diversity is the characteristic that made English become the de facto lingua franca, allowing the language to spread in many regions of the world: the more the number of learners of English grows, the more people desire to study the language because it

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20 MESTHRIE, "World Englishes...", cit., p. 386
21 MESTHRIE, "World Englishes...", cit., p. 383
opens an incredible variety of opportunities, intercultural exchanges and access to knowledge and information. However, the diversification of English also involves numerous issues concerning the future of English Language Education (ELE). On the one hand, the standard form must not delegitimize or disempower other varieties and sociolinguistic realities, and ELE should not marginalize the cultures related to these other varieties; while on the other hand, a certain degree of standardization is necessary for guaranteeing the communicability through the English language. These two positions were represented in a debate that occurred in 1990-91 between the two scholars Kachru and Quirk\textsuperscript{22}. Kachru was for diversification and outlined the need to recognize the pluricentric and multilingual dimensions of English, retaining that the local varieties of English were more than inter-languages, and consequently had the right to claim for more linguistic legitimacy and autonomy from the traditional center. On the contrary, Quirk defended the importance of standardization, insisting on a projection that empowering varieties would have lead to incommunicability, undermining the mutual understanding. For analogous reasons, in the same years Crystal expressed concern about the ‘intelligibility issue’, defending the necessity to establish a World Standard English (that at present does not subsist), a standard form “acting as a strongly unifying force among the vast range of variation which exists”\textsuperscript{23}. Moreover, in most recent times, he asked himself the following questions:

“The future of world English is likely to be one of increasing multidialectism; but could this become multilingualism? Is English going to fragment into a mutually unintelligible varieties, just as Vulgar Latin did a millennium ago?” (Crystal, 2010: 201)

He was reflecting on some hypotheses by McArthur, who in 1998 thought about a future in which the varieties of English become so differentiated “that we end up […] with an English ‘family of languages’”\textsuperscript{24}; but Crystal argues that predictions like these are inaccurate, because they reason on assumptions from the past, while the contemporary world is absolutely different: the complex phenomenon of globalization makes ‘English as a global language’ needed in the form of a functional means for international interaction and communication; thus resulting in the real requirement for intelligibility.

\textsuperscript{22} SEARGEANT, The Idea of English in Japan..., cit., p. 23

\textsuperscript{23} David CRYSTAL, “What is Standard English?”, Concorde (English-Speaking Union), 1994, pp. 24-6

In such a context he rather foresees the establishment of situations in which, inside a speech community, more varieties of the English language are maintained and used in different situations; thus he sustains that “English at the global level is steadily moving towards becoming a diglossic language”\textsuperscript{25}.

\textbf{Glocalization: multicultural roots}

The desirability of the unilinear narration of English is not much about guaranteeing an intelligible communication, but it is more about safeguarding the legitimacy of a standard form over the other varieties, and the interests of certain social groups over other groups. Indeed, it resembles the desirability of homogeneous speech communities that was shaped by European nation-states through the promotion of \textit{national} languages\textsuperscript{26} and both unilinearity and homogeneity seems an attempt to simplify a complex and multifaceted reality.

The unique role that the English language has been assigned in contemporary globalized context is due to many reasons. Currently it is the language of international business, travel, scientific and academic knowledge, technology and Internet connecting people from any part of the world, that allows information sharing and the transmission of knowledge in an unprecedented way. This constitute the ‘global special value’ of English, and such an achievement would have not been possible without the long process of local adaptation and diversification of the language, which allowed it to spread extensively “among non-native speakers as a sizable number of Asian, African, Pacific, and Caribbean countries designate it as their official, associate official, or working language”\textsuperscript{27}.

Kachru's model is also the starting point of Honna, who, focusing on the analysis of English in Asian contexts, affirms that it is impossible to internationalize “things and ideas [and languages] without having them accommodated to the customs of people who are supposed to use them for their own purposes”\textsuperscript{28}. The diffusion of English may seem a global trend, but it was made possible through a process of \textit{adaptation} and \textit{diversification} that occurs when the language interact with the local context; thus the

\textsuperscript{25} \textsc{Crystal}, “An English Family…”, \textit{cit.}, p. 208

\textsuperscript{26} \textsc{Heinrich}, \textit{Making of Monolingual Japan…}, \textit{cit.}, p. 2; \textsc{Liddicoat}, “Multilingual education…”, \textit{cit.}, pp. 3-7

\textsuperscript{27} \textsc{Honna}, \textit{English as a Multicultural…}, \textit{cit.}, p. 1

\textsuperscript{28} \textsc{Honna}, \textit{English as a Multicultural…}, \textit{cit.}, p. 7-8
The phenomenon of English spread seems matching better the notion of glocalization, that emphasizes the simultaneous existence of global and local forces. Local adaptation increased the diversity of English, which collected the contribution of many other communities that are using and transforming the language. All of these contributions can be seen as new roots that made and make possible for English to be accepted by non-natives as the international lingua franca and also as intra-regional or intra-national language. Indeed, Honna elucidates that the spread of English in Asian context represents a releasing contact to Anglo-American culture:

“The spread of English does not assure the transplantation of American English or British English throughout the world. [...] The internationalization of English has caused the diversification of English. [...] Chinese, Thais, Indonesians, Vietnamese, and Japanese have structural ad behavioral features in their national patterns of English, which originate from their communal languages and cultures. Actually when Japanese speak English with Singaporeans, there is no room for American or British English and culture.” (Honna, 2008: 6)

Furthermore Honna argues that, the pluralisation of the language into World Englishes, requires to create an international common framework, in order to rethink English Language Teaching according to the value of multiculturalism, educating to the intercultural awareness so to ensure both the communicability between and the respect of the different varieties of English.

I-Chung Ke offers a further reflection about the multiculturalism of English. He talks about the ‘Global English’ referring to the use of English “on various occasions at local, national, regional, and international levels to the extent that its penetration reaches a global scale” and in numerous the fields among which science, academia, and business. The Global English approach focuses on the utility of the language as a communication tool transcending the cultural connection, and sustains that English “can be seen as one of the standardizing infrastructures that modern science and scientific thinking helped create to rationalize the world”. In such a dimension the language

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29 HONNA, English as a Multicultural..., cit., p. 71
30 Associate Professor, Department of Foreign Languages and Applied Linguistics, Yuan Ze University, Taiwan
32 KE, “A Global Language...”, cit., p. 78
already loosened its connection with the Anglo-American culture; and moreover if we try to retrace the culture to which the Global English is related to, we come to see its numerous roots around the world, and its essential multiculturalism.

Table 9 Scheme of viewpoints about the English language and its diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quirk</th>
<th>Crystal</th>
<th>Kachru</th>
<th>Mesthrie</th>
<th>Honna</th>
<th>Ke</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mono-centric</td>
<td>World Standard</td>
<td>World Englishes</td>
<td>English Language</td>
<td>Diversified</td>
<td>Global English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(monolithic)</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>(pluri-centric)</td>
<td>Complex</td>
<td>(glocalized)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defense of the</td>
<td>Intelligibility</td>
<td>Enhancing</td>
<td>Multilingual</td>
<td>Framework</td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traditional</td>
<td>issue,</td>
<td>multilingualism</td>
<td>narration of</td>
<td>for teaching</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>standard</td>
<td>forecasted</td>
<td>and other</td>
<td>World</td>
<td>inter-varietal</td>
<td>many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>diglossia</td>
<td>varieties</td>
<td>Englishes</td>
<td>roots</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Elaborated by the author

Some pedagogical responses to the diversification approach can be observed in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) proposing to seek for a common denominator, teaching some core features of the language complex allowing intercultural communication without delegitimating other varieties, and also in ELF (English as Lingua Franca) by Jennifer Jenkins, who applies “a sociopolitical awareness to the description of world English use”33 so that students can familiarize with the other existing forms.

To sum up from English diversity emerges the necessity to reflect about the desirability, legitimacy and power of one standard form over other varieties. As Quirk and Crystal pointed out, the intrinsic nature of a common language requires guaranteeing its intelligibility; nevertheless the unequal distribution of linguistic resources and the advantageous position of the native speakers of English are issues to be solved. Kachru and Mesthrie focused on the diversification of English, showing that the standard form must not be used for disempowering other sociolinguistic realities and marginalizing

33 SEARGEANT, The Idea of English in Japan…, cit., p. 23
their cultures, while Honna suggested to change the approach of ELT, by establishing some common guidelines to teach an inter-varietal awareness, for guaranteeing both communicative goals and respect of other varieties. Finally, Ke described the multicultural face of the English used as a global language. The danger of English linguistic imperialism or other forms of discriminations derives from an unequal distribution of linguistic resources; since the English language diffuses adapting to the local context, it is unlikely that the spread of the language itself could delete the several cultural identities, but this would actually depend on the management of multilingualism intra-nationally. Indeed, there is more anxiety concerning the national management of languages, and the persistency of ideological monolingual societies produces as an effect a systematic marginalization of linguistic diversity. This is due to the fact that nations have interest in maintaining their solidity, a solidity that relies on the national language at disadvantage of the intra-national multilingualism and of the existing linguistic minorities. Thus the next step is to investigate the conceptualization of English in the specific Japanese context, for understanding the ideological context behind English-related language policies, and their orientation towards standardization or diversification, and towards linguistic diversity.
Chapter three: The symbiotic conceptualization of English and Japanese languages

The idea I explore in chapter three is that, at present, in Japan the ideological comparison between the English language and the Japanese language is structured in a way that it reproduces the monolithic conceptualization of languages, resulting in ensuring the legitimacy and power of the Japanese national language, against the languages minorities, second language speakers and foreign residents. First of all, I provide a brief excursus considering the history and role of the English language in Japan. Then I reason on the symbiotic conceptualization of English and Japanese observing that the ideology of ‘native-speakerism’ reflects beliefs indissolubly bonding speakers to their first language. Indeed, native-speakerism can be regarded as an attitudinal factor towards English, which reveals beliefs sustaining the ideological Japanese monolingual society. In such a context, language planning and policies concerning English language in Japan result (consciously or not) in securing some old vested interests, affecting not only the practice and learning of English, but also a conceptualization of Japanese society that produces a systematic disempowerment of linguistic minorities.

3.1 History and role of the global language in Japan

I provide a brief explanation of the history of English in Japan, dividing it into three main phases: 1) the introduction of English in Japan, 2) modernization, and 3) globalization. This is to better understand the current role of this language in the country.

The introduction of English in Japan: Japan is a country that “over the past 400 years [...] varied between extremes of utter isolation to openness”\(^1\); at first, when the English language knocked on the door of the Japanese archipelago, it was quite cordially welcomed. The first contact occurred in April 1600 when William Adams arrived in Japan with his ship, the *Liefde* (“Charity”), becoming the first Englishman navigator to visit the country. Adams engaged a positive relationship with the *shogun* Tokugawa Ieyasu, and because of his wide knowledge he was made on of his consultant, given an

\(^1\) Craig HAGERMAN, “English Language Policy and Practice in Japan”, *Osaka Jogakuin College Kiyo Journal*, 2009, pp. 47-64; *cit.*, p. 49
official rank and an estate, but never the right to return home\(^2\). However, the friendliness to Englishmen and their language was going to end soon: first, Tokugawa Hidetada (the successor of Ieyasu) “eliminated Christianity from Japan, and took the first steps toward closing the country to all trade or other intercourse with foreign countries”\(^3\), then his son Tokugawa Iemitsu\(^4\), completed the process (in 1638) closing the country in a severe protectionism to which scholars refer with the Japanese word sakoku (closed country, or national isolation). For almost two centuries, the Japanese authorities tried, in their vision, to defend the country from the danger of a ‘western’ influence. The national isolation included the expulsion or execution of Christian merchants and the prohibition of studying foreign languages and literature. Commercial relationships were limited to few exceptions and the only western merchants allowed in Japan were the Dutch. These strictly regulated contacts were limited to Dejima, off Nagasaki, an island where the foreign influence was kept distant and close to Japan at the same time\(^5\).

**Modernization:** In 1853, Commodore Matthew C. Perry (from the US) showed to Japan the danger of imperialism from the West. He sailed with his black ships to a country that had been facing already a deep crisis because of its deteriorated political institutions. Perry’s arrival had some heavy consequences: the conclusion of United States-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce Issue (1854), which is the first in a series of *unequal treaties* signed by Japan and recognizing significant concessions to the US and the European countries. This event made understand to the Japanese authorities the vulnerability of Japan within the international scenario, revealing the necessity to re-centralize the political system (namely the Meiji restoration). Moreover, the unequal conditions imposed by the treaties were perceived as the requirement to modernize the country, for reaching as fast as possible ‘western’-civilization standards, rehabilitating the status of the country. The Japanese modernization required studying ‘western’

\(^5\) HAGERMAN, “English Language Policy...”, *cit.*, p. 49
sciences and knowledge, their systems of law and political organization, and for this purpose the English language in Japan started acquiring importance. Thus, “in 1871 [English Language Teaching] was adopted as an integral part of the national language curriculum”\(^6\) and became part of the entrance examination at universities.

Moreover, during this period emerged a first proposal for replacing the Japanese language with English\(^7\). In May 1872 Mori Arinori, the first Japanese ambassador to the USA, proposed a switch from Japanese to English in order to facilitate the expansion of international trade. In those years the English language was emerging as a key tool for international communication, while on the contrary the Japanese language(s) was going through a complex process: unification of written and spoken forms, standardization and lexical modernization. The proposal of Mori was not much for replacing the Japanese language with the better English language, but rather substituting Japanese with a reformed and simplified English that could effectively spread among the ultimate users in Japan\(^8\). The suggestion to adopt a simplified language demonstrates that Mori’s proposal was shaped around the idea of a practical solution for the future of Japan inside the international society, and not around feelings such as “taking pride in one’s native tongue”\(^9\), and was therefore disconnected from the bond between language and national identity. However, many people sensed in his proposal a threat to the Japanese language, and moreover, the path undertaken by the actors of language planning in the years after the Meiji restoration followed the guidelines of European nation-states and the ideology of language nationalism. Consequently, threats to the Japanese language became threats to Japanese identity and for this reason anti-western and anti-English sentiments were very diffused in the years preceding WW2. Furthermore, when by 1930 Japanese nationalism reached its peak, “English language instruction was officially ceased”\(^10\) and thus we understand that the history of English in modern Japan reveals a

\(^6\) HAGERMAN, “English Language Policy ...”, cit., p. 49  
\(^7\) HAGERMAN, “English Language Policy ...”, cit., p. 49 ; HEINRICH, “The debate on English, cit., p. 115; HEINRICH, Making of Monolingual Japan..., cit., p. 21  
\(^8\) HEINRICH, Making of Monolingual Japan..., cit., pp. 25-32  
\(^9\) HEINRICH, Making of Monolingual Japan..., cit., p. 31  
\(^10\) HAGERMAN, “English Language Policy...” cit., pp. 49-51
contradictory attitude towards the language, an attitude going continuously and alternatively from acceptance to exclusion\textsuperscript{11}.

After the end of World War II, the study of English was re-included as a compulsory subject in Japanese secondary school education\textsuperscript{12}. Until recently, the education system comprised six years of English Language Teaching from the 7\textsuperscript{th} school grade (approximately 12 years old)\textsuperscript{13}; a first step for intensifying ELT occurred 1997, when “selected elementary schools [...] have been able to offer English conversation as an after-school activity” from 3\textsuperscript{rd} grade on (Mckenzie, 2008: 272).

\textbf{Globalization:} The intensification of ELT in Japan proceeded further from the beginning of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, on the assumption that English is nowadays indispensible to cope with the international society, globalization or simply the \textit{rest of the world}. For this reason the Japanese government imprinted a strategy aimed to improving the ‘linguistic skills’ of Japanese students, implementing some language policies to further globalize the country.

In 2002 the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) promoted the strengthening of ELT in Japanese schools; the measures was taken to the light of a survey concerning the results of Japanese students (years 1997-8) in the TOEFL English test; the survey outlined some issues concerning the Japanese way of teaching English as “Japan (along with North Korea) was ranked the lowest of all twenty-six Asian countries”\textsuperscript{14}. Such a poor result exposed a generalized negative attitude of Japanese students toward the learning of English and constituted the starting point for two major reforms of language-in-education polices: the \textit{New Course of Study policy} (2002) followed by the \textit{Action Plan to Cultivate “Japanese with English Abilities”} (2003), in which “the Ministry recognized the importance of English to the future of Japan and to the world generally\textsuperscript{15}”.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{11} HAGERMAN, “English Language Policy...” \textit{cit.}, pp. 49-51
\textsuperscript{12} HAGERMAN, “English Language Policy...” \textit{cit.}, p. 51
\textsuperscript{14} ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} ibid.
\end{flushright}
The negative trend of Japanese ELT opened a wide discussion about how to improve the participation of Japan to the international society, in such a context the *Prime Minister’s Commission on Japan’s Goals in the 21st Century* (PMCJG) proposed to recognize the role of second official language to the English language in the country. The commission sustained the requirement for Japan to cross “the frontier within”, reasoning on the limits that were interposing between the country and the fulfillment of its goal to further globalize the economy. Since the English language has become the *de facto* international lingua franca, the commission justified the importance for Japanese students to master such an important tool with these words:

“So long as English is effectively the language of international discourse, there is no alternative to familiarizing ourselves with it within Japan. Even if we stop short of making it an official second language, we should give it the status of a second working language and use it routinely alongside Japanese.”

Moreover, the commission stressed the necessity for more diversity in Japan “[t]o avoid being left out of the current of international activities and lamenting that the rest of the world is bypassing Japan”. Expressions such as *no alternative*, *avoid being left out* or *bypassing Japan* communicate a sense of ineluctability, as if Japanese people cannot help but embracing the international language to further globalize the country. Also, the comparison with ‘the rest of the world’ alludes to a feeling of inadequacy or inferiority deriving from the current state of things in Japan.

Heinrich explored the lively debate against the proposal, focusing in particular on the opinions of Yukio Tsuda. From the arguments of the opponents re-emerge the ideology of *language nationalism*, which assumptions are a language-spirit connection, the homogeneity myth and the idea of linguistic imperialism.
“The first assumption would require two principles known as “linguistic determinism” and “linguistic relativity” [...]. While linguistic relativity, that is to say, the idea of uniquely encoded distinctions in any given language, can be widely observed, [...] linguistic determinism, that is the idea of language determining thought, remains unproved assertion. [...] The second point, that the Japanese form a homogeneous speech community, is no more tenable [...] with regard to the third point, the spread of “English nationalism” in Japan through the English language, Tsuda seems to fall victim to his own ideological beliefs. Since he presupposes a connection between language and the spirit of its speakers, he is led to assume that spreading a specific language entails spreading the spirit of its (national) speakers”. (Heinrich, 2007: 126)

This analysis clarifies two things: first, language ideology does not necessarily need to be entirely true, or realistic to be promoted with tenacity, and second, beliefs about the other languages happen to be a reflection of those beliefs one has about her/his own language. Indeed, by presuming the existence of a language-spirit connection, which Tsuda felt towards the Japanese language, his conviction is transferred to the English language. Thus, when studying the idea of English in Japan, it should be appropriate not to isolate such a conceptualization from the dominant beliefs about language supported inside the speech community.

Table 10 Language ideologies reflect on beliefs

Author’s elaboration based on Heinrich (2007: 125-126)

Whether certain beliefs were right or wrong is not relevant to their diffusion, and the pervasiveness of certain beliefs related to the ideology of language nationalism reveals that they passed through a normalization process. In other words, powerful élites, social groups or organizations succeeded in convincing the speakers about the legitimacy or the adequacy (through a careful prestige planning) of certain linguistic behaviors. The ideology of language nationalism was adopted and promoted by the Meiji authorities in order to build an ideological homogeneous speech community, and it shaped a mindset
for which beliefs related to such an ideology continued reproducing at both an institutional and a popular level.

In 2008 MEXT issued new guidelines for renovating ELT in Japanese schools, extending the study of the subject to the primary schools (5th and 6th graders). Honna points out that “[t]he new guidelines did not characterize English either as an Anglo-American or an international language”, so the new scheme of ELT failed in transmitting the value of English as a global language. This is more evident when reasoning on the suggestion of including in the guidelines ‘to take full advantage of native speakers’; by looking at the composition of the native speakers employed in Japanese ELT, with the role of Assistant Language Teacher (ALT), we find a predominance of US and UK native speakers of English, indicating that their linguistic legitimacy is still a popular discourse.

3.2 English language to further globalize Japan

Two examples of recent official documents connecting the English language to globalization are the Five Promises for Attracting Foreign Business to Japan (2015) and the Policy Package for Promoting Foreign Direct Investment into Japan to Make Japan a Global Hub (2016). Both the documents are from the Office of Foreign Direct Investment Promotion (OFDIP) and include the intensification of ELT as a requirement for the future of the country. The document of 2015 contains the promises that would have become a policy package in 2016. The first of these promises assures that measures will be taken to increase the offer of services to foreign customers in foreign languages, to reduce the anxieties over language during their stay in Japan. However, even on the auspices, in “Promise 4” the sole foreign language to be mentioned is English.

“Promise 4: The government will enrich educational environment for children from overseas, and ensures that people receiving an education in Japan are able to communicate smoothly in English.” (OFDIP, 2015)

22 HONNA, English as a Multicultural…, cit., p. 144

23 HONNA, English as a Multicultural…, cit., p. 145

24 ibid.

Through the policy package of 2016 the Japanese government announced the ambitious goal to become a *global hub*, which means a vital center of the interconnected world. The document synthetizes Japanese strength (R&D capability overall) in the framework of international competition and recognizes some critical issues; policy-makers took into consideration important aspects of economic globalization, such as improving regulations and administrative procedures, providing their translation in foreign languages, supporting international students, and improving the living environment for foreign residents. Even if the document does not propose the English language as the sole requirement for globalization, the discourse for strengthening ELT includes some elements of concern. Initiatives involve:

a) Ensuring that *all schoolchildren* receive *high quality English language instruction* within their curriculum and that they have the opportunity to encounter high quality English outside the curriculum as well.

b) Developing “more external human resources including *assistant language teachers (ALTs)* and those *fluent in English* at all elementary schools by the 2019 fiscal year”

c) Promoting “the utilization of external human resources with *sufficient English skills* at junior and senior high schools”; developing “a core curriculum necessary for fostering teachers and reinforce their practical training”

d) Setting “English achievement goals specifying “what can actually be done in English” by the end of the 2020 fiscal year with the aim of ensuring that *students at all junior and senior high schools are equipped with practical English communication skills*”. (Italics in the original document; OFDIP, 2016)

The policy package contains provisions for realizing a *high quality* ELT in the Japanese school system. However, it is difficult to evaluate the quality of the instruction (does the evaluation focus on grades, meritocracy, equality, international reputation?); moreover, since the Japanese education system is affected by a recognized inequality between private and public institutions, the phrase ‘*all school children*’ seems rather rhetoric. The role of ALTs in Japanese ELT received much criticism and keep focusing on *external human resources fluent in English* differs from the major position of international ELT, according to which languages can be learned more efficiently if they are taught through

the learner's 'mother tongue'. Moreover, from the initial high quality (a), the feature decrease to sufficient skills (c) and finally to practical English communication skills (d); this suggests that what is required is an instrumental knowledge of English, without touching the point that speaking English enriches students connecting them to a global dimension, and permitting to interact with different cultures, and to explore new knowledge sources, new cultural artifacts and new aesthetic concepts and works. In this sense the policy package is still deficient in conveying the value of intercultural communication and also of learning languages beyond a practical utility.

In the attempt to understand the general opinion and the feelings about the urge for more English in Japan, I collected some statements from blogs, online newspapers of people and journalists interested in this topic. Sometimes the viewpoint of academics can be relatively distant to the view of the general public, while the opinions of bloggers and journalist tend to be more spontaneous but still it is supported by data and critical researches.

Table 11 Some opinions on English and globalization in Japan

| Author: Mogi Kenichirō |
| Date: 11/11/2016 |

This is a comment pointing out that even if people from US, who are native speakers of English, are facing difficulties because of the globalization. This is to say that English and globalization are connected but not inter-dependent, as Trump-US and post-Brexit UK, which constitute the traditional center of the English language, seem to suffer from globalization’s side effects.

「米大統領選でトランプさんが当選したことについての評価、振り返り、反省が世界中で続く中、私はこんなことを考えた。英語とグローバル化は、論理的に独立である」と。是非是別として、「グローバル化」に取り残された人たちの反乱だとしたら、その反乱した人たちは英語のネイティブである。」

Translation: “Reflecting on the comments and considerations about Trump elected as President of the USA, I came up with this intuition. “English and globalization are logically independent.” Without considering pros and cons, if this is the rebellion by people left behind by “globalization”, those who are rebellious are English speakers”.

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Translate: “Reflecting on the comments and considerations about Trump elected as President of the USA, I came up with this intuition. “English and globalization are logically independent.” Without considering pros and cons, if this is the rebellion by people left behind by “globalization”, those who are rebellious are English speakers”.

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The article proposes an interesting opinion about global standards, arguing that English skill is not the sole necessary knowledge. Globalization needs standardization on a world scale and good university performances, to form human resources that can move (or be moved) freely in the global society.

Translation: The true nature of globalization is ‘meritocracy on a global scale’

- People, things, money and information from anywhere circulate all over the world with no relationship to state and region.
- In the global society the nationality of human resources does not create problems
- Compared to the rest of the world, Japanese people perceive enormous wages
- Even Japan's top universities do not perform so well if we see the world standards

 [...] Thinking that English ability = excellent human resource is absolutely not right. It makes no sense being able to speak Japanese and English, without knowing how to do anything else.

The author criticizes inequality inside Japanese universities and education institutions, stating that even ELT begins at an earlier school grade, the opportunity to acquire more
specialized knowledge would be given to privileged people and this alone would not change (nor improve) the situation of Japanese education.

Translation: "The author does not think that English language education from an earlier age would have made him acquire the same proficiency or expressiveness both in English and in Japanese. And even if universities were teaching high-level specialized knowledge, only few talented people would reach success. [...] Universities mainly focused on international competition, and those primarily concerned about teaching in Japanese language must differentiate into organizations of clear characteristics and purposes. [...] Is it not the case that the real problem is, here again, the reluctance of Japanese society to break down structural inequality?"

To summarize, these comments suggest a moderate viewpoint for which the English language plays an important role within contemporary global context, but it is far to be considered the major factor to further globalize the country. All the opinions included a comparison of the Japanese current situation and that of the other countries, to understand what the society is missing. However, the acknowledgment that also the countries associated to the traditional native-speakers of English (UK and US) are facing some difficulties in coping with the side effects of globalization, suggests that English language skills alone does not equate to an international-oriented mind. The education system has an important role in transmitting the open-mindedness that can lead to solve many issues, source of injustice and inequality both internationally and intranationally. At the beginning of 21st century the English language constitutes an opportunity for acquiring more information and knowledge, it has become indispensable both for higher education and employment; for not narrowing the benefit of ELT to the sole privileged pupils having enough money to receive a high quality education, it is necessary to realize more social equality."
English: transmitting your message to a wider audience

In the meantime many Japanese companies are sustaining the growing importance of English in Japan with their English-only corporate policies. One example is Englishnization, a word coined by Hiroshi Mikitani to describe the linguistic strategy of his company: Rakuten Inc., the biggest Japanese shopping-mall operator. In 2009, Mikitani learned about some GDP projections concerning the evolution of world economy for 2050; these projections forecasted a future in which the weight of Japan is going to be about 3% of world GDP, and its active population is going to decreasing sharply (-39%). Such a future pushed Mikitani to think about a strategy to successfully globalize his business, in order to guarantee the long-term survival of Rakuten, and its success on the foreign markets. Thus, he started investigating the elements of inefficiency inside the company and discovered that multilingualism had been slowing communication between headquarter and the subsidiaries located in different places of the world. Consequently, he decided to adopt English as the corporate language. The announcement of the ‘eigo kōyōgoka (English official language) project’ was as radical as its contents: overnight the employees were catapulted in an English-only environment where everything had been translated into English, including the cafeteria menus.

Rakuten is only one of the many multinational corporations which chose English as their corporate language, Softbank, Nissan, Bridgestone, Fast Retailing (Uniqlo) are other names of an expanding list of Japanese companies with English-only policies. Tsedal sustains that the adoption of English corporate language policies is a necessary step for multinational businesses to facilitate communication between the operations located all over the world, and actually the majority of multinational firms already embraced English as the common lingua franca. Moreover, Tsedal explains some


28 MIKITANI Hiroshi, Englishnization, Tōkyō, Kodansha, 2012


30 TSEDAL “Global Business…”, cit.
benefits of Englishization, such as removing the restrictions resulting from multilingualism, smoother communication among company employees notwithstanding their geographical distribution, greater movability of human resources, and aid in the management of international M&A. She also encourages those people worried about loosing part of their cultural identity to see the English language in new light, as a tool that allows communicating your message in a more efficient way and to a wider audience. However this affirmation opens the discussion about the identity issue, bringing inside the concept of *Global English* the possibility and the power to use the language to the scope of defending the special interests of certain groups of individuals over others.

The definition of globalization by Sabanadze includes the concept of internationalization, being a phenomenon that results “from the intensification and extension of international interaction”\(^\text{31}\). In Japanese ‘internationalization’ is translated as *kokusaika*, which however has a peculiar nuance in the specific Japanese context.

"Kokusaika [...] reveals much about Japan's attitude towards foreign language. The term began to appear in official policy in the 1980’s under Prime Minister Nakasoke’s leadership [... and] has similar connotations to globalization used in the West. [...] However, it would be a mistake to equate kokusaika with globalization since it is more focused on communicating Japan’s uniqueness abroad rather than taking part in ‘western’ cultural imperialism.” (Hagerman, 2009: 52)

Globalization can be seen as an attempt to achieve common standards in order to facilitate international communication and trade, but at the same time national identity of each singular country remains very vivid and many authors pointed out that these identities became even stronger in reaction to the process of globalization\(^\text{32}\). Due to the fact that the existence of an inter-relationship between globalization and nationalism is rather evident, I do not discuss in detail the theoretical difference between globalization, internationalization and *kokusaika*; it will be enough to keep in mind that Japanese internationalization often encloses the desire to communicate internationally the *uniqueness of Japan* and that the global language has become a powerful tool for such a purpose.

\(^{31}\) SABANADZE, *Globalization and Nationalism*... cit. pp. 15-34

\(^{32}\) YOSHINO, "English and nationalism...", cit. p. 135
Yoshino argues that the promotion of English in Japan is a process intrinsically bound with the management of cultural identity, and illustrates how one part of the ideology of language nationalism happens to revive in the efforts to further globalize the country. Some of the beliefs related to this ideology are effectively diffused via the commercial sector, particularly by the Eikaiwa (English communication) industry. Eikaiwa schools do not teach the language according to the academic curriculum, but rather focus on teaching a practical use of the English language, a real English, that can help learners to deal with different international situations. Moreover, the multi-layered and intercultural communication necessities resulting from contemporary globalized contexts had the effect to shape a new emphasis: teaching the language in association to cultural knowledge for developing intercultural communication skills. However in practice this resulted in advertising the English language as a tool to communicate cultural-driven messages. Thus the English language converts into cultural stereotypes and it is often taught like it was a vessel of the Anglo-American culture. On the other hand, Japanese speakers are suggested to respond communicating their own identity through the practice of English and defending their Japaneseess worldwide. Such a tendency manifests prominently in numerous cross-cultural handbooks published in Japan, which are “presented in a dual-language format [...] as a practical resource for anybody who would like to communicate Japanese in English in international settings.”

The same attitude, or the tension between the international issue and the identity issue, has been noticed extensively in the education policies for intensifying ELT.

“Hashimoto [...] repeatedly illustrated that Japan's idea of internationalization (or globalization) of education, including that of English language education, is not exactly what it sounds like. [...] the Japanese government’s primary intention is to protect Japan from globalization and foster new generation of Japanese people with strong traditional values. Hashimoto calls it ‘Japanesisation’ of English language education [...]” (Morizumi, 2016 citing Hashimoto, 2000, 2013)

33 YOSHINO, “English and nationalism...”, cit. p. 138
34 ibid.
35 ibid.
36 YOSHINO, “English and nationalism...”, cit., p. 139
This tension between international and national, English and Japanese is part of a consolidated attitude that has been reproduced since the modern period: during the Meiji period the goal was ‘western’-style modernization, while today the goal is globalization, but analogously the perceived threat remains the same: becoming ‘less Japanese’. The Englishnization of Japanese business-world and the Japaneisation of ELT are two situations deriving from the interaction of global and local forces. This interaction produces a contradictory conceptualization of the English language in Japan, that is considered either as a means 1) for the international success (or even survival) in the international society, and 2) for reformulating the transmission of the traditional (ideological) identity of the country.

To the anxiety against the Englishnization, Mikitani replies: “It’s just English. Why does everybody list reasons for being unable to do it?” However, this statement is only valid when focusing on the instrumental use of the language, because when we reflect on the implications of the socio-political and ideological context, we clearly see the difficulty for the language to be ‘just English’ in Japan.

To sum up, the history of English in Japan reveals 1) a frequent comparison between the Japanese language and other languages, 2) a widespread sense of inferiority of the Japanese language compared to the ‘western’ ones and 3) adverse feelings towards English generated by a perceived threat to the national identity, 4) the apparent ineluctability of adequating to international standards.

3.3 ‘Attitude transfers’ from Japanese to English

In the 3.3 I analyze how these beliefs, attitude and feelings toward the English language are strictly connected to the dominant language ideology, which models a symbiotic conceptualization of English and Japanese sustaining the everlasting bond of languages and national identity, at disadvantage of the linguistic diversity inside the country.

The institutionalized attitude towards English in Japan is characterized in that there is a great effort to improve ELT in Japanese schools, for fulfilling the requirement of more English skills that emerged in contemporary globalized context, which is due to the

38 MATSUTANI, “Mikitani and his ‘Englishnization’...”, cit.
increasingly important role of this language for both the academic career or the future employment. The path for realizing these goals is recurrently sugarcoated with the encouragement to proactively use English for expressing more and louder one's own identity. But what is the identity that Japanese learners of English should display when talking in English? In many cases such an identity means the Japanese national identity, excluding from the discourse those of linguistic minorities, foreign residents, second language speakers or other social groups. This is due to the influence of the dominant language ideology in Japan, which secures the legitimacy of the standard form over variations.

In the framework of English diffusion, Japan is traditionally part of the expanding circle, which comprises countries where the language is not assigned any official status, but has a de facto special role for international communication. The recurrent opinions against the role of English in Japan are due to beliefs that are enclosed in the ideology of language nationalism: a mixture of linguistic determinism and fear for English linguistic imperialism. The widely diffusion of these beliefs about English is a replication of beliefs coming from the conceptualization of language in Japan. Heinrich concluded a complete analysis concerning the modern and contemporary language ideologies in Japan, an analysis suggesting that the moments of linguistic crisis or change are extremely useful for grasping how the dominant ideology models may be questioned or challenged and become visible to the eyes of observers. Thus I reflect on the dominant beliefs about the Japanese language focusing on three critical phases: 1) ‘conquering’ the Chinese system of writing, 2) standardization and lexical modernization, and 3) the suggestions to replace Japanese language.

‘Conquering’ the Chinese system of writing: The history of Japanese is made of many contacts with other languages, first of all with the Chinese language. Frellesvig describes the development of the Japanese language, underlining the influence of the Chinese system of writing. Chinese characters, kanji, were introduced in Japan around the 5th century from Paekche (Korean peninsula) together with several elements of the Chinese culture such as Buddhism, poetry and text about government administration.

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39 HEINRICH, Making of Monolingual Japan...
41 FRELLESVIG, A History of..., cit., p. 11
Official documents and literature was written quasi exclusively in the Chinese written form and it was only from the middle of the 7th century that a Japanese writing form, combining kanji and Japanese characters, kana, became widespread. The interaction of the Japanese language and the Chinese writing produced two separated entities: Japano-Chinese (J-Ch) and Sino-Japanese (SJ); the latter one being a naturalization of Chinese language, in which the idea of foreignness get abandoned through a process of adaptation to Japanese phonology42. Interestingly, the naturalization of Chinese resulted in a sort of familiarity to kanji and this was a factor that during the Meiji period facilitated the assimilation of ‘western’ knowledge. Indeed, despite some supported the idea to switch to the Latin alphabet, kanji demonstrated to be a flexible tool, providing an intelligible or intuitive communication of the meaning of terms from the ‘West’. After the Meiji period kanji became more than Chinese characters: not only they had been manipulated to express new words and concepts, but also Japanese created a series of kokuji, or indigenous kanji. Such an intimate use can be seen as a conquest of the Chinese writing system and the symbolic emancipation from the ancient Chinese cultural influence.

**Standardization and modernization of the Japanese language:** The Edo period was an era of intra-linguistic diversity, a complex situation characterized by significant differences between written and spoken forms, and also between regions and social classes.

"In the Edo period, geographical and social mobility was very low, and most people stayed all their life in the same place within provinces which were in effect isolated feudal states. This situation resulted in large number of fairly small and self-contained speech communities. The linguistic diversity with lack of mutual intelligibility between many dialects within Edo-period Japan is famous [...]" (Frellesvig, 2010: 377)

The Meiji administration decided to manage this situation by adopting the ideology of European national-states: bonding the language with the national identity, and the Japanese language became one symbol of the unity they constructed. The starting point for creating a standard form was the ‘Edo-Japanese’ variety, which was completely reformed to acquire the features of a modern language, representative of a modern Japan. Actually, a certain degree of standardization was desirable and such a process

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42 FRELLESVIG, A History of..., cit., pp. 278-284
had positive effects in spreading literacy and education; however, the choice to sponsor a unilinear narration of the Japanese language excluded the linguistic minorities and other sociolinguistic realities from the plan at great damage of the linguistic diversity. During the nationalist era, the national language had been aggressively imposed over dialects, to the point that corporal punishments were adopted for students speaking dialect at school; thus dialects assumed a negative qualification, as if they were sorts of betrayal to the spirit of the nation. This resulted in an orientation similar to the idea of ‘planning the future by rebuilding the past’: Edo-Japanese was selected to be the bases for the standard language form, which since than has been promoted like it had always been the vessel of the Japanese culture and national identity. The positive achievements of modernized Japan were achieved by sacrificing the linguistic diversity, promoting the desirability of a monolingual social structure, for the wealth and the future of the country. This mindset is retractable or still alluded by the discourse of Japanese global competitiveness.

In the same years that the Japanese language was downplaying its diversity, the modernization goals required to introduce and popularize many new concepts. Indeed, after a long period of national isolation, the country opened to the advanced knowledge from the European countries and the US, unlocking “a whole intellectual and philosophical conceptual world”. For this new conceptual world, many new words were needed, stimulating a process of lexical modernization, which occurred mainly through the translation of western concepts by using kanji to calque the meaning of European terms. A second phase of lexical modernization, this time with extensively intake of direct loanwords, opened after the end of the World War II and primarily from the English language. This second phase of lexical modernization suggests that from the end of the WWII the cultural flows coming to Japan were originated predominantly from the Anglo-American countries. Even if Japan did not experience a period of

43 FRELLESVIG, *A History of...,* cit., p. 381
44 One example of these corporal punishments were the dialect tags, in Japanese hōgen fuda (*FRELLESVIG, A History of...,* cit., p. 381; HEINRIC, *Making of Monolingual Japan...,* cit., p. 91)
45 FRELLESVIG, *A History of...,* cit., p. 403
46 FRELLESVIG, *A History of...,* cit., p. 409
47 English now has “a near monopoly as a donor of loanwords to Japanese” (*FRELLESVIG, A History of...,* cit., p. 411)
colonialism, after the traumatic end of the WWII and during the US occupation, a consistent influx of ideas, cultural and social changes occurred in Japan under the guide of some ‘democratic American principles’. Consequently, in Japan bringing cultural identities inside the practice of English may have the side effect of proposing again the language as the mirror of the Anglo-American culture, which is not the direction proposed by the global language approach.

**Japanese substitution?** The standardization strategy was the winning scheme among many other proposals; indeed, how to modernize the language was very far from one universal agreement. In 1872, Mori Arinori (see 3.1) advanced the proposal to replace the Japanese language with a simplified version of English, at benefit of the international position of the country. The modernization of Japanese language concluded differently, and the legitimacy and adequacy of the standard form constructed by the Meiji administration became commonly accepted. Nevertheless, a second critical phase for the Japanese language occurred after WWII, during US Occupation. In this period Japan was required to realize a new change: to catch up with ‘western’ standards, this time for evolving in a *democratic country*. However, if on the one hand McArthur and American policy-makers openly expressed concern about the Japanese language⁴⁸, particularly about the complexity of the writing system, on the other hand they were extremely cautious for avoiding drastic changes that could have undermined the social cohesion that the Japanese language embodied. Between many schemes of change, appeared again the suggestion to replace Japanese with a ‘western’ language, interestingly, this time with French. The promoter of such a proposal was the novelist Shiga Naoya, who in 1946 expressed his ideas in an essay, in which we can read and perceive the re-emergence of doubts concerning the Japanese language.

> “What did remain […] was a sense of the inferiority of Japanese to the national languages of the west. Shiga, like many, believed the Japanese language to be defective, while perceiving ‘western’ languages to be perfect means of communication.” (Heinrich, 2012: 115)

The feelings inside this proposal correspond to a widespread perception for which, compared to other languages, the Japanese language was still defective, or inferior.

Moreover, in the proposal the ideological beliefs are completely visible, incorporating “a sense of both the hurdles that must be surmounted by way of modernizing Japanese, and of the ideological set pieces of the ensuing emancipative discourse in the defense of Japanese”\(^49\); and it was in defense of Japanese identity that Shiga proposed French. Indeed, the novelist preferred French because he discovered in this language a concordance or harmony with the Japanese language and, most significantly, with the Japanese spirit\(^50\). Here we grasp the value of Shiga’s essay for displaying the uncertainties regarding the path chosen for the Japanese language by the Meiji administration; uncertainties that were still widespread even after having accomplished the process of linguistic modernization, determining a popular feeling of inferiority in the comparison to the ‘West’.\(^51\) The feelings inside this proposal, are similar to the feelings alluded by Prime Minister’s Commission on Japan’s Goals in the 21st Century with expressions about the ineluctability of mastering the global language and the requirement to not being left out or bypassed by the rest of the world, which suggest that the Japanese language alone is not enough to further globalize the country.

**Behind the ideology of ‘native-speakerism’**

The role assigned to the native-speakers of English in Japan is described as the ideology of *native-speakerism*\(^52\); and it is a crucial element for observing the influence of dominant beliefs about language in Japan and the reflection of these beliefs on the attitude towards English. Holliday defines native-speakerism as “a pervasive ideology within ELT, characterized by the belief that ‘native-speaker’ teachers represent a ‘western culture’ from which springs the ideals both of the English language and of English language teaching methodology”\(^53\). From this definition we understand that in Japan there is a generalized belief for which English native speakers are still considered the actual owners of the language. The ideology of native-speakerism alludes to the *ideological belongingness* of speakers to their speech community. Therefore, despite ELT

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\(^{49}\) HEINRICH, *Making of Monolingual Japan...*, cit., p. 115

\(^{50}\) ibid.

\(^{51}\) HEINRICH, *Making of Monolingual Japan...*, cit., p. 120

\(^{52}\) Stephanie Ann BOUGHTON, Damian J. RIVERS (a cura di), *Native-Speakerism in Japan - Intergroup Dynamics in Foreign Language Education*, "Multilingual Matters" 151, Bristol, Multilingual Matters, 2013 (a collection of essays on the topic).

\(^{53}\) Adrian HOLLIDAY, “Native-speakerism”, *ELT Journal*, 4, 1 October 2006, pp. 385-386
should be taught as the international lingua franca, in Japan it is still frequently taught, learned and practiced as a foreign language. In this way English ends up belonging to its native speakers, who are considered the language authorities and the natural experts\textsuperscript{54} for any references to the language. However, this authority is not recognized to all native-speakers of English, but primarily the Anglo-American native speakers, symbolizing the ideological leadership of the ex-western countries in contemporary global context, at disadvantage of non-native speakers, and denying the linguistic legitimacy of Outer and Expanding circles’ varieties\textsuperscript{55}.

This attitude is a reflection of the commonsensical association between language and national identity, which is part of the ideology of language nationalism: Anglo-American speakers remain profoundly tied to the English language, because Japanese speakers remain profoundly tied to the Japanese language, never questioning the legitimacy of one standard over the other varieties. Under this assumption, the English language is not perceived as a global language that is releasing its unilinear connection to the Anglo-American standard form. Moreover, this is causes issues for Japanese ELT, and also operates a form of discrimination, namely ‘culturism’, for which the cultural identities outside of the standard core are systematically denied.

Under the current circumstances intensifying the Japanese ELT would difficultly lead to a substantial improvement of intercultural communication skills, because the practice of English is affected by a conceptualization that connects language and national identity: the result is that we still clearly see the line dividing self and other. Liddicoat calls this cultural approach meaning the tendency to present culture in a “monolithic, homogeneous and uncontroversial” way\textsuperscript{56}. He further explains that:

“The cultural approaches present tend to present culture as an idealized version of national culture, which is manifestly homogenized and frequently archaized. There may be some recognition of variation within a cultural approach, however. Where culture is presented as variable, this variability is presented as geographic or as temporal. In each case, however, the variant cultures tend to be essentialised and presented as homogenous constructs.” (Liddicoat, 2007: 5)

\textsuperscript{54} HOUGHTON, RIVERS (a cura di), Native-Speakerism..., cit., p. 1

\textsuperscript{55} ibid.

\textsuperscript{56} LIDDICOAT, “The ideology of interculturality…”, cit., p. 4
Such a cultural approach is essential to the continuation of the ideological homogeneous perception (or self-displaying) of the Japanese society and it is transferred to the idea of English in Japan. Thus the legitimacy recognized to the Anglo-American native speakers of English resembles the attachment that Japanese are educated to feel towards their own language and its correlated cultural identity. This constitutes an issue because, as code switching studies teach us, effective intercultural communication needs something more that mastering the grammar of a common language; it requires a mindset that allows speakers to overcome the barriers of self and other, to create relationships with people that otherwise would remain just foreigners (outsiders). The policies concerning ELT in Japan demonstrates that the approach to English is not effectively changing into an intercultural approach, because the formulation of language-in-education policies enhances a unidirectional communication, from Japan to outside but not much the vice versa. Additionally, the commercial sector of Eikaiwa schools is even going in a complete opposite direction because these schools are focusing on teaching codified behaviors and communication patterns to be used in international settings, attaching cultural contents to the English language. Thus many Japanese learners of English may end up not distinguishing between cultural boundaries and cultural stereotypes.

Monolingual society? The crucial role of language ideology is that it influences and affects the language structure and use, functioning as a “self-fulfilling prophecy” about the future of language. The effects that language ideology adopted by the Meiji administration was going to produce effects on linguistic behaviors in Japan that were already implicit in that ideology: it has converted into a management of language that convinced the majority of speakers about the desirability of a monolingual, homogeneous society. Thus, the teaching, learning and practice of the standard-Japanese language acquired the legitimacy to conversely delegitimize and disempower other varieties and linguistic minorities.

Accordingly, by observing the influence of language nationalism in the edification of ideological monolingual societies, we discover a reality in which “the rise and fall of

57 LIDICOAT, “The ideology of interculturality…”, cit., p. 6
58 YOSHINO, “English and nationalism…”, cit., pp. 138-139
59 HEINRICH, Making of Monolingual Japan…, cit., p. 122
60 HEINRICH, Making of Monolingual Japan…, cit., p. 123
languages have little to do with the merit of these languages per se”\textsuperscript{61} but rather it is due to an unequal distribution of linguistic legitimacy, authority and power, which consequently produces the linguistic domination of some people over other people. Therefore building a monolingual society is strictly connected to the value (not) recognized to linguistic diversity and to multilingualism. The problem in recognizing such a value is that linguistic torts\textsuperscript{62} such as linguicism occur in a contradictory real-world context, where politico-economical interests and other vested interests slow the process for reaching solutions to linguistic injustice. Correcting the ideology of native-speakerism in Japanese ELT, or the negative beliefs and attitude towards English can be accomplished only through re-thinking the value of linguistic diversity, and the distribution of linguistic power and legitimacy within the speech communities. Japanese dominant language ideology at present is characterized by a homogenization myth that was promoted through the standardization of Japanese and, therefore, neglects to recognize the linguistic diversity on the ground because those behaviors deviating from the standard assume negative connotations. Coming back to the conceptualization of English in Japan, the global language approach wants to enhance inter-varietal communication, and this implicates to recognize the value of varieties, abandoning those beliefs that empower uniquely one standard. This implications cause an inevitable reduction of the advantages held by those people whose power, authority and vested interests are connected that standard. Here we find the crucial issue: how could ELT in Japan encourage students to embrace the value of multilingualism without colliding with the status quo of the ideological monolingual society?

\textsuperscript{61} HEINRICH, \textit{Making of Monolingual Japan}..., cit., p. 123

\textsuperscript{62} PHILLIPSON, SKUTNABB-KANGAS, “Language rights and wrongs”, \textit{cit.}, pp. 456-464
Chapter four: ‘Improve your English’ for 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics

Rationale for choosing this case
English language for 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics is a case to shed light to the ideas and beliefs included in the discourse to get ready for 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics. The purpose of this thesis is replying to the question: to which extent does monolingualism affect the conceptualization of language(s) in Japan and the attitude towards the English? So this case is an attempt to comprehend whether the most-recent ELT policies and the initiatives made by other English-related organizations are effectively enhancing values such as interculturality, multiculturalism or multilingualism.

Since not only in Japan the academic world is relying more and more on English as a global language (and in fact such a tendency corresponds to the scope of a lingua franca), I do not enter in the discussion of policies boosting the language in higher education. Also, I do not question the indispensability of English skills in the Japanese workplace either, because this topic has been exhaustively investigated by Kubota1, incidentally, her findings question the neoliberal emphasis on (English) linguistic skills that is promoted under the current circumstances of the dominated-by-English foreign language education in Japan; she demonstrates that in many cases speaking Chinese is far more useful in the workplace but she also addresses that the actually more needed abilities to be developed are competencies for border-crossing communication.

Here I take as a case the idea(s) of English that is transmitted to young students, children and teenagers, and also the ideas diffusing and reproducing among the general public in the framework of the upcoming Olympic-Paralympic Game. The excitement for the international event that will be held in Tokyo, and the activities of English-related organizations in the commercial field with their advertisement can be seen as situational, transitional events. However, not only they display the future goals of the

country but they also encapsulate the current situation, showing us the beliefs on which the actors of language policies leverage in order to boost Japanese ELT. Thus the purpose of this case study is to analyze the factors that both the institutions and the commercial sector use to inspire the motivation for studying English, to understand more clearly the ideology behind such a motivation.

First I investigate the value of English a) conveyed to young students through ELT at school examining the *Implementation plan for English language teaching reform coping with globalization* by MEXT (2013), and b) communicated to children and teenagers through commercial and other English-related activities.

Second I consider c) the idea of English as conceptualized in the *Omotenashi language volunteer* plan by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (2017) and finally reflect on d) the stereotyped ideas inside a TV commercial produced by COCOJuku Language School; to conclude answering the following questions:

1) What are the effects of the dominant language ideology on the idea of English for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic-Paralympic games?
2) What do the marketing campaigns by English-related organization in the commercial field tell us about the motivation for studying English in the so-called *global era*?

**The ‘Olympics fever’ and the intensification of ELT in Japan**

Coupling the English language and the Olympic-Paralympic games has a symbolic meaning, similar to the English-globalization combination. 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics is going to reveal the capability of Japan to cope successfully with contemporary global context, but also to demonstrate the world Japanese advanced innovation technology and specialized know-how. This is a test involving a certain amount of pressure, but Japan has the advantage to play this match ‘at home’, and Tokyo city has been developing and implementing numerous plans for city’s renewal. Thus the discourse on 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics is surrounded by the impulse to *get ready* for welcoming the rest of the world in a way that represents the high standards of Japanese efficiency.

Tokyo city is living this sort of *Olympic fever* and is proceeding with the implementation of plans of any sort: from the rethinking the urban structure, to improving the railway
network of the city\textsuperscript{2}, to the makeover of symbolic elements for the urban community. Among these there is the plan concerning the relocation of the renowned Tsukiji fish market.  

(TSUKIJI INTO A PARKING LOT) “The Tsukiji fish market is expected to be turned into a parking lot and transportation terminal for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics.” (The Asahi Shimbun, 25/08/2017)

The relocation was supposed to take place in November 2016, however some safety issues concerning pollutants found at site of relocation (that would be Toyosu) slowed realizing the move\textsuperscript{3}. However, what did not slowed the decision are the voices of disagreement by numerous people living and working at Tsukiji, worried about Tsukiji identity, as a symbol of Japan’s traditional food culture\textsuperscript{4}. Similar sort happened to the Hotel Ōkura, described by The Washington Post as a landmark of Japanese modernism, “built on a site where samurai lived in Edo period [...] opened in 1962, in time for the 1964 Tokyo Summer Olympics”; notwithstanding the cultural heritage it got renovated for the new Olympics: despite the petitions to save the lore of this building, the main wing of the hotel has been bulled down living space for band-new two glass towers\textsuperscript{5}. These are two of the many initiatives for the Olympic games, which reveal a country that is rebuilding places of its tradition, projected into a future that is shaped around the image of hi-tech and innovation. This is further demonstrated by the plan to offer hospitality through robots at the Olympic games.


FUTURISTIC HOSPITALITY “deploying robots for the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics, part of the organizing committee’s vision of hosting the most innovative Games in history. [...] Robots Tokyo metropolitan government started placing artificial intelligence-equipped robots in its building and an observatory to provide tourism information in several languages, including English and Chinese.” (The Asahi Shimbun, 03/01/2018)

All of these strategies surely are supposed to assist, please and fascinate foreigners coming to Japan for the event, and it would be naïve not recognizing the visibility of the country hosting such an important event, which constitutes an important moment to send symbolic messages to the international society. The measures proposed since 2014 by the Ministry of Education express anxiety for the scarce English linguistic skills of Japanese, and concern about the capability to successfully manage intercultural communication during the event and within the contemporary globalized context; thus the upcoming Olympic games symbolize a short-term motivation for improving the situation.

4.1 English for young students, children and teenager

a) Conveying the value of English to Japanese pupils

The “English Education Reform Plan corresponding to Globalization”, in Japanese gurōbaruka ni taiōshita eigo kyōiku kaikaku jisshi keikaku (グローバル化に対応した英語教育改革実施計画) is the scheme for strengthening ELT in Japan, targeting elementary, junior and senior high schools; it was published on the ministerial website\(^6\) in December 2013, exposing the guidelines to be followed from 2014 onwards. I reason on the Japanese version of the document, trying to understand the ideas of English that emerge from this plan through the translation and comment of some extracts.

As we can notice the title includes two elements of interest: 1) the goal to reform/improve ELT in Japan and 2) the relationship between the English language and the challenges deriving from globalization.

**Extract 1 - Author translation:** A plan designed to the radical enrichment of the whole ELT, comprehensive of elementary, junior and senior high school levels, expanding and

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intensify ELT at elementary schools, and improving it at junior and senior high schools, in order to advance in creating an education environment compatible with globalization.

Comment: Here the evolution of ELT in Japan is proposed as a goal deriving from the need to create an education environment compatible with the global standards. Interestingly, this statement let suppose that it is not possible to realize such a globalized education system without improving English language skills of Japanese. The critical point here is whether the English language proficiency should be allowed to become the key of an advanced education system. Since the language has become the de facto international lingua franca for information sharing, and academic and scientific publications, it is undeniable that it is indispensable for accessing to a wide international literacy, especially at higher education level; however, values such as the importance of knowledge, multiculturalism and globalism should not require to be fostered through the English language, but they should be enhanced through the education system of that country in the first place.

Extract 2 - Author translation: [We] aim to the genuine development of English language education focusing on 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics; including the provisions based on the present plan, from 2014 subsequent reforms will be promoted.

Comment: Here a third element is introduced: if globalization is often perceived as an abstract, ambiguous or distant goal, the 2020 Tokyo Olympic-Paralympic games are concrete and near; thus the event was given the role of conveying the special value of English in contemporary globalized context to a multi-layered target: young pupils, their children and teachers.

The plan continues introducing the guidelines of a renovated ELT, schemed to cope with globalization. In this part, it is possible to notice that many of the critics moved by scholars remain unlisten; first, the benefit deriving from teaching other school subjects in English is object of debate, as many experts suggest to make good use of student’s first language to stimulate their creative and effective learning; second, there is no

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8 KUBOTA Ryūko, “Eigo bannōron wa yameyō” (English is not a universal language), Tōkyō Shinbun, 16 December 2013
mention to the value of multilingualism and even when talking about language activities, *gengo katsudō*, the plan actually involves only *English* language activities.

The first page of the document introduces also a complementary action to the plan for intensifying Japanese ELT: educating to the Japanese identity\(^9\). The necessity to affirm that boosting English language teaching is not going to undermine the Japanese identity is quite peculiar, and can be understood as an allusion to the logic of linguistic imperialism. This statement seems to be written for preventing any antagonism towards the plan, from those people who are frightened about the Japanese identity, perceiving English as a threat for it. There is uncertainty whether such an allusion really is compatible with the idea of a globalized education system, and whether the value of intercultural communication can be disseminated through this scheme.

Furthermore, the latter part of the document again dedicates attention to the identity issue, thinking of methods for promoting the Japanese tradition, culture and identity in the framework of a reformed education system.

*Extract 3 - Author translation:* [we] intensify the transmission of the Japanese culture through the English language to young students, and other initiatives including international exchanges and volunteer activities, oriented towards Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics.

*Comment:* This part includes the encouragement to use English in combination with Japanese-related cultural contents, in order to intensify the transmission of the *Japanese* culture to pupils, and the requirement to organize international exchange and other volunteer activities. There are two possible interpretations of the reason why using English and transmitting Japanese culture are together on the same line: 1) transmitting the Japanese identity along with awareness of multicultural international society; 2) defending the Japanese identity through highlighting cultural differences.

The last page of the document reveals more about this association. The reason why 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics are such a goal for Japanese education is not explicitly explained, but they actually constitute the possibility for promoting feelings of belongingness to Japan and the self-representation of a *homogeneous* nation.

\(^9\) In Japanese 「日本人としてのアイデンティティに関する教育」; *cit.*

Extract 4 - Author translation: Under the circumstances of proceeding globalization and aiming to raise the self-consciousness of being Japanese in an international society, we will evaluate the state of things of education for cultivating the Japanese identity, and the results would be reflected in the following guidelines’ revision.

Comment: Leave apart that the methodology of these revision has not been given to know; the two goals together remain ambiguous. Moreover, reflecting on the names given to the various school subjects for the cultivation of Japanese identity, it is noticeable a sort of old-fashioned patriotic attachment; history of this country wagakuni no rekishi (我が国の歴史); traditional culture dentō bunka (伝統文化); national language kokugo (国語); these names do not include the word Japan or Japanese, as the connection was implicit. Thus these names are proposed as the history, the tradition and the language were the same for every child living in Japan.

The whole atmosphere of this document leads to think that the ideas at its foundation are not effectively acknowledging or disseminating the value of intercultural contacts. Ryūko Kubota10 wrote many articles explaining that the Olympic games require a multicultural approach and not English-only policies. First, she explains that the decision to intensify Japanese ELT in time for 2020 is the result of the difficulties faced by Japanese athletes at Sochi Olympics in Russia, where the main language was Russian11. To prevent the possibility that international athletes in Japan could face similar difficulties, the Government and Tokyo Metropolitan Government, synergically implemented some measures to boost English language skills. Regarding other major languages, they are preparing to offer interpreter solutions, which as seen above also include the use of advanced technology and robots.

Kubota points out the precarious logic under this conclusion: if despite the special role of the de facto lingua franca, at Sochi Olympics became clear that not all athletes, sport federations and foreign visitors share an equal proficiency in English, should not be the goal focusing on solutions for who cannot speak this language? = Promoting multilingualism? Kubota discussing the ELT strategies to get ready for Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics disagreed over the “wrong assumption that commonly foreigners speak

10 Professor, Department of Language and Literacy Education, The University of British Columbia
11 KUBOTA Ryūko, “Oriinpikku to eigo kyōiku: Han guōobaruteki kaikaku” (The Olympics and English language teaching: Anti-global reforms), Shūkan Kinyōbi, 17 January 2014
Indeed, at 2014, the year when the scheme was proposed, the speakers of English were about ¼ of total world population. Moreover, the plan includes some confusing initiatives, such as sending Japanese students to live overseas experiences in Anglophone countries. This assumption reveals the perceived connection between English language and English-speaking countries, demonstrating the limits of the internationality or the globalism promoted by the plans to get ready for the Olympic games of 2020.

Kubota’s opinion illustrates the negligence of the Government and the Education Ministry in formulating policies with an inclusive approach to linguistic diversity, or policies able to diffuse or inspire the value of multilingualism, multiculturalism and internationalism. Therefore, the necessity to incorporate in the plan some measures for enhancing Japanese identity remains ambiguous; and the two possible interpretations seen above, which were 1) transmitting the Japanese identity along with awareness of multicultural international society; 2) defending the Japanese identity through highlighting cultural differences, are actually the two sides of a same medal.

Morizumi (2016) argues that it seems likely that the Japanese government’s mission to popularize the indispensability of English for the country requires at the same time to keep calm the opposition of conservatives who want to safeguard the Japanese identity; this is described as revealing a logic analogous to the wakon-yōsai (Japanese spirit, ‘western’ knowledge), the slogan adopted during the Meiji Period. However, to the light of the discussion around globalization and glocalization, and also reflecting on the complementarity of global and local forces in shaping real-world context, another hypothesis should be considered. It is that these policies are not trying to sugarcoat the idea of English in Japan, but rather that these policies reveal resistance to multilingualism as an effect of the homogenization myth and because of the believed desirability of a Japanese monolingual society.

b) Real English and Eigomura: a simplified international society

Seargeant affirms that the aspiration or motivation to learn a language is influenced by beliefs about that language, and that these beliefs are going to influence the way such a

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12 In Japanese 「外国人はあらわく英語を話すという前提」; KUBOTA Ryūko, "The Olympics and English..." cit.
language is perceived, conceptualized and practiced\textsuperscript{13}. This logic is visible in the advertisement and in the marketing campaigns by Eikaiwa schools in the way they transmit the desire of English.

Aeon Eikaiwa is one of the major institutes in this sector; they offer English courses to a wide target from the youngest, Aeon kids courses start from 1 year old, to adults. The website of Aeon kids\textsuperscript{14} focuses on convincing parents of the desirability for children to study English and the usefulness of the language for realizing their dreams in the future; but let us see what are the idea(s) of English contained in some of the contents taught or produced by the school.

\textbf{Figure 1 “Tsukaeru! Riaru English”}

Published on Facebook on 26 January 2018, by Eikaiwa Aeon

Aeon Eikaiwa has been producing two series of videos on a weekly basis in collaboration with the Yomiuri Online\textsuperscript{15}. The first one titled Real English! You can use it\textsuperscript{16}.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{13} SEARGEANT, The Idea of English in Japan…, cit., p. 106

\textsuperscript{14} https://www.aeonet.co.jp/kids/reason/ (accessed: 26 January 2018)

\textsuperscript{15} It is the online version of the Japanese journal Yomiuri shimbun.

\textsuperscript{16} In Japanese “Tsukaeru! Riaru English” (使える！リアル English)
is the series for the young public; it is made of animated videos with a 2-3 minutes role-play to learn phrases and expressions commonly used in English language daily conversation. The main idea transmitted by these videos is to have fun and use English in Japanese real life; on the one hand, the whole idea emphasizes a proactive language learning of English, but on the other hand, the real English concept is so vague that it fails in addressing to the contemporary global context of the language, simplifying English language communication in a business formula.

Figure 2 “Tīn no buchake! Eikawa”

Published on Facebook on 27 January 2018, by Eikaiwa Aeon

The second series is titled “Teenager plain speaking! English conversation”\(^\text{17}\) and it is targeted to a more grown-up public, as observable by the different manga-style drawing used for realizing the videos. Here the goal is teaching some colloquial English expressions or the slang really used by the American teenagers. This association makes presume that the real meaning of real English is still ‘the language of Anglo-American native speakers’. Therefore the influence of the ideology of native-speakerism is not only received in official language policies or language-in-education policies, but also

\(^\text{17}\) In Japanese “Tīn no buchake! Eikaiwa” (ディーンのぶっちゃけ！英会話)
incorporated by the commercial sector for promoting the desire of English through the cool factor of speaking English, connected to the image of American teenagers. This results in a mindset for which English learning remains tied to the US-culture, generating conscious or unconscious discriminatory behaviors such as culturism\textsuperscript{18}, which delegitimize the other varieties of English and keep outside of ELT the cultural meanings associated to these varieties.

The word Eigomura\textsuperscript{19} (英語村) is the Japanese translation for English villages; these are institutions providing a language immersion experience for students of English in many countries, among which Spain, Italy, South Korea and also Japan. In Japan the activities and organization of Eigomura have been encouraged by MEXT as part of the English-related activities for improving linguistic skills of Japanese students. They are organized either by commercial institutions or by groups of citizens. An article on JapanToday discussed the creation of Eigomura, sustaining the following logic: more exposure to a language means more chances to speak and listen this language, and these chances permit to learn a language better than studying it from the books. On the contrary, English-only villages are described as an unusual or playful way to learn English. Indeed, it expressly affirms:

"Do you know what isn't a particularly good method of learning a language? Four classes a week of language learning taught in your native language with little to no chances to utilize what you've learned" (JapanToday, 04/01/2015)

Ripple Kidspark is an online Eikaiwa school for children; on their website they attempt to explain the merits of Eigomura\textsuperscript{20} among which the more exposure that children can get of the living English: they refer to the language that children can listen or read in Japan at a station or a shopping mole, through TV commercials or magazines. The advertisement of both Eikaiwa schools and English villages does not focus much on children but rather on their parents, and this due to the fact that English-related commercial organizations need to convince about their usefulness. Thus, the promotion of Eigomura concentrates on explaining how they would contribute to the prosperous growth and future of children. The full immersion method is a recurrent theme in the

\textsuperscript{18} Terminology by HOUGHTON, RIVERS (a cura di), Native-Speakerism..., cit., p. 3
\textsuperscript{20} https://www.ripple-kidspark.com/user/column/wp/20150202/ (accessed: 30 January 2018)
popular discourse about language learning; however, in contemporary globalized context English Language Teaching should convey on pupils the significance of linguistic contacts, inter-varietal awareness and cross-cultural communication, and these cannot be learned in a simulated-environment where the only language of communication allowed is English. In these villages the English that can be learned is a language of practical usefulness, and the motivation for studying it is reduced to creating situations where children can put into practice their linguistic skills, but not in situations where they can experience linguistic diversity.
Figure 3 Yoyogi park English village for children

Published on Facebook on 17 December 2017 by 代々木公園子ども英語村

Published on Facebook on 17 December 2017 by NœZov

This pamphlet advertises an *Eigomura* where children *can play and learn with foreigners in English*. The meaning of this park is explained in the middle section of the pamphlet that is translated as follows.

We are citizens who established a group in November 2017, to create the possibility for children to acquire more familiarity to English speaking with foreigners.

Setting a small participation fee, our goal is to build an environment where children from all families can come in contact with English, in a third place other than schools or English courses, and meeting foreigners of different cultural backgrounds who are living in Japan, to create a community that feel comfortable speaking English. (Author translation)

Despite the good intentions to connect children raising in Japan and foreigners living in the country for creating more social inclusivity, the assumption for which *English = language of foreigners* is the same we find in the scheme to improve English skills in time the Olympic-Paralympic games. Notwithstanding the acknowledgement that these foreigner residents have different cultural backgrounds, they are all collected together as a group with the common denominator of the English language. This is an oversimplification that could result in a mindset for which all foreigners living in - and coming to - Japan are fluent in English: consequently, for communicating with them English is enough.

Clearly English is a useful tool, allowing communication between many individuals disregarding their ‘mother tongue’; however, is it the *key* to build a globalized internationalized Japan? Or is it the *key* to simplify the concept of multiculturalism into one ‘easy-to-digest’ international society, to avoid facing the contradictions of the ideological homogeneous Japanese speech community?

4.2 English for the general public

c) ‘Omotenashi-eigo’: Japanese hospitality in English

The *Omotenashi language volunteer* is a project, organized and promoted by Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG). *Omotenashi* is a Japanese word, meaning a *uniquely Japanese* cultural-nuanced hospitality and these Omotenashi languages volunteer are supposed to offer assistance to foreign visitors coming to Japan for 2020 Olympics-
Paralympics. This example is only one of the many projects for realizing Tokyo omotenashi and its the contents is explained on the official website as follows:

Extract 5 - Author translation: Focusing on the opening of 2020 Tokyo Olympic-Paralympic Games, Tokyo Metropolitan Government is training Omotenashi language volunteer for offering hospitality to foreigners aiming to prepare an environment that makes possible a safe stay of foreign visitors. These volunteers should help with some guidance information the foreigners in difficulties downtown, proactively addressing them in a simple foreign language. [...] We look forward to your participation, thank you for your cooperation in realizing Tokyo Omotenashi!

Figure 4 Contents of the ‘Omotenashi language volunteer’ training course

The training course is offered in two formulas: a) omotenashi course + language course (English) or b) only the omotenashi course for those who already possess an intermediate proficiency in English (TOEIC score: at least 500). The question is: why is this activity called language volunteerism when it actually refers only to the English language? Moreover, if we switch to the English version of the website we find more evidently such a critical point; the course is promoted with the phrase “Let’s enhance your foreign-language skills to get ready for 2020!” Since the only language involved

in the course is English, this statement equates the expression foreign-language skills to an intermediate proficiency in English; thus in this context the word foreign may be a) one way to display a multilingual/multicultural approach that does not correspond to the contents of this activity, or b) the common association of English as the general, universal language of foreigners.

d) COCOJuku commercial: “the rival is the world”

In Japan both a) and b) are ideas affecting the practice of English. These ideas are represented in language policies and in the activity of other language-related organizations, but they are also very popular among the speakers. The conceptualization of multiculturalism promoted through many English-related activities, frequently correspond to some stereotypes about the language and about the American culture; and these stereotypes are so diffused that they can be incorporated in advertisements in a quasi-unproblematic way, and moreover successfully convey the desire to enroll at an Eikaiwa school! This is exactly the case of a TV commercial produced by COCOJuku Language School\(^{25}\), which is realized on the logic of the rivalry between the Japanese and English languages.

The title of this spot is “The rival is the world” - in Japanese raibaru wa sekai (ライバルは世界). The protagonist is a Japanese actor, Yūsuke Iseya; he plays a Japanese man, who is about to marry Katy when the ex boyfriend of her (John) runs inside the church shouting: “Wait, Katy is mine! Katy, marry me”.

At this point the Japanese man looks at the camera and explains to the public: “In this era of globalization, the rival is the world”; then he stares directly into John’s eyes and says: “Hey, listen! There’s no way I am gonna let you take away my bride! And everyone is tired of the same old hollow ending!” So the Japanese man makes hear his voice to the rival, replying in perfect American English and showing his communication competence, in Japanese taiwa ryoku (対話力).

\(^{25}\) TV commercial broadcasted at the beginning of 2014

\(^{26}\) The official version of the video published by COCOJuku language school, which had been shared on Facebook on 14 January 2014, has already been deleted; re-published version (by the user Eriko Fujino on 5 Jun 2014) at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j54RSPs8Qp0 (accessed: 13 December 2017)
Published on YouTube.com by the user Eriko Fujino on 5 Jun 2014

Thanks to his *taiwa ryoku* the Japanese man wins over John, receiving compliments for his proficiency in English and a handshake.

Published on YouTube.com by the user Eriko Fujino on 5 Jun 2014

The ideas inside this commercial are so clear that as a result they effectively communicate the message to the public. The first idea is that to win in era of fierce global competition, people need to speak out as frankly as the English-native speakers

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27 At https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j54RSPs8Qp0 (accessed: 13 December 2017)
28 At https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j54RSPs8Qp0 (accessed: 13 December 2017)
do. This is associated to beliefs about the inferiority of the Japanese language communication-patterns in international contexts, alluding to the requirement to reach global (American) standards.

English as a common language, or a global language does not require to any culture to be dominated by another, and the English language can guarantee a respectful communication between different identities only if dethatched from the concept of inferiority/superiority of cultures. Richard D. Lewis is a cross-cultural communication consultant, who built a well-known model that collects many different cultures into three macro-categories of behaviors. The model is an attempt to offer a general overview of the most recurrent behaviors in different countries, for promoting cultural awareness and for assisting entrepreneurs in the management of multiculturalism inside global businesses.

“The Lewis model shows three different types of human being, we called them linear-active, multi-active and reactive. ‘Linear-active’ people are Germans and Americans; they do one thing at the time, they’re quite definite, they go forward, they plan well ahead, they are a job oriented. ‘Multi-active’ people, they’re people-oriented, emotional, try to do many things at once, get excited; Italians are a good example. And then of course the reactive people are the Asians, Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Vietnamese; they try to make you speak first, to establish what your aims and intentions are, and that enables them to modify the reply so they don’t sound too worried about it, they accept certain things and that way and they can create a slightly harmonious response and an harmonious attitude from the beginning” (audio to text by the author; based on Lewis, 201329)

Behavioral and cultural differences should not be allowed to generate feelings of rivalry, however rivalry is the exact discourse proposed about English in the commercial analyzed above; a discourse that is based on cultural stereotypes, such as the American boy who runs into the church and steals the happy ending, or the surprise in noticing that the English skill of the Japanese man is good. Moreover the ability of speaking frankly, establishing eye contact and reaching out the hand for a handshake are all elements that remind of an attitude distant to the Japanese communication pattern, as these elements were supposed to symbolize the ‘attitude of a winner’ that can be

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29 Extract from video (shared on YouTube on 12th September 2013) where Lewis explains the model named after him; “Chapter 2 - The Lewis Model”, Youtube, 12 September 2013, (user: Fish Can't See Water; title of the book by K. Hammerich and R. Lewis)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_T98wFx73V0 (accessed: 4 February 2018)
achieved through the study of English. Thus the desire of English, as proposed by the commercial, means the defense of personal interests by playing the part of the winner in the global competition, or could even seem a payback against the ‘West’. A further critical point is that behind the stereotypes in this commercial, there is a common sense for which its hypertext is clearly understandable by the given target; it is because of the general conceptualization of English in Japan that the commercial can inspire the desire to study the language levering on the wish to become closer to the perceived image of the American man. To sum up even if English should be promoted and practiced as the global language connecting the world, the idea of English compared to the Japanese language is fixed in a rivalry, juxtaposing two entities with their related cultural associated messages. This viewpoint is due to the tendency to homogenize things, and to simplify the definition of entities for what they are not. In such a context the English language is far from transmitting the value of diversity, in which nobody needs to homologate to one standard, and the world remains rival.

Case study conclusions

What are the effects of the dominant language ideology on the idea of English for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic-Paralympic games? The dominant language ideology in Japan has multifaceted effects on the idea of English for 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics. One the one hand, there is an excitement to get ready for hosting the international society in Japan and to increase the English language abilities of Japanese students, these are goals reflecting the perceived indispensability of English to further globalize the country. On the other hand, intensifying ELT is balanced in policies and activities with the promotion of Japanese traditions and culture, revealing that English is still perceived as it could somehow diminish the Japaneseness of the speakers. Consequently, even when promoting a global-oriented mind, multiculturalism is reduced into a one-to-one comparison, between the country and the rest of the world. This has the effect of aiding the self-fulfilling prophecy of language ideology, transferring into the idea of English in Japan a homogeneous version of the international society, which does not require to re-think about the intra-national diversity, leaving untouched the interests of the ideological Japanese monolingual society.

30 Terminology by HEINRICH, Making of Monolingual Japan..., cit., p. 122
What do the marketing campaigns by English-related organization in the commercial field tell us about the motivation for studying English in the so-called global era? The new plan for ELT in Japan presented by MEXT in 2013 is only one of the initiatives to further globalize the country and get ready for the Olympic games. Since 2013 year many other English-related activities received the input to intensify the promotion of English in Japan; however, reasoning on some of these activities and on their marketing campaigns and advertisement, it seems clear that the image of the language is still commonly coupled to the Anglo-American native speakers, and that the motivation for learning the language is frequently inspired by stereotyped cool factors of the US culture. Consequently, the motivation for studying what should be regarded as a common lingua franca, and the desire of English in the global era, are associated to cultural messages, in which Japanese and English but also Japan and the world, are still represented as rival. Moreover, the popularity of such a conceptualization supports a vicious circle for which the attitude towards English is unlikely to evolve either into an intercultural approach as demanded by scholars, or into the global-oriented approach that has being promoted in theory by the Japanese Government.
Conclusions

**About the present work**

The present work started with a careful reading of the bibliography in the description below, realizing soon after the importance of the theme I had been selecting. At first the objective of research was to understand the Japanese attitude towards English, however I ended up finding a question that could be asked to many of the so-called advanced-democracies in contemporary globalized context, and actually also to my homeland, Italy. The question is ‘to which extent does monolingualism shape our linguistic behavior and the way we conceptualize our society? And, as an effect, how do we live the contact with different communities and sociolinguistic realities?’ Monolingualism is a desire of many nations, but multilingualism is the reality of every society. Diversity changes according to the viewpoint of observation. Globalization or glocalization, standardization or diversification; the reality we are observing is one but the difference is the way we are trying to translate it into a rationalized phenomenon. The issue is making coexist diversity in a respectful but also efficient solution.

At first I tried avoiding the inclusion of concepts such as enriching the person, elevating one’s spirit, increasing the sensibility of human beings in the work, because I considered these aspects external to an academic discourse. However the more I studied, the more I understood that it is under the logic of utilitarianism that everything must be kept tangible or concrete; simplifying, smoothing the angles, reducing the problem into a or b. The reality is very complex and multifaceted, and this complexity needs to enter in the academic discourse and, moreover, it must be transmitted to students. It is our responsibility to provide a broadened vision of language learning that, abandoning the idea of improving the Curriculum Vitae or career opportunities, enhances a value that goes beyond the logic, not cultivating human resources but enriching human beings.

**Summary of chapter one and two**

Focusing on a linguistic dimension, in chapter one I studied the way and the reasons why language constitutes such an important instrument for communication, information sharing and the transmission of knowledge, and I understood that language is also one element that need to be carefully managed in order to build social justice. Reflecting on the concept of prestige planning I realized that the linguistic behavior of speakers is influenced by a receptive value function that seems unproblematic without
being addressed to think about the ideological context in which we learn and speak the language. The legitimacy of language planning and language policies is connected to the authority of their proponents; while their desirability and acceptability are originated by the undergrowth of beliefs and ideas that shape our conceptualization of language. In other words, although language planning is mostly a top-down oriented phenomenon and the power and authority of planners affect the process in multiple ways, the final users of the language are also active part in receipting such a value function: questioning or not questioning it.

In chapter two I reflected about the relationship between globalization and the English language. Globalization has been defined as a “greater global closeness, both real and perceived, resulting from the intensification and extension of international interaction”¹. This closeness includes numerous benefits but also several issues; it is generated by intensified international interaction and as a response it generates more interaction, requiring a smoother and faster communication. In such a context the English language, due to its unprecedented diffusion around the globe, is currently recognized and conceived as the *de facto* international lingua franca, constituting a crucial means of communication in many fields: science, medicine, technology, informatics, academic and business world. However, in a globe that is statically fractionated into advanced and advancing countries, the economical, political, military and social inequalities are still leading to a domination of the strongest. Repeatedly, within the global competitiveness, ‘faster’, ‘useful’ and ‘efficient’ are becoming the ideal features in many arenas; linguistic one is no exception. This orientation seems requiring certain changes, and abandoning the sources of slowness; however, it is profoundly unjust to impose the same pace to many different realities. With regard to the English language, the supporters of standardization (Quirk, Crystal) focus on the efficiency of a faster international/intercultural communication, or on the intelligibility of English, while the defenders of diversification (Kachru, Mesthrie, Honna, Ke, et al.) aim to safeguard the ecology of language diversity and the legitimacy of varieties; these are two processes are modeling the reply towards English diversification, a reply that comprehends simultaneously global and local claims.

¹ SABANADZE, *Globalization and Nationalism…*, cit., pp. 15-34
Summary of chapter three: the Japanese and the English language

After acknowledging that ELT in Japan had been producing poor results (in 1997-8 the lowest of all lowest of all twenty-six Asian countries along with North Korea), the Japanese government and MEXT implemented several language plans and policies in order to strengthen it. The basic assumption is that English had converted in an indispensable tool to cope with the international society, globalization or simply the rest of the world; moreover, it is acquiring growing importance consequently to the orientation of many multinational corporation, which are undertaking policies (for instance Rakuten’s Englishnization) that are sustaining and dictating the prominent role of English in contemporary globalized context.

The implementation these policies faced some resistance, caused especially by a perceived linguistic imperialism, or linguistic domination, deriving from the international diffusion of English. This fear is due to the hyper legitimation of British English and American English over other varieties, promoted through a narration of the history of English as “the unilinear progression of the standard variety”. The Japanese ELT is generally affected by this vision, because English continues being conceptualized in the Anglo-American cultural dimension, which consequently empowers Anglo-American native speakers over the speakers of different varieties, second language speakers and many others. But why does this vision continue? Actually, such a vision subsists in a context where 1) language is ideologically tied to the concept of national identity and to the exclusivity of cultural belongingness, 2) the legitimacy of a standard language form reflects the vested interests of dominant, or more powerful social groups. Reasoning on why does native-speakerism affect the conceptualization, teaching and practice of English in Japan, I learned that the way we see other languages, reveal the way we see ‘our’ language. Thus I investigated the dominant language ideology in Japan. There are widespread beliefs about the Japanese language reflecting on the attitude towards English: a desire of cultural emancipation, the myth of homogeneity, a feeling of inferiority continuing from the historical comparison to and competition with the so-called ‘West’, a will to harmonize differences, the attempt to make coincide language

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2 MCKENZIE, “The complex and rapidly…”, cit., p. 272
3 MESTHRIE, “World Englishes…, cit., p. 381
and nation. These beliefs are part of the dominant language ideology in Japan, and they are also a commonsensical conceptualization of languages on the ground.

**Summary of chapter four: English for 2020 Tokyo Olympics-Paralympics**

Under the current circumstances ‘globalization’ in the first place and then the ‘Olympic-Paralympic games’ symbolize the goal and the motivation for increasing the linguistic abilities and intercultural communication skills of Japanese students. On the other hand, the strategies to intensify English Language Teaching are balanced with some measures concerning the preservation of the education to Japanese culture and traditions via the English language. This may seem an attempt to *sugarcoat* the strengthening of English language education in Japanese school programs; however, to the light of the discussion around globalization and glocalization, it rather seems that these policies reveal a resistance to multilingualism because of the widespread conviction about the desirability of a Japanese monolingual society.

Moreover being English language teaching and learning still connected to stereotypes on the American culture, this generates forms of discrimination (often unaware of it) toward speakers of the other varieties of English and their culture, obstructing the development of cross-cultural communication skills and the mutual understanding. The rivalry between the Japanese and English languages is still diffused to the point where it can motivate the *desire of English* in Japanese learners. Therefore, even if English should be promoted and practiced as a common language connecting the world, the relationship between Japanese and English is juxtaposing two entities and their related cultural associated messages, which are far from transmitting the value of diversity and for which the world remains *the rival*.

Thus, I learned that the connection between language, nation, identity, and cultural-associated meanings is still working in contemporary Japan, and this occurs not only because of a top-down imposition, or manipulation, but also because these beliefs are so diffused that they became unproblematic, quasi-natural, ‘commonsensical’. These beliefs are transferred to the English language, making so that Japanese and English are conceptualized interdependently or in a symbiotic way, which safeguards the interests of the social groups connected to the standard language form. In this way, the two languages are recognized the legitimacy to take advantage of the less usefulness
assigned by the status quo to other sociolinguistic realities, becoming the facto a source of discrimination.

**Limits of the present work and what remains to be done**

I acknowledge some limits of the present work; first of all, the absence of a fieldwork for collecting data about the attitude towards English not only in general, but also specifically at an individual level of the speakers and learners of English; furthermore, the approach to language learning of children living in Japan whose first language is not Japanese remains to be studied, for understanding if there are any relevant discrepancies in their attitude towards English. Moreover, the knowledge I collected through this research does not allow me to foresee how the present circumstances could contribute in building the near future. Thus my question research did not touched upon the feasibility of a English-speaking Japan, in which the English language substitutes Japanese, re-harmonizing the ideological monolingual society and leaving untouched the vested interests enclosed in the current conceptualization of the Japanese society; and I do not provide applicable solutions for improving the current state of things, but simply some insights.

These insights are 1) to pay particular attention onto the activities engaged by multinational corporations and the commercial sector in the way they popularize discourses hindering the realization of more linguistic and social justice. In contemporary globalized context, for maintaining the benefits of English as a common lingua franca and, at the same time the identity of minor sociolinguistic realities, the path suggested by scholars is re-discovering the value of learning language, diversity and multilingualism. In promoting this attitude, 2) institutions and language education should focus on teaching to respect each other diversity, and not on self-protection; or the risk is that the value of diversity translates into the celebration of one’s own uniqueness, exacerbating differences and building barriers instead of bridges to international cooperation⁴. Consequently, enhancing the value of linguistic diversity is going to translate into questioning the legitimacy of monolingualism and also the vested interests of some groups of individuals.

⁴ Michael NETTLES speaking at SGS, *cit.*, http://www.salzburgglobal.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Documents/2010-
So to which extent does the dominant language ideology affect the conceptualization of language(s) in Japan and the attitude towards English?

In multiple ways, affecting policies and also commercial activities: either at an institutional or a commercial level, in which cultural-associated messages and consolidated stereotyped images related to the English language are frequently used for promoting the desire to study the language. To avoid ending up with a ‘one to one’ comparison or rivalry and with the misrepresentation of a simplified version of the international society, the Japanese education and English-language policies need to transmit more effectively the value of multiculturalism, encouraging to see more as a plus, and not one as the goal. However, the problem is that such a vision collides with the interests of monolingualism.

Presumably, the proficiency in English of Japanese students is going to grow, but the attitude towards the language is unlikely to change any soon, because the practice of English is commonsensically equated to one standard. Who does lose by this equation? Linguistic minorities, second language speakers and other sociolinguistic realities, as they need to adequate to the self-displayed homogeneous Japanese society, or remain at its margins. Thus the real issue is not surviving to the globalized world or to a global language, but to realize more justice and respect of each identity. At the basis of language nationalism there are some existentialistic views connecting language and national identity for protecting the solidity of national-states. In the global era, national-states are shaking because of many attempts to overcome and neutralize national barriers: multinational corporations eluding taxes, crypto-currencies transcending bank regulations, English language connecting one global community. In such context ‘identity issues’ are deepening the discussion about monolingualism and multilingualism and the critical point is whether local forces would be used for empowering the nation inside the international society, or whether global forces would be used for empowering the communities living inside the nation.
Appendix - Original extracts in Japanese


Extract 1: 「初等中等教育段階からグローバル化に対応した教育環境づくりを進めるため、小学校における英語教育の拡充強化、中・高等学校における英語教育の高度化など、小・中・高等学校を通じた英語教育全体の抜本的な充実を図る」(MEXT, 2013:1)

Extract 2: 「2020年の東京オリンピック・パラリンピックを見据え、新たな英語教育が本格展開できるように、本計画に基づき体制整備等を含め 2014年度から逐次計画を推進する」(MEXT, 2013:1)

Extract 3: 「東京オリンピック・パラリンピックに向け、児童生徒の英語による日本文化の発信、国際交流・ボランティア活動等の取組を強化」(MEXT, 2013:3)

Extract 4: 「グローバル化が進む中、国際社会に生きる日本人としての自覚を育むため、日本人としてのアイデンティティを育成するための教育の在り方について検討し、その成果を次期学習指導要領改訂に反映させる」(MEXT, 2013:7)


Extract 5: 「東京都は、東京2020オリンピック・パラリンピック競技大会の開催を見据え、外国人観光客等が安心して滞在できる環境を整えるため、「外国人おもてなし語学ボランティア」を育成しています。このボランティアは、街中で困っている外国人を見かけた際に簡単に外国語で積極的に声をかけ、道案内等の手助けをするボランティアです。[...]東京のおもてなしの実現に協力いただける皆様のご参加をお待ちしています！」
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