Representations of Globalization, Violence, and Peace in Published Lesson Plans

Aaron Hahn
Fukuoka University

Author Note

Aaron Hahn, Department of Language Education and Research, Fukuoka University

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Contact: aaronhahn@hotmail.com
Abstract

Some of the foremost places where ideologies are shaped, perpetuated, and resisted are in educational settings. Thus, as we consider what a globalized future means for the people and countries of Asia, one site we must examine are classroom activities to determine if and how issues such as internationalization, "the foreign", peace, and violence are addressed or ignored. Of particular interest are English classes in Japan, where official government policy directly links kokusaika (questionably translated as "internationalization") to the improvement of student English ability. However, official policy and actual classroom practice are not necessarily in sync, so this project examines a large corpus of lesson plans published between 2011 and 2015 in *The Language Teacher*, the primary journal for the Japan Association for Language Teaching. Operating under a critical discourse analysis framework, it was found that these topics were addressed only sparingly, and when they were handled directly, the authors tended to do so in uncritical ways. Furthermore, a significant number of the lesson plans contained features that were likely to perpetuate hegemonic, neoliberal concepts about globalization, and that may also normalize an acceptance of violence and competition (physical, economic, and social).
Representations of Globalization, Violence, and Peace in Published Lesson Plans

One of the key sites of ideological struggle is the classroom. As Pitsoe and Letseka (2013) write, "Schools are institutions for social reproduction and the classrooms are key sites for the reproduction of social identities and unequal relations of power" (p. 27). Therefore, when considering how ideologies linked to internationalization are both constructed and reproduced, one useful research target is the educational discipline. Such research can examine any level of practice, from national education policies down to the social and linguistic behaviors enacted in individual classrooms. For reasons discussed below, I have chosen to examine this issue by looking at an intermediate level—that of lesson activity plans designed for use and published in Japan.

**Background**

Internationalization has been a major topic in Japan since at least the 1980s, when it came to be discussed both in government and in more general settings (Kubota, 1998). The importance of internationalization was formally made a part of Japanese education when language to that effect was incorporated into the in preparation for inclusion in the 1999 Course of Study (CoS) under the term *kokusaika*. The CoS is the official document written by the Ministry of Education that somewhat strictly governs what must taught in accredited primary and secondary schools in Japan. While the CoS is often viewed (especially outside of Japan) as the primary tool of top-down educational control by a strong, centralized Education Ministry, it is probably better characterized as a fusion of governmental
concerns and aggregated bottom-up practices that reflect more gradual changes in teaching originating at the local level (Azuma, 2002; DeCoker, 2002; Lewis & Tsuchida, 1998). While it does explicitly lay out teaching topics and targets, the document is intentionally written with flexibility that allows local innovation and interpretation (Lewis & Tsuchida, 1998).

The term *kokusaika* is usually (and officially, in the English translation of the Cos) as "internationalization" or "globalization." However, in practice it does not really have the same meaning or implications as either of those English words. Kubota (1998) and Hashimoto (2000) argue that, instead, we need to understand *kokusaika* as a desire to integrate Japan into the broader international economy, but to do so while preserving a strong and independent Japanese identity. Hashimoto goes so far as to say that "internationalization" is better understood as "Japanisation," and Kubota notes that at the same time that schools were required to promote international activities and increase foreign language study, they were also required to display the flag and sing the national anthem at school ceremonies. Japanese internationalization is definitely not (officially) about helping Japanese join into any sort of international common culture, nor is it about blending aspects of other cultures into life here in Japan.

However, if one interprets internationalization as a primarily economic (and not cultural or political) process, then *kokusaika* is strongly convergent with "internationalization," in the neoliberal economic sense, since neoliberal attitudes have formed the foundation of much of the educational reform of the past 30 years (Amano & Poole, 2005; Newby, Weko, Breneman, Johanneson, & Maassen, 2009;
Takayama, 2009). Here, I mean neoliberalism as described by Davies and Bansel (2007)—that is, an approach to government (and governmentality) that places economics at the center of all things, both public and personal, and that fundamentally fuses the success of nations and individuals into a singular drive for survival/success, measured solely by economic achievement. In Japanese education, we see this process enacted most especially in the deregulation of universities and decentralization of control of tertiary education (and, to a lesser degree, primary and secondary education). One of the most striking consequences of this has been the transformation of the national universities from public institutions into semi-private ones (Goodman, 2005; Newby, et al., 2009).

My specific interest is the impact of the push towards kokusaika on language teaching. While English has, since the post-World War II era, been the primary foreign language taught at all levels of Japanese education, kokusaika has solidified English's status, effectively making "foreign language education" equivalent to "English education" (Kubota, 2002). While some parts of the CoS promulgated in the 21st century appear to be truly international in scope such as the mandatory introduction of "foreign language activities" into the elementary school curriculum, a closer examination of both the entirety of the CoS and the documents which support and interpret it indicates that the true intent is to require English language education (Hashimoto, 2011). Additional support for the idea that "foreign language activities" really meant "English activities" can be seen when observing that when these activities were first made mandatory in elementary schools, the only approved textbook was called *Eigo Note*—with *Eigo*
being the Japanese word for "English". Similarly, surveys seeking to determine how ready elementary school teachers were to implement these activities reported that the biggest concern expressed by elementary school teachers was that they didn’t speak English sufficiently well to teach this new subject. (Fennelly & Luxton, 2011).

Not only do government policies equate "foreign languages" with "English," they also support the general preference in Japan for North American and British English. This preference has previously been observed before among Japanese students (Chiba, Matsuura, & Yamamoto, 1995; Matsuda, 2003) and among Japanese teachers (Kubota, 1998). But the codification of internationalization into policy has further naturalized and perpetuated these links ("foreign language entails English" and "English entails North American, or, to a lesser degree, UK English"). For example, Matsuda (2002) found that Ministry-approved seventh grade textbooks were dominated by "Inner Circle" English speakers. In this way, kokusaika helps perpetuate the traditional division present in Japanese culture between "Japan" and "the rest of the world" (alternatively, the idea that Japan, Japanese culture, and the Japanese language are "unique" in comparison to the "foreign"), by codifying in language education policy the idea that there are two languages truly worthy of study—Japanese, and a highly limited set of English dialects—and only two cultures of note—Japanese, and the "international" or "other" culture.¹

In summary, while internationalization is definitely a key talking point in Japanese educational policy, especially in language education policy, it needs to be understood in its specifically Japanese form: neoliberal economic globalization without any form of cultural internationalization, along with the preservation of a somewhat-rigid binary division between that which is "uniquely" Japanese and that which exists outside of Japan.

**Investigating Lesson Plans**

Given that kokusaika figures so strongly in Japanese policy documents, public pronouncements, and individual attitudes towards language learning, it is important to ask how much this ideology factors into classroom teaching. I have chosen to focus my inquiry specifically at university level English classes, primarily because that is the context in which I teach, and thus the one I feel most confident in discussing (especially with respect to the professional discourse of said community). In order to understand what ideologies are at play in these classes, as well as how those ideologies are constructed and perpetuated, I have examined published lesson activity plans. These activities were published in *The Language Teacher*, one of two journals for the Japanese Association for Language Teaching (JALT), which is one of the largest professional associations of language teachers in Japan. While JALT represents teachers from all levels and types of language education, the majority of the focus (in terms of membership and types of papers published and presented) is on university level English classes. In most issues of *The Language Teacher*, which is published bimonthly, there is a section called "My Share," which contains several (usually 4-6) short (less than 700 word)
descriptions of lesson activities that describe, per the explanation that accompanies this section in each issue, "a successful technique or lesson plan you have used that can be replicated by readers." The present study, which focuses specifically on the representation of globalization in these lesson plans, is part of a larger project examining how these lesson plans represent and create identities, ideologies, and power relationships.

The reason I choose to look at lesson plans, rather than lessons enacted in practice, is twofold. First, lesson plans offer a teacher-author's "ideal" sense of what a lesson can/should be, especially those offered to the public like these. This makes analyses of issues such as identity and ideology both clearer and more resonant, since this issues tend to be more salient and pure than they would be in actual practice. Second, this body of work serves as a part of the disciplinary apparatus ("disciplinary" in a Foucauldian sense) of English education in Japan. While, admittedly, JALT membership represents only a small portion the total population of English educators in Japan, and also over-represents non-Japanese teachers relative to their proportion of the field, The Language Teacher is circulated beyond JALT membership, with many institutions maintaining subscriptions for staff or housed in their libraries. Furthermore, while it is not possible to directly extrapolate from this teaching/writing/publishing context to others, what can be done and is valuable is to understand better the links between teaching/publishing and ideology/identity. Such an analysis helps us understand

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2 It would probably be more accurate to say that they represent an intersection of the ideals of the teacher-authors and the policies and ideologies of the My Share editors, which are collectively constrained by the practical considerations of the genre as well as the conventions of professional TESOL discourse enacted in JALT.
how what goes on in the classroom is linked (as mirror, cause, and effect) to wider sociopolitical issues.

**Methodology**

I am undertaking this project through the lens of critical discourse analysis (CDA). CDA is an approach to textual analysis that draws primarily though not exclusively on two scholastic disciplines—first, discourse analysis, the branch of linguistics which analyzes language in units larger than a sentence, and the more general "critical" approach to research that grew out of "those forms of critique that carried a post prefix (postmodern, poststructural, postcolonial) as opposed to those I saw as modernist, materialist, and structuralist" (Pennycook, 2010, p. 3).

While the field is quite diverse and involves a variety of practices and perspectives, one fairly broad definition that encapsulates much of the field (including my own work) comes from Wodak (2005), who asserts that

CL [critical linguistics] and CDA may be defined as fundamentally concerned with analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language. In other words, CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (or in discourse). (p. 5)

I have placed my CDA stance into the methodology section of this paper to help readers understand my approach to these texts, but CDA is best understood not as a method, but as "a state of mind, an attitude, a way of dissenting, and many more things, but not an explicit method for the description of the structures or
strategies of text and talk” (Van Dijk, 2013, para. 1). Rather, when I claim that I am "doing" CDA, what I mean to say is that I am approaching this corpus of lesson plans as a set of related texts linked to specific social practices (primarily, teaching non-Japanese languages in Japan, and secondarily to the professional practice of publishing often required to obtain and retain academic employment, especially at the tertiary level), and that both the texts and the social practices associated with them are implicated in systems of power, governmentality, ideology, and identity. My goal is to look at the texts, the terms used in them, and how they are constructed, and interpret them in the wider social context in which they are produced and read, in order to understand these relationships. Furthermore, I, like many other CD analysts, hope that this investigation makes it possible to identify points of resistance to discourses of inequality, and thus aid in developing a more equitable world.

To do this, I am using a combination of textual analysis and corpus analysis tools. My approach has been strongly influenced by the ideas that Paul Baker (2008) lays out in *Using corpora in discourse analysis*. Using corpus analysis in conjunction with close textual analysis of selected items helps alleviate objections that are sometimes raised to studies that use only one of these approaches. The criticism of using solely linguistically-focused CDA is strongly linked with Widdowson (2004), who argues that CD analysts often pick out a very small number of texts out of a wide body of those available, and then only analyze a limited set of textual attributes, presumably with the intent of making an argument about the texts’ properties that they have decided prior to the actual analysis. In a
certain sense, this is an accurate assessment—as stated above, CD analysts such as myself do start from a specific set of beliefs about the world and the role of language use as social practice within that world (though, of course, all researchers do that), and no textual analysis can ever attend to all aspects of even a single short text, much less a large collection of them. Nonetheless, Widdowson is correct to assert that sometimes CD analysts attempt to extrapolate too widely from their analyses of a limited number of texts, and that they don’t always sufficiently justify why they’ve chosen those texts in a persuasive way. Corpus analysis provides a way of looking at a large number of texts simultaneously by employing the assistance of computational tools to see how the discourse/genre is working as a whole. Thus, a researcher who melds corpus analysis to discourse analysis can use the corpus results to provide some additional evidence that their conclusions are representative of a wider discourse than the smaller number of texts their analysis focuses on.

The use of pure corpus analysis, on the other hand, can be criticized when the analyst attempts to draw conclusions based solely on computationally generated qualitative data without a corresponding fine analysis of the detailed functions of the texts and their linguistic components. Such an approach can lead to results that ignore the role of context, stripping texts of their links to social practice. Thus, Baker recommends an iterative approach, where the analyst cycles back and forth between the use of computational tools to look for broad trends and the close analysis of at least some of the specific examples called up by the tools. For example, as detailed below, I began the present study by using corpus analysis
tools\textsuperscript{3} for specific instances of terms directly related to "internationalization;" after using the corpus tools to locate and quantify those, I examined texts containing those terms in detail. In doing so, often I noticed other, related features of the texts, which then lead me back to the corpora as a whole, and so forth.

Source Materials

My corpus originally covered all of the My Share articles published in The Language Teacher from 2011 to 2016, of which there were 204. However, since CDA requires that texts be understood in context, I decided to place two restrictions on the texts I would analyze. First, I chose to limit the activities to those which the authors said could be used at the university level, since this is the level that I currently teach and is the most widely represented one among JALT members. All of the activities contain an introductory section called "Quick Guide;"\textsuperscript{4} one of the points included in these brief overviews are the authors' beliefs about the "Learner maturity level," which is usually described in terms of schooling age, such as "All ages" or "Junior and senior high school." Any activity which was listed as being solely for learners at the primary and secondary levels was excluded.\textsuperscript{5} Second, I also excluded all articles where the authors were listed as

\textsuperscript{3} For this project, I mainly used two tools: KH Coder, developed by Koichi Higuchi (available at http://khc.sourceforge.net/en/), and AntConc, designed by Laurence Anthony (available at http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/).

\textsuperscript{4} An introductory section containing bullet points listing the target student level, length of the activity and preparation time, keywords, etc.

\textsuperscript{5} Note that this is already a potentially contentious way of discriminating the texts—this excision left in a number of activities that, based on the actual classroom behaviors involved, would be extremely difficult to do at many universities, such as those which required a fixed classroom used by only a single teacher or set of students, or those which involved walking around campus. I chose to use this simple division (going by what the Quick Guide said) rather than substitute my own judgment, since 1) universities certainly vary, so what may be impossible at most may be possible at some, and 2) I wasn't confident that I could create a more "fair" way to divide activities between those which were appropriate for university classes and those which were not than simply using the author/editor's self-judgments.
teaching at non-Japanese institutions, since I presume that other countries have students and teachers with different goals, schools with different institutional structures, and governments with different educational policies. In total, that left 177 articles, which contained (excluding things like titles, references, and the "Quick Guide" section) over 99,000 words by 160 distinct authors.6

Results

Direct References to Globalization and Internationalization

If globalization/internationalization is as important a topic in Japanese education as it seems to be from reading government documents, then, even though the authors in this list are, for the most part, not directly connected to the government,7 it might be reasonable to hypothesize that the concept would appear with at least some frequency in the corpus. Thus, the first question I asked of the corpus8 was a simple measurement of the frequency of the terms "international / internationalize / internationalization" and "global / globalize / globalization." Only the base forms appeared in the My Share articles: “international” appeared 3 times, while “global” appeared 8 times. While this seems like a small amount,

6 A number of authors published 2-3 different articles during this time period, and several papers were co-authored by two people.
7 A small number of the authors are employees at public institutions, which act as quasi-independent entities. However, preliminary surveys of the authors indicates that most of them were in their early career when they had these articles published, thus making it extremely unlikely that they would have had any direct connection to national government education policy; in my own experience, most university teachers rarely if ever take into account national policy when designing their individual lessons.
8 Thinking back to the cyclical two-part process described above, I metaphorically conceptualize the corpus analysis—where I am using the computational tools to draw quantitative data from the corpus—as me asking a question of the text. This metaphor foregrounds the idea that part of the point in choosing this holistic approach to the text is to present what is nominally a more objective stance, in that the metaphor makes it seem like the "text" is answering back. On the other hand, when I'm doing the close textual analysis, I place myself into the agentive position, imagining myself as analyzing, examining, or interpreting the data — this highlights my own subjectivity in the interpretive process.
whenever we consider word frequencies in a specific corpus, it is helpful to compare our findings to a reference corpus in order to determine if the observed frequency in the specific corpus under question is more or less frequent than in a general corpus (Mautner, 2016). Since the My Share corpus contains authors from a variety of countries and uses multiple English variants, I felt it helpful to compare it to three corpuses: the Corpus of Contemporary American English (520 million words), the British National Corpus (100 million words), and the News on the Web corpus (4.1 billion words). Table 1 contains a comparison of the frequencies of each of the terms between these four corpora.

Table 1. Frequencies of key terms in various corpora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>COCA</th>
<th>BNC</th>
<th>NOW</th>
<th>My Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>international</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>internationalize</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>internationalization</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>international*</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>global</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>globalize</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>globalization</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>global*</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. All frequencies are listed as results per million tokens. "international*" refers to the combined frequency of "international" + "internationalize" + "internationalization", and likewise for "global*"

Overall, we can see that the international/global terms are significantly underrepresented in the My Share corpus relative to the three reference corpora.

Thus, despite the importance of this term in the discourse Japanese education and
the central role that language instruction plays in promoting *kokusaika*, the concept seems to not have been taken up directly by the My Share authors.

The next step I pursued was to consider how those terms were actually used in the articles. First, one instance of each word was removed from analysis, since one ("vox pops international") refers to the name of a company/web series, while the other ("global reference") is a linguistics term unrelated to the concept of globalization. The remaining uses of these terms fell into three broad categories: environment, business, and international communication. While each of these articles is worthy of detailed discussion, time and space permit me to provide a detailed analysis of only one from each category; the rest are summarized briefly.

**Environmental issues.** Three of the articles use the terms in reference to global climate issues, using the phrases "global warming," "global climate change," and "global hectares" (the latter a unit of measurement of an entity's ecological footprint), and a fourth labels a project on endangered animals as talking about a "global issue." The first two only mention globalization very briefly, as the issues are merely an aside to each activity’s main focus (in one case, vocabulary learning, and, in the other case, a discussion of the relationship between music and emotions, especially in the context of violent movies). The third is a very positive example of teachers and students together interrogating a global issue, by engaging in a discussion about the connections between personal behavior and global resource use.

The fourth article, which focuses on endangered animals, is of the most interest to me, since a careful examination shows how sometimes raising a weighty
issue but then treating it shallowly can lead to a normalization of the status quo. In this article, the author says one of the outcomes of the project is to "raise awareness of global issues." Specifically, the activity requires students to make a poster presentation and short speech about an endangered animal. Students present to each other, but do not ask questions or otherwise engage in discussion. Also, the points that the students can cover are strictly prescribed by the teacher. They are required/allowed to list only simple facts such as the animal's name, habitat, primary food source, coloring, etc., and only a brief phrase or two indicating why the animal is endangered. The ideological result of such a poster presentation is to naturalize the endangered nature of these animals and silence a consideration of the ways in which students are indirectly complicit in the condition of endangerment. The teacher, in exercising their institutionally and socially granted authority to determine what can or cannot be discussed in the classroom thus normalizes a status quo stance towards a globalized world in which animals will inevitably become endangered, a problem for which individuals face no responsibility. Even though some of the phrasing in the article leads me to believe that the teacher-author is sympathetic to the problems of endangered animals, the restrictions on the genre and the teacher-authors' beliefs about what students can and cannot discuss result in a passive acceptance of the situation, and especially a relinquishing of personal responsibility.

**Business.** One article uses the term "international project," which is described in the Procedure section of the article as follows:
Briefly review the meaning of corporate entertainment. Explain that students will use their smartphones to find three places to take their foreign clients. Emphasize that they are trying to persuade their foreign clients to collaborate with them on a major international project. [emphasis added]

This lesson situates English language learning within the neoliberal project of making students more valuable to their employers. That is, it constructs/reflects the idea that one of the primary goals of English language learning in Japan is to provide students with a tool that isn't personally beneficial, but is rather beneficial for the greater economic enterprises in which they will have to take part in the future. This is not to deny that future business use is something that isn't important, valuable, or potentially motivating, but in cases where English becomes solely business focused, it is commodified and rendered valuable only insofar as it increases corporate profits. Even worse, this activity may actually go further, in that the task of finding local entertainment may also commodify local cultural events, sites, and practitioners, since they, too, are judged solely based on what they contribute to the hypothetical corporations business goals. English is being used, and culture is being shared, not for personal or cultural reasons, but for corporate ones.

**International communication.** The remaining 4 instances of the terms "global" and "international" all relate to international communication—that is, communication occurring across national and/or cultural boundaries. The first activity uses the term "Global English student writers," but then doesn't have
students engage in either Global English or in any discussion of global issues. The second uses the terms "global scale" and "Global English," in both cases referring to the way that social media sites, especially YouTube, enable students and others to engage in international communication. This activity, and especially its "extension," have students not only watch internationally available content, but also engage in analysis of what it means that social networking sites allow for easy access to people in many countries and cultures, but do so primarily via the lingua franca of English.

The last activity in this section talks about "international students in Japan," and in the lesson the teacher invites foreign students to the class to talk with Japanese students in English. When I found this lesson via the corpus search for "international," I recalled that there were actually two lessons that included an activity like this, and yet it didn’t appear in this search. After tracking down the other article, I found that it didn’t appear in this search because in the second article international students were referred to as "U.S. students doing a short-term study abroad." This distinction, already problematic, prompted a more detailed comparison between the two lessons (which I label below the "international students" activity and the "U.S. students" activity).

First, it is important to note that a significant number of "U.S. study abroad students" are extremely unlikely to be found at most institutions, since less than 1.2% of all foreign students in Japan come from the U.S. (Japan Student Services

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9 An optional component of My Share articles, found in just under 12% of the articles in this corpus. Often, as in this case, Extensions are included when the author wants to include a component of the lesson that they think will only be of interest to a limited number of readers—here, to those teaching more advanced students, especially students in a media studies course.
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Organization, 2016). For that matter, why would U.S. students even be preferable? While the debate about the relative value of "native" and "nonnative" teachers (and other sources of English language input) is more extensive than I can discuss here,\(^1\) I stand with the international students author, who says, "The greater the variety of nationalities, the more stimulating the lesson will be." That is, an emphasis on so-called "native speakers" is harmful to students given that they are much more likely to use English with other non-native speakers in transnational and international cultures, not in bilateral contexts with native speakers, and because treating English as if it were rightfully owned and controlled by "native speakers" places English language learners in place of permanent deficiency. Note, also, that the "U.S. students" activity isn’t just arbitrarily mentioning U.S. students as a possible source, because they indicate that the goal is to connect Japanese students with people from "English-speaking countries," and that, if none are available in person, the teacher should use "Skype or some other online conversation system for the interviews." Discussions with non-native speakers clearly hold no potential value in this author’s pedagogical beliefs.

In addition, the two activities structure the relationship between the Japanese and international students differently. In the "U.S. students" activity, the U.S. students interview the Japanese students, asking them questions about Japan, Japanese culture, and Japanese perceptions of the U.S. Since the interviewer in a interview dyad is inherently privileged over the interviewee (as the interviewer is

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\(^1\) For discussion of the problematic effects of overemphasizing the value of native speakers in Japan, see the recent collection *Native-Speakerism in Japan* (Houghton & Rivers, 2013)
the one who determines the general course of the conversation, deciding when a
topic is exhausted and when new topics can be begun), this inherently places the
Japanese students in a subordinate position to the U.S. students. In the
"international students" activity, on the other hand, the teacher provides a set of
discussion questions that all participants discuss together. While this preserves the
standard teacher-student power relationship (where the teacher is firmly the
dominant source of power and decision-making authority in the classroom), at
least this doesn’t also reinforce the very harmful binary of “native speakers as
leaders, non-native speakers as followers” so prevalent in much of the discourse
surrounding language teaching and learning.

**Nationality and Language**

Seeing the author of the "U.S. students" activity refer to the international
Other in specifically nationalist terms, lead me to another avenue of analysis: a
consideration of what locations and nationalities are represented in the corpus.
Using the Part of Speech tagger in KH Coder to identify all proper nouns, I
compiled a list of all nouns that identified a specific place (national and

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11 To attempt to be fair to the author, I want to add a note of hesitation to my analysis here. The
reason I say that the interview is unidirectional is because the only example questions given are
from U.S. speakers to Japanese speakers. Furthermore, the benefits to the two groups of students
are listed quite differently: the U.S. students are said to gain better awareness of the local culture,
while the Japanese students gain experience in being able to communicate with native speakers
(not normally available). However, one question from the pre-interview questionnaire is
ambiguous, since it asks, "Have you ever interviewed a native English/English-as-a-Second-
Language speaker before?" So, it is possible that the authors intended both sides to take turns
being the interviewer. However, if that was their intention, it was very hidden, since I personally
didn’t notice that one point until about the fifth read-through of the article. Even if they intended a
balanced event, the weight of providing a large sample of U.S. to Japanese questions and none in the
other direction, along with the imbalance in benefits, still seems to strongly privilege the U.S.
students over the Japanese.

12 This is an example of the iterative process of analysis described by Paul Baker and other CD
analysts—the research does not begin with a question and end with an answer, but, rather, flows
from each finding into new questions and avenues of inquiry.
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subnational), nationality, or language. Since the names of many languages are the same as the demonyms (that is, "Japanese" can be a noun referring to the Japanese language, a noun referring to a person from Japan, or an adjective giving a noun a quality of Japanese-ness), many of the tokens had to be hand-checked to determine which category they fell into. There were 176 references to locations or nationalities in the corpus; of those, 101 (61%) referred to Japan, and 65 (39%) referred to non-Japanese places. This tells us that even although JALT does have members living outside of Japan, and JALT’s publications including The Language Teacher are available internationally via internet archives, the author-editors conceive of the primary audience as other educators working in Japan. Were the journal truly international in character, we would expect a wider variety of nationalities to be represented, and there would be little value in the most common use of these proper nouns, which were phrases such as "In many Japanese universities..." and "Japanese students enjoy...."
While confirming the target audience is important, when considering the issue of how internationalization has impacted university teachers in Japan, it is more interesting to look at which non-Japanese locations and nationalities were included. Given that the members of JALT come from a wide variety of countries (though, anecdotally, I would say that the overwhelming majority are from Japan, the U.S., the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, and Canada), as well as the Japanese government's ostensible interest in globalization, we might expect and/or hope for a wide variety of locations used, or perhaps at least a large representation of other Asian countries. However, as Figure 1 shows, this was not the case. An extraordinarily disproportionate number of non-Japanese location and nationality references in the data are to the U.S./Americans. Furthermore, a close examination shows that some of the non-U.S. examples are themselves
directly linked with the United States. For instance, the four mentions of "Vietnam" are from a single article, and refer to the movie *Good Morning, Vietnam*, a U.S. movie about the U.S. experience in the Vietnam War. All six references to Australia are from a lesson wherein students use internet research to compare living in Sydney to living in New York. The overrepresentation of the United States in this corpus matches up with the earlier discussed preference among both students and the Japanese educational system for U.S. English (Kubota, 2002). The same preference for the U.S. can also be found looking at what I broadly term "cultural items"—that is, movies, books, holidays, websites, etc. While categorizing these was more subjective (for example, while the TOEIC test is ostensibly an internationally available test, it is predominantly taken and used as a sorting tool in Japan, and thus I coded it as Japanese), roughly 37% of the items were from Japan, 37% were from the U.S., 17% were trans- or inter- national, and the rest came from other specific locations.

The other major type of proper noun in the corpus that is connected with the issue of globalization is language. The proportion of languages mentioned in the corpus is shown in Figure 2. The fact that English accounts for nearly 80% of the language references may be so unsurprising for the intended JALT readers that it wouldn’t even be noticed—the thinking, if attention were called to this fact, would likely be that the whole point of JALT and the My Share articles is to make readers better teachers of English. Technically, however, this is not true, since JALT
is the Japanese Association for Language Teaching, not English teaching. What we are really seeing here is the same equivalence mentioned earlier that Hashimoto (2011), Kubota (2002), and Matsuda (2002) found in government language policies and approved textbooks. The JALT My Share articles are reflective of and contributory to the idea that foreign language learning in Japan is the same thing as English language learning. Even the other languages appear strictly in service of the goal of learning English—Japanese is usually brought up to explain either the use of Japanese in English language classes or to point out differences between Japanese and English that may challenge Japanese learners of English; Greek and Latin appear in a single article that talks about learning English word roots; and French appears in a lesson where students use English to teach students a little bit about their third language.

13 There is another organization called the Japan Association of College English Teachers (JACET). While JACET is open to all university English teachers, most of their research is published and presentations are conducted in Japanese.

14 The author notes (and I concur based on my personal observations) that while English is usually compulsory at Japanese tertiary institutions, students may be able to take a third or fourth language as an elective (especially students majoring in internationally focused topics like International Relations).
Figure 2. Languages in the My Share corpus

**Competition and Cooperation**

One way in which lessons may be said to influence how students view international relations and what it means to speak another language is in how those lessons use collaborative and/or competitive activities. When I was first reading through the corpus, one of the things that struck me was that there seemed to be a large number of activities involving some form of competition. To check whether my impression was accurate, I categorized each lesson in two ways. First, I determined whether the activity was done alone or in groups. 33 out of the 177 articles (18.6%) described activities that were solely individual, while the remaining 81.3% were group activities (though many of the group activities also contained solo components, such as solitary preparation prior to joining and working with a group).
Second, I categorized the activities as being primarily cooperative (students work together in groups of two or more to accomplish a task), inter-group competitive (team vs. team games), or intra-group competitive (students compete against other students as individuals). Any activity which clearly specified winning or losing, the awarding of points, or had other game-like aspects was classified as competitive. In some cases, classification was difficult—for example, two activities have students doing mock job interviews. I classified one as competitive and one as cooperative, since one had students on the mock hiring committee explicitly choose a single "candidate" to hire, while the other did not proceed to that final step of selecting a single winner. Others might argue that both are competitive, since real job interviews inherently involve competition among job seekers to "win" a limited number of positions in the hiring company and thus the students will, if they are role-playing properly, be engaged in competition with one another.

In the strictly individual activities, only 3 (9.1%) included competition—that is, were activities where each student in the class was directly competing against every other student. The balance of the individual activities (89.9% of the solo activities, 16.9% of the whole corpus) had no significant competitive elements. However, in the group activities, competition was more common. 21 (11.9% of the full corpus, 14.6% of the group activities) contained inter-group competition, while another 10 contained intra-group competition (5.6% of the full corpus, 6.9% of the group activities). In total, 34 of the activities utilized competition—that is, nearly 20% of the activities in this corpus were competitive; conversely, 125 involved some amount of collaboration (70.6%).
On the one hand, 20% may not seem like a very high portion of the corpus. However, two things make me feel that the number is surprisingly high. The first is that any number higher than 0% is “high” in comparison to non-language classes at the university level. That is, a typical university math, science, history, other humanities, etc. course (except a physical education course involving competitive sports) is unlikely to utilize any competitive activities whatsoever—this simply isn’t in the basic nature of tertiary education in Japan. By situating in-class competition solely within English classes, students may come to believe (or have a previously existing belief reinforced) that either international interaction or use of English specifically is an inherently more competitive tact than Japanese people engaging in intracultural communication. Second, there has been some research that indicates that competition may be harmful in developing positive motivation in language learning (see Dörnyei, 1997 for an overview of research on competition, collaboration, and motivation). One worry is that competition can reinforce the idea that there are “good” and “bad” language users (i.e., “winners” and “losers”), and that the “losers” may simply stop attempting to improve once they’ve already been branded a loser. For me, especially worrisome are several lessons that give actual rewards to “winners,” such as candy or extra points, or, even worse, lessons where “losers” are penalized with additional work. 15 I’m concerned about the implicit ideological implications given to students if the only class (or one of just a few classes) that they have that concerns transnational and transcultural interaction is heavily influenced by the idea that competition

15 Also, see the next section wherein I argue that a few physical games involve a potentially more harmful, physical penalty for “failure.”
underpins interaction—I’m worried that this may be reinforcing the notion that the basis of international relations is competition.

One possible offsetting point to my concern about competition is that inter-group competition may be better than intra-group, since inter-group competition implicitly involves cooperation, as each team works together to achieve victory. In a sense, some inter-group competitions can be considered to also be collaborative. However, further examination of specific activities will need to be done to determine how frequently that such collaboration is actually likely to occur—for instance, a game using ad-hoc teams in which one player from each team does a task (such as answering a quiz-game style question), and then all players are replaced with a new member from each team doesn’t really require team building since even though students win or lose as a team, they can’t do anything collectively to improve their chances of winning. Also, it will be worth considering whether inter-group competition strengthens the idea of tribalism—the “us vs. them” mentality that was already seen above in the division of the world between "Japan" and "Other." 16

Additional research is also needed to determine why competitive activities are so frequent. One possible source of insight I intend to pursue is to determine if there is a correlation between the use of competitive activities and the justifications the authors use to argue that their activities have been successful and worth replicating. For example, a preliminary move analysis suggested that two of

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16 Note that even though I am expressing concerns about the use of competitive activities in the language classroom, I sometimes use them in my own classes. In my larger project, I hope to turn my concerns self-reflexively on my own practice, to see how my justifications for including competition are related to those found in this corpus.
the most frequent arguments used to justify the lessons were that they are "exciting" or "fun," and it seems at least plausible that this would also be a reason to use a competitive activity. Once a second, refined move analysis is completed, it will be interesting to see if these moves correlate with particular types of activities.

**Violence and Domination**

Finally, I turn to some preliminary thoughts on the way that issues of violence and domination are represented in this corpus. These topics occur explicitly in only a handful of cases. For instance, one of the "global" activities mentioned above has students watch movies about war or other violence with the intent of seeing how music can be used to set the emotional tone of a movie. However, there are no activities where students directly research, discuss, or otherwise learn about these topics. Based on my general feeling of the types of activities that are published, my guess would be that this is because the most common target student is at the low-intermediate to false beginner stage, and the teacher-authors and/or editors may view serious debate to be linguistically beyond these English language learners. Nonetheless, I do believe that how the lessons are structured can have an indirect impact on how students perceive domination and violence.

Early on in this research, a set of activities triggered a negative emotional and physical response in me. Following my earlier training in feminist rhetoric which recognizes that emotional/bodily/intuitive knowledge can be just as valuable as "rational" knowledge, I sought to determine if I could transform my emotional/bodily knowledge into an explicit, expressible claim that I could explain
to others. The activities that concerned me all involved requiring students to move around the classroom. Two nearly identical activities from 2013 particularly bothered me. In each activity, all students are required to stand. Students are asked a question (questions in both activities are random, and not tied to anything else being learned in the class). The student who answers the question correctly is allowed to sit, while the rest of the students remain standing. The only difference between the two activities is that one is a solo activity (and so continues until every student in the class has correctly answered a question) while the other is a team activity (so it continues until one team has successfully gotten every member sitting).

The problem I have with this pair of activities is that it, at their core, they treat the students’ bodies as the subject of direct, physical discipline, saying that students who are, in whatever way is being measured, "worse" at this particular game are compelled to undergo bodily stress (i.e., standing) until such time as the teacher releases them. While some of the justifications given for having students stand until successful are non-violent (such as, "[having student stand] ensures that one student doesn’t answer repeatedly"), the main argument given is that "The chance to sit down is motivation to listen and participate." While the overwhelming majority of lessons in this corpus are designed and controlled almost exclusively by the teacher (in a minority of cases, students are given some choice over portions of the lesson), these two lessons give the teacher complete control over not only what the students must think and discuss, but also give the teachers control over the students bodies, transforming the bodies into a sort of
stress-inducing device. While it’s obviously hyperbole to call this an act of torture, it shares at its root the notion that people will comply with directives in order to relieve bodily stress. Continuing this admittedly stretched analogy, we might wonder whether any useful, sustainable learning can possibly come from a lesson where the entire structure is "Get some English correct so that you aren't under stress anymore."

To a lesser degree, any activity in which teachers compel students to move about the classroom evoke concern in me, and are fundamentally different from most non-language university courses. I can’t recall seeing, either in Japan or in my own schooling in the U.S., a university teacher in a large lecture hall making students stand up, walk around, run to get information from one side of the room to another, repeatedly change partners, etc. (with the exception of a physical education teacher or a class directly involving physical skills, such as a science laboratory class). Why, then, do language teachers think they are authorized to make this command? As with the competition section above, note that I am not absolving myself—I routinely make students walk around, using activities similar to some in the corpus, such as ones where students have to find others in the class who meet certain criteria by repeating similar questions to most or all of the other students in the class. I do this because I believe students gain something from practicing the same language patterns repeatedly in a short period of time with a large number of different interlocutors...and yet I also see, in some classes, a non-negligible number of students who are highly resistant, and very possibly for good reason. Why do I believe it appropriate to use my institutionally and socially
granted authority as a teacher to simply insist that, even students who are tired or hot or otherwise wanting to remain seated must get up in order to fulfill the requirements of my class? And, what consequences do this have in students future lives, when they have to use English outside of the classroom, presumably with people from other nations and cultures? I do not have answers to these questions about either myself or about the corpus yet; as with the competition issue, I'm hoping that a study correlating the moves in these articles to their pedagogical structure may reveal some possible explanations.

**Conclusion and Discussion**

As discussed above, looking at the details of this corpus does not, with certainty, tell us unassailable truths about either teaching English in Japan or the professional discourse of TESOL teachers. However, seeing the relationship between the linguistic features of the texts, the activities being presented, and educational policy help us to understand how ideologies about not only English language learning but also about identity, nationality, and globalization are created and perpetuated.

The data on nationality and language collectively point to a reaffirmation of the *nihonjinron* philosophy that there are two places in the world: Japan, and the Outside. This "outside" is strongly linked with English, especially with U.S. English and U.S. culture. Several of the articles reinforce the importance of a neoliberal, business-first approach to the world and language learning. Further study is needed to look at other examples in the corpus that deal with business issues that aren't specifically marked as "international" in character. There is some evidence
to suggest that teacher-authors may have shied away from including discussions of complex issues due to concerns about student level, though, as we saw with the endangered animals article, it is important to take care that the combination of simplicity and strict teacher control don’t normalize existing conditions of harm and inequality. In the future, I hope to address related concerns in the way that the articles do and don’t handle gender roles, sexuality, and other sites of potential discrimination, as my initial reading is that there similar problems of normalization of dominant ideologies.

Furthermore, another key step in future research will be to attempt to tease out the connections between these ideological constructs, the linguistic tools used to describe the activities, and the pedagogical structures being presented. I hope to find links between these various aspects of the texts in order to provide clearer insight about what steps the journal editors and potential future authors should take if they wish to consider not only the pedagogical but also the ideological implications of their lessons. I also hope to be able to provide guidance to teachers writing and designing lessons solely for themselves (that is, not for publication), so that they can be mindful of what they are teaching to their students in addition to English.

References


