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| Authors       | Ōtsuka Yukio                                                                                     |

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Reports on Team Research
In its research activities, the International Research Center for Japanese Studies places primary emphasis on studies of Japanese culture in the form of inter/trans-disciplinary team research, and currently fifteen team research projects are underway. The following two articles are reports on one of the projects organized by Prof. TSUDA Yukio, a visiting professor at the Center.

Team Research Project :

THE JAPANESE AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
—An Interdisciplinary Study of Anglicized (Americanized) Japan—

Organizer: TSUDA Yukio

Article 1

Critical Studies on the Dominance of English and the Implications for International Communication

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The study discusses the development of critical studies on the dominance of English in Japan and overseas in order to discover how these critical studies can contribute to the building of a more equal and open international communication without linguistic discrimination. I first review the three critical studies in English on the dominance of English. In these studies, the ethical problems caused by the dominance of English are very well articulated and the ideological role of English Language Teaching is explicated. I then overview the development of critical studies on the dominance of English in Japan. These studies have remarkably increased in number in the 1990's including the publication of books and a series of debates on English linguistic imperialism. Lastly, I summarize the implications of these studies for the building of international communication without linguistic discrimination. I propose several approaches to dealing with the dominance of English such as consciousness raising, the signing of an international agreement, reform of ELT, formulation of language and cultural policy, etc. Also, I propose an alternative theoretical paradigm called "Ecology of Language" as opposed to "Diffusion of English".
Key words: DOMINANCE OF ENGLISH, LINGUISTIC IMPERIALISM, CRITICAL STUDIES, INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION, ECOLOGY OF LANGUAGE, ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT), LINGUISTIC DISCRIMINATION

In June 1996 the International Conference on Language Rights was held in Hong Kong. This was the very first international academic conference which directly dealt with the issues related to linguistic human rights. The conference drew as many as 140 scholars from about 25 countries from Asia, Africa, Europe and North America. The three-day conference included 6 plenary sessions, 11 symposia, and more than 100 presentations in which the participants discussed the issues related to language rights in order to examine concrete examples of linguistic inequality and explore conceptualizations of language rights.

I took this opportunity and presented a paper entitled “Resistance to the Hegemony of English: A Proposal for Equality in International Communication”, in which I pointed out some examples of the dominance of English in international communication and proposed the “Ecology of Language” paradigm for a global language policy that will create more equality in international communication.

I was very pleased with the fact that the conference on language rights was held, because it demonstrates the birth of a new direction in the studies of languages as well as the growth of a new awareness among scholars of language and communication. In other words, at least some linguists, applied linguists and language teachers have become aware of the problems of linguistic injustice and inequality, and have come face to face with these problems academically.

As for myself, I have been dealing with the dominance of English in international communication for the past decade from a critical and non-English-speaking perspective. I have been arguing that the international use of English in international communication puts the non-English-speaking people in a very disadvantageous position, causing inequality in communication and resulting in social inequality and injustice (See Tsuda, 1986; 1990; 1993; 1996).

Looking from my critical position, I very much welcome the latest development of critical researches, because it indicates the development of a growing interest in the issues of ethics in the studies of languages which have been obsessed with objective description of linguistic phenomena and therefore are indifferent to the ethical issues related to language and fail to confront the problems of linguistic inequality and injustice.

With this said, I shall discuss the following three matters.

First, I shall review some critical works in English on the dominance of English which are representative of the latest developments of critical-oriented research in the studies of languages.

Second, I shall survey some of the recent developments in the studies of language and communication in Japan that criticize the dominance of English in international communication.

Lastly, based on the review and overview of critical studies on the dominance of English, I shall make some theoretical arguments as to how the new development of these critical studies can contribute to the betterment of international communication as well as to the improvement of English Language Teaching.
Critical Studies in English on English Linguistic Imperialism

There is no doubt that Robert Phillipson’s *Linguistic Imperialism*, published in 1992, invoked a great interest among applied linguists and language teachers in the problems of linguistic inequality and injustice, particularly the issues related to English linguistic imperialism. As a matter of fact, Phillipson and his associate Tove Skutnabb-Kangas were the keynote speakers and on the program and review committee of the Hong Kong conference on language rights. I believe that some scholars in Hong Kong were inspired by Phillipson’s work and decided to hold a conference on language rights.

Although the book is entitled *Linguistic Imperialism*, it would have been better if it had been named *English Linguistic Imperialism*, because the book is entirely dedicated to the analysis of how English has come to dominate and what problems it is creating, especially in relation to English Language Teaching.

In his introduction, Phillipson clarifies the objectives of the book:

“This book explores the contemporary phenomenon of English as a world language and sets out to analyse how the language became so dominant and why. It looks at the spread of English historically, in order to ascertain whether the language has been actively promoted as an instrument of the foreign policy of the major English-speaking states, and if so, in what ways. It looks at the language policies that Third World countries inherited from colonial times, and considers how well “aid”, in the form of support for educational development and English learning in particular, has served the interests of the receiving countries and donors, and assesses whether it has contributed to perpetuating North-South inequalities and exploitation. It looks specifically at the ideology transmitted with, in, and through the English language, and the role of language specialists in the cultural export of English (Phillipson, 1992, p. 1).

His opening statement clearly shows a very critical perspective from which he attempts to explicate the problems of inequality, discrimination and domination caused by the spread of English.

Then he sets out to provide a set of concepts by which to explore English linguistic imperialism. First, he provides definitions of “English linguistic imperialism” and “Linguicism”. According to him, “English linguistic imperialism” is a situation in which “the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47).

He goes further to say that English linguistic imperialism is one example of “linguicism”, which is defined as “ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language” (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47).

Therefore, what Phillipson is criticizing is “linguicism” or the structures, practices, ideologies of linguistic discrimination which favor the speakers of dominant languages over the interests of the speakers of dominated languages. The term “linguicism” is a neologism following well-known terms such as “racism”, “sexism”, and “ageism”,

...
all of which are concepts directly concerned with the ethical issues of dominance, inequality, and discrimination between the dominant and the dominated groups of people.

Phillipson then argues that "linguicism" is justified and legitimated through the theories and practices that constitute the English Language Teaching (ELT). The legitimation of English linguistic imperialism, according to him, is achieved through the mechanisms of "anglocentricity" and "professionalism" in ELT.

Anglocentricity is another neologism following "ethnocentricity", meaning that you look at and judge other cultures entirely from your own cultural norm. Therefore, "anglocentricity" sees the English language and culture as the norm by which "all language activity or use should be measured. It simultaneously devalues other languages, either explicitly or implicitly" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 48).

"Professionalism" refers to "seeing methods, techniques followed in ELT, including the theories of language learning and teaching adhered to, as sufficient for understanding and analyzing language learning (Phillipson, 1992, p. 49), Phillipson argues. In other words, professionalism in ELT confines language teaching professionals within the technical knowledge of language teaching and discourages them from developing a critical awareness and possibly having a wider perspective of looking into the ethical aspects of foreign language education.

Phillipson argues that ELT, because of its "anglocentricity"and"professionalism", is responsible for the legitimation of "English linguistic imperialism" and "linguicism".

He says:

"Anglocentricity and professionalism legitimate English as the dominant language by rationalizing activities and beliefs which contribute to the structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages. The professional discourse around ELT disconnects culture from structure by limiting the focus in language pedagogy to technical matters, that is, language and education in a narrow sense, to the exclusion of social, economic, and political matters (Phillipson, 1992, p. 48).

Thus, the technical knowledge of language pedagogy of ELT prevents teachers from engaging in ethical and political aspects of education. And some of the beliefs circulated in the ELT profession contribute to the legitimation of English linguistic imperialism. Phillipson has listed five tenets, or beliefs held by ELT professionals. These tenets are as follows:

1. English is best taught monolingually.
2. The ideal teacher of English is a native speaker.
3. The earlier English is taught, the better the results.
4. The more English is taught, the better the results.
5. If other languages are used much, standards of English will drop.

Phillipson argues that all these tenets are false and labels each of them as follows:

1. the monolingual fallacy
2. the native speaker fallacy
3. the early start fallacy
4. the maximum exposure fallacy
5. the subtractive fallacy

Phillipson's point is not to show the falsity of these five tenets, but to argue that these tenets which have been circulated and believed by ELT professionals have been accepted without much examination as a set of unquestionable dogmas. Once they have become dogmas, they constitute the taken-
for-granted knowledge of ELT professionals. And as a result, it legitimates the ELT in which the monolingual native speaker of English deprives the learners of their mother tongues and imposes English upon them. This kind of teaching practice is, I imagine, quite common in English classrooms around the world. And it is only the affirmation of “anglocentricity” and “professionalism” of ELT.

Another conceptual framework employed by Phillipson in criticizing “linguicism” and “English linguistic imperialism” is the theory of Center-Periphery. Phillipson explains as follows:

“The theory operates with a division of the world into a dominant Center (the powerful Western countries and interests), and dominated Peripheries (the underdeveloped countries)....The norms, whether economic, military, or linguistic, are dictated by the dominant Center and have been internalized by those in power in the Periphery” (Phillipson, 1992, p. 52).

Thus, the Center countries monopolize the resources and control the flow of people, goods, ideas, and information. The interaction between the Center and the Periphery is often unidirectional and asymmetrical, creating and reproducing the structure of unequal relationships. People in the Periphery are often marginalized and excluded from the mainstream of international communication.

English plays an important role of creating the legitimacy of the unequal relationship between the Center and the Periphery, because English is the most powerful Center language which has been learned by the elites of the Periphery countries who often internalize the values of the Center culture and perform as important agents and facilitators of neo-colonial control.

Phillipson also notices the relations between ELT and development aid. He argues that English and its teaching pedagogy, along with teachers and textbooks sent from the Center to the Periphery in the form of educational support, only reinforce the unequal Center-Periphery relationship, instead of terminating such an unequal relationship.

One of the most serious consequences of “English linguistic imperialism” lies in the colonization of the minds of learners and users of English. Learners simply become slaves to the language. Phillipson quotes a Ghanaian sociolinguist and highlights this problem:

“The phenomenon in which the minds and lives of the speakers of a language are dominated by another language to the point where they believe that they can and should use only that foreign language when it comes to transactions dealing with the more advanced aspects of life such as education, philosophy, literature, governments, the administration of justice, etc....Linguistic imperialism has a subtle way of warping the minds, attitudes, and aspirations of even the most noble in a society and of preventing him from appreciating and realizing the full potentialities of the indigenous languages” (Quoted in Phillipson, 1992, p. 56).

Thus, “English linguistic imperialism” not only controls the Peripheries materially but also makes the people in the Peripheries dependent upon the Center culturally, linguistically, and psychologically.

Phillipson, I believe, is very successful in articulating and explicating the ethical problems caused by the dominance of English and the role of ELT in English linguistic imperialism by providing a set of
critical concepts for constructing critical arguments on the dominance of English.


This is the first book that directly tackles the issue of language and human rights. It contains 20 articles. The first section attempts to delineate the concepts of linguistic human rights by discussing historical developments of linguistic human rights and exploring the concept of linguistic human rights in relation to language policy and legislation.

Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson provide a tentative definition of linguistic human rights as follows:

“We will provisionally regard linguistic human rights in relation to the mother tongue(s) as consisting of the right to identify with it/them, and to education and public services through the medium of it/them. Mother tongues are here defined as “the language(s) one has learned first and identified with. In relation to other languages we will regard linguistic human rights as consisting of the right to learn an official language in the country of residence, in its standard form (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1995, p. 71).

So Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson argue that linguistic human rights should allow people to use, learn, and identify with their mother tongues and to receive education and public services in the official language of their residence.

Actually, their efforts to explore linguistic human rights have come out of a particular linguistic situation in Europe where there exist 50 million autochthonous minority people out of 320 million Europeans, in addition to a great number of immigrants. As these people live side by side, conflicts and struggles have naturally occurred, often at the expense of human rights of the minorities, including their linguistic rights.

Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson provide a tragic case where linguistic human rights are deprived. They describe it as follows:

“A young Finnish immigrant in Sweden is hospitalized in Stockholm. He is in acute pain at night, despite being heavily drugged. He tries, tired and desperate, to explain his pain to the nurses but nobody understands Finnish. He jumps from a fifth floor window and dies” (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1995, p. 19).

Confronted with multilingual and multicultural environments where conflicts often occur, the organizations such as European Parliament, Council of Europe, and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe have been proposing declarations and charters that will protect and promote the rights of minorities, especially since the 1980’s. Also in the United Nations, several declarations have been made including the “Draft Universal Declaration on Indigenous Rights” in 1988.

In terms of promoting linguistic human rights, UNESCO has been very supportive and encouraging the development of “Universal Declaration of Linguistic Human Rights” since the late 1980’s until today. Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson are contributing to this effort by providing fundamental theories and concepts.

Along with these international political efforts to establish linguistic human rights, some scholars of languages have begun to pay serious attention to the ethical and political aspects of language.

*Linguistic Human Rights* is a case in point to demonstrate a serious interest in
the ethics involved in language use and communication. The contributions in this book are mostly derived from the World Congress of Applied Linguistics in 1990 and a symposium on linguistic human rights held in Tallinn, Estonia in 1991.

In the Tallinn symposium, the “Declaration on Linguistic Human Rights” was put forth by the participants demanding the recognition of linguistic human rights as an inherent part of human rights. Also in the World Congress of Applied Linguistics in 1990, “some 80 distinguished professors and other researchers signed a protest against the violation of the linguistic human rights of the Kurds in Turkey” (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1995, p. 367).

Thus, although they are still a minority, an increasing number of linguists have become concerned with the ethical and political issues of language such as “linguicide”, meaning the murder of languages, promotion and protection of minority languages, and establishment of linguistic human rights. The development of politically and ethically motivated studies of language is an indication of a growing critical awareness of scientific objectivism and descriptivism that neglect the ethical and political issues of language.

Another critical study that examines the dominance of English is Alastair Pennycook’s Cultural Politics of English as an International Language published in 1994.

Pennycook echoes Phillipson in criticizing the dominance of English, but he approaches the problem from a different perspective. While Phillipson employs the structuralist theory of Center-Periphery inequality, Pennycook adopts the notion of “discourse” in developing his argument.

“Discourse”, according to Pennycook, is “that place in which power and knowledge are joined together” (Pennycook, 1994, p. 104). He further explains:

“Discourses are organizations of knowledge that have become embedded in social institutions and practices, a constellation of power/knowledge relationships which organize texts and produce and reflect different subject positions” (Pennycook, 1994, p. 104).

In other words, “discourse” is a predominant way of understanding and talking about a topic that has become taken-for-granted knowledge in a society.

Relating the notion of discourse to the matter of English as an international language (EIL), Pennycook argues that there is a discourse of English as an international language, which makes us believe that the global spread of English is natural, neutral, and beneficial, and the discourse of EIL prevents us from recognizing the relationship between the spread of English and the inequitable structures of international relations. In other words, the discourse of EIL prevents us from understanding what Pennycook calls “the worldliness of English” or “cultural and political effects of the spread of English” (Pennycook, 1994, p. 13).

The dominant discourse of EIL, which approves the spread of English uncritically, overlooks the worldliness of English, or adverse effects of the dominance of English. Pennycook summarizes the worldliness of English as follows:

“its widespread use threatens other languages; it has become the language of power and prestige in many countries, thus acting as a crucial gatekeeper to social and economic progress; its use in particular domains, especially professional, may exacerbate different power relationships and
may render these domains more inaccessible to many people; its position in the world gives it a role also as an international gatekeeper, regulating the international flow of people; it is closely linked to national and increasingly non-national forms of culture and knowledge that are dominant in the world; and it is bound up with aspects of global relations, such as the spread of capitalism, development aid and the dominance particularly of North American media” (Pennycook, 1994, p. 13).

The discourse of EIL has not been criticized by linguists, but rather it has been legitimated and reinforced by scientific objectivism and positivism. Pennycook further argues:

“The view of the spread of English as natural, neutral, and beneficial is made possible by the dominance of positivism and structuralism in linguistics and applied linguistics, since these paradigms have allowed for the concentration only on a notion of abstract system at the expense of social, cultural or political understanding of language” (Pennycook, 1994, p. 141).

Pennycook goes on to say that the discourse of EIL has always connected English with “good things” such as development, modernization, and international free trade, and in so doing, justified the worldwide spread and use of English, while hiding the worldliness of English.

Having made an analysis of the discourse of EIL, Pennycook then attempts to make a proposal for the improvement of ELT in order to overcome the control of the discourse of EIL.

He proposes that the creation of a counter-discourse should be made by English teachers who employ “critical pedagogy” in the classroom. Unlike teachers who believe in the discourse of EIL, regard English as a neutral medium, and just teach the language, critically motivated teachers will relate the worldliness of English to the teaching of English, so that the counter-discourse will possibly be made.

Pennycook’s proposal as well as his analysis of the discourse of EIL is quite significant in that it expresses the need for English teachers to grow out of the discourse of EIL and become more critically and ethically oriented educators who incorporate the cultural and political effects of the dominance of English in their teaching.

In summary, there is indeed a growing awareness among linguists and ELT professionals in the English-speaking countries of the ethical and political aspects of ELT, even though the professionals with such a critical awareness still constitute only a minority. It is very much hoped that the latest critical works by Phillipson, Skutnabb-Kangas, and Pennycook as well as the Hong Kong conference on language rights will exert influence upon the ELT community, so that it will have to redefine and reformulate its scope, goals, objectives, and pedagogies.

Critical Studies on English Linguistic Imperialism in Japan

Although they are still and have always been a minority, critical studies on English linguistic imperialism have also been done in Japan for the past several decades. The dominant force that has been driving the Japanese ELT can be characterized as “Anglomania”, the infatuation and preoccupation with learning English on a nationwide scale. For example, English has been imposed as a compulsory subject starting from junior high school for many years, and recently, it has been decided that
the teaching of English will be introduced into primary school education. Also, private English language schools have been growing in great numbers, and it is estimated that in the Tokyo metropolitan area alone there are as many as 2,000 such schools. Moreover, the Japanese mass media are filled with English. Professor Hajime Abe, a linguist at Dokkyo University, estimates that 17-18% of children’s comic books, and 12-13% of weekly magazines are using English in their contents, and according to Professor Abe, these ratios are overwhelmingly high compared to those of other countries. He is warning that if the trend to use more English in Japan continues, it will lead to the entire loss of Japanese in the future (“Tbunka Obiyakasu Eigokuukan”, 1996).

Professor Abe’s warning is no exaggeration. I can give a case in point. In the City of Kani where I live, the city government has recently built an arch-shaped signboard across the street in my neighborhood. The signboard says in English: “Fasten Seat Belts” in gigantic letters. This is an example of “Anglomania”, and it is not an isolated and exceptional case, but rather, it no doubt represents an overwhelming trend in Japan, and more and more local and national governmental bodies use English especially in their public relations activities.

The Japanese ELT has been creating “Anglomania” among Japanese people and in turn been fed and supported by the people’s “Anglomania”. In the past few decades, the Japanese ELT has been gradually changing its orientation from the old dominant ideology which focuses on the teaching of grammar and translation for the purpose of absorption of Western culture and technology, to the new dominant ideology which emphasizes the teaching of oral and spoken English for the purpose of expressing Japanese culture and ideas to the rest of the world.

In short, the direction of the Japanese ELT has been changed from a translation-centered to an expression-centered approach.

However, “Anglomania” persists throughout the transformation. In fact, “Anglomania” has been strengthened by the increasing use of English in everyday lives as well as by the popular support for the discourse of “English as an International Language”. The majority of people believe that English is the most important language and its spread is “natural, neutral, and beneficial”. Not being able to speak fluently, the majority of people blame the ELT teachers and the teaching methods employed. The recent change to more practical goals in the orientations of ELT was a response to severe criticisms and frustrations.

Against the mainstream “Anglomaniac” ideology of ELT, there have been some developments of a critical discourse for the past few decades. Among such critical works is Douglas Lummis’s “English Conversation as Ideology” published in 1975. His work is the first of such critical works. Based on his experience of teaching at English language schools in Japan, he criticized these schools as “racist” because they hired only ‘white’ native speakers as teachers, and argued that the Japanese should boycott such schools (Lummis, 1975).

Of course these schools do not intend to be racists, but they only supply what the students demand. In other words, there has been an “Anglomaniac” infatuation with white native speakers among the general Japanese public.

Although Douglas Lummis’s argument was radical and pointed out important
political and ethical issues of ELT, his argument was more or less ignored by the mainstream ELT community in Japan. Actually, the Japanese ELT began to move from reception to expression-oriented method in the mid-1970’s when Lummis’s work was published.

It was not until the late 1980’s that another important critical effort was made against the mainstream ELT in Japan. It was done by Professor Nakamura Kei of Seijyo University, who incorporated political issues into the contents of senior high school English textbooks. Among such political issues is a critical description of the Japanese invasion into China and Southeast Asia in the Second World War, which was censored by the government and replaced by some other contents.

Professor Nakamura’s effort was significant in that it directs the ELT from the mere technical learning of language to the more educational, political learning through the teaching of English.

The year of 1990 was very important because in that year the critical argument against “English Linguistic Imperialism” and the Japanese “Anglomania” was made not isolatedly, but with synchronicity. I published a book entitled Eigo Shihai-no Kouzou or “The Structure of the Hegemony of English”, discussing “English linguistic imperialism” from the perspective of promoting equality among languages and equality in communication.

Professor Ohishi Shunichi, an expert on the literature of James Joyce, also published a book called Questioning the English Ideology in the same year. He also criticized “English linguistic imperialism” but with an emphasis upon the criticism of “Anglomania” of the Japanese from the perspective of postmodern thought of “deconstructing” the Western culture (Ohishi, 1990).

In addition, Professor Nakajima Yoshimichi, an expert on German philosophy, published a book entitled Uiten Aizou or “The Love and Hate of Vienna”, based on his experience of living in Vienna (Nakajima, 1990). He criticized the dominance of Western culture and the Japanese infatuation with it, taking Vienna as the central base of legitimating Western cultural universalism and imperialism.

It is really epoch-making that these three Japanese scholars who live not knowing one another and belong to different disciplines have started making criticisms with the hegemony of English and Western culture at the same time. I regarded it not as a mere coincidence but as a meaningful synchronicity in the psychologist Carl Jung’s sense. So I contacted them and asked them to write papers for a book on “English Linguistic Imperialism” together. As a result, we were able to publish a book called Eigo Shihaieno Iron, or “Oppositions to the Hegemony of English” in 1993 (Tsuda, 1993).

In 1994, Professor Nakamura Kei had a series of debates over “English linguistic imperialism” with journalist Chikushi Tetsuya in a nationwide weekly magazine, which drew quite a lot of attention especially among intellectuals.

Thus, critical voices against “English linguistic imperialism” have been growing steadily in Japan and are no longer ignored as before.

In fact, a special issue was published by one of the ELT monthly journals featuring “English Linguistic Imperialism” in March 1995. And in 1996, another ELT journal published an issue featuring “foreign language education”, suggesting more emphasis on foreign languages other than English, because ELT has been dominating
foreign language education in Japan.


I also started a research project called “The Japanese and the English Language: An Interdisciplinary Study of Anglicized Japan” at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies. The research project has a team of scholars specializing in linguistics, communication, philosophy, anthropology, comparative culture, sociology, ELT, and so on. It attempts to explore how the Japanese perceive English, how the Japanese relate to English, and how the use of English affects the thoughts of the Japanese and Japanese culture in general.

How can these critical works contribute to ELT in Japan?

There is no doubt that these critiques will widen the perspective of ELT which is basically confined to the technical aspects of teaching.

Critiques of “English linguistic imperialism”, which pay attention to the ethical and political aspects of the ELT, orientate both teachers and students alike to the “context” in which English dominates the world. In other words, these critiques can contribute to connecting ELT teachers and learners with the “ethical” aspects of learning and teaching English which have been disconnected by the non-critical teaching pedagogy which is only interested in the technical “effect” of teaching. The dominant ideology of ELT which is very effect-oriented may contribute to producing good speakers of English. But it is very difficult to say that it is contributing to producing good citizens.

The Implications of Critical Studies on the Dominance of English

In the first two sections, we have seen the latest developments of critical studies on the dominance of English in and outside of Japan. These studies show that there are two kinds of problems caused by the dominance of English: (1) First there is a structure of inequality in international communication as a result of the dominance of English, denying the use of languages other than English and preventing the non-English speakers from expressing their ideas in international communication; (2) Second, there are feelings of anxiety and uncertainty on the part of the non-English-speaking, non-Western nations about cultural imperialism, especially that of American culture, which influences all the local cultures in the world by massively transmitting its cultural and media products. It seems that the dominance of English and cultural imperialism of the major English-speaking countries are combined to control and threaten the autonomy of local cultures all over the world.

In this last part of the paper, I would like first of all to discuss some of the ways to tackle the problems of linguistic inequality and cultural imperialism. I shall refer to the debates over English linguistic imperialism in Japan and discuss the significance and implications, especially in terms of further advancing critical studies on English linguistic imperialism and improving English Language Teaching. Then, I would like to propose an alternative theoretical position from which to explore the problems caused by the dominance of English and formulate a global language policy for establishing equality in international communication.
(1) Solutions to the Dominance of English in International Communication

There are two steps toward solving the structure of inequality caused by the dominance of English: (a) the first step is what is usually called a "consciousness raising" phase in which researches and debates over the dominance of English are carried out to discover the facts about the dominance of English and develop a critical awareness of the problems caused by it; (b) the second step involves international efforts to reach an international agreement on an equal use of languages in international communication. Let me explain in detail what these two steps involve.

(a) The First Step: Consciousness Raising

For the purpose of raising critical consciousness about the dominance of English, critical researches such as mentioned above are necessary.

The goal of critical researches is to produce critical knowledge that will expose the contradictions in a society, especially problems such as discrimination and domination that justify the structure of inequality. Such critical researches are motivated by "emancipatory" interests that aim to liberate the oppressed from the structure of domination.

Critical researches will provide critical knowledge that will enable people to become aware of "false consciousness" or the taken-for-granted knowledge that they have held about the reality in which they live, and allow them to develop a true understanding of it so that they will realize the contradictions in a society and feel motivated to correct them.

The critical studies mentioned in the first and second sections have contributed greatly to the development of critical consciousness about the problems caused by the dominance of English, not only in the academic community but also among the general public at large.

Traditional studies of languages have fallen short of being critical of the problems of linguistic domination and discrimination. Rather, they have always been dedicated to admiring the dominance of languages in power. For example, the work of compiling dictionaries done by philologists have always contributed to establishing and reinforcing the legitimacy of the dominant language already in power. *Oxford English Dictionary* is a good case in point to illustrate how the studies of language help legitimize the dominant language.

Scientific studies of languages have also fallen short of producing critical knowledge. They have only produced technical and practical knowledge that fails to recognize the contradictions in a society and therefore legitimizes them. Especially, positivist-oriented studies that operate on descriptivism and objectivism are unable to uncover the problems caused by the dominance of English, because they are only interested in producing technical knowledge by observing the quantifiable variables.

In contrast, critical researches are motivated by emancipatory interests held by critical scholars who intuitively perceive the problematic. Through critical reflection, critical scholars develop a critical interpretation of the problematic so that the contradictions will be disclosed.

Also, having debates over the dominance of English is an effective way of raising consciousness about the problems caused by it.

In Japan, there has been an increasing interest in the dominance of English and
therefore there have been numerous debates over it for the past several years.

First, there was a debate in 1994 between Nakamura Kei, professor of sociology of English and leading critic of English linguistic imperialism in Japan, and Chikushi Tetsuya, a TV anchorman. The debate continued in a weekly magazine for several months and stirred up a lot of controversy among the general public.

Second, Professor Nakamura Kei again had a series of debates over English linguistic imperialism with Matsumoto Michihiro, professor and advocate of “Eigo-do”, or learning English as a way of life. The debate was published in the monthly magazine for teachers of English beginning in October 1996 until March 1997. The debate was an index of a growing interest among the teachers of English in the dominance of English.

Third, there was another debate between myself and Huwa Naoko, university professor in Tokyo, about the Japanese “Anglomania”, or obsessive and excessive use of English in Japan, in Asahi Shimbun, a nationwide newspaper.

Through these debates, we have come to realize that there is a clearcut division in opinions about English. That is, there is a critical view of the dominance of English causing linguistic and communicative inequality, while there is an affirmative view of the global spread of English, arguing that there is no such thing as English linguistic imperialism and that English should be actively used as a common international language.

The critical view is labeled as “The Theory of English Linguistic Imperialism” while the view that accepts the dominance of English is named “The Theory of English Linguistic Universalism”. These names help us to understand the differences in opinions about the dominance of English and provide a set of concepts for understanding the points of argument over the dominance of English, thus raising consciousness about it.

(b) Second Step: International Agreements on Languages

In addition to raising consciousness by making academic inquiries and having debates, international political and diplomatic efforts are needed to reach an international agreement for an equal use of languages in international communication.

The principles of non-discriminatory international communication with special regard to languages are as follows:

1. For communication to be equal, a speaker of A is not allowed to impose his/her language upon a speaker of B.

2. For communication to be equal, there should be a consensus about the common language between the two speakers.

3. For communication to be equal and for the purpose of protecting the right to use one’s own languages, a speaker of any language has the right to ask for the services of translation and interpretation.

4. Any person in international communication is entitled to the right to communicate and not to communicate and to be communicated to and not to be communicated to in a language of his/her choice.

(Tsuda, 1996, p. 171-173)

Based on these four principles, along with a number of international declarations and covenants, an international agreement on an equal use of languages in international communication should be signed to establish equal and non-discriminatory international communication.

It seems that almost all the countries in the world want their peoples to learn and
use English in order to catch up with the rapidly changing international community in which English is the common language, but they do not realize the long-term influence of the use of a globally dominant language upon the languages and cultures as well as the minds of their own peoples.

For the purpose of protecting linguistic, cultural and psychological sovereignty of less dominant countries, establishing an international agreement for equal and non-discriminatory international communication is very much needed and this should be realized through international political and diplomatic efforts.

(2) Solutions to Feelings of Anxiety over Cultural Imperialism

The global spread of English and American media and material products causes some anxiety and fear in the minds of the people all over the world, as the spread is so prevalent that it threatens the linguistic, cultural and mental sovereignty of almost all countries.

I believe that there are at least four approaches to dealing with the impact of linguistic and cultural imperialism. They are: (1) consciousness raising; (2) international effort; (3) formulation of language and cultural policy; (4) revision of English Language Teaching.

(a) Consciousness Raising

The critical studies on media, linguistic and cultural imperialism play an important role of raising consciousness about the psychological problems caused by media, linguistic, and cultural imperialism.

I have already explored the psychological problems suffered by the Japanese as a result of the dominance and imposition of English in Japan. I have named them “English Conversation Syndrome” and “Anglomania”, suggesting that the Japanese have become obsessed with English so much that they tend to devalue their own language and culture (Tsuda, 1990; 1993; 1996).

The critical works done by Ngũgĩ and Fanon explore the ambivalence suffered by the dominated toward the dominator. “Colonization of the mind” is the ultimate form of domination in which the dominated willingly surrender to the dominator not even knowing that they are dominated (Ngũgĩ, 1981; Fanon, 1967).

More recently, Ammon, a German linguist, reported the feelings of anxiety and concern in Germany about the increase of English and American cultural products. He introduced several letters to the newspapers expressing anxiety over the cultural pollution done by the invasion of English in all aspects of German life (Ammon, 1992).

These critical studies on the cultural and psychological problems caused by the dominance of English and the global spread of American culture as exemplified by “Coca Colonization” contribute greatly to raising consciousness about these problems.

(b) International Effort for New World Information and Communication Order

One of the biggest problems caused by cultural imperialism is the imbalance of the flow of information between the advanced countries and the less developed countries. In order to deal with this problem, UNESCO launched a project called New World Information Order in the mid-70’s, which was later renamed New World Information and Communication Order.

The major concern expressed by this international project was over the possibility of cultural invasion into each country by the advanced countries. The less developed countries expressed their frustrations of not
being able to get their messages across to the world because there is a structure of international information flow that does not allow the less developed countries to send their messages. They have always been the receivers and consumers of the messages sent by the more advanced, often Western, countries.

Confronted with this problem, UNESCO organized a special commission which investigated information and communication problems in international communication and proposed the establishment of a new order of international information and communication (Macbride, 1980).

However, the project of New World Information and Communication Order went into a deadlock in the mid-80's when the United States and the United Kingdom withdrew from UNESCO, leaving it with financial difficulties. These two countries protested against the above project because it would go against the freedom of exchanging information.

From this conflict arose the question of whether information is commodity or social good. For the most capitalist countries, information is a commodity to be sold and bought, while in the rest of the world information is to be equally shared by everyone. This difference in opinions about the nature of information has resulted in the conflict between the ideas expressed by UNESCO and the two major English-speaking countries.

(c) Formulation of Language and Cultural Policy

Another approach to dealing with cultural imperialism is the development of a language and cultural policy for a country and the global community. The making of a policy involves planning and proposing a direction for the future, which can check and correct the already existing inequalities and discriminations.

The absence of linguistic and cultural policy allows for the invasion of dominant languages and cultures, since there are no models or guidelines by which to determine what ought to be absorbed from foreign cultures and what ought not to.

The policy of sakoku, or isolation in the Edo era in Japan, for example, is a good example of a national cultural policy. It allowed for only the limited influx of foreign cultures for the purpose of preserving the domestic culture. The policy of Wakon, Yousai, or Japanese spirit and Western technology, in the Meiji period of nineteenth-century Japan is another example of a national cultural policy which was intended to achieve modernization without Westernization.

In the age of rapid globalization of the world when English and American culture spreads globally, all the other countries should develop cultural and linguistic policies so that their cultural and linguistic sovereignties will not be easily violated by the more dominant languages and cultures.

(d) Reform of English Language Teaching

As discussed in the first section, English Language Teaching (ELT) operates as an ideology apparatus to reproduce and reinforce English linguistic imperialism. Phillipson argues that due to its anglocentricity and professionalism, ELT fails to teach the ethical and political aspects of English and only teaches English as an instrument disconnected from the political context in which it dominates.

How can ELT contribute to the eradication of English linguistic imperialism? It cannot help but support it, it seems.

I shall provide three suggestions for the reform of ELT for now.
The first suggestion is concerned with the curricula in the schools. In Japan English is a compulsory subject to be taken from junior high school. That is, every student is supposed to learn English. I suggest that a variety of foreign languages should be available so students can choose from among them. This reform of changing the status of English from a mandatory subject to an elective one may contribute to the development of an awareness of English as one of many other languages, and not as the prestigious international language.

The second suggestion has to do with the reform of teacher education. Ishihara Masahide, linguist at Ryukyu University, proposes that the critical knowledge of the dominance of English should become a part of the curricula of English teacher education. It is easy to imagine that teachers of English with educated knowledge of the dominance of English will be able to teach English not as a mere tool, but in the context of politics, history, and ethics in communication.

The third suggestion has to do with the academic discipline that contributes to ELT, namely, applied linguistics. Pennycook argues that in order for ELT to be critical, applied linguistics should also be critical by incorporating the ideas of critical pedagogy (Pennycook, 1990). I agree with him, but the point is whether or not the teacher can be critical. No matter how critical a text or a method may be, it will not make any difference if the teacher has no critical awareness of the dominance of English and the accompanying cultural imperialism.

(3) The “Ecology of Language” Paradigm for Equality in International Communication

The theory that underlies the critical studies on the dominance of English and cultural imperialism is what I call the “Ecology of Language” paradigm as opposed to the “Diffusion of English” paradigm which supports the dominance of English (See Tsuda, 1994 for details).

While the “Diffusion of English” paradigm features theoretical orientations such as capitalism, science and technology, modernization, monolingualism, ideological globalization, internationalization, transnationalization, Americanization and homogenization of the world culture, and linguistic, cultural and media imperialism, the “Ecology of Language” paradigm is based on theoretical positions such as Human Rights, equality in communication, multilingualism, maintenance of languages and cultures, protection of linguistic, cultural and mental sovereignties and promotion of foreign language education.

The “Ecology of Language” paradigm has emerged as a counter-discourse to the “Diffusion of English” paradigm. The “Ecology of Language” paradigm aims to call into question the dominance of English which is taken for granted. The critical studies that are motivated by the “Ecology of Language” paradigm attempt to uncover the structure of inequality and domination in international communication and global relations with a view to changing the structure into one that will promote and protect the minority languages and cultures.

Also, the views of language in these two paradigms are contrary to each other. The view of language in the “Diffusion of English” paradigm is “Functionalist” in that it sees language as a tool or instrument detached from the context in which it is actually used. In contrast, the view of language in the “Ecology of Language” paradigm is ecological and “Environmentalist” in that it regards language as a precious environment that shapes human beings, and
as an important component of a person's cultural identity.

Thus, the "Ecology of Language" paradigm connects language with people and therefore deplores the death of a language because it is equal to the death of a people and a culture.

The "Ecology of Language" paradigm is a critical theory that creates a tension and a balance of linguistic and cultural power between English and other languages and cultures.

Conclusion

We have seen the latest developments of critical studies on the dominance of English in Japan and overseas. These studies have clearly shown the problems resulting from the global spread of English and the accompanying culture.

The developments of these critical theories suggest at least two things. One is concerned with a growing awareness of the adverse effects of the dominance of English all over the world. While many people find it convenient to use English, an increasing number of people are feeling disadvantaged or deprived in the English-dominated international communication.

Another is concerned with the growth of a new direction in the studies of languages. An increasing number of linguists seem to be taking a critical and political position to investigate the problems related to language and communication. In other words, linguists are beginning to grow out of neutralism and objectivism that prevent them from engaging in critically and politically motivated researches.

Further developments of critical studies on the dominance of English are very much hoped for and more debates over English linguistic imperialism should be made. Also, international collaborative researches on the dominance of English should be encouraged to understand the impact of the dominance of English in each country and produce critical knowledge that will contribute to the development of a global language and cultural policy in the future.

REFERENCES


英語支配批判研究と国際コミュニケーションへの意義

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要旨：本研究は、英語支配批判研究の最近の動向をまとめ、その研究の成果が、言語差別のない国際コミュニケーションの確立にいかに貢献するかを考察するものである。

第一に、英語で書かれた英語支配批判研究の代表的なものについて解説し、これら
の研究により英語支配の影響の実態が明らかになったこと、英語教育のイデオロギー
的な役割も明らかにされた。

第二に、日本における英語支配批判研究の動向を概観し、出版をはじめ英語帝国主
義論争が起きていることを紹介した。

最後に、これらの批判研究が、言語差別のない国際コミュニケーションの確立にい
かなる意味をもたらしているのかをまとめた。英語支配への対応策として、意識高揚、
国際協定の締結、英語教育の改革、言語・文化政策の立案などを提案した。また、
「ことばのエコロジー」という理論的パラダイムを提唱した。