The Representation of English in Japan's Language Policies

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Abstract

In many Asian countries, English has been seen as essential for surviving in the era of globalization.   Many countries form language policies to develop their people's English abilities.   Japan is no exception in this respect, and it has been a long time since English was discussed in relation to globalization in Japan's language policies.   Many researchers have pointed out that a link has been established between English and globalization in terms of policies.   Yet none of them has revealed the way in which the symbolic equation of English with globalization was established.   Consequently, there is an urgent need to examine this symbolic equation, because it may have a significant impact on language education.   In this paper, therefore, I will analyze how English and globalization are represented as one and the same in Japan's language policies.   Finally, I will consider the implications for ELT in Japan in the 21st century.

The Representation of English in Japan's Language Policies

English-language teaching (ELT) in Asian countries, in the last decade, was characterized by a surge of policies to equip the people in each country with English abilities (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007).   This surge sprang from the recognition that English has accelerated globalization, and the presence or absence of English proficiency would decide people's future and the country's destiny.

Like many other Asian countries, Japan has looked for ways to cope with globalization since around the turn of the century, and has seen it as essential that Japanese people acquire proficiency in English.   Many policies were thus announced between 2000 and 2010 to achieve this objective.   Different as these policies might look at first glance in terms of their ostensible foci, a representation of English underlies all the policies. That representation makes a discursive link between English and globalization, showing globalization as an inevitable process for Japan.   As a result, English is represented as inevitable for Japan to survive in the era of globalization.

However, giving a privileged status to one language may lead to lowering the status

of other languages.　As Yamada (2008) points out, furthermore, those policies beg the question as to whether or not the position of those who failed in mastering English in the system is considered.　There is room for doubt about whether such policies develop Japanese people's English abilities without sacrificing individuals' diverse interests in language and intrinsic motivation for learning English.　Representing a particular language as if it were the only medium for globalization may result in looking at the world from a limited view.　This suggests that recent Japan's ELT policies be examined from a critical perspective.

In this paper, therefore, I will analyze how English is represented in Japan's language policies, and consider what implications the representation has for Japan's ELT in the 21st century.　To this end, I will first develop the concept of globalization.　Representation is a matter of discourse (Fairclough, 2003), and refers to meaning production by the arbitrary relationship between words and ideas (Hall, 1997).　According to Blommaert (2005), "In an era of globalization, the threshold of contextualization in discourse analysis can no longer be a single society but needs to include relationships between different societies and the effect of these relationships on repertoires of language users" (p. 15). Given this, while I focus on the discursive production of the meaning of English in Japan, I need to situate it in the context of globalization as an existing world system.　I will particularly attend to defining globalization as the re-organization of space, and conceptualize Japan's language policies as a political scenario respond to the spatial re-organization.

Discourses are shaped by social structure, but at the same time they have an autonomous structure within themselves (Fairclough, 2001, 2003).　In other words, on the one hand, discourse analysts need to show how social structure influences the production of discourses, but on the other, they have to analyze the structure peculiar to the semiotic level.　Discourse analysts then have to examine what impact formal properties of discourses may have on society.　By analyzing the formal properties of Japan's language policies, therefore, I will reveal the way in which English is represented as inevitable for the Japanese, and consider what impact the representation has on the matters of language. Finally, I will consider implications for Japan's ELT in the era of globalization.

Globalization as the Re-organization of Space

Whilst the notion of globalization has spread across the world's major languages,

globalization lacks precise definition (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt & Perraton, 1999). Different researchers have different views on globalization. Yet it is possible to extract a common denominator from various definitions of globalization.

As seen in the discussion of Mcdonaldization (Ritzer, 1993), jihad against global capitalism (Barber, 1995), and the clash between different cultures (Huntington, 1996), globalization is frequently conceptualized within the framework of the dichotomy between the global and the local. This kind of conceptualization sees both the global and the local as unitary within themselves, lacking the perspective of multiplicity inherent in each of those. Moreover, the possibility that the global and the local are articulated is totally out of consideration due to the lack of the perspective of space.

Harvey (1989, 1993) took the initiative of investigating globalization in terms of space, seeing it as socially constructed. He attributes the re-organization of space to the emergence of the global patterns of capital accumulation. As spatial barriers were overcome in the 1970s, people, stuff, and capital began to cross borders easily. Communities then competed against one another for capital, and they differentiated themselves from others in order to make differences which look fascinating from the capitalists' viewpoint, because profits were yielded through differences. In other words, globalization derives from the dynamics caused by the interactions between the global-scale re-organization of space by capitalism and social practices by the local to respond to the global movement.

In the same vein, Hall (1991) says "Global and local are the two faces of the same movement from one epoch of globalization, the one which has been dominated by the nation-state, the national economies, the national cultural identities, to something new" (p. 27). The organization of space was traditionally seen as a practice to build up the stable in the transitoriness of fleeting time (Harvey, 1989). The nation-state, which has territory within a clearly defined boundary, was considered as a manifestation of the stable. However, the basis of the nation-state has recently been eroded by transnational flows of the material and the non-material (Appadurai, 1996). Countermeasures against the fluctuation of the stable has to do with the local, because as Hall (1991) says, the local is space where movements against the global forces that are trying to remake the world emerge as a political scenario. Putting it another way, like works of interlocking wooden building blocks, the global and the local get intertwined by the blocks of culture, economics, education, and politics. This apparently contradictory relation forms globalization.

Japan's Language Policies as a Local Political Scenario

Given the above conceptualization of globalization, the representation of English in Japan's language policies is not simply a matter of expression, but has to do with the politics to re-organize Japan as local space.   Japan was defeated in the Second World War in 1945, but under the protection of the US and owing to the special procurements by the Korean War, Japan's economy got back on the track to recovery in the late 1950s.   Economic growth policies were further pushed to the front in the 1960s, and by the 1970s Japan's economic power had become too strong to be ignored.   The economic development did not show signs of decline throughout the 1980s, and reached its peak in the Plaza Accord in 1985.   The fear that the strengthened yen by this accord would cause a recession in Japan gave an incentive for the continuous enforcement of low-interest policies which resulted in the Japanese asset price bubble between the late 1980s and early 1990s.   As Japan's economy was growing throughout the 1970s and 1980s, it was insisted loudly in the field of politics that Japan should be given a position in the world which reflected its economic power.   This was a political ambition by Japan which regained confidence through the economic recovery.   However, the economic bubble-burst crisis early in the 1990s caused the decline of land prices, expansion of nonperforming loans, collapse of financial institutions, and reduction in employment.   Consequently, Japan's political ambition for a leadership position was obliged to be suspended, and Japan needed to re-organize itself.   Among other things, it was an urgent need for Japan to hold its ground in the rapidly changing world by the global spread of neoliberalism under the leadership of the US and the UK.

Appadurai (1996) sees such a rapidly changing world as a set of disjunctive relations between the global flows of people, images, technology, capital, and ideology.   He calls these five flows ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes, respectively.   The reason for his using '-scape' for these flows is that by this suffix, he tries to represent the indeterminate relations between these landscapes that are inflected by different perspectives of different actors with different backgrounds.   The lines between the realistic and the fictional landscapes thus become blurred, and it follows that actors are likely to construct imagined worlds.   Appadurai (1996) then remarks that, "The imagination…has a projective sense about it, the sense of being a prelude to some

sort of expression" (p. 7), and that "the imagination, especially when collective, can become the fuel for action" (p. 7).

Following Hall (1991) and Appadurai (1996), Japan's language policies, which were announced in the midst of the re-organization of the world, could be considered as a local political scenario envisioned by the collective imagination of those who pictured to themselves Japan catching up with, holding ground in, and displaying leadership in the world. The following illustrates this point:

> Japan must rebuild itself while knowing the world, associating with the world, and engaging with the world.　This is not an age that permits isolation.　We must not lapse into a cramped mentality.　In this age of globalization, we need to resurrect the method that worked for early modern Japan – new domestic construction resulting from knowledge of the outside world (Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century [PMC], 2000, chap. 6, p. 1).

It should be noted, however, that "What counts as local requires an understanding in relational terms" (Pennycook, 2010, p. 7).　When Japan, as a part of the world system, confronts the world, it is 'local' in the sense that it organizes and turns movements against global forces into a political scenario.　When Japan, as a system of government for the nation, turns to the interior of itself, however, it works as 'power' to control Japanese society.　There is a multilayered structure in the local, and the opportunities for the exercise of power exist across different social practices in local space (Foucault, 1972; Giddens, 1985).

As Pavlenko (2003) illustrates, shifting national identity influences foreign language education, since it is seen as a means to expand national power.　As the following shows, the representation of English in Japan's language policies should then be understood as a political scenario for re-organization Japan:

> Achieving world-class excellence demands that…all Japanese acquire a working knowledge of English.... knowledge of English as the international lingua franca equips one with a key skill for knowing and accessing the world.　(PMC, 2000, p. 10).

This representation was brought into being by ideologically-loaded ways of using words, which are backed up by the superstructure of the disposition of power inherent in the multilayered structure of the local. We need to examine what impact this kind of representation may have on the matters of language, by using a methodology which deconstructs the particular ways of using words in terms of power relation.

Methodology

The selection of methodology has to do with the constituents of space. Lefebvre (1991) lists material spatial practices, representations of space, and spaces of representation as properties of space. Material spatial practices refer to how space is experienced. Representations of space have to do with how space is discursively constructed. Spaces of representation attend to how space is used as a symbolic representation. What this matrix suggests is the dialectical relationship between practices and discourses (Harvey, 1989). Practices assume the existence of the two types of perspectives. One is the top-down perspective that tries to control space (Castells, 1996), and the other is the bottom-up perspective that experiences space in direct ways (Appadurai, 1996). Yoshimi (2003) defines the former as 'power', and the latter as 'body'. Space is then created by interactions between power and body which face each other across discourses. Indeed, as Anderson (1991) demonstrates, the national space has been constructed by discourses backed up by print capitalism. Similarly, producing the meaning of English through representation in the field of discourse has to do with re-organizing a local space.

As noted above, the opportunities for the exercise of power are spread across social practices in space. Contrary to the stereotype, therefore, power is not necessarily oppressive (Giddens, 1985). Collective action as a social practice vests power in individuals, thereby enabling a group of individuals to work on social structure (Giddens, 1984). Given the total amount of elites' different types of capital (Bourdieu, 1991), however, elites have easier access to power. I will then focus on elites' power, and explore how they represent English in language-policy discourses for the purpose of re-constructing Japan.

As Hall (1997) says, the development of a theoretical framework in representation owes a great deal to Sassure. The Swiss linguist saw language as a system of signs. The system is made up of a bundle of a distinctive relationship between a form (e.g.

sounds, written words, images, etc.) and an idea that the form refers to.   It is through this distinctive relationship that a word acquires a meaning peculiar to itself.   To put it another way, the meaning of a word is determined by what we think of when we hear or see the word.

Sassure saw the relationship between the form and the idea as arbitrary.   It then follows that the unfixed relationship provides individuals with many possible options for meaning production.   Why the arbitrary relationship does not hinder individuals from communicating with each other is that the relationship conforms to linguistic conventions shared by members of a particular culture.   It should be noted, however, that words make the outlines of their meanings fluid under particular historical and social circumstances (Hall, 1997).

Developing Sassure's idea further, Derrida (1981) remarks that the final meaning of a word continues to be deferred, and never finds its place.   The word thus never fits the object it refers to, and always includes a certain obscurity which allows diverse senses of values to slip into the word.   This is why we bring multiple meanings to a word when we see or hear it.

Hall (1997) says that the relation between the form, the idea, and language as a system of signs plays crucial roles in meaning production.   He calls the process to link the three 'representation'.   Following Sassure's and Derrida's ideas on language and meaning, furthermore, he argues that meaning and representation are subject to history and change.   In other words, representation is exposed "to the constant 'play' or slippage of meaning, to the constant production of new meanings, new interpretations" (Hall, 1997, p. 32).

Fairclough (2003) regards representation as a discoursal matter, defining discourses as "particular ways of representing part of the world" (p. 26).   In common with Hall's (1997) views on representation, Fairclough (2001, 2003) says that discourses shape and are shaped by society, attending to the impact that formal properties of discourses have on society.   Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which Fairclough plays a leading role in establishing as an approach of discourse analysis, considers that "discourse may…try to pass off assumptions (often falsifying ones) about any aspect of social life as mere common sense" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258).   Ideology-laden ways of using language, which underpin falsifying assumptions and represent these as truth, are often invisible.   Through linguistic analyses of discourses, therefore, "CDA aims to make more

visible these opaque aspects of discourse" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258), and tries to reveal the ways in which formal properties of discourses work on society.

Globalization, due to the difficulty of grasping its overall picture, made the representation of English in Japan's language policies allow for the constant slippage of meaning. Yet the meaning of English never finds its place, and English has been overloaded with multiple meanings.   This might have far-reaching influence over the matters of language, because "language and language policy both exist in...highly complex, interacting and dynamic contexts, the modification of any part of which may have correlated effects (and causes) on any other part" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 6).   Using CDA as a method, therefore, I will analyze formal properties of Japan's language policies, and examine how English is represented in language-policy discourses.   I will particularly attend to the way in which English is represented as inevitable for the Japanese by symbolically equating it with globalization.

The Symbolic Equation of English with Globalization

The symbolic equation of English with globalization can be seen in two documents: *The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium* (Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century [PMC] 2000) and *Regarding the Establishment of an Action Plan to Cultivate "Japanese with English Abilities"* (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology [MEXT] 2003).   The reason for choosing these documents is because they are seen to have exercised an effect on Japan's ELT in the sense that they addressed ELT in strategic ways for the first time in Japan's history.   As a matter of fact, many researchers have examined these two documents in terms of their impact on society.   Although these researchers point out that English is discussed in relation to globalization, however, none of them has analysed how English and globalization are represented as one and the same, and by extension, as inevitable for Japan.   Nor have they considered what effects the representation brings about to the teaching and learning of language.   By analysing PMC (2000) and MEXT (2003) from a different perspective, therefore, I will approach these issues.

The Representation of Globalization

Let us look at how globalization is represented Japan's language policies. PMC (2000) gives the following:

> Globalization has progressed beyond the stage of being a "process".... The fences between countries have become lower, and the effects of developments in one part of the world are immediately being felt elsewhere; the world is indeed becoming an ever smaller place.... As a result, the universality and utility of systems and standards in various fields, including the economy, science, and academic training, will be held up to global yardsticks for questioning and evaluation. Every country will have to review, reevaluate, and adjust its existing systems and practices on the basis of a global perspective…. Globalization will accelerate the process of diversification, both domestically and internationally..... Globalization has raised a variety of issues for Japan, such as the need to cope with the speed of developments, to participate in rule making and to empower individuals. (PMC, 2000, p. 3)

MEXT (2003) represents globalization as follows:

> Recently, globalization in various fields of the economy and society has advanced rapidly.... Globalization extends to various activities of individuals as well as to the business world. (MEXT, 2003)

What stands out in these policies is that globalization is constantly represented as an entity as if it could act as an agent. Fairclough (2001, 2003) calls this nominalization, through which a process is converted into a noun-like entity. As a consequence of nominalization, particular agents who initiate and are responsible for globalization (e.g. multinational corporations, transnational organizations, and governments) are absent from the texts. Globalization is thus represented as universal in terms of place ('the world is indeed becoming an ever smaller place') and as an inevitable process which must be responded to in particular ways ('Every country will have to review, reevaluate, and adjust its existing systems and practices on the basis of a global perspective'). Japan is under the influence of globalization, because according to PMC (2000), Japan is required to respond to the inevitable process ('Globalization has raised a variety of issues for Japan').

The Representation of English

A notable characteristic in the representation of English is that words which remind us of the 'earth' are used repeatedly to describe English.   In PMC (2000), for instance, 'international' is constantly used.

> The advance of globalization and the information-technology revolution call for a world-class level of excellence.   Achieving world-class excellence demands that, in addition to mastering information technology, all Japanese acquire a working knowledge of English.... ...knowledge of English as the **international** lingua franca equips one with a key skill for knowing and accessing the world.   (PMC, 2000, p. 10 emphasis added)

The same is seen in MEXT (2003) as well.

> English has played a central role as the common **international** language in linking people who have different mother tongues.   (MEXT, 2003, emphasis added)

These are only a few instances out of many, and the same description can be found scattered in these policies.   In PMC (2000), furthermore, 'global' and 'world' are used in relation to English.

> Globalization also means the advent of an age in which people will not be overly concerned with established systems, customs, and vested interests.   They will have broad access to opportunities for new undertakings not limited by national boundaries.   To accomplish this, however, people must posses the ability to access and converse with the rest of the **world**....   The possession or lack of this ability, which we may call "**global** literacy", will determine whether or not one will enjoy a better life in the world of the twenty-first century....   The basic components of this new literacy are the mastery of information-technology tools, such as computers and the Internet, and the mastery of English as the international lingua franca.   (PMC, 2000, p. 4 emphasis added)

In this example, English is given a special skill such as 'global literacy', and the skill is

used to 'converse with the rest of the world'.   As these extracts show, the derived words that share the same meaning are used to represent English.

A Relation of Equivalence between English and Globalization

Interestingly, these words (i.e. international, global, and world) are used to describe globalization across these language policies.   The following is an example.

> Globalization extends to various activities of individuals as well as to the business world.   Each individual has increasing opportunities to come in contact with the **global** market and services, and participate in **international** activities.   It has become possible for anyone to become active on a **world** level.   (MEXT, 2003, emphasis added)

According to Fairclough (2001), overwording works as an indicator of an ideological struggle.   What is striking in the overwording above is that there is a semantic relationship between English and globalization.   Through rewording the different words that are reducible to the same meaning, "a relation of equivalence, or synonymy" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 127) is textured between English and globalization.   In other words, English and globalization are semantically positioned as a hyponym of 'earth', alongside other co-hyponyms such as 'international', 'global', and 'world' (Fairclough, 2003) (see Figure 1). Showing this schema repeatedly throughout the texts, as if "a cascade can overwhelm one with the force of water" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 212), these policies may have a cumula-
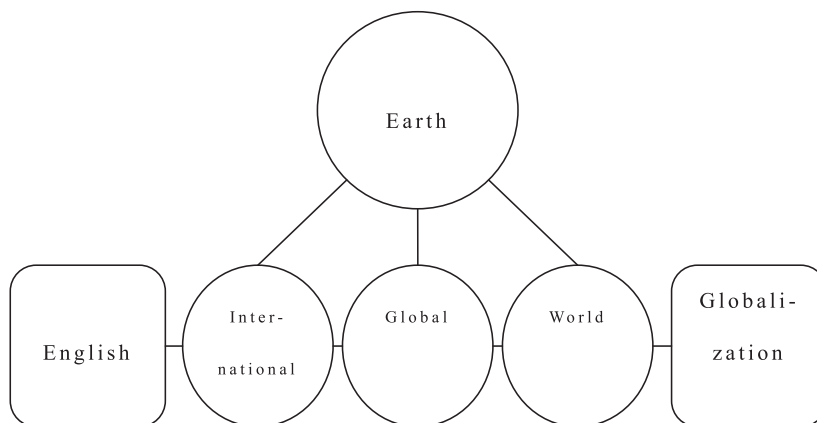

Figure 1

tive effect by which English and globalization are discoursed as one and the same. As demonstrated above, globalization is represented as an inevitable process for Japan. As long as globalization and English are one and the same, it is inevitable for the Japanese to learn English in the era of globalization.

Dialectical Relationship between Representation and Society

When we examine discourses as ways of representation, we need to take into account that there is a dialectical relationship between discourses and social structure (Fairclough 2001). Discourses are socially determined, but at the same time they have causal effects on the material world. This is true of ELT in Japan. In 2002, foreign language became a required subject for the first time in the postwar era, but no languages other than English are offered in junior high school. In the same year, it became possible to teach English at elementary school, and the teaching of English was formally introduced into the elementary school curriculum in 2011. From 2003 to 2005, in addition, 100 high schools were designated as Super English Language High Schools, which set as their objective teaching a part of their curriculum in English. The representation of English above is shaped by the high status of English in the material world, but at the same time it contributes to strengthening the status of English in the material world.

The Principle of Japan's ELT in the First Decade of the 21st Century and Its Problems

In 2009, MEXT announced a comprehensive plan for ELT reform for the purpose of effective implementation of ELT at elementary school. This plan summarizes the gist of its objectives as follows:

> In the midst of globalization in the fields of economy and society, in order for children to survive in the 21st century, they need to acquire communication abilities in English as the international lingua franca. This is a critical issue for the future of children as well as for the further development of our country. (MEXT, 2009, [translated by the author from the Japanese original])

Given this statement, this plan seemed to take over the spirit of PMC (2000) and MEXT

(2003). The adherence to English underpinned Japan's language policy during the first decade of the 21st century.

This kind of representation may unify individuals' diverse interests in different languages into an instrumental motivation for English for the state's purpose. Just as 'a language is a dialect with an army and a navy' shows, so giving a special status to one language leads to lowering the status of other languages. If English is given such a high status, who will go to the trouble of learning languages with lower status? Even if there are individuals who decided to learn such low-status languages, what learning environment are they to study under? If English is the language that needs to be learnt before anything else, what support can minority children whose first language is not English get to maintain their first language? While MEXT (2009) sets both 'the future of children' and 'the further development of our country' as its objectives, the representation of English above may lead to ignoring the wishes of individuals to learn different languages, which should be of high priority in a democracy, to meet the demand of the state for national development.

Yamada (2008) even sees an early sign of totalitarianism in the representation of English. According to Yamada, stirring up in the populace a sense of unease is a usual measure for a totalitarian state. He sees the representation of English as a source of uneasiness, by which the Japanese are compelled to learn a single language. In the era of globalization in which interdependence, conflict, and stratification take place simultaneously in complex ways, what democracy should be like needs to be re-considered (Held, 1995). It is doubtful whether ELT, which shows a sign of totalitarianism, is appropriate as democratic education.

What Yamada (2008) feels most apprehensive of is whether or not the position of those who failed in the learning of English in such a system is considered. In Japan's language policies, as shown above, English is represented as inevitable for the Japanese. Moreover, MEXT (2009) even says that communication abilities in English as essential for surviving in the 21st century. Yet these policies appear to be open to question. Do these policies assume that all Japanese play an active part in the international society in English? If so, what should those who gave up learning English or are poor English-language learners do? What alternative plans will be given to them? If these policies cannot give answers to these questions, as Yamada says, Japan's ELT will be nothing but a threat. Education for language should not take threat as motivation for learning. The

learning of language gains success when learners are intrinsically motivated to learn the target language for its own sake (Brown, 2001). In other words, discovering how interesting language is leads to being a successful language learner. Japan's ELT needs to be re-considered along this line.

Conclusion

This paper has focused on the top-down perspective rather than the bottom-up perspective in Japan's ELT policies. This does not mean that each ELT practitioner's agency, effort, and practice are meaningless. No matter how great power is, there is always space in which individuals can undertake reform through collective action (Giddens, 1984, 1985). As this paper does, investigating top-down perspectives should be seen as a first step for such a reform.

The following words by Bauman (2004) give an insight into Japan's ELT:

The human world...is saturated with 'Sollen' ['shoulds'] - the sort of idea that 'want to become reality themselves': they 'have an inborn drive to realize themselves'. (Bauman, 2004, p. 9)

The mastery of English is a 'should' for the Japanese, and the symbolic equation of English with globalization has furthered this idea. It is true that English is widely used in the world, but we need to be cautious of taking for granted that there is a necessary link between English and globalization. Given that every action an individual takes in her/his daily routine has potential for accelerating the process of globalization (Giddens 1990), every language should be able to play a role as a medium for globalization. Rather than representing English as a 'should' in the era of globalization through symbolic manipulation, it is more useful to deconstruct the ideologies of English, to reexamine the roles of English education as a part of schooling, and to focus on laying a foundation for individuals' future needs.

Consequently, the role of the state needs re-consideration, because the state holds authoritarian power over educational policies. According to Kang and Yoshimi (2003), in Japan in the period after the Second World War intermediate communities between the nation and the state, such as companies, labor unions, and localities, played leading roles

in the formation of order, thus freeing Japan from militarism. As neoliberalism advanced in the field of economy, however, the intermediate communities could not work effectively to deal with the market because of their limited power. As a result, the state began to reassert itself in the economic and other fields, and this tendency became most noticeable during and after the economic bubble burst in the 1990s. Therefore, the first decade of the 21st century was the era in which policies determined by the state and their effects were observed.

The representation of English above takes the same line as this movement after the economic crisis in the 1990s. It shows that the Japanese state found an anchorage in English that linked Japan to global landscapes (Appadurai, 1996). As noted above, however, these language policies entail the danger of totalitarianism, only resulting in enhancing instrumental views on language (e.g. getting a high score on standardized tests) at the expense of individuals' diverse interests.

For the teaching and learning of English in the 21st century, I would like to propose that Japan's ELT go back to the principles of language learning. Brown (2001) summarizes what he calls "the Intrinsic Motivation Principle" (p. 59) as follows:

> The most powerful rewards are those that are intrinsically motivated within the learner. Because the behavior stems from needs, wants, or desires within oneself, the behavior itself is self-rewarding; therefore, no externally administered reward is necessary (Brown, 2001, p. 59).

If learners are intrinsically motivated to learn English being fascinated by structural differences between their first language and English, for instance, external rewards, such as good outward appearance of curriculum vitae, promotion, and rise in salary, are not necessary. Curriculums, methods, and materials should be designed to arouse learners' intellectual curiosity about language.

Learners then needs to be given opportunities in which to invest their knowledge of the target language, since successful learning of the second language depends on their "personal investment of time, effort, and attention to the second language in the form of an individualized battery of strategies for comprehending and producing the language" (Brown, 2001, p. 60). To this end, I would propose that Japan's ELT give more attention to local voice, since my on-going research in Hiroshima demonstrates this point.

Children at an elementary school in the city showed great interest in sending a peace message to the world in English from their locality. They wished to communicate with the world directly to discuss peace together with people all over the world. Meeting the needs of the local rather than the state may lead to successful ELT.

As the discussion above shows, a critical inquiry into the representation of English enables us to consider Japan's ELT from a different perspective and to imagine ELT through which individuals, groups, and schools in particular localities directly communicate with the world without state approval in the manner that the localities request. As Said (1994) says concerning the intellectual, ELT practitioners should open up to innovation and experiment rather than to the existing condition given from above by authority.

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