

Introduction

I would like to focus primarily on Japan, which holds a unique position in Asia, and provides important insights for understanding various methodological, attitudinal, and ideological issues about the uses and users of English. In East Asian region Japan has been one of the first countries to articulate positions about the acceptance of English and an identity with it, and about the rejection of the language and proposing a distance with it. The case study of Japan and its ongoing love–hate relationship with the language has a lesson for us all. A large body of such writing is in Japanese and therefore is not as well-known as it ought to be in Asia and elsewhere.¹ (Kachuru 1997: 68)

For in isolating *beginnings* as a subject of study my whole attempt was precisely to set a beginning off as *rational* and *enabling*, and far from being principally interested in logical failures and, by extension, ahistorical absurdities, I was trying to describe the immense effort that goes into historical retrospections as it set out to describe things from the beginning, *in history*. (Said 1975: xi–xii)

1. Purpose

The aim in this paper is to reexamine Mori Arinori's 1872–73 language reform discourse within a new theoretical framework, and to elucidate his Weltanschauung shaped by his early language experiences at home and abroad. Thus I want to offer an alterna-

tive interpretation of what Mori was really aiming at in his plan for national language reform. The main reason that I will deal with Mori Arinori's philosophy of life in connection with his language use is that, as Braj B. Kachuru (1997) points out in the above quote, if we look at the history of modern (Meiji) Japan, we will find that quite a few samurai intellectuals "articulated positions about the acceptance of English and an identity with it, and about the rejection of the language and proposing a distance with it." Kachuru is doubly right when he says that Japan is one of the first countries that tackled head on the question of the "local politics" of "English as a global language" (Crystal 1997; see also Sonntag 2003); and he also aptly takes up as a starting point for discussion Mori Arinori's discourse on English and Japanese. Mori's idea for the introduction of a "simplified" English into Japan is worthy of remark precisely because it can be seen as an unprecedented attempt at English orthographic reform by a non-English speaking nation in world history. Given the distinct geo-cultural/political position of modern (Meiji) Japan in East Asia, it is well worth examining how Meiji samurai intellectuals such as Mori Arinori looked upon the hegemony of English in the new world order as the crucial part of the "national language" issue in terms of nation-state building (Kobayashi 2001).

While, in Japan, there are some distinguished Japanese scholars (Tsuda 1990; Oishi 1990, etc.) who are interested in figuring out synchronically how the hegemony (or the dominant use) of English has contributed to "language inequality and distorted communication" in international and domestic settings, it would appear that they do not treat Mori Arinori as the first samurai

intellectual who explicitly problematized the politics of the English language for the benefit of non-native English speakers. It is obvious that the historical and diachronic study of the problem of national language in Japan in relation to English linguistic hegemony will help us gain more insight into the essence of the question of a “global” language facing the Japanese today. In order to understand in much greater depth the contemporary relevance of the question of the “big language” for the Japanese in the past, we need to develop our understanding of how the English language came to be historically, geopolitically, and culturally situated in the early development of a new branch of Western Learning in mid-nineteenth century Japan; this is where, as I shall argue in this paper, the modern language recognition of the Japanese had begun in earnest.

In the field of English studies abroad, most of the papers dealing in English with the problems associated with the hegemony of English in the world have more to do with the former colonies of Britain and America; very few focus on the case of Japan.² Recently, however, some serious attempts have been made by foreign scholars (naturally, in English) to reexamine socio-linguistic issues surrounding the question of English in Japan (Stanlaw 2004; Kachuru 1997; Unger 1996). Regrettably, while they bring up for discussion Mori’s proposal for language reform in the early Meiji period trying to understand its historical significance in terms of modern Japan’s political and cultural development, they nonetheless seem to fail to go beyond the socio-linguistic interpretative framework and get at the reason why the samurai-diplomat intellectual had to hammer out new Japan’s linguistic strategy in 1872–

73. Our concern, therefore, is to take a critical look at the established theory on Mori's language reform discourse from a broader perspective, and thereby shed new light on his hitherto ill-famed enterprise.

It goes without saying that his ideas for national language building and education in Meiji Japan have posed many difficult problems (aporias) from the present standpoint of multiculturalism, multilingualism, and postmodernism, and that the down side of his attitude and approach to the issues of modern language and society also needs to be retrospectively examined. However, questions of such a controversial nature regarding the other side of the equation demand a separate study and go far beyond the scope of this paper; here I limit the discussion to reevaluation of the historical and theoretical *mis*interpretations of his language reform discourse and his Weltanschauung.

2. Methodology

Theoretical framework for textual criticism³ of Mori Arinori's English discourses on language

Mori Arinori's 1872–73 discourse on language reform in Japan has long been seen as resulting from his *nihongo pesimizumu* (pessimism over the future of the Japanese language) or *kokugo shouaku setsu* (belief in the inherent inferiority of the Japanese language to the larger languages such as Chinese and English) (see Watanabe 1993; Tanaka 1989). Consequently, it has been generally held to be a controversial proposal for “the abolition of the Japanese and the introduction of the English language into Japan.” Such vague and unreasoned conjectures helped perpetuate the accepted theory

rather than encouraging thorough textual criticism of the discourse by way of re-examination. Such being the case, it is necessary to problematize the old assumption behind the unmerited denunciation of Mori's serious proposal and seek to figure out new ways of getting at the truth of the matter. The conventional study of Mori Arinori, however, only seems to provide an insufficiently limited framework for understanding his linguistic tactics and strategy in the political, economic, cultural, and historical contexts. Whether we can succeed in challenging the long-established theory on Mori's language reform discourse and thereby further extend the knowledge in the study of Mori Arinori in a small yet significant way, largely depends upon the methodology of this new study. To this end, we definitely need to formulate a new theoretical and interpretative framework for making possible an alternative interpretation of Mori's "stigmatized" discourse on language reform in early post-Restoration Japan.

Historical-sociological approach to a case study

This is a historical-sociological re-examination of Mori's Weltanschauung and language experiences within a new theoretical/interpretative framework in which we will attempt to establish our hypothesis. Since historical-sociological approach can and should be hermeneutical in its own right, this methodology, first of all, as Tsutsui Kiyotada (1997: 3) explains, is intended "not to construct a general theory of modernization or social change (such as the theory of evolution) in dealing with the establishment and development of modern society, but rather to interpret the historical significance or to elucidate the cause and effect of individual

cases.” Also, this approach involves using what C. W. Mills (1956) called the “sociological imagination.” Indeed, as Mills cogently argues, “neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both.” After all, it is this sociological imagination that only “enables its possessor to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals.... The history that now affects every man is world history” (Mills 1956: 3–6). For this very reason, the present writer, born and raised and still living in this country, uses the “sociological and historical imagination” to carry out a case study of a samurai individual in late-Edo and early Meiji Japan so as to understand his language-thought and behavior in the context of world history (Yuasa 1996).

Another feature of this historical-sociological approach is that, as Tsutsui (*ibid*: 6) comments, “it borders on many other academic traditions or disciplines,” and therefore, “is open to a wider range of approaches.” To conduct textual criticism of Mori’s language experiences in the late-Edo and early-Meiji periods necessitates incorporating geo-political and cultural perspectives; for Mori was a globetrotting diplomat who put forth his “notoriously radical” proposal for language reform in Japan in light of the international balance of power and a colonial reconfiguration of East Asia by Western nations in the new world system. Thus, it is very important to understand how Mori looked at the problem of language reform in Japan in connection with the “politics of English” (Holborow 1999) as an international language. As Alistair Pennycook (1994, 1998, 1999, 2001) developed English studies by

incorporating the concept of the “cultural politics of English” from the field of cultural studies into the field of applied linguistics in the 1990s, he showed how the global spread of English as an international language causes social and cultural problems in local countries. Pennycook’s works have been instrumental in elucidating in terms of colonialism and cultural imperialism the “politics of English as a world language” (Mair 2003) in its local context, thus further developing the studies of World Englishes pioneered by Braj B. Kachuru (1983, 1985, 1986, 1997), and of English linguistic imperialism propounded by Robert Phillipson (1992).

However, Japan has not been given due attention in the previous works by those non-Japanese scholars engaging in the field mentioned above, chiefly because of its distinct geo-political and cultural history of *kokugo* (the “national” language). In order to fully understand the question of a world language in Japan, we need to develop Pennycook’s (1994) idea of the “cultural politics” of English in former British and US colonies a little further into the “*geo*-cultural politics” of English in relation to the language of Japan (see also Wallerstein 1991).⁴ Only by looking at the historical structure of language in Japanese society from this broader theoretical perspective can we delve into the essence of the question of the national language *and* English in Japan.

Like English studies abroad, the counterpart in Japan, using descriptive approach as its time-honored mainstream methodology, fails entirely to consider the political and cultural implications and ramifications of English (teaching and learning) for modern Japan’s national language building in the midst of reconfiguration of the world (nation-state) system. As a result, few attempts have

so far been made to develop a broader understanding of the Japanese language experiences; the traditional descriptive approach with no theoretical/interpretative framework only makes it difficult (if not impossible) not only to reexamine Mori's thinking on the language of the new Japan but also to appreciate its historical significance and contemporary relevance. For this reason, in conducting textual criticism of Mori Arinori's language reform discourse, we need to use historical-sociological approach so that we may understand the geo-cultural politics of the modern Japanese language in relation to English linguistic hegemony which was prevailing in the world in the mid-and-early nineteenth century. In this light, this paper seeks to comprehend Mori's idiosyncratic linguistic behavior and his *method* and *intention* of language reform in the global and local dynamics of the *beginning* of the new Japan's nation-state building in the new world order, thus interpreting an ideogramic case study of Mori Arinori within a nomothetic or theoretical framework. Therefore, in dealing with the *beginning* of Mori's language reform discourse, we need to adopt the kind of approach that is at once "pragmatic and theoretic." The reason for this is succinctly described in Edward W. Said's *Beginnings: Intention & Method* as follows: "Beginning is not only a kind of action; it is also a frame of mind, an attitude, a consciousness. It is pragmatic—as when we read a difficult text and wonder where to begin in order to understand it, or where the author began the work and why. And it is theoretic—as when we ask whether there is any peculiar epistemological trait or performance unique to beginnings in general. For any writer to begin is to embark upon something connected to a designated point of departure" (Said

1975: xv–xvi).

A historical and sociological study of English studies in Japan

The theoretical underpinnings of this study also derive from a historical and sociological analysis of *eigaku* (*the* English Studies or *the* English Learning)⁵ in late-Edo and early Meiji Japan. In those turbulent days *eigaku* itself served not so much as a purely academic language research rather as a purposeful “area studies” dealing with Western (= Anglo-American) civilization. Area studies almost always involves first learning “local” languages so as to gain an overall understanding of the logos, pathos, ethos, and mythos of the target people from geo-political and cultural standpoints (Nakajima and Johnson 1989). As I shall explain in Part I, for Japanese samurai intellectuals, English Studies at the dawn of the age of *bunmei kaika* (civilization and enlightenment) and *fukoku kyohei* (wealthy nation and strong army) in modern Japan, by definition, was nothing less than the cutting-edge area studies intended not only to recognize the Japanese Self by looking upon the West as the significant Other(s), but also to acknowledge the significant Other(s) as a mirror image of the Self. Consequently, I would like to emphasize that *the* English Studies of the time can and should be treated as a form of what is now called area studies in its own right.

As Yoneo Ishii (1989: 218) points out in *Area Studies and Social Sciences*, “The scholars engaging in area studies tend to choose foreign countries as the target of their study. But this does not necessarily mean that the choice of ‘otherness’ abroad is mandatory in this field; for instance, Japanology by Japanese scholars can and

should be legitimately counted as one of area studies.” In this light, the present writer sees a historical and sociological case study of Mori Arinori’s cross-linguistic/cultural experiences as legitimately subsumed under transdisciplinary “area studies.”

Relevant to Ishii’s claim is Japanese historian Irokawa Daikichi’s prosopographical approach to the nature of the “Japanese mind” (Christopher 1983) in Meiji era. Irokawa regards prosopography as a new way of understanding history, maintaining that “such historical studies would not be a worthwhile and rewarding endeavor in life if you were not driven by a “desire to capture history as it was happening” (Irokawa 1976: 245–246). Irokawa argues:

It is important that we try to capture the essence of the social, political and cultural problems by focusing as a focal point on the psychological, linguistic and behavioral aspects of a particular individual whose interior experiences typify the zeitgeist or the whole spirit of the times in which he or she lived.... Historians can only look specifically at the historical facts as they seek to elucidate the process of the course of events in order to describe the possibilities of an active person or class group achieving their true potential, and the ways in which they acted or could have acted within the bounds of the times. By so doing we demarcate a man’s objective possibility and their perception of the reality, thereby getting at the true nature of the individual or group. (ibid.: 208)

Irokawa further emphasizes the need for a new methodology of the historical studies of modern Japan as follows.

The methodology used in the historical studies of the Western thought will simply not suffice in understanding non-Western countries such as modern Japan which is characterized by its cultural and philosophical hybridity as well as its overdetermined structure of the mind-nature (mentality) of the people. It is clear that an alternative and original perspective and more elaborate research design are required for the historical studies of modern Japan. This is why a number of adventurous approaches are welcome in this field of study today. (ibid.: 240)

Regarding historians' historical imagination for hypothesis-making, Irokawa goes on to say:

Likewise, it is a historian's imagination that propels the development of the historical studies. In this case, his imagination serves as the powers of hypothesizing. In this very process of hypothesis-making lie all historians' concerns about the pressing issues of today. Based on their hypothesis, they dare to attempt to "make an epistemological journey from the present to the past." Working in the field of human science, they take pleasure in exercising their creativity as the powers of hypothesis-making. And they find the pleasure in testing and verifying their hypothesis by way of comprehensive investigation; along the way

they meet many other related people and unexpectedly learn new facts, thus developing their consciousness on a higher plane with a broadened hypothesis and getting at a larger truth. (ibid.: 210–211)

Given the nature of this prosopographical case study of Mori Arinori,⁶ the methodology we shall employ in this treatise is hypothetic-deductive and inductive, or hermeneutic and constructive (on this point, see Takeuchi and Ueyama 1977). As Ishii (1989: 217) argues, “while area studies is to be conducted empirically, we must make constant efforts to propose a hypothesis and thereby construct a theory.” As a matter of course, this methodological process, if applied to discourse analysis in the field of historical sociology, involves seeking hard evidence in authentic primary documents so as to verify a hypothetical proposition theoretically. Indeed, this hypothetic-deductive and inductive method is indispensable to the study of an individual’s political and cultural thought, which falls somewhere between humanities and social sciences. We may recall that this method has much to do with what Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), a founder of American pragmatism, would call hypothetic inference or abduction (Takeuchi and Ueyama 1977; Yonemori 1981). The discourse analysis of Mori Arinori’s language reform, I believe, should be conducted in this hypothetic-deductive (or abductive) and inductive way. Kimura Rikio (1986: 3), citing Peirce as Mori’s contemporary, suggests that after we have generated a hypothesis regarding the abducted image of Mori Arinori, we almost always need to test it by way of both deduction and induction (Interestingly enough, as

we shall see once again in the conclusion of this paper, Mori's Weltanschauung bears a striking resemblance to Peirce's). Using this interdisciplinary approach, we will try to understand Mori's individual experiences in the late-Edo and early Meiji periods in a broader context of the social history of modern Japan and world history.

The English language as a vicarious means of Mori Arinori's English discourse analysis

Finally, I, as a Japanese, write this paper in English in the Japanese discourse community in an attempt to examine Mori's thinking on the English language and his linguistic behavior which can be largely attributed to his early language experiences in his Satsuma student days—especially from *eigaku* or *the English Studies*. This, by itself, is closely connected with the whole theme I deal with in the subsequent discussions; the means has a great deal to do with the end. In order to get to the heart of Mori's Weltanschauung represented and actively projected in his English discourses, the very act of this writer interpreting and writing in English (just as Mori himself experienced the language) will certainly help to relieve his foreign language experience and thus get behind his linguistic strategy in cross-cultural diplomatic settings in mid-and-late nineteenth century Japan. Consequently, this paper is intended mainly for (Japanese and non-Japanese) students at home and abroad of Mori Arinori and English studies, including other students of language and languages in general who are interested in socio-linguistic, politico-cultural issues around English as an international language in modern Japan.

3. Hypothesis

A working hypothesis

This writer's central argument in this study is that Mori's idea for language reform in Japan was the beginning of the building of "Imperial Japanese language" or "*kokugo* (the national language)," and that his scheme for imperial language building is based on the then-popular geopolitical-cultural philosophy of *datsua nyuou* (Leave Asia, Enter Europe [the West]) which implies more than just dissociating the East (Chinese-writing community based on the Confucian ethic) and assimilating into the West (e.g. English-speaking community based on the Christian ethic). It can be argued that Mori had a higher purpose in mind; his hidden agenda was that the new imperial Japan would overtake and *transcend* Western civilization. Thus, Mori's geopolitical and cultural thought on language is best characterized as *datsua nyuou chouou* [= Leave Asia (the East), Enter and Transcend Europe (the West)] in which the new Japan was seen as a site of reconciling the Chinese imperial ideogram-based language and the English imperial phonogram-based language. And a working hypothesis that we want to establish in this paper can be summarized as follows:

Mori's 1872–73 discourses on language reform in Japan involved (1) abolishing the Chinese hieroglyphics from the conventional written language of Japan; (2) romanizing the Japanese spoken language as the new written; and (3) adopting a "simplified English" primarily as a source of new vocabulary. This radical triple scheme for language reform in Japan can be viewed as marking the beginning of

the modern Japanese “imperial language” awareness for imperial nation-state or empire building in East Asia; his unprecedented proposal for the “abolition” (= reform) of both the Chinese hieroglyphic-dominated Japanese written language and the not-completely phonetic English written language, was arguably the forerunner of modern Japan’s counter-hegemonic linguistic initiative in the geo-cultural politics of the Chinese–Japanese–English triad which would emerge as a subsequent site of *kindai no choukoku* (Overcoming Modernity) in the mid-and late-nineteenth century, and culminate in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere governed by *kokugo* (the imperial language of Japan) in the first half of the twentieth century.

It could be argued that Mori’s ultimate aim in his language reform was to create a new language of the Japanese Empire. That there was a shift in the means (tactics) in the process does not necessarily mean that Mori abandoned the end (strategy); whether or not (simplified) English was intended to be introduced into the new Japan, failure in his proposed tactics would not have made much difference in his linguistic strategy for building a new language for the imperial Japan.

Mori’s attitude to the imperial languages of the significant Others was meant to be methodologically ambiguous in the cross cultural-lingual settings: it was strategically dialectic/eclectic, and transcendently assimilative and resistant, which is due in large measure to a triple reciprocation and construction of Self and Other within what I term the Imperial Language Triangle (ILT)—

the Chinese–Japanese–English triad—in East Asia. I would also like to put special emphasis on the fact that there is a direct parallel in his strategic attitude to the introduction of Christianity and the English language into the country without compromising Japanese national and cultural integrity. In order to corroborate my view on Mori’s linguistic strategy, I shall analyze his discourse on religion along the same lines.

By exploring the third space between the imperial languages of Eastern and Western civilizations, Mori strove to find a way of transcending the two big languages at the same time as he sought to form an alternative imperial Self (subjectivity) in the building of the new language of Japan (He was fond of using the term the Japanese Empire or Japanese civilization as against the counterparts of the Imperial Others in the East and the West). Employing the Anglo-American imperial language (=English) instead of the yet-to-be-built Imperial Japanese language, Mori set out to project in the English “discourse community” (Watts 1999) the image of the Japanese Empire or the imperial Japanese nation as an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991) by tracing its history to the mythological ages and thereby mythologizing and substantializing the myth of the Imperial Japan (See also Harris 1981; Hobsbaum and Ranger 1983). The reason why Mori took great pains to represent the new Japan in English-speaking communities is that in the eyes of Westerners he wanted to differentiate Japan from China as a distinct imperial entity. In the same way, he wished to set the Japanese (language and people) apart from the Chinese (language and people).⁷

With the working hypothesis above, we shall take a new and

critical look at the established theory of Mori Arinori's discourse on language reform by reinterpreting it as the beginning of the imperial (modern) Japan's language recognition in terms of the geo-cultural politics of the new Japan in the mid-and late-nineteenth century. In so doing, I hope to make clear how Mori developed his language attitude to the Self and the imperial Others as he contemplated reconciling the differences in strength and weakness between the Chinese and Anglo-American imperial languages in Japan. Given that China is presently reemerging as the "neo-imperial" power in East Asia, this study of Mori Arinori's language reform discourse, I believe, has much greater significance for contemporary Japan's geo-cultural politics of language in East Asia.

The unsolved mystery of Mori's discourse on language reform

It will be useful here to address some unsettled questions concerning Mori's discourse on the so-called "adoption of the English language in Japan" (henceforth AELJ). The biggest question is one of interpreting the incoherence of his logic in the statements about his language reform. Let us now look at the main points that Mori discussed in the following two texts below:

- A. Mori's letter to William D. Whitney (1872)
 - (1) The romanization of Japanese (= the adoption of Roman letters)
 - (2) The introduction of a simplified English
- B. The preface to *Education in Japan* (1873)
 - (3) The renunciation of the romanization of Japanese
 - (4) [No reference to simplified English]

(5) Forecast for the future—“disuse”—of “the language of Japan”

What has been left unanswered and still remains a mystery for us is the missing link between (1) and (2), and the logic behind his reasoning that leads to (5). These questions various scholars have so far attempted to explain, but without a great deal of success. Most interpretations of AELJ tends to echo the view of accepted authorities on Mori Arinori and slide all too easily into the same old argument (or the mere impression) that Mori was an “ultra-Westernized Japanese” who revered the English language and therefore came to entertain such a “wild view” of the adoption of English and the abolition of Japanese in Japan (See Okubo 1944: 46–48). It has been established that since Mori was so obsessed with his idea for the “substitution of English for the national language,” he never “listened to Whitney’s (or anybody’s) advice and tried to push ahead with his plan.”

If we look closer at Mori’s thinking on AELJ, however, we find that there is good evidence to show that that was not really the case: the matter of the fact is that Mori’s discourse had been distorted for political reasons and so came to be accepted as it is today. Lee Yeounsuk is perhaps the first scholar to give attention to the politics of discourse connected with Mori’s AELJ proposal. As for the politically-charged discourse that has gone unchallenged over the past century, Lee (1996: 9) made a scathing remark that “such unfounded inference is nothing but a devious gossip made by (pseudo) intellectuals.” As Sakamoto (1969: 214–215) observed, Mori, the first Education Minister, was abhorred by Shinto priests

who labeled him as a Christian scheming to abolish Shinto religion in favor of Christianity. By the same token, Mori was detested by Shinto-affiliated scholars of the Japanese language; they looked upon him as an “unpatriotic traitor” who sought to do away with Japanese by adopting English instead. In short, Mori was an embarrassment to those priests and scholars. Evidence suggests that they had a very strong motive for launching a propaganda campaign in an attempt to eliminate him from the government. It is worth mentioning briefly its historical background. In the early Meiji period, as Sato Hideo (1979) correctly observed, Education minister Mori was made the target of criticism by Motoda Nagazane (1818–1891), an influential “ultra-nationalist” whose opinion was directly opposed to Mori’s on education in general, especially the matter of religion. This is largely because Mori did not believe in a “state religion” Motoda and his cohorts strongly advocated. What has to be born in mind is that Mori’s death was coincident with the promulgation of the Constitution of the Imperial Japan in 1889, which is too symbolic to be dismissed as just another common occurrence in those days. Mori was stabbed to death at home on the very morning of the ceremony that he was to attend, which ironically heralded the beginning of modern Japan as a nation state. Given the domestic political situation at the time, we can only conjecture that there must have been something behind the killing of the incumbent Minister of Education. While this still remains an unsolved mystery, to follow up this matter further would carry us too far away from the purpose of this paper. Paradoxical and ironical as it may seem, Mori’s primary goal of building an imperial nation-state was only to be realized

upon his own death, which in turn set the stage for establishing a new National Learning, a long-cherished desire of Mori's.

My interest here is not so much in uncovering the political conspiracy involved in the process of the historical formation of the AEJ discourse but rather in looking at Mori's language reform from a new angle in order to find out what it was really about and who misinterpreted it first when and how. Thus, it will be advisable, at the outset, to dissociate Mori's discourse in question from the stigmatic name *eigo saiyō kokugo haishi ron* (a discourse on the abolition of Japanese with the adoption of English, hereafter cited as AJAE). Instead, for the sake of argument, we would like to call it a "Japanese versus English" discourse (JVE); for reasons we shall go into later, Mori's idea for language reform is concerned with Japanese *and* English at the same time; before plunging into an detailed analysis, it is very important to suspend judgment on what Mori meant to do in his plan.

In examining the texts of Mori's JVE, very few scholars have so far placed it in the historical, economic, cultural, and philosophical context. There has been much uncritical discussion of AJAE but little textual analysis done of JVE in terms of its historical significance. Consequently, no attempt is made to provide a more adequate explanation of JVE which throws light on Mori's language attitude to Japanese in relation to English. In her *kokugo toiu shisou*, Lee (1996) discusses Mori's JVE discourse from a historical point of view, although she is interested in dealing with JVE only in terms of Japanese, not English. What Lee is trying to show is when and why and how *kokugo* (an imperial Japanese language) came into being in the Meiji era and "oppressed" Koreans in the

early twentieth century. She treats Mori's discourse as a historical background for her main discussion of the emergence of *kokugo* in the late Meiji period.

Whereas Lee's well-documented argument clarifies the role linguist Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1937) played after the 1890s in creating the Imperial Japanese language based on *kokutai* (the national polity constituted by the imperial institution in Japan), it does not provide any sufficient explanation for the significance of the historical watershed in the 1890s that made a difference in the way intellectuals of the time viewed the language issue in modern Japan. Lee takes up Mori's discourse on language but fails to examine its discursive continuity or discontinuity that could have influenced Ueda's language policy one way or the other after the mid-Meiji period. The problem with Lee's argument is that although she comes close to finding out about the true nature of Mori's discourse, she winds up representing Mori merely as a troubled intellectual who was not sure of his own language and saw no future in “the language of Japan”; there is no mention of the possibility of Mori being a logical precursor of the creation of an imperial Japanese language that was to be subsequently advocated by Ueda. As a consequence, Mori has been overshadowed by the later scholars of *kokugo* such as Ueda whom Lee focuses on as major agents that typified what she calls “modern Japan's linguistic recognition.”

Although Lee succeeded in tracing the beginning of the *kokugo* ideology (cultural and linguistic nationalism) to Ueda, she does not seem to recognize the fact that it was Mori's assassination that cleared the way for the ensuing change in the government's national

and foreign language policies. As Sato Hideo (1979) points out, the conservatives and ultra-nationalists rolled back as Education minister Mori's "enlightening" line of education was terminated in 1889. In the following year, Ueda was sent by the government to Germany to study Western linguistics after which *kokugo* was to be developed; after three and a half years of research, he returned home in order to begin work on the national language project. What happened several months after he came back from his mission was the Sino-Japanese war (in June of 1894), which was to decisively "trade places" with China afterwards as a newly-emerging imperial nation-state.

The first question to be raised here is whether there was any essential difference or similarity between Mori's view of language as a means of civilization and Ueda's perception of *kokugo* as constituting the national polity itself. It is important to note that Meiji saw a qualitative change in the course of Japan's national education; seen from a phenomenological or philosophical point of view, only after Mori was killed by a fanatic was there the government's reactionary transition from a dynamic to static approach to the language issue. Yet it would appear that many scholars pay little attention to its historical significance; they believe that Inoue Kowashi (1843–1895) took over Mori's work after his death, and that Mori had been thinking along the same lines as his successor; in a eulogy Inoue delivered at his funeral, Mori was made out to be a "true nationalist" who would surely approve of the "Imperial Rescript on Education" drafted by Inoue and Motoda—Ueda's language ideology goes hand in hand with their political thought. Sato (1979) considered it open to dispute by demonstrating that it

was Inoue's fabrication: Inoue used Mori as a political justification for their new educational policy. Assuming it to be true, then there should exist the discontinuity of Mori's philosophy of education before and after 1889. At the same time we must not forget that Mori, as we shall see, did view the history of Japan's imperial institution as what Pierre Bourdieu (1991) calls "cultural capital" in Japan. What do we make of this? Was he a "true nationalist" or "more liberal internationalist" (see Umesao 1987: 123–135)? Did Mori have something in common with Inoue in terms of educational reform in some respects? If so, what was it? Could it be that Mori had already paved the way for Ueda's *kokugo* ideology? Or did Mori have his own vision of what education in Japan should be? In order to delineate "modern Japan's recognition of language," we must explore these questions in depth.

Although I recognize the importance of Lee's assertion that the Japanese language took on the imperial ideology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century because of the active involvement of nationalistic linguists such as Ueda in the national language building project, it seems to me that in the first place she leaves out of account many aspects of what triggered the emergence of *kokugo* in the late Meiji period. Her argument fails to explain sufficiently the historical conditions in the early Meiji period that determined the direction modern Japan was to take in the latter part of the Meiji period. Thus, to group Mori and Ueda together as typical Meiji intellectuals who symbolize "modern Japan's recognition of language" is to oversimplify the nature of the dynamics of the language situation in the Meiji era. Lee's otherwise cogent argument would be misleading, for it is apt to mag-

nify only one side of modern Japan's dualistic recognition of the new world. Here I must point out that Lee is wrong in her assumption (if I interpret her analysis correctly) that the primary purpose of Ueda's mission is not to create *kokugo* so as to control and oppress other Asian peoples and their languages. This is not to say, I must hasten to add, that the consequential oppression of modern Japan in neighboring countries should be neither perfectly justified as "inevitable" nor condemned as "absolutely unpardonable." My point here is that it is of great significance to consider historical conditions and geopolitical factors as the cause of modern Japan's dualistic recognition of language. From this point of view, we would like to focus attention to the first half of the Meiji period (when Mori tackled the problem of education in Japan) as a crucial site of the geo-cultural politics of the Japanese language. What I am interested in showing is how Mori Arinori looked at issues to do with languages of the significant Others in the East and the West. I see Mori Arinori as the first Japanese who took up the issue of the geo-cultural politics of English as a "global" language. I would like to stress that Mori brought it up for discussion *in English* within the English "discourse community,"⁸ which in its own right marks the *beginning* of the Imperial Japanese language awareness leading to the Japanese "writing back" to the imperial Other in a foreign language (see Ashcroft et al. 1989).

In the following chapters I would like to question the veracity of the generally accepted view on Mori's discourse on the adoption of the English language in Japan. I will then reexamine the text critically based on corroborative evidence I collected from other writings of Mori and his circle of friends. As I shall argue

later, the key to an unsolved mystery concerning Mori's thinking on language reform is his notion of *setchu-shugi* (eclectic, selective and dialectic approach) and *datstua nyuou chouou* [Leave Asia (the East), Enter and Transcend Europe (the West)]. For the above reason, I limit the discussion on Mori Arinori's strategic language attitude to the big languages (Chinese and English), and thus we are not concerned with how other Western languages (French, German, Dutch, and Russian) acted on the minds of the Japanese intellectuals and ordinary people in pre- and post-Restoration Japan.

4. Outline

This paper consists of the following two parts:

Part I: Before carrying out a discourse analysis of Mori's language reform, we shall formulate a new theoretical/interpretative framework for discussion whereby we can verify our working hypothesis; we aim at defining modern Japanese language recognition as typified in Mori Arinori's idiosyncratic linguistic behavior; first we will be looking at how his geo-cultural and political awareness and his cross-culturally strategic mind was nurtured and developed in the local learning environment in which the super-samurai's Western Learning (especially English studies) was historically conditioned to channel imperialism into building a new imperial language for a new education (National Learning). We will also discuss his *Weltanschauung* behind how Mori understood modernity and strove to overcome it without compromising Japanese cultural integrity. Finally, we will be dealing with what he learned and was

taught by Western thinkers in Britain and how he tackled the issue of imperial nation-state building in Japan in connection with the geo-cultural politics of the British Empire's "Queen's English" in the mid-and late-nineteenth century.

Part II: We shall conduct textual criticism of Mori's discourses on language reform along with other related materials with a view to demonstrating how his true intentions behind the text could have been misconstrued as abolishing the Japanese language in favor of the English language, and how the misinterpretations of his ultimate purpose of the plan were perpetuated and further reproduced until it became a *fait accompli*. We shall further look at Mori's purposeful and strategic language choice and attitude in connection with his other discourses on religion and thereby elaborate on his Weltanschauung and mindset regarding the clashes in the new Japan of imperial languages between Oriental and Occidental civilizations.

PART I THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The Geo-Cultural Politics of English Studies in 1860s–80s Japan: Dialectic Linguistic Imperialism

To get barbarians under control, we must first find out about their game. To know their scheme, we need to become familiar with their language. Therefore, to know their language is to enable us not only to know our enemy but also to control them ... we should establish an institution in which we intensively translate barbarian books and their history into our own language and lay bare their game. And it is to be hoped that we can utilize the intelligence to deal with them in the best way possible....

(Sakuma Shozan 1871: 36–37)

Be proficient in languages for pragmatic purposes. No more, no less.

(Mori Arinori 1864)

The purpose of English learning in Imperial Japan is none other than to reinforce her strengths and remedy our weaknesses. The ultimate aim is to glorify the power of our imperial nation in every nation of the world.... This English-Japanese dictionary will help those learning the English language using the language of imperial nation soar to great new heights.

(Preface to the 1869 “Satsuma Dictionary” by Satsuma students)

In this chapter we will first look from a socio-linguistic standpoint at Mori’s personal language experiences in his formative years in relation to Satsuma’s local education system, and then inquire into how Mori as a globetrotting samurai developed his *Weltanschauung*⁹ in the new world order and how he approached the problem of the national language building in connection with a “world language” in his pre- and post-Restoration periods. In so doing we will place his local language experiences in a larger cultural and historical context of the international geo-politics of the new Japan. In what follows, we will examine, as a starting point, how Mori’s attitude to language was shaped and influenced by his home domain’s local education before he made the world his stage.

1. English Learning as “know-your-enemy” studies

Language education for super-samurai¹⁰ building

Mori experienced the “Western impact” during his formative years as he saw a re-configuration of the world system giving rise to the clashes of civilizations between the significant Others in the East (imperial China) and the West (imperial Britain). As Ivan Hall (1973) points out, the education he received in his Satsuma days played a significant role in developing his attitude to language learning. Mori was born and educated in Satsuma which was famous for its *Gōjū* (village fraternity) and *Zoshikan*¹¹ school education which laid the foundations for the ethos of the Satsuma peo-

ple. At the age of twelve Mori studied the Chinese classics thoroughly at the Zōshikan where he rose to the rank of assistant instructor. Three years later, aside from Chinese Studies, he secretly began to pursue English Learning under the tutorship of Ueno Keikan, senior student of English. After the Zōshikan, at the age of seventeen Mori went on to the Kaiseijyo School (for Western Studies) and majored in English Learning for about a half year until he, as one of the students, stealthily left Japan for Britain on the Satsuma government-sponsored covert mission in 1864. It seems reasonable to suppose that these two written languages (Chinese and English) played a significant role in forming Mori's Weltanschauung. As Hall (1873: 48) says, the Gōjū and the Zōshikan “had trained Mori to read, to think, and to express himself in writing. His later career as social critic and man of letters is unthinkable without that basic foundation.”

Our concern here is the distinctive features of the Gōjū and the Zōshikan education: the tradition of *bun-bu ryoudou* (ways to master both literary and military arts) was part and parcel of samurai's way of life; consequently, the purpose of Satsuma's *bun-bu* oriented education was to “learn to perfect ourselves and to govern others” (Hall 1973: 51). Indeed, samurai's codes of behavior can be regarded as a product of the arts of both self-discipline and self-defense, physical and mental. Thus, education for the super-samurai in Satsuma was cultivated in the soil that would encourage samurai students to combine and develop literary and military arts into a system of learning (Hall 1973: 45).

Moreover, in the days of Mori Arinori's youth, the Gōjū institutions, after having long undergone necessary reforms in line with

the times, were further developed to provide education for building super-samurai intellectuals who could practice *jitsugaku* or Japanese pragmatism to cope with the new reality.¹² In *bun-bu* integrated super-samurai education, language training served as building a “man of character and action” and thus unifying his mind-body in a commonsensical way (see Kaminuma 1979, 1995). As Satsuma domain lord Nariakira’s “gakumon no taihon” (cardinal principles of learning) dictates, “Learning which cannot tear itself loose from literary exegesis and enlighten men on ethics and other practical matters, is as good as no learning at all”¹³ (cited in Hall 1973: 54). What needs to be stressed is that the rationale behind *jitsugaku* was the ethics of samurai that not only control himself as an individual but also maintain and reinforce the order of the society that he lived in. As the Cardinal principles say:

We insist that the essence of education lies in the fulfillment of our most urgent task, which is to serve the sovereign and our parents in a spirit of loyalty and filial piety, and keep ourselves above reproach. To this end we must clarify our sense of duty, and bring moral dispositions into alignment, so that by learning to govern ourselves we may achieve the capacity for governing others. (cited in Hall 1973: 54)

Here it must be noted that “learning as the art of defense” for samurai-intellectuals was intended not only to protect their own domain or country from their enemies, but also to maintain, reform, and develop it as a better society that they deserved to serve. And educating individuals as a unit of the community was

the key to achieving the goals. The educational philosophy in Satsuma put premium on ethics and politics that were designed to develop individual discipline, build esprit de corp, and establish order in the country. It is not surprising, then, that Mori's basic ideas of education—learning and teaching language, native or foreign—should be nurtured by his Satsuma education with its emphasis on the political and moral conscious of students.¹⁴ Education in Satsuma, as Hall (1973: 54) states, was “to be rooted in ethics, and oriented toward politics, in the broadest sense of the term.” As I shall discuss later, such academic training Mori had in his early years was to have a much greater impact on his later discourses on education in modern Japan that deal with the issues of language and religion reforms for imperial nation-building.¹⁵

Equally important is the thought of *jitsugaku* closely connected with his language learning experiences (Kaminuma 1995). The point to observe is that soon after he became well grounded in Chinese and English studies Mori wrote in the style of the Chinese classics his famous “shi tashinamu beki jyojyo” (points to be cultivated by the samurai).¹⁶ One of his personal precepts that we must draw attention to is “gengo tatsuyou made no koto” (Be proficient in languages for pragmatic purposes. No more, no less).¹⁷ What exactly did Mori mean by this statement about his language attitude? For Mori, as I have already suggested, literary arts and military arts were mutually complementary; as with swordsmanship, pragmatic language skill, too, was samurai (warrior)'s way of life. Further, Mori saw literacy as empowering an individual in terms of the art of not only personal but also “national” self-defense/discipline. As Mori's letter to his brother Yokoyama Yasutake reveals,

he firmly believed that it was imperative that samurai change his *raison d'être* or their existential code of ethics “from a small *bu* (individual military spirit) to a greater *bu* (national military spirit)” (SMAZ, Vol. 3: 45–59). Here we have his new political awareness of nation-state building in Japan. What I want to argue here is that Mori’s new consciousness of a greater *bu* (the concept of the art of self-defense for the new Japan), by extension, would lead to a shift in his choice of a medium of education from the Confucian-based Chinese language to the Christian-associated English language. As Inuzuka (1986: 40) points out, the small *bu* had long been dictated by the Confucian ethic so much so that Mori had to redefine his old samurai identity by “washing one’s dirty (conventional, Confucian-bound, feudalistic) soul.” Mori’s later proposal for the abolition of samurai’s sword as the symbol of Confucian-based small *bu* bears witness to his higher principle of born-again samurai in modern times. As suggested earlier, the concept of *bu* (military skills) has a great deal to do with the concept of *bun* (literary skills). As I shall argue, just as Mori had an idea of both small and greater *bu* in his military spirit, so he saw a small *bun* in his literary spirit as a way of building personal character (disciplining oneself), and a greater *bun* as a means of controlling the significant Others (arch-rival nations) as well as building an independent nation-state.

With Mori’s early education background in mind, the basic question we need to ask here is: what was the quintessence of English studies superseding Chinese Studies for super-samurai intellectuals of the time? Now let us inquire into the innermost core of English Learning in the political and cultural contexts.

The Anglo-American studies

The beginning of English Learning in Japan can be traced back to the early nineteenth century when the arrival of the “enemy” ships created the unprecedented national crisis. It all began with the Phaeton Incident in 1808 when the British ship disguised as the Dutch one with the bill of entry illegally sailed into harbor at the port in Nagasaki. The Japanese were shocked by the British invasion of the country. Forty five years later, there was another national commotion created by the US black ship that appeared in Uraga (1853). Viewed in the context of world history, these past incidents in the history of Japan was seen by samurai intellectuals of the day as symbolizing the major shift of the world hegemonic state from Holland to Britain (and America). Indeed, shortly after Mori was born in 1847, there was an Anglo-American hegemony looming over Japan in the 1850s. In 1860, when he began to study English, Britain and America were expanding its geo-political and economic influence over the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans to East Asia. This eventually resulted in the so-called “Western impact” on Japan. Given that the two English-speaking nations (Britain and America) were beginning to secure their supremacy not only in the West but also in the East, the “Western impact” on Japan can be better described as the *Anglo-American* impact.

Indeed, it was this Anglo-American impact that caused the old paradigm of old Western (Dutch) Learning in Japan to give way to a new Western Learning: English Learning. Thus, English Learning emerged as the study of the world hegemonic state in the new world. In short, it can best be described as the study of an enemy nation’s language by way of samurai’s intelligence opera-

tion for national security.

Again, from the viewpoint of Wallerstein's World-Systems Theory, the world was undergoing a dramatic geo-political re-configuration in the 1840s–50s. The symbolic events that took place in the world during the period are: the Opium Wars (1840–42), the publication of Marx's *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), the Arrow War (1850–60), the Taiping Rebellion in China (1853), the Crimean War (1853–56), the Indian (Sepoy) Mutiny (1857–59), the downfall of the Mogul Empire (1858), and many other incidents. In short, this was the age of Western imperialism and colonialism. Against this international geopolitical background, Japanese super-samurai gradually awakened to the realization that they must start jockeying for the position in the new world order. Thus, English Learning emerged as a geopolitical and cultural product of “globalism” in the nineteenth century (See Sonoda 2003).

Given its original nature, the English Studies took the form of the “know-your-enemy” studies that carried on the tradition of the preceding Western Learning¹⁸ (Toyama 1993). The pioneer work in the “know-your-enemy” studies was typified by Hayashi Shihei (1738–93), an enlightened social critic. Sensing a barbarian threat due to the then-current geopolitical reconfiguration at the end of the eighteenth century, Hayashi had already predicted correctly the invasion of foreign ships into the country, which later transpired in 1808. At the age of fourteen, when Mori still devoted himself to Chinese Studies (in 1860), he came across Hayashi's *Kaikoku heidan* [Discussion of the Military Problems of a Maritime Nation (1791)], a most inspiring and enlightening book that dealt with national military strategy and gave warning that the maritime

Japanese nation must build up the defenses and fortify the coasts of the country with barbarian foreign enemies approaching Japan. This book written in the Chinese style is said to turn him on to English Learning for the “know-your-enemy” studies in 1861. In the following year, Satsuma went to war with Britain. In Mori’s eyes, Britain now became a new enemy of Japan. As Inuzuka (1986: 18) points out, this is when Mori, overwhelmed and impressed by the *bu* (military) power of Britain, set out to “seek the source of their strength” in the power of their *bun* (embodied in the realm of science, art and religion) and “find out what is behind Western civilization.” Thus, English Learning was to serve as alternative foreign studies that took on the character of intelligence gathering. Mori’s interest here was not in the purely academic/scientific study of the English language per se, but rather in the geopolitical/cultural studies of “Anglo-American” civilization. As for Mori’s motive for English Learning Hall writes:

Why Mori should have picked English in the first place is nowhere explained. Hayashi’s references to European other than Russians are primarily to the Dutch. Perhaps even before the Kagoshima Bay encounter, Mori may have known enough about Uruga and Canton to realize that in his day the waterborne peril was in great measure *Anglo-American*.
(Hall 1973: 60; emphasis added)

Indeed, there was supposed to be the spirit of small and greater *bun* behind Mori’s language choice. He saw Britain and America (= an offshoot of the former) as Satsuma’s [and the new Japan’s]

potential enemies. As he perceived the new reality, he chose their common language—English—as the wave of the future. Consequently, the English Studies in the 1860s–80s came to function as the *Anglo-American* studies, which was to be at the center of Western Learning in Meiji Japan. Toyama Shigehiko (1993: 31–50; 254–268) explains, Japanese approach to English Learning as the “know-your-enemy” studies¹⁹ urged those super-samurai intellectuals to examine thoroughly the civilization of their new enemies with a view to internalizing whatever it was that they possessed as their strength so as to compliment their own weaknesses. Then, super-samurai intellectuals pursuing English Learning should be characterized not merely as mere linguists but rather as today’s investigative journalists or intelligence experts who worked in the capacity of *keiseika* who often served as politician, philosopher, scholar, journalist, and scientist; they studied the English language not because they were interested in analyzing the internal system of the language purely for academic purposes, but because they eagerly sought to “know their enemy” cross-culturally and politically in order to emulate and beat them at their own game. In short, they were expected to engage in strategic intelligence gathering operations in the English Studies. The following sums up their political conscious in their literary arts:

Since defense against the foreign threat is the most vital business of the day, we must go beyond our Japanese and Chinese texts to achieve a true understanding of the world of the barbarians, and adopt those things in which we are weak and they strong. Government and people in perfect

harmony should expand the Imperial might to check these barbarians of the West. This is the urgent duty of the valiant men of today. Remaining strength should be devoted to the diligent study of Western texts in Japanese translation, so that we may be able to discriminate the worthwhile from the worthless among the customs and artifacts of the West, and make use of them in displaying the Imperial authority towards all nations. (quoted in Hall 1973: 56–57)

Similarly, the essence of the “know-your-enemy” studies at the time is most aptly expressed by leading super-samurai intellectual Sakuma Shozan (1811–64)’s following statement:

To get barbarians under control, we must first find out about their game. To know their scheme, we need to become familiar with their language. Therefore, to know their language is to enable us not only to know our enemy but also to control them ... we should establish an institution in which we intensively translate barbarian books and their history into our own language and lay bare their game. And it is to be hoped that we can utilize the intelligence to deal with them in the best way possible....

(Sakuma 1871: 36–37)

Like Sakuma, for most samurai scholars of those days, studying English meant none other than breaking away from the old (neo-Confucian) paradigm and acquiring the knowledge of the civilization of their new archrivals from the West. They undoubtedly had

a definite goal in mind; they were all eager to read and interpret the meanings behind the English text as they ventured to explore into the unknown world so they could come closer to and unravel the principles and essence of Western civilization; they were curious and eager enough to compete with the Western powers on an equal basis, which is a most striking characteristic of the first generation *eigakusha* (scholars of English Learning).²⁰

Translation as the art of cultural war

As what started as English Learning developed into the full-fledged English Studies, samurai scholars devoted themselves more and more to “knowing thyself” and “learning from thine enemies.” In the Anglo-American studies, the aim of English Learning was to “translate” into Japanese what they understood from the English books as the strengths and weaknesses of their barbarian enemies. With their relativistic critical mind, samurai scholars would cross-culturally compare and contrast themselves with their adversaries in both English and Japanese.

Mori had precisely the same attitude as Sakuma to foreign language learning. Through English Learning he came to see Britain not so much as a barbarian enemy to fight against, but rather as a more civilized enemy from which the Japanese could learn and should emulate. He was well aware that Japan must assimilate into a higher civilization before she could really “beat them at their own game” (on this point see Matsumoto 1994: 243). Interestingly, we can find much the same mindset in Nakamura Naomasa (1832–1891), a prominent Tokugawa government official, who was sent by the shogunate to Britain around the same time that Mori

was studying there. As regards a proper attitude to English Learning as the “know-your-enemy” studies, Nakamura writes:

From what I have been told, Western barbarians have six strengths of theirs: astronomy, geography, arithmetics, mechanical engineering, navigation, and medicine. These sciences are so elaborate and sophisticated that the Chinese are far inferior to Westerners in these respects. That said, Western barbarians, too, are only human. Then why not adopt their advanced sciences and make them our own? It is not wise for us to just sit back and watch them monopolizing the advantages when we now know we are far behind in science. To begin with, these sciences have their origins not in Western civilization: much of the astronomical knowledge came from Egypt; Christianity, their religion, derived from Israelites, not Westerners. These examples are too many to enumerate. This only goes to show that Westerners came to have their advantages as a result of adopting those of the significant others. Although I think Westerners are ugly barbarians, they have learned from other people’s strengths and successfully internalized them as their own. That being the case, the imperial nation (Japanese) should not lag behind them, for we are capable of catching up with, emulating and outperforming those barbarians. (cited in Takanashi 1967: 57–58)

The point to note here is that Nakamura argues for the importance of learning even from barbarians who continued to develop their

own strengths with a pragmatic attitude to foreign cultures (Note the same logic in the aforementioned Sakuma's statement). What is more, as a reminder of the dangers of studying foreign languages Nakamura warns:

However, in translating and learning from foreign books we must bear in mind that Western barbarians learn the Chinese language and read Chinese books not because they attach themselves to the Chinese way of life, but because they aim to have a good grip of the trends of the times and take stock of the whole situation in China so that they may turn things in their favor. The Japanese scholars of Western Learning should have the same attitude as that of those Western barbarians engaging in Chinese Studies.

(cited in Takanashi 1967: 58)

What Nakamura suggests is that Japanese students of foreign languages should learn from their enemies who adopt a right approach to the "area studies" of China for more strategic purposes. It is worth pointing out, in passing, that although Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* is well known as the first academic book published after World War II that relentlessly elucidates the cultural and behavioral patterns of the Japanese, it was in fact a product of the U.S government-sponsored "area studies" of Japan for military purposes. The history of such area studies of Japan, however, goes back to the mid-nineteenth century when Commodore Perry's black ship arrived in Japan. Perry was convinced that in their version of the "know-your-enemy" studies, Japanese lan-

guage learning was a prerequisite for controlling Japan. As the admiral clearly states in his *The Personal Journal of Commodore Matthew B. Perry*:

A long time will elapse before any full and authentic account of their (= Japanese) internal laws and regulations will be obtained; certainly not until we can establish men of intelligence in the country in the character of consular agents, merchants, or missionaries who, to enable them to make any progress, should acquire a knowledge of the language. (Pineau 1968: 180)

What is important in this connection is samurai intellectuals' mind-set nurtured in the Anglo-American studies where English language learning was required to "know their enemy" in exactly the same way as Americans did with the Japanese around the same period (see also Samuels and Weiner 1992). This is how super-samurai scholars who pursued English Learning such as Mori and Nakamura developed their mind-nature in conducting the English studies. Now it should be obvious that when Mori wrote the precept "Be proficient in languages for pragmatic purposes. No more, no less," he meant that language—native or foreign—should be studied not merely for pleasure and self-indulgence but for building super-samurai's character with the spirit of *bun* as an integral part of the art of *bu*. Recall here the above-quoted Nakamura's plea for strategic language attitude: "The Japanese scholars of Western Learning should have the same attitude as that of those Western barbarians engaging in Chinese Studies." In this view,

Mori's personal admonition with respect to language learning can be seen as reminding himself of the danger of falling into what might be called "lingo-cultural snobbism" which makes students of foreign language too much obsessed with an exotic way of life and its literary and cultural prestige associated with it.²¹

Most importantly, the fact that samurai scholars of the English Studies engaged in active "translation" from the language of the Anglo-American Empire into their own points to the essence of their mind-nature: they assumed a *counter-civilizational* attitude to the enemy's language. Indeed, Mori's counter-civilizational language attitude was nurtured in the English Studies in Satsuma in the 1860s. It could be argued, then, that Satsuma's education based their Western Learning on the geo-cultural politics of language in the world. The reason that Mori decided to learn English instead of Dutch is apparently because he had a counter-civilizational attitude to the hegemonic language in the new world order as he increasingly felt the need to build a new nation-state with "a new language" in Japan.

It is clear by now that the English Studies in Mori's young days was in a state of flux and dynamic in that it attempted to explore into the unknown world and to create a new civilization of its own. As I shall argue in the next section, there was a dialectal and overdetermined structure of samurai intellectuals' language thought in late- nineteenth century Japan. To further develop our understanding of Mori's personal precept regarding language attitude, which was written down in Chinese characters while he was concentrating on the English Studies, we need to understand the dynamics of the English Studies in a larger context of the geo-cul-

tural politics of Satsuma vis-à-vis the Tokugawa government.

The geo-cultural politics of learning in Satsuma

The English Studies in mid-nineteenth century Japan was a new Western Learning that originally emerged as the “know-your-enemy” studies. Simply put, it was the studies of the new world order of “barbarians” that people viewed Westerners as. The super-samurai in Satsuma saw the English or their enemy “barbarians” possessing arguably the biggest imperial language in the West, namely English. While a number of historical facts pertaining *eigaku* (the English Learning) in the nineteenth century has been chronologically well-documented in the historical studies of English education in Japan, very little research has been done from a social-historical linguistic perspective on super-samurai intellectuals’ shift in *eigaku* approach from one that was primarily aimed at “beating Western “barbarians” at their own game,” to one intended to emulate Western “civilization and enlightenment.” No attention at all has been paid to the process of how super-samurai intellectuals transformed their mind-nature or attitude to English, the language of their worst enemy nation; now they began to look upon it as the language of civilized nations which they once viewed as that of barbarians. Here it is important to keep in mind that when the geopolitics of Satsuma supported by Britain and the Tokugawa government backed by France was developing in the late-Edo period, what Thomas Kuhn (1962) called “paradigm shift” was taking place in the epistemological transformation of the nature of knowledge through English Learning (= studies of the Anglo-American Empire).

As I suggested earlier, the English Studies was started upon the Western impact as the “know-your-enemy” studies intended to provide super-samurai intellectuals with literary arts for pragmatic (military and industrial) purposes. But the nature of English Learning was soon to change in the course of time. A brief look at the following chronological table helps us to understand how the Japanese established the institutes for English Learning as a form of intelligence bureau for studying their enemy nations.

- *1808 Phaeton Incident (the arrival in Nagasaki of a British ship disguised as Dutch one)
- *1811 Bansho wagegoyo (Institute for translating *Barbarian* Books into Japanese)
- *1839 Bansha no goku (Imprisonment of the Companions of *Barbarian* Studies)
- *1847 Mori was born in Kagoshima
- *1853 The arrival of US black ship in Japan
- *1856 Bansho shirabejyo (Institute for the Investigation of *Barbarian* Books)
- *1862 Yosho shirabejyo (Institute for the Investigation of *Foreign* Books)
- *1863 *Kaiseijyo*: Tokugawa Institute for *Enlightenment*.
- *1864 Satsuma *Kaiseijyo* was established
- *1865 Mori set sail for Britain as an appointed student
- *1868 Meiji Restoration

Here we can clearly see that the early *eigaku* started as the know-your-enemy/barbarian studies. And it came to be later called

“institute for enlightenment” which would “function mainly as a full-fledged governmental agency for military science; the whole program offered in the institute was primarily based on English Learning that covered a wide range of subjects such as astronomy, geography, mathematics, as well as other branches of science that deal with products, instruments, refining, fine arts, and type founding” (Nihon Eigakushi Gakkai 1976: 77).²² What is of most significance is the 1862 watershed in their perception of English Learning. It would appear that English learning as the “know-your-enemy” studies transformed itself from Western barbarian studies into Western civilization studies. Apparently, this epistemological paradigm shift occurred just as the political thought of the time in Japan was mutating from the “revere-the-emperor-expel-the-barbarians” into the “open-the-country-and-compete-with-the-civilized” line. This suggests that super-samurai intellectuals began to view their potential enemy not so much as lesser barbarians to beat, but rather as violent yet more advanced people to emulate, thereby distinguishing themselves from the significant Other in a new way. Here we should draw attention to the fact that Mori was born and raised and educated in the middle of this epistemological transition period of Western Learning, and that he started learning English in the very early 1860s when English was being regarded as the language of their archrival nation: Britain.

There is one further point we must not ignore in terms of the geo-cultural politics of language learning in late-Edo Japan. In the 1860s, Satsuma, Mori’s home domain, was emerging as a counter-imperial power against the Emperor-approved Tokugawa government. It is well known that soon after British merchant Thomas

Blake Glover (1838–1899) arrived in Japan in 1859, Glover and Co. supplied arms to the domains of Satsuma and Choshu, centers of antishogunal activities. Choshu concluded an alliance with Satsuma in 1861 as they both independently continued to study carefully their old enemy (the Tokugawa government) as well as their enemy's enemy (Britain) for intelligence gathering.

A few years later, in retaliation for Satsuma and Choshu samurais' anti-foreign violent acts, there was a Kagoshima bombardment (1863) by British warships and another one in Shimonoseki Straits (1864) by a combined Western fleet of seventeen ships (nine British, three French, four Dutch, and one American). But it was not long before Satsuma and Choshu came to terms with Britain and other Western nations; strategic reconciliation with their enemy's enemy meant tactically concentrating their energies on overthrowing their long-standing foe: the Tokugawa Shogunate.

If we now return to the mind-nature of super-samurai intellectuals in Satsuma, we need frequently to remind ourselves of their language education for super-samurai building because of the geo-cultural politics of the marginal domain and the Tokugawa government in a rapidly changing world. It is noteworthy that in 1864 Satsuma established *Kaiseijyo*, a counterpart of the Tokugawa government-run school of Western Learning, which was called exactly the same. The fact that the school was intentionally named after the Tokugawa government's "intelligence agency" clearly indicates that in so doing Satsuma's super-samurai intellectuals decided to take a counter-Tokugawa line so as to secede from the old Japan (Inuzuka 1986: 18–19). Like the Tokugawa school, Satsuma's counterpart taught a wide range of special subjects such as" the

arts of army and navy artillery, warfare, maneuvering, castle-building, as well as other courses including astronomy, geography, mathematics, surveying, navigation, machinery, shipbuilding, physics, analytic chemistry, and medicine.” As Hall (1973: 47) notes, “*Kaiseijyo* (Western Learning Institute) which was to perform the same function as the Tokugawa government’s *Bansho shirabejyo* (Office for the Investigation of Barbarian Books). Incidentally, the layout of the Zōshikan was a “smaller copy of the Shoheiko in Edo.” Again, all this suggests that Satsuma began to position itself apart from the central government with the view of overthrowing it and instead creating the new Japan for themselves.

As Inuzuka (1986: 21) points out, the year 1864 was a turning point for Satsuma in many respects. Not only did they build *Kaiseijyo* in 1864, but there was also an anti-Tokugawa movement rapidly growing among such influential super-samurai as Komatsu Kiyoyasu, Saigo Takamori, and Okubo Toshimichi who played a key role in governing the Satsuma domain. The point to note here is that it was against this political backdrop in 1864 that Mori entered *Kaiseijyo* and majored in English Learning and wrote the famous personal precepts, one of which encapsulates his language attitude that says “Be proficient in languages for pragmatic purposes. No more, no less.”

In 1865, one year ahead of the Tokugawa government, Satsuma sent the select students (including Mori) to Britain as the counter-Tokugawa measure. As Inuzuka comments:

The purpose of Satsuma’s sending students to Britain is that they felt the urgent need to learn Western cultural and mili-

tary arts—especially naval science—and to promote friendly relations with the enemy country; they did so with the true intention of the latter outweighing the former. That is, it was *because of their anti-Tokugawa motive* that they dispatched a goodwill mission to strengthen the ties of friendship with Britain.” (Inuzuka 1986: 24; my emphasis)

Added to this, Satsuma decided to form a military alliance with Choshu against the Tokugawa government in 1866. Furthermore, in 1867 the Satsuma domain participated in the World Exposition held in Paris in rivalry with the Tokugawa shogunate which was supposed to represent Japan overseas. Here we can see that there were Satsuma and the Tokugawa government trading places in terms of international geo-cultural politics. As has been noted above, they both concurrently redefined the once-barbarian studies (English Learning) as the new platform for enlightenment and civilization between 1863 and 1864; although at the beginning both parties believed in the same cause of “expelling the barbarians and revering the Emperor.” In 1863 when Satsuma was defeated by Britain, those super-samurai intellectuals decided to found a Western Learning school of their own (*Kaiseijyo*) in emulation of the Tokugawa Shogunate as they changed their stance from anti-barbarian to anti-Tokugawa. What needs to be emphasized from the standpoint of the cultural politics of Satsuma, the Tokugawa Shogunate, and Western nations is that in the early 1860s Satsuma came to modify their political tactics from *sonnou jyoui* (“revering the Emperor and expelling the barbarians while keeping the country closed”) to *sonno kaikoku* (“revering the

Emperor, opening the country and associating with the civilized Western nations).” As Inuzuka (1986: 2) points out, this whole phenomenon can be viewed as the process of transformation of the Emperor-centered national polity, which once had to be defended and maintained against foreigners as the *absolute flag to die for*, into the *relative flag to capitalize on* in the interests of the parties involved in the intra/international geoculture and geopolitics.

Here we must draw attention to the fact that there were trilateral conflicts arising from the power struggles among Satsuma, the Tokugawa government, and Britain, which in turn gave rise to the parallel construction of the geopolitical position of Satsuma and their attitude towards language learning in relation to their significant others. *Kaiseijyo* was a place where their know-your-enemy studies (English Learning) was conducted; the English language was not only Satsuma’s enemy (Britain)’s language and what another enemy (the Tokugawa government) studied as the language of their potential enemy. Consequently, conventional Western Learning with its emphasis on Dutch Learning was to include English Learning in both *Kaiseijyo* in the Tokugawa government and Satsuma. For Satsuma’s super-samurai, English Learning was none other than a means for projecting a new reality which would allow for epistemological transformation needed to adapt to the changing domestic and global environments. In developing their thought on language, Chinese Learning was instrumental in providing them with feudalistic and idealistic/ideological ethos as against Western values, while Western (English) Learning helped inculcate anti-bakufu and pragmatic ideas into them. In this way, their strategy for language learning would incorporate Chinese

Learning and English Learning as a dual and dialectic site for generating a higher platform that would allow them to shift their position legitimately from anti-foreigner to anti-bakufu to pro-Anglo-Saxon depending on the changing social and political circumstances.

What needs to be further clarified is that it is the structural dynamics of Chinese Learning in contraposition to Western Learning that dialectically combined the Confucian ethos of *taigimeibun* (one's flag to die for) with the pursuit of practical knowledge of the most advanced "enemy" nations in the world. All this, as I shall argue later, led to the resurgence of National Learning in between, which strongly advocated the patriotic slogan "revere the emperor, expel the barbarians." More important is the fact that Satsuma found in cultural nationalism an opportunity to use the imperial flag to die for as a cause for turning the conventional ethnocentric and anti-barbarian National Learning into the patriotic yet more liberal one that would open the imperial nation to a higher civilization. Indeed, not only did Satsuma form an alliance with their biggest enemy from the West (Britain) so that they might overthrow the Tokugawa regime and thereby build a new country trying to break away from the Chinese (Confucian) ethics, they were also willing to strive to learn from their enemy's strengths with the aim of outstripping the British Empire. And it was the then-current stream of *eigaku* thought propelled by emerging Japanese imperialism that necessitated and determined Satsuma's dual approach to the intra/inter-national "geopolitics and geoculture" (Wallerstein 1991).²³ Their strategic attitude to English Learning as the "know-your-enemy" studies played a pivotal role in relativiz-

ing the old Other (the Chinese Empire) in the East and the new Other (the British Empire) in the West as it helped establish the new Self (the Japanese Empire) in the geo-cultural politics of Satsuma in the new world system. That is, it would allow the new leaders to challenge the “national politics” of the imperial Self vis-a-vis the imperial Others. This in turn led those super-samurai intellectuals to seek a new National Learning whereby a new language and knowledge were to be sought after.

2. Channeling imperialism into a new National Learning

In order to bring about a greater understanding of Mori’s language attitude and choice, it is very important to understand the historical significance of the geo-cultural politics of the English Studies as a new branch of Western Learning. What Mori was seeking in his choice of English over Dutch was a new paradigm that would open up a whole range of possibilities in the new realities unfolding before his eyes. Furthermore, English studies as a new learning was to go further beyond the realm of the conventional Western Learning; it was meant to open the way toward a new National Learning. Of particular note here is the philosophy of (language) education in Satsuma which had long continued to promote not only Western Learning but also a “new National Learning” (Yoshiga 1971: 707–710; Okita 1992: 51–110). As Hall explains:

If the purpose of education was to create men of character, with new political awareness and new capacity for political involvement, then its content *required a drastic broadening in*

the direction both of native Japanese studies and of Western Learning. (1973: 55; emphasis added)

This can be confirmed by Satsuma lord Nariakira's educational policy.

The academic tradition of the Zōshikan has adhered to the teachings of Chu Hsi exclusively, *neglecting the historical annals of our own native land*. Some, I have heard it said, go so far as to despise Japan in their adulation of China and try to do everything in the Chinese fashion. That is a frightening mistake.... *We ought to establish an Institute of National Learning in which the ways of our native land may be studied, supplemented by Chinese- and Western-type subjects, with a set of school regulations defining relative priorities in the curriculum.* (cited in Hall 1973: 56; my emphasis)

Japanese and Western studies, both urgently recommended in addition to Chinese studies in Nariakira's Exhortation, were to serve each in its own way.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| (1) Zōshikan | (Institute for Chinese Learning) |
| (2) Kokugakukan | (Institute for National Learning) |
| (3) Yōgakukan | (Institute for Western Learning) |

What we have here is the dynamics of what might be called "dialectics of Japanese Learning: *kokugaku* or National Learning was to be reinforced and developed by Chinese Learning and

Western Learning; it would be enlarged to embrace the old with the new to form a higher learning. The point to note is that the geo-cultural politics of National Learning envisioned by Satsuma lord Shimazu Nariakira must have been inculcated in such a serious student as Mori Arinori. As Beasley (1990: 25) says, “Japanese [National] learning encompassed all the rest, including Confucianism and Buddhism. This left room for Dutch [Western] studies, especially scientific ones, to be assimilated, not rejected”. *Kokugakukan*, a school for the study of National Learning within the *Zōshikan* was effectively promoted with appointment of Godaiin Mihashira, a disciple of (radical nativist) Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843) who claimed to be a pupil of Moto-ori Norinaga (1730–1801), one of the most influential scholars of National Learning in Japan. Indeed, lord Nariakira was cognizant of the need for a new National Learning. He maintains:

In coping with the actual conditions of our contemporary world, we can no longer rely as in the past on the sole guidance of our official Confucian scholars. It has become impossible to rule the realm properly without opening our eyes widely to the world around us. The time has come to permit communication with foreign countries and to enter broadly upon intercourse with the entire globe. It is of the foremost importance that we exhibit our national power by embarking upon relations with the outside world. *To this end we must firmly establish the national polity, make good our weak points by learning from others where they are strong, undertake vigorous military preparations, and promote our shipping*

capacity. *If we follow this policy, the prestige of our Imperial realm will shine throughout the world.* It is with this aim in mind that I wish to establish our academic instruction upon a broadened base of scholarship.

(cited in Hall 1973: 55; my emphasis)

and

As radical nativist Hirata Atsutane put it in 1811, “Japan is the land of the gods and we their descendants.... Japanese differ completely from and are superior to the peoples of China, India, Russia, Holland, Siam, Cambodia, and all other countries of the world.”

(quoted in Beasley 1990: 24–25)

As I shall explain later, Mori’s stance on educational and language reform was inspired and driven by the philosophical ethos of the imperial nation in Satsuma, which triply based all their Learning, Chinese, National and Western, upon *jitsugaku* (pragmatism). It is worth mentioning, in passing, that Satsuma’s Western (English) learning can be viewed as designed to emulate the following three enemies: the Tokugawa shogunate, China, and Britain. Thus, the geo-political and cultural ethos behind English Learning in Satsuma helped simultaneously and dialectically redefine both the Self and the Others by unlearning what they had understood in the Chinese-dominated paradigm and learning instead what they could absorb out of the English-dominated paradigm. In this way, English Learning in Satsuma was to set the stage for creating a new

language for a new National Learning in which the imperial nation would be embodied in late Meiji. To put it another way, the essence of English Learning in Satsuma was made explicit in its “comprehensive political and moral philosophy” of the imperial nation which required that conventional logos (language) and ethos (religion) for old national polity be replaced dialectically by new logos and ethos for new national polity so as to provide a new education for a new imperial nation.

There is evidence to show how Mori attempted to go about the dialectic pursuit of power in the new imperial Japan. Mori found in education the key to rebuilding the nation in the new paradigm. In making an official declaration of the new Japan’s determination to adapt to a higher civilization, he compiled *Education in Japan* in 1873. In it he argues that the building of the new imperial Japan as a nation-state requires a new education that allows for new knowledge construction and accumulation through a new language and religion. This discourse is an all-important exposition of Mori’s Weltanschauung primarily because he wrote it in English, outlining the *dialectic* development of the history of old and new Japanese imperialism against Chinese and Western (British) imperialisms—hence, dialectic Japanese imperialism. The theme recurring throughout his treatise revolves around the internal dynamics of imperial regime change in relation to the imperial Others in the East and the West; it underscores the historical legitimacy of Japanese civilization by focusing on domestic upheavals leading to (1) restoration and re-legitimization by the new forces (Satsuma and Choshu domains) of the national polity (imperial genealogical line) in Japan²⁴ (thesis); (2) the declaration of imperial Japan’s national

independence from imperial China²⁵ (antithesis); (3) the announcement of imperial Japan's potential competitiveness in the new world of Western imperialism (synthesis).

Satsuma (a major force in the new Japan)'s relativization of the imperial Others at home and abroad would lead to the growing awareness of a new National Learning that pivots around the new imperial flag to die for. And a new sense of National Learning would allow them to develop their imperial subjectivity with a critical attitude to the studies of the imperial Others: Chinese Learning and English Learning. Taking another look at their own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of the Others' in the "know-your-enemy" studies, pragmatic super-samurai intellectuals considered building a new imperial language for a new National Learning. As they relativized the legitimacy of the (imperial) Chinese language embedded in the language of Japan, they tried to incorporate the (imperial) English language into the linguistic fabric of the country. Given the geo-cultural politics of Japanese language-knowledge building in imperial Japan, the development of national imperialism necessitated establishing a "new National Learning" for the Japanese Empire; it was the logical conclusion of the simultaneous relativizations of Chinese imperialism that had long legitimated Chinese Learning and Western imperialism that now legitimated Western (Dutch and English) Learning.

As observed earlier, the education Mori received in his Satsuma days placed a high premium on pragmatism, and generated public service-minded and political consciousness. As previously noted, Satsuma lord Nariakira keenly realized the importance of strategically creating a new identity of the new Japan in the world's

nation-state system. This is the reason why Nariakira strongly recommended that they “go beyond our (old) Japanese and Chinese texts to achieve a true understanding of the world,” and that a new National Learning requires reexamining a native language while engaging in a new Western Learning (English Learning) so as to build a whole new language of Japan for the benefit of the whole new nation. Thus, both English Learning and Chinese Learning now became indispensable catalysts for a new National Learning. Equally important, Chinese Learning in Japan had long been instrumental in setting the stage for Western Learning as well as Japanese Learning; the studies of Chinese civilization had defined the Japanese strengths and weaknesses as well as mirroring the imperial Self against the Western imperial Others. To put it another way, Chinese Learning in Japan played a key role in functioning as a catalyst for reflecting the old world order in recognizing the new world order. As Murata suggests:

(T)here are ample grounds for seeing Westernization in Meiji Japan as a realization of the Chinese order in altered form. Watanabe Hiroshi points out that for Meiji advocates of opening Japan, the West itself acted as the real “China.” The Civilization and Enlightenment movement reenacted progress toward this “China” from a barbarian state, a desirable outcome even for the Chinese order itself.... In other words, Japan had always been highly conscious of its own marginality in its historical relations with China. Once Japan had selected the West as the new focus of its “China” model, it was able to reorganize itself quickly and

easily into a nation-state without having to question its fundamental view of civilization. (Murata 2000: 32)

If we take a closer look at the process of modern Japanese language building, we will find that there were the dynamics of Chinese and Western and Japanese studies being generated as a consequence of cultural conflicts of old and new languages in the midst of the clashes of Oriental and Occidental civilizations in late-Edo and early Meiji Japan. It can thus be argued that the two major foreign imperial languages of the East and the West—Chinese and English—had served as “catalyst languages” of what Koyasu (2003) calls *hukahino tasha* [inevitable significant Other] for the creation of a new National Learning as well as the building of a new language of Japan. Simply put, a new National Learning was to emerge as a result of the Chinese Learning model being dialectically mirrored and applied in Western (Dutch English) Learning. Then, it may safely be assumed that it was the learning environments in Satsuma that Mori first nurtured the idea of establishing a new National Learning that would take advantage of both Chinese and English Learning for the benefit of a new education in Japan. In what follows I shall examine from theoretical and hermeneutical points of view the ways in which Mori’s linguistic behavior had operated within the paradigm of Satsuma’s three-tiered language education that would lay the groundwork for the subsequent dialectical development of Chinese Learning and English Learning into a new National Learning by means of a “new language” of Japan.

3. New Japan's tactical approach to a higher civilization

Eigaku performance in action: Cultural diplomacy

It was Mori's *eigaku* performance in action that contributed a great deal to paving the way for a new National Learning in Japan. This is best exemplified in Mori's English publication of *Education in Japan* during his stint in America in the early 1870s. This can and should be understood as an official declaration of the new Japan's national project for creating a new National Studies. Why and how did Mori decide to write in English and publish the book abroad first? Why in America? Why not in Europe? What was his motive? In order to answer these questions, we first need to clarify where Mori resided as he made major moves on his cross-cultural journey.

The first and most important fact that we have to bear in mind is that Mori was a globe trotting super-samurai diplomat. His cultural shuttle diplomacy, private and public, or at home and abroad, was to make a difference in his cognitive mapping of the international geopolitics and geoculture of Japanese civilization in the 1860s–80s. The fact that Mori's first overseas travel to Britain was on a steamship speaks for itself.²⁶ As Sonoda Hidehiro (2003) demonstrates in his *The Beginning of Voyage Around the World: the Origin of Globalism*, the practical use of steamships made it possible to connect the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean to bring the “globe” into being in the literal sense of the word. With the advent of globalism, the super-samurai intellectuals became more and more sensitized to the geo-politics and geoculture of Japan in the “global” world; they began to realize the fact that Japan can be

seen as located in both the Far East *and* the Far West on the global extension of Asia and Europe. In short, Japan, located both in the East and the West as a periphery nation, was unconditionally required to open her mind to the new world where she had no other choice but to turn into the country which could challenge her significant Others. Putting in action his *eigaku* performance in cultural diplomacy, Mori set out to study the strengths and weaknesses of Japan's enemy nations while at the same time trying to overcome her own weaknesses and let the world (international community) know her own strengths. With this background in mind, let us take a closer look at where and how he took action in such *eigaku* performance. The following is the chronological table of diplomat Mori's geo-cultural political locations in the new world order:

Where Mori Arinori (1847–1889) Lived and Worked

1847–1865 Satsuma (in Old Japan)

1865–1866 Britain

1867–1868 USA

1868–1870 New Japan (Meiji Restoration)

1871–1873 USA

1873–1875 Japan

1875–1878 China

1878–1879 Japan

1880–1884 Britain

1884–1889 Japan

Here we must draw special attention to the geopolitical positions

Mori took as a diplomat-politician in his lifetime. The point to observe is that Mori spent one third of 42 years of his life with a mission abroad; as the chronological table above shows, more than half of the last half of his life after 1865 was spent in shuttling between Japan and the significant other countries. Thus, Mori played a significant role in cultural diplomacy in the 1870s–80s. More noteworthy is the fact that Mori’s overseas experience began and ended with Britain over a span of twenty years. This clearly suggests that Britain was seen by many super-samurai to be Japan’s number one “enemy” (rival) nation. Closely connected with this is the fact that Mori moved from Britain to America and vice versa while placing China in the middle. This indicates that the new Japan was trying to approach the United States and China in such a way that she could facilitate later talks with Britain and secure a better place in the Western (Anglo-American) geopolitics. Therefore, in looking at what he stated in his English discourses, it is very important to locate the texts within the context of his geopolitical maneuvering in cultural diplomacy.

While representing Japan in America, Mori spoke and wrote in English most prolifically between 1871 and 1873; his important works were intensively published during this period.²⁷ All these discourses made during the 1870s(–80s) should be seen as the diplomatic products of his personal and collective acts of translating into English the Japanese views on both the Self and the Other, which was a typical example of traditional *eigaku* intelligence operation by super-samurai intellectuals. For Mori, translation in the English Studies had to be *interactive* representations in Japanese as well as in English of both Western and Japanese civi-

lizations for geocultural and geopolitical purposes. Therefore, Mori not only encouraged samurai-intellectuals to translate English into Japanese but also took the initiative in speaking his Japanese mind to the Anglo-American discourse communities. Indeed, the opening gambit for Mori's *eigaku* performance in cultural diplomacy in the early 1870s was a publication in Washington, D.C. of *Life and Resources in America* (1871), the first full-fledged study by the Japanese of the United States of America (Van Sant 2004: x). Again, it must be noted that it was a cultural and political product of Mori's (language) behavior propelled by the English Studies which served as the "know-your-emeny studies. The preliminary note to *Life and Resources in America* disclosed Mori's intended purpose of the book as follows:

The knowledge furnished by all the better qualified minds of the world, is a powerful element, rendering great service in the cause of humanity. It is often the case that enmity and bloodshed, are the consequence of storing up prejudices, resulting from the want of mutual knowledge of the parties engaged. The object of this publication, is not only to aid in removing those prejudices, but also to invite all the lovers of their race, in Japan, to join in the noble march of progress and human happiness.

(SMAZ, Supplementary Vol. 1: 5)

Here we can see that Mori firmly believed that "mutual knowledge of the parties engaged" would help toward removing racial prejudices. Added to this, equally important is the italicized indication

on the facing pages of the book which says, “*For circulation in Japan.*” Considering the place of publication, it was supposed to be intended for the Anglo-American readers. So it may sound a little strange when it says that it was also meant to be circulated for the Japanese readers. What should we make of the fact that he wrote and published the book in English in an English-speaking country when he wanted both the Anglo-American peoples and the Japanese people to read it?²⁸ It would appear that what Mori was aiming at was enlightening both sides on the importance of mutual understanding for diplomatic reasons; he was trying to draw attention from both sides at the same time as he created cross-cultural space where the “twain shall meet in English.” This might give us a clue as to why Mori attempted to maintain a geo-political and cultural position by simultaneously representing the Self and the Others in English. The same is true of the successive publications in the U.S. of *The Japanese in America* (1872), *Religious Freedom in Japan* (1872) and *Education in Japan* (1873).

One further point to be raised here is why Mori engaged in *American* studies instead of *British* studies. As previously mentioned, it was because of Meiji Japan’s strategic diplomacy that Mori set out to take advantage of the U.S. bargaining power so as to gain a more competitive edge in the geo-cultural politics of the Japanese Empire against the British Empire.²⁹ In order to find out why Mori began to study America on a large scale in his English Studies after 1871, it is very important to understand the historical significance of the year 1873 in terms of the international geo-cultural politics of the British Empire and the United States of America. If we look at the year 1873 from a historical perspective,

we can see it as marking a very significant transition period in world history. History suggests that the nineteenth century saw the world hegemonic shifts from France to Britain to America. According to the World System theory propounded by Emmanuel Wallerstein, after the British Empire emerged the United States as a new world hegemonic state in the late nineteenth century. As Waterstain writes:

One of the basic structures of the capitalist world-economy is the cyclical rise and decline of “hegemonies” within the world-system.... The story of the third of the hegemonies, that of the United States, may be best be started in 1873, the beginning of the so-called “Great Depression” of the nineteenth century, the moment after which one could say the era of British hegemony was over. (1991: 3)

The above historical view on the structural change in the world system is worthy of note, because it suggests a possible connection between the new Japan’s 1873 approach to the United States and its hidden agenda for challenging the British Empire in a broader context.

Furthermore, we must not overlook another event that simultaneously transpired in 1873 when the new Japan officially declared the eclectic adoption of Western solar calendar in Japan by way of spatial and temporal transformation. In the introduction to *Education in Japan* Mori states:

By a recent decree, the Western calendar has been adopted

in Japan in all particulars excepting as the names of the months, for which numbers are substituted, commencing with January. We have, therefore, since the first of January just passed, come into a new relation with Western civilization. (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 186–187)

Of particular relevance here is the simultaneous fact on the year 1873 that as the new Japan decided to enter the West, she concurrently made an official breakaway from the Chinese Empire³⁰ (Ko 1995: 20–31; 217–219). Indeed, in East Asia, Chinese hegemony was over when Japan, as Ishikawa Kyuyo (1999: 198–199) suggests in his *A Nation with a Dualistic Language: Japan*, officially terminated the long-standing Sino-Japanese tributary system in 1873 by abolishing *sanpai kyuhai* (compulsory bowing ritual conducted when a foreign guest was presented to the Chinese Emperor); this political decision was tantamount to Japan’s declaration of independence from China. This is, as Ishikawa points out, a moment when the “Japanese Empire” stood on an equal footing with the Chinese Empire. As Murata (2000: 25) says, “The nation-state system first appeared in East Asia as a challenge to the tribute system of imperial China.” All this goes to show that the new Japan virtually attained independence from China in 1873 as an imperial nation-state that began to challenge China’s hegemony and instead establish her supremacy over East Asia.

The question that needs to be clarified here is how this geo-cultural and political synchronicity affected Mori’s cross-cultural approach to language. What this suggests is that Mori’s 1872–73 idea for language reform points to the possibility of the conven-

tional Japanese language developing dialectically into a new imperial language that forms a trilateral relationship with the two other imperial languages of the Chinese Empire and the British Empire.

It is also interesting to note that as Kawakatsu Heita's explanatory model of the global economic development of maritime nations suggests, Britain and Japan underwent a similar secession from the continent of "Asia" when Japan left "Chinese Asia" in just the same way Britain broke away from "Islamic Asia" (1996: 215). Kawakatsu goes on to argue that these two nations' secession from the continent of "Asia" are closely connected with British and Japanese ethnocentric (imperial) views of their own civilizations as the highest in the world. Viewed in this historical context of the global geopolitics, as Kawakatsu (2001: 22) observes, "Modernization means involving both Britain and Japan (as maritime imperial nations) expanding and creating new civilizations via the "Asian" Seas in a contest for supremacy and seeking the status of the old (French and Chinese) civilizations of the Eurasian continent."

Based on Kawakatsu's theory I would like to carry my own argument one step further. At the turn of the nineteenth century, just as the British Empire had left Continental Asia, she also began to secede not only economically but also geopolitically/culturally from the continent of "Europe" whose civilizational ethos was represented by Latin/French culture. And the British Empire (along with America) continued to expand its imperial sphere of influence into the continent of China in the mid-nineteenth century. Then there was the clash in East Asia of old and new "civilizations" between the East and the West. Among the imperial nations involved were Britain, China, and Japan. Here we can find an

inevitable current of history in which the new imperial Japan was forced to find a way to challenge Western (Anglo-American) civilization and Eastern (Chinese) civilization at the same time. Thus, this would as a necessary corollary lead Meiji Japan to attempt in the long and medium terms to de/un-Easternize (de/un-Chinese) and de/un-Westernize (de/un-Anglo-Americanize) the country so that she might create a higher civilization than those of rival imperial nations in the East and the West.

Considered in the light of the “world system” theory, we can see the year 1873 as triply symbolic of the end of the Chinese Empire’s hegemony in East “Asia,” the beginning of the decline of the British Empire’s global hegemony, and the U.S. emergence as a new hegemonic state in the world. This is why the new Japan decided to capitalize on the on-going reconfiguration of the world system and chose the United States as the strategic platform for negotiating the Japanese voice through the language of the Anglo-American communities; they were looking to win over Americans first and thus gain a more bargaining power in later talks with Britain which had the last word on the issue of revision of unequal treaties with Japan. For modern Japan, successful revision of treaties would mean becoming independent not only of all the imperial Western nations involved, but also of the imperial China being colonized by the West. Thus, the leading samurai Japanese were attempting not only to relativize and emulate not only China (and the Chinese language) as the old imperial Other (and their language), but also in the long run to emulate and surpass Britain-led Anglo-American communities and (the English language) as the new imperial Other and (their language). What we have here

is modern Japan's geo-cultural politics that can be best described as "Leave the East, Enter the West, Challenge and Transcend the Imperial Others" (hereafter called LEEWCTIO).

As we have already seen, diplomat Mori continued to shift his geopolitical positions with Japan as he shuttled between the imperial nations in the East and the West: Britain/America, China, and Japan. In what follows, let us examine how his idea of LEEWCTIO was expressed in his English and Japanese discourses made as he changed his location in cultural diplomacy.

The key to getting behind Mori's world view that most reflects his LEEWCTIO approach lies in the introduction to *Education in Japan* (1873). Given that America then was way ahead of Britain in language and educational reforms, it is not surprising that in 1873 he displayed in America (not in Britain) his LEEWCTIO attitude to the issue of language education in Japan. (Apparently, Mori realized that in order to reform Japan and surpass the British Empire, Japan must emulate America, a newly-emerging hegemonic state in the new world that was in the process of emulating Britain.) As Hall (1973) points out, *Education in Japan* is "probably one of Mori's most revealing English discourses that unfolds his Weltanschauung embracing his broad overview on the history of imperial Japanese civilization." This treatise should be considered as an all-important exposition of Mori's personal Weltanschauung, not only because it was written by himself in English, but also because what is disclosed in the discourse represents his grand vision for imperial nation-state building. As we shall see in the subsequent discussions, it is mainly concerned with the cultural/ethnic/racial strengths as well as weaknesses of Japanese civiliza-

tion, in which we can find much of what shapes his Weltanschauung embracing the super-samurai's *mythos* (national history based on mythology, *ethos* (pragmatism), *pathos* (patriotism), and *logos* (enlightened views on the science of language and religion). All these he attempted to express in English in the English discourse communities. As observed already, this can be seen as a super-samurai's linguistic behavior at the cutting edge of *eigaku* performance. (It is in this discourse published in the English discourse communities that Mori would advocate the "adoption" of a "new language" as well as a new "religion" required for creating a "new National Learning" of the new people, by the people, for the people, which we shall examine closely later.

What we are concerned with here is the connection he makes in the discourse between the methodology of educational reform in Japan and the mythology of the Japanese Empire. The most arresting feature of Mori's historical view is found in his descriptions of the evolution of old and new Japanese imperialism/civilization against Chinese *and* British imperialisms/civilizations. Here we can see his idea of LEEWCTIO as underpinning Japan's dialectic counter-imperial and anti-civilizational approach to reforming education in order to achieve the national slogan as expressed in the Meiji government-issued *gokajyo no goseimon* ("charter-oath of five articles") that says: "Wisdom and ability shall be sought after in all quarters of the world, for the purpose of firmly establishing the imperial domination." Thus, education, Mori believed, furnishes the key to building an imperial nation-state that could stand on an equal footing with hegemonic states in both the East and the West. For this very reason, Mori considered

it necessary to expatiate on the legitimacy and superiority of the Japanese Empire in connection with the potentialities of the new education in Japan.³¹ Mori begins the introduction to *Education in Japan* by mythologizing the beginning of the Japanese Empire as follows:

The history proper of the Japanese Empire stretches over 2,532 years, and begins with the year of ascension to the throne of the Emperor Zinmu, the first sovereign who definitively established the empire. Her dynasty, until the present time, has suffered no change, and is therefore *the oldest in the world*. (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 134; my emphasis)

There are two fundamental things that never should be separated from the throne; its great constitution and its great authority. Since the establishment of the empire, the imperial dynasty has been one and the same, and it will so continue forever. Every portion of the land, and every one that lives, are of the throne. This is what we call the Great Constitution. No one will be allowed to hold any property in land without the imperial authority. This is what we call the Great Authority. (ibid.: 178)

[T]he unification of the power of the nation in the hands of the emperor, so that Japan might become strong enough to stand as an equal in the face of the nations of the earth. (ibid.: 173)

The point Mori tries to highlight here is that the Japanese Empire is the oldest in the world; therefore, it is perhaps one of the most legitimate imperial nations. Ten years later, while he assumed his post in Britain as an official representative of Japan, Mori once again disclosed much the same view of the history of imperial Japan as follows.

It is a fact that, since the time of Emperor Zimmu—2,544 years ago—Japan has never been subjected to any foreign rule; the same Imperial Dynasty has remained in sovereignty even to the present time, the throne being the center of our national existence; and that these two facts have been so cherished in the hearts of my countrymen, as to create in them a profound and unqualified respect for the Imperial Throne, and a peculiarly strong love for our country. (ibid.: 407)

I do not know how it is, or what it is that causes this intense attachment of the Japanese to their country—an attachment which neither time nor distance can weaken; but I think that two of its great causes are—first, the fact that for twenty-five centuries Japan has never passed beneath the rule of a conquering race—for all that period Japan has been free and unconquered, and that fact is one which we always remember with pride; the second is that during that same period—for 2,500 years—we have remained under the same dynasty. For a time, it is true, the representatives of that dynasty were overshadowed by the power of com-

manders-in-chief, whom you incorrectly call the Tycoon, but the dynasty survived, and it is once more in full possession of powers. No other State can point to such a record, and it is but natural that we should feel a pride in our country—pride that makes us smile with amusement at the idea that our importation of steam engines, telegraphs, or Parliaments can in any way affect our Japanese heart.

(SMAZ, Vol. 1: 436)

Again, the main thrust of the discourses above is that the Japanese Empire is undoubtedly the oldest civilization in the world on the grounds that the imperial lineage has since ancient times been unbroken and never been conquered by foreign nations. As we shall see later, the theme of unbroken and unconquered imperial Japan often recurs in his other diplomatic English discourses concerning the unique strength of the nation. Mori chronologically focuses on the imperial genealogy in connection with evolution and revolution in Japanese civilization, which has progressively caught up with and transcended a higher (model) civilization (from China towards Western nations). This view of his can best be summarized as what might be called “dialectic Japanese imperialism” developed by the geo-cultural and political thought of LEEWC-TIO within the clashes of the old and new civilizations.

The methodology employed in Mori’s tactics for realizing his strategy of LEEWC-TIO can be found in his discourses on “imperial Japan’s time-honored eclectic cross-cultural adaptation,” which is closely connected with the geo-cultural and political thought of the archrival-emulating English Studies. In the introduction to

Education in Japan Mori asserts as follows:

The highly-developed condition attained on the (Chinese) continent in various departments of art, science, literature, and also in religious sentiments and ideas, found ready appreciation in Japan. (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 143)

Among many peculiar and interesting characteristics of our people, the most remarkable was their noble and appreciative disposition with which continental civilization was received. Not only were its benefits appreciated, but so ready and apt was then our nation as a pupil that it soon equaled its master in the versatility of its knowledge, and our whole race, morally, became identified with that of the Asiatic continent. (ibid.: 146)

Mori also restates the idea three years later (1876) when he was appointed as an ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to China:

If our ancestors were still living they would without doubt do exactly what we have done in regard to this very simple business of changing costume. Our ancestors about a thousand years ago, adopted the Chinese costume as they then found it better than one they had. It is one of our national characteristics to readily take in anything that is both good and beneficial. (SMAZ, Vol. 1: 337)

On the contrary we are quite proud of the change. It was never forced upon us but was made entirely at our own free voluntary will. I am happy to say that my nation is, and has been, so well disposed as to readily take in all things that are deemed good, from any quarter whatsoever, Asia, Europe, or America. (ibid.: 378)

Furthermore, when he took his appointed post in Britain seven years after his stint in China, he made the same comment as follows:

It is a fact that from early times Japan has possessed an aptitude for appreciating, and readily making use of, foreign ideas, manners, and things; and that this aptitude of Japan has enabled her to rise to, and in some respects, to surpass, the state of civilization attained by the neighboring countries; —in former times, Japan largely engrafted on her political institutions many features belonging to the highly developed systems of her Asiatic neighbors, and, at the present time, she has already commenced a similar process, as regards the systems of her European and American neighbors. (ibid.: 408)

Before he left Britain for Japan, he spoke about the cultural strengths and its superiority over and over again.

But, I don't know how it is, whether from the genius of our nation, or from whatever other cause, the Japanese have

ever been prompt to appropriate whatever is best in foreign nations. Hundreds of years ago they imported from the Corea or China their arts, their costumes and much of their Constitution. Down to within the last three hundred years the facility of assimilation, or imitation if you like to call it, continued to be our great characteristic. Three hundred years ago a change was introduced. The feudal system was established, and remained stationary and shut up within herself. But at the close of that period she shook herself free from the burden of feudalism, and assumed her old national role.

and

People imagine here that Japanese during the last ten or fifteen years is a new thing to us. It is, on the contrary, but a return to her historical role, the only difference being that, whereas we formerly borrowed from the East, we now borrow from the West. It is not an unworthy policy to take that which is best from all worthy nations with which we come into contact. That has been our policy in the past; it is our policy to-day. You think that this importation of ideas and institutions from foreign and alien civilizations will weaken and impair our strength. I have too much confidence in the Japanese heart. Go all over the world, take any Japanese you like, no matter how Americanized or Europeanized he may be, and you will find in him the same stout heart which beats in the breast of every native

of Japan.

(ibid.: 435–436)

All these discourses above clearly show that Mori held a strong conviction that the Japanese imperial polity-centered approach to cross cultural interaction would almost always make a difference in importing whatever is good from abroad so as to create something Japanese out of foreign civilizations, be it Chinese or Anglo-American. The conventional wisdom we find here might be called “eclectic cross-cultural adaptation” which, as I shall argue later, would have a great effect on Mori’s thinking on language reform in Japan. In Mori’s view, imperial Japan’s eclectic cross-cultural adaptation would no doubt make for the LEEWCTIO approach to relativizing other civilizations and incorporating foreign elements into Japan with its cultural and national integrity intact.

In addition to the long-standing national polity that had comprised the integrity of the Japanese race, there is another important element that came into play in the development of the English Studies as super-samurai intellectuals’ vehicle for eclectic cross-cultural adaptation; it was super-samurai’s *kigai* (spirit of independence, self-respect, and personal honor that made it possible for them to propel their English Learning into action with a well-defined purpose in mind. A notion that I find useful in conducting an in-depth analysis of a super-samurai’s *kigai* is what Francis Fukuyama (1992a) calls *thymos* or “spiritedness” that produces human “desire for recognition.”³² Fukuyama argues that “an understanding of the importance of the desire for recognition as the motor of history allows us to reinterpret many phenomena that are otherwise seemingly familiar to us, such as culture, religion,

work, nationalism, and war” (ibid.: xix). And he goes on to suggest that the evolution of world history has been driven by human *thymos* which consists of *isothymia* (desire to stand on an equal footing with others) and *megalothymia* (desire to excel others). These two concepts go a long way toward explaining well the ethos of modern Japanese statesmen and intellectuals who believed in *bushido* (the code of samurai). Indeed, the soul of the warriors derives from *kigai* (the Japanese ethos equivalent to *thymos*) which dictated their behavior as moral imperatives (Nitobe 1989: 157–165; see also Fukuyama 1992b: 19); Meiji government’s goal was to rank equally with and surpass the imperial Others (China and Britain/America) in every way. Thus, it may be said that super-samurai intellectuals’ *eigaku* performance based on “honorific individualism” (Ikegami 1995) was intended to transform the Japanese into a nation with the highest civilization by capitalizing on the dialectic dynamics of the imperial Self and the significant imperial Others.

Meiji Japan’s national slogans such as “enrich the country, strengthen the military” and “civilization and enlightenment” were coined and propagated by super-samurai leaders with their eyes set on the inter-civilizational competition for equality and supremacy. They were giving serious consideration to the question of how long it would take to overtake and outperform the Western great powers. To this end, the government decided to dispatch the Iwakura mission to America and Europe in 1871–1873 in order to size up the major powers. According to *A True Account of the Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary’s Journey of Observation through the United States of America and Europe*, the official reports of

the inspection tour in Britain, the Iwakuwa Mission came to the conclusion that “Even in Europe it was only after the nineteenth century that a number of wealthy people came on the scene. And still, as far as we can see, it took only forty years for them to reach where they are now.” As Kawakatsu (1999: 115) points out, “They returned from the observation trip with the prospect that it would take about one generation for Japan to overtake Western powers. We can read their sense of rivalry between the lines in the official reports.” Here we must notice their spirit of emulation and “counter-civilizational attitude to Western civilization. This is exactly how Mori felt about the geo-cultural politics of the new Japan in the 1870s. In an interview with Li Hongzhang (1823–1901; a Chinese general and leading statesman of the late Qing Empire) which took place in China in 1876, Mori was asked by Li how he looked at the question of the introduction of Western elements into an Asian nation. Then he clearly expressed his view as follows.

That is a very great question. It is, I should say, a question concerning the competition for supremacy between the races and the religion as well as for intelligence, power, and wealth between two of the great divisions of the world (= Asia and Europe). (SMAZ, Vol. 1: 379)

Note that Mori regarded the competition for supremacy between the races as a fact of life. While in Britain, he talked of the competition of commerce as nothing less than a “war”:

You ask me about standing armies, and the impression which is on the Oriental mind by a continent converted into an army camp. That spectacle, I am free to confess, impressed far less than *the war of commerce* which, under the name of “competition,” goes on unceasingly. In military warfare there is sometimes peace. You have truces and treaties, and you have intervals during which nations abstain from armed strife. But the war of commerce never stops. The competition of nation with nation for the monopoly of the trade and industry of the world is constant and cruel. (ibid.: 438; my emphasis)

Upon returning from Britain to Japan, he commenced directing the people’s attention to achieving the highest civilization and so winning a victory in the war called “competition” in the arenas of national diligence and education:

I am of the opinion that there is nothing we do everyday in Japan today that could not be regarded as a war in the face of international competition; we have the war of commerce, the war of knowledge building (national education), the war of individual and national independence that would make Japan a good country in the world. If we were satisfied with Japan having its place in the international community at the very bottom of its hierarchy, then we would have nothing to worry about and thus no need to prepare for such wars. The Japanese Empire would only continue to decline in spite of its name. Japanese men with

the samurai spirit must work harder and harder so that our country, if now a third-class nation, may become a second-class power in the near future; if now second-class, then she aspires to becoming the first-class; and finally she will be the world's leading nation. (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 346–347)

To let the people know the fact relative to the international status of Japan, Mori began to go on the road around the nation, visiting governmental and educational institutions and speaking in public repeatedly about the importance of acting in recognition of the impending national crisis:

How powerful is our country compared with other nations in the world? To answer this question we need secondary and tertiary education. Some of you in the audience may have overseas experiences and know something about foreign affairs. Others may have read foreign books or have heard about what is going on outside the country. In short, although it is difficult to know exactly what status Japan has in the world community without finding out about foreign countries, now it is common knowledge that our country does not have class or commercial power, nor do we have enough experience in international diplomacy. It goes without saying, therefore, that in order to compete with other nations we need to conduct diplomatic activities more actively while promoting domestic industry and developing commerce. Yet perceptive observers will realize that conventional education falls short of achieving our

goals.

(ibid.: 409–410)

If you want to know why we need secondary and tertiary education today, all you have to do is simply look at whether Japan is powerful in comparison with other countries and where Japan stands in the world now. Although Japan adopted other approach to retaining the power of the nation in the period of national seclusion, now that we have opened the country and joined the international community, it is urgent that we do what is necessary to achieve independence in reality and in name and maintain national prestige.... Sad to say, the reality is that Japan is way behind the advanced nations and still has a long way to go.... In spite of difficulties before us, we have no other choice but to make a concerted effort to go forward undaunted; there is no way we can't do it if we take two steps forward when they take one; if they take ten steps, then we take twenty.

(ibid.: 424–425)

How do you think we are doing in this competition? Where do you think we are in the world in terms of national progress, compared with Europe and America? To be perfectly honest and plain, the people do not realize the hard fact that Japan still has a long way to go before she catches up with them. We have to admit that that is where we are now and we are going to start from there and strive to rank with them in the world of universal competition.

(ibid.: 442)

Given the present national power, it is too risky for us to participate in the universal competition in the world. If we fail to develop our nation, we are only left with two options: Japan will either be annexed by foreign countries or become an “independent protectorate. (ibid.: 447)

All these quotes suggest that Mori felt a pressing need to educate the people in such a way that Japan as a new nation would achieve political, economic, and cultural independence and thereby stand on an equal footing with other advanced nations in the “universal competition in the world.” In Mori’s *Weltanschauung* as exemplified in the above discourses can be found his blueprint for the future of Japan; he expressed his belief that the new Japan should and could reach the highest level of civilization in the new world order. As he declares in his letter to Whitney:

[T]he people of the Japanese Empire, aspire to attain *the highest degree of civilization, but are unprovided with that great essential to their individual as well as national progress, —a good language —*. (ibid.: 56; my emphasis)

Of particular importance here is his reference to the connection between the realization of his grand project and the necessity for a “good language” for individual and national education. In the next section, then, we shall examine ways in which Mori adopted the LEEWCTIO approach to the development of a new language for imperial nation-state building.

4. Confronting modernity through a new imperial language

From geo-cultural and political standpoints, Meiji Japan was located in the sites of the clashes of the old and new civilizations between the East and the West, which inevitably led to the linguistic-epistemological clashes of imperial languages between ideographic and phonogramic languages: Chinese and English. Thus, language reform movement emerged as one of the most urgent problems associated with modernization (or Westernization) of the country; to establish national education necessitated unifying the spoken and written language. Without what Mori implied by a “good language” that unifies the people, nation-state building would not have been possible. The new Japan as a nation-state was to meet the challenge of seeking the third way in the geo-cultural politics of Chinese and English linguistic imperialisms, thereby forging a new national identity (intersubjectivity) through a new imperial language of its own. As we shall discuss later in Part II, Mori’s language reform discourse was all about creating a superior language for a higher civilization in a struggle to deconstruct in its own way the civilizational hegemony of the significant imperial Others. As we have seen, the tactical methodology Japan adopted can best be encapsulated in the concept of “dialectic linguistic imperialism” driven by LEEWCTIO. (By “dialectic” here I mean strategically assimilating and resisting for a higher purpose). This can also be viewed as the new Japan’s counter-hegemonic linguistic initiative or Japanese counter-linguistic imperialism in the geo-cultural politics of the imperial languages of the Self and the significant Others. The politics of

LEEWCCTIO demanded that the new Japan develop its “dialectic intersubjectivity” as belonging to both the East and the West or neither the East nor the West. Thus, the new Japanese nationalintersubjectivity hinges on the dialectic interaction with their “significant Others.” As Murata (2000: 29) points out, the “formation of national self-identity begins with the designation of an adjacent Other as the indispensable second party between which a line of distinction can be drawn between “Us” and “Them.” Murata goes on to argue:

Historically, Japan had always been conscious of its marginality in the Chinese sphere of civilization. Even when claiming cultural superiority over China, Japan could not create a positive identity for itself without reference to the Other of China. Without question, the eighteenth-century nativist discourse that sought to replace China with Japan as the center of civilization (Japanese-style Chinese ethnocentrism) served as a prototype for modern Japanese nationalism. However, even as its proponents sought to avoid submission to the weight of Chinese civilization, they were still in the end bound by the center-periphery relationship, unable to exercise from their subconscious the role played by China as a mirror. (Murata 2000: 33)

My argument here is that modern Japanese reflexive recognition of the Self against the perception of China as the significant Other was dialectically developed by pitting the image of the “West” against the China’s; in order that the new Japan might deal with

the “West” and its civilization represented by the British Empire, The “East” had to be redefined as replacing the civilizational center of imperial China with that of imperial Japan. As Yamaszaki Masakazu (1987: 140) points out, the idea of “Asia” (= the East) was “ironically discovered as a result of the “West” denying the Self,” which has much to do with what Edward Said (1979) called Orientalism. Modern Japan rediscovered the Self at the same time she found the “West” by dissociating herself from the Western image of “Asia” which is represented by imperial China (Kano 2001: 30). When Irie Akira (1966: 171) states that “Japan’s diplomatic policy has often been dictated by the concept of “Japan belonging between East and West,” it means that modern Japan has long taken the geopolitical and cultural position that belongs in both/neither the East and/nor the West. Thus, the Japanese image of the Self was doubly symbolic; it mirrored the reciprocating images of the significant imperial Others in the East and the West. Thus, it is Japan’s geo-cultural politics that inevitably entailed creating “dual imperial intersubjectivity” or a new national identity created by the dialectical interaction between two imperial/civilizational systems expanded by the Chinese and the British Empires in East Asia. Regarding the role of China as Japan’s civilizational mediator, Murata states:

Neither Chinese nor Japanese nationalism developed within a strictly binary relationship with the West. Rather, they were indelibly imbued by their regionally specific historical context.... In the Japanese case, late Tokugawa and early Meiji cultural contact between Japan and the West was con-

tinually mediated by the Other of China. (Murata 2000: 28)

The point to observe here is that it was through China as the intermediary Other that the “West” was discovered in Japan. At the same time, China was relativized as a consequence of the discovery of the West, through which the Japanese rediscovered the Self as a mirror for both the East and the West. More importantly, the recognition of Japan as the Self against the significant imperial Other was initially induced by the discovery of her own indigenous language. When much of the conventional knowledge had been constructed in the world of the Chinese classics and its hieroglyphic characters came to be relativized by the knowledge of the new world provided by Western Learning and its phonogramic symbols, there was a new awareness of their native language growing among samurai-intellectuals in the movement of National Learning. Harootunian (1980: 17–19) discussed the reflexive role of the Chinese language in helping the Japanese discover their own language:

China functioned as a reminder of Japan’s centrality. In fact, the premises governing the Chuka/barbarian opposition were reversed; the resulting classification represented transformations from one side of the opposition to the other. Much of this made possible by resorting to a new kind of linguistic strategy; nativism, in its call for a return to the pure meaning of words, acknowledged the failure of representing reality with “Chinese” words. Indeed, their whole quest was to dramatize how language itself, elevated

to a privileged position by Confucians, serving the task of representation, ascribed to itself a transparency it could never hope to achieve. Discontent took the form of a new “human science” which they called *kokugaku*. In other words, nativists, like many other Confucian colleagues, had perceived the problem of ascribing to language a privileged status as instrument of representation, and thus the disparity between the world and the knowledge men might have of it. They assumed that language was a thing like other things, with no special position, since all were the creation of the deities; since language was like anything else, to assign it the task of representing the world of things, as though it might perform the task adequately, was a profound mistake. This criticism of language was manifest in their attack on Chinese Learning and in their ultimate celebration of “wonder,” silence, the things that could not be said or explained.

Regarding the denial of the Chinese spirit behind Chinese Learning in the process of the discovery of the Japanese spirit in the native language of Japan, Harootunian goes on to explain:

In this sense Japan functioned as the opposite of China, just as what was essentially pure and real (nature) functioned as the opposite of what was authentic functioned as the opposite of what was inauthentic. Despite the nativist denunciation of the “Chinese spirit” (*Karagokoro*), the attack was not prompted simply by an inherent dislike of China, but

rather by the linguistic strategy itself. Their view of China was merely another way of saying that life could no longer be represented by words in eighteenth-century Japan.... The obvious consequence of this strategy was to see Chinese as different from Japanese, and therefore to designate all Japanese as similar to each other by virtue of their common origins.

The point to observe here is that the Western impact on samurai intellectuals not only gave rise to relativization of China but also led them toward the seeking of a “different modality of representation” (= their own language). Harootunian clearly sums up the point as follows.

Japanese writers in the late Tokugawa period had first to make sense of China in terms of the epistemological and linguistic strategies available to them. Thus China was seen increasingly as simply an instance of decline.... Okuni, by referring to China as *shina*, had already shown how far it had been removed from its earlier identification with civilization and excellence. For most late Tokugawa writers, China was simply one more country among the nations of the world, constituting differentiation in one sense, as England, America, or France represented differences, but a nation just the same, like all others. To reach this kind of conclusion was possible only in so far as writers could appeal to a different modality of representation. (ibid.: 29–30)

Thus, the discovery of the Japanese indigenous language and its spirit in *kokugaku* (National Learning) made the Japanese cognizant of their imperial subjectivity. This epistemological and linguistic change should be understood in the geo-cultural politics of Japan; it was the Western impact that caused the Japanese version of Chinese ethnocentrism to generate Japanese (linguistic) imperialism which reacts against Chinese (linguistic) imperialism. An important point to note here is that there was the trilateral reciprocity of Western Learning, Chinese Learning, and National Learning coming into play when the Japanese attempt to seek and identify their own national subjectivity.

Modern Japan's linguistic recognition must be discussed within this interpretative framework that embraces the geo-cultural politics of the Japanese imperial linguistic subjectivity in the new world. Only by so doing will we be able to understand not only how Mori intended to compete for national linguistic supremacy over English as well as Chinese in the site of the international politics of imperial languages, but also how he sought to empower the national linguistic subjectivity in establishing a new education in Japan. Apparently, Mori's linguistic attitude to Chinese and English was determined by the geo-cultural and political position of Japan which inevitably involved developing a new National Learning into one that could withstand and survive the impact of the clashes of Eastern and Western civilizations.

What we are concerned with is the geo-cultural political position of Japan that defined language attitude and choice of the new Japan. As Huntington (1996: 135; 197–202) points out, "Japanese civilization is virtually identical with the single Japanese core

state,” despite the fact that it has long been caught between Western and Chinese civilizations since the anti-colonial period. Indeed, the emergence of Japan as a “counter civilization” (Okada 2001d: 24) made her geographical location a site of the clash of Chinese and Western civilizations in the mid-nineteenth century. The logical conclusion is that in order for Japan to gain politico-cultural independence there needed to be a counter imperial Japanese language that challenges the two Eastern and Western imperial languages: Chinese and English. The rationale behind the politics of imperial language was a new epistemological dichotomization of Us and Them or Our language and Their language in the age of nationalism (Mazrui 1990: 13; see also Kobayashi 2001; 98–102). Here we find that the geopolitics of Japan involved experiencing an imperial linguistic configuration in East Asia with the Japanese confronting the two “big languages.” I would like to call this geopolitical site of trilateral linguistic battle “the Imperial Language Triangle” (hereafter referred to as ILT). This notion of ILT helps establish a diachronic and geopolitico-linguistic perspective in this study.

Super-samurai intellectuals with *thymos* by definition would emulate and outperform the significant imperial others. By employing Fukuyama’s notion of *isothymia* and *megalthymia* we can interpret theoretically the dual nature of modern Japan’s geopolitical challenges in the ILT. As I argued elsewhere (Kobayashi 2001), when the first Japanese Education Minister Mori Arinori contemplated the creation of the new Imperial Japanese language (not the “abolition” of the native language) in the aforementioned proposal, what he was trying to do was to seek

out ways of competing with both Eastern and Western Imperial Powers (China and Britain/America) for linguistic superiority and equality. The most salient feature of Mori's countervailing linguistic strategy, as I shall argue later, is marked by its "dialectic duality" that operates in such a way as to accommodate linguistic resistance and assimilation. Japan was and still is geopolitically situated in a site of contest for linguistic hegemony in the ILT where she has had no alternative but to keep her native language evolving strategically and dialectically just to maintain her intersubjectivity. The point to observe here is that modern Japan eventually chose to adopt dialectic (both-East-and-West or neither-East-nor-West), not dichotomous (either-East-or-West) approach in making a cross-cultural breakthrough. What we have here is the reciprocating ethno-cultural construction whereby Japan becomes Janus-faced with a Western front when looking at the East, and an Eastern front at the West. The reason for this is that "by reasserting its own cultural identity," as Huntington (1996: 107) remarks, "Japan emphasizes its uniqueness and its differences from both Western and other Asian cultures." Once again, we must not forget that this geo-cultural politics of modern Japan applies in principle to the matter of national linguistic strategy.

Many scholars, Japanese or non-Japanese, believe that the center of the geo-cultural politics of modern Japan shifted from Chinese to Western civilization when she had worked out the national strategy "*datsua nyuou*" (Leave Asia [the East] and Enter Europe [the West]). Yet it would be misleading to interpret the national slogan to mean Japan's complete turnabout on language policy. Kachuru, therefore, is wrong when he concludes that:

There is thus a need for shifts in paradigm and in attitude. There was a time when the politically astute philosophers of the Meiji era (1868–1912) argued for “secession” from Asia and identification with the Western Powers. That phase has been characterized as *datsu-ah*, *nyuu-oh* or “Leave Asia and Enter Europe [the West].” And now the phase that has been ushered in is *Datsu-oh*, *Nyuu-ah* (“Leave the West and Enter Asia”). This indeed would mean a swing in another direction. What is preferable, of course, is the Buddhist middle path, *madhyam marga*, and that would mean: *Nyuu-oh*, *Datsu-oh* (sic), “Enter Asia and Enter the West.” (1997: 82)

It is clear that Kachuru’s argument is based on the assumption that Meiji Japan’s cross-cultural approach was too dichotomous to follow a middle course today. While we must appreciate Kachuru’s contribution to bringing up for discussion the politics of English in Japan in the English discourse community, I should point out that he seems to misunderstand the geo-cultural politics of language in Japan and thus gives a distorted account of the above-mentioned Mori’s linguistic strategy by forming a hasty conclusion that “perhaps Japan is the only Asian country in which a proposal was made over a century ago to abandon Japanese and ‘adopt instead some better, richer, stronger, language, such as English or French’” (1997: 70). The truth of the matter, however, is that, as I shall explain in more detail by conducting textual analysis in Part II, Mori considered implementing 1) script and stylistic reform of the Japanese language with the abolition of Chinese characters and the

adoption of the Roman alphabet, and 2) orthographical reform of the English language for the purpose of the introduction of (simplified) English into Japan. He thus aimed at creating a new imperial Japanese language which was to be characterized as both Eastern and Western or as neither Eastern nor Western, and which would surpass both Chinese and English in linguistic efficiency and richness. Although he soon found the “means” of implementation (the Roman alphabet-based compromise method) impracticable, he relentlessly continued to achieve his end with an alternative (Chinese-character based) “translation and compilation” method (Kobayashi 2001: 115–127).

Thus, we can recognize from what has been said that modern Japan’s language policy in the cultural politics of *datsua nyuou* was not only to break away from and transcend Chinese civilization (i.e., feudalism) by remedying the particularity (weaknesses) of Chinese characters by entering the West, but also further to assimilate into and transcend Western civilization (i.e., modernism) by emulating the “universality” (strengths) of the English alphabets while strategically drawing on the Chinese linguistic and semantic tradition (see Matsumoto 1994: 222). From this point of view, I want to advance a hypothesis that there are three phases constituting Mori’s discourse on language reform: “Leave the East, Enter the West, and Challenge and Transcend the Imperial Others” (LEEWCTIO). Accordingly, in light of post-colonial English studies by Japanese scholars,³³ Kachuru’s interpretation of Mori’s language policy should be corrected by saying that perhaps Japan was the only Asian country —the first non-English speaking nation in the world, for that matter—in which a proposal was made over a

century ago to challenge the standard English language with its unique (dialectic) linguistic strategy.

What needs to be emphasized here is that in creating a new Japanese language, their subjectivity was being located between and redefined by English and Chinese wherein there was a clash of these two imperial languages in the geo-cultural politics of translation and word-formation. Here we find the super-samurai trying to put their subjectivity on a higher plane by virtue of cultural and linguistic eclecticism and open “the third way” (Giddens 2000) of linguistic-epistemological interpretation dialectically toward the creation of a new language and new national identity. As Nakamura Yujiro (2000: 189–215) has observed, eclecticism was a “most characteristic feature of Japanese culture” that contributed to the idea of modern Japan’s *kindai no choukoku* (challenge of transcending Western modernity) (see also Tsurumi 1960). Nakamura refers to the notion of what Japanese postmodern architect Isozaki Arata (1985) terms “schizophrenic eclecticism,” suggesting that the term “eclecticism”, combined with the adjective “schizophrenic,” begins to take on an international and modern nature in this day and age. Here I would like to lay special emphasis on the key word “eclecticism”, for it was (and has long been) Japan’s traditional cross-cultural approach that can be interpreted as a “strategically schizophrenic” way of spontaneous assimilation into and resistance to a higher civilization.

While a strategic approach was taken to dialectically “redefine its civilizational identity,” the fact remains that the geopolitics of modern Japan eventually made her a “torn country” causing national and cultural identity problems (Huntington 1996: 139).

Relevant to this point is Huntington's following remark:

Political leaders imbued with the hubris to think that they can fundamentally reshape the culture of their societies are destined to fail. While they can introduce elements of Western culture, they are unable permanently to surpass or to eliminate the core elements of their indigenous culture. Conversely, the Western virus, once it is lodged in another society, is difficult to expunge. The virus persists but is not fatal; the patient survives but is never whole. Political leaders can make history but they cannot escape history. They produce torn countries; they do not create Western societies. They infect their country with a cultural schizophrenia which becomes its continuing and defining characteristic.” (ibid.: 154)

Thus, modern Japan evolved in the pre-colonial and independent, colonial, occupied, and post-colonial periods³⁴; she first emerged as a nation-state (which resisted and assimilated into the West); she then became a colonial empire (which expanded and governed in the East [mainland China and other areas]); after the Greater East Asia War she ended up as an occupied (colonized?) democracy (which collapsed and rebuilt) and became a “sovereign democracy” (which has assimilated and grown up to this day). After all she had to go through, modern Japan has continued to develop its “dual character” (Yamamuro 2000) in a struggle to maintain her geo-political/cultural equilibrium between the East and the West. In considering modern Japan's geo-cultural politics of language, it

is very important to keep this historical fact in mind because it was largely due to its dual subjectivity torn between the East and the West that determined the duality of her linguistic (and therefore national) recognition. In fact, what Meiji Japan did was to try to secure its geopolitico-linguistic position in the midst of the civilizations through translation, thereby attempting to transcend the other two conflicting imperial languages: hence, the new imperial Japanese underpinned by what I term “inter-imperial subjectivity” and countervailing colonialism/imperialism. Thus, translation not only helped create Meiji Japan’s national language but also caused dialectic interpretation and re-configuration of its national subjectivity and cultural identity (see Sakai 1997). The point I wish to stress here is that it was none other than Meiji super-samurai’s *thymos* that triggered dialectic translation of inter-imperial linguistic subjectivity which prevented the West from controlling the Japanese native language and the people’s mind at least during the pre-colonial and independent periods. To ignore this hard fact is to lose perspective on the historical construction of modern Japan’s language recognition.

With this explanatory model for Meiji Japan’s geo-cultural politics of language in the new world, we are now able to make better sense theoretically of the proposition that “imperial language awareness of the Japanese today derives from their counter-civilizational language mentality”; their “imperial” language attitude began to be formed in the pre-colonial and independent period when the Japanese went to great lengths to claim and protect their “language right” by securing a “countervailing politico-linguistic public sphere” (Nakamura 1993: 99–100; 2000a: 26–27; see also

Lee 2000: 347–348). This alternative linguistic public sphere only existed within modern Japan’s *daitoa kyōuei ken* (the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere), which collapsed at the end of the independent period in 1945 with the defeat in World War II. Viewed in this light, we can see that the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere was a testing site of reconciling the duality of modern Japan’s intersubjectivity between the East and the West and overcoming Western modernity in the long run. The imperial Japan expanded its public sphere in order to seek an ultimate solution to this civilizational conflict; the territorial expansion of the Japanese Empire was driven by not only politico-economic but also politico-cultural/linguistic factors. It was imperative that a new imperial language be created so as to establish a new National Learning through which the people in the Empire were to be united with a larger subjectivity as against the old (Chinese) hegemony and the new (Western) hegemony. The imperial Japanese language, therefore, was required to embrace the dialectic development of morality, ethnicity, and nation-state through the interaction between “universal” and “particular” languages (see Dowak 1994). For this very reason, the modern Japanese language emerged as a counter-imperial language against Chinese and English linguistic imperialisms. Language was a site of representations of the dialectic development of morality, ethnicity, and nation-state between “universal” and particular languages.

As has been pointed out, it was decades before the early twentieth century that attempts at the overcoming of modernity had been seriously made by the pre-Restoration and early Meiji super-samurai intellectuals by realigning the politics of knowledge that

underpinned the Tokugawa establishment through “reconfiguration of the language of Japan” (see Yasuda 1997). As previously mentioned, with the first wave of full-fledged Western (Dutch) learning³⁵ in the early-and mid-eighteenth century, there began a gradual paradigm shift in the Tokugawa world: the body of knowledge dominantly provided and sustained by the government-authorized Chinese Studies came to be relativized through Western Learning in such a way as to change the way they perceived the world. Then there was a national awareness growing in the form of Japanese indigenous language movement which later led to *kokugaku* or National Learning. In the early nineteenth century, the new national sentiment arising from National Learning would coalesce with the second wave of Western (English) Learning (see Okita 1992).

The point we must clarify here is the Japanese *counter imperialism* occurred as the response to the “clashes of civilizations” in East Asia. As “civilizations” were seen by many super-samurai intellectuals as another form of Western imperialism, what the new Japan did was to strategically employ long-standing Japanese imperialism in its own right as counter-civilizational approach to the significant imperial Others in the East as well as in the West. As a result, super-samurai intellectuals raised their counter-imperial linguistic awareness, which led to the cultural movement for a new National Learning. Thus, Japanese counter-linguistic imperialism emerged as a driving force behind a new National Learning aimed at emulating and transcending both English linguistic imperialism and Chinese linguistic imperialism simultaneously. In this way English Learning was to be incorporated into a new National Learning in

contraposition with Chinese Learning. As I shall argue later, English Learning was thus to serve as a new platform for building a new language for a new National Learning or a new education in Japan. The geopolitics of a marginal domain as well as national pragmatics nurtured in the soil of Satsuma helped generate a patriotic movement for a new learning that would required learning the language of their new archrival nation (Britain) in comparison with the old model nation (China) so that the new Japan could not only overtake but also transcend their new model civilization. Whether or not Mori was aware of this, this observation makes it possible to formulate a theory that Mori's scheme for ingenious plan for language reform in Japan can be traced back to Satsuma's pragmatic therefore eclectic approach to the creation of a stronger nation with a better civilization; this would necessitate radical linguistic reform through which the two imperial languages of Oriental and Occidental civilizations—English and Chinese—were to be reconciled in the “language of Japan.”

Of more importance is the dialectic development of national linguistic subjectivity by means of the studies of hegemonistic imperial languages of other civilizations in the East and the West. It was this newly raised national subjectivity underlying the successive acts of samurai-intellectuals' language learning, that would pave the way for the later formation of a “new National Learning” in Meiji era. The most important part of this argument is that in this tradition of Chinese and Western Learning lies the latent impetus for a new National Learning that would allow for a new national/linguistic subjectivity. We can be fairly certain that the momentum toward a nation-state building gave rise to the coales-

cence of both Chinese and English Studies into a new National Learning that would make it possible for the new Japanese to obtain a new knowledge in a new language of their own.

As I have already suggested, English Learning as the “know-your-enemy studies” became a mainstream Western Learning in the 1870s which focused primarily on Anglo-American discourse communities. By the time it developed into a full-fledged platform for nation-state-building in the 1890s (after Mori passed away), there emerged the new movement for the studies of the new Japan spearheaded by fierce patriots Miyake Setsurei (1860–1945) and Kuga Katsunan (1857–1907), which paved the way for a new National Learning. This stream of thought in turn led to patriotic linguists such as Ueda Kazutoshi orchestrating a national project of bringing into being the science” of *kokugo* or the national language. Viewed in this light, we can see that the English Studies that began as the “know-your-enemy” studies in the mid-and late nineteenth century laid the groundwork for the new National Studies of the imperial Japanese language in the early twentieth century. In short, the new National Learning was brought into being for the purpose of challenging and deconstructing modernity translated mainly through the English Studies into the Japanese mind and its national polity (see Oguma 2002; Lee 1996). A new language of Japan was evolved and created dialectically and eclectically through translation principally between the two Imperial Others’ languages³⁶—Chinese and English—to establish a new *kokugogaku* (National Studies of the Imperial Japanese Language or a new National Learning) and transcend the hitherto mainstream Chinese Studies and the subsequent English Studies. The reason for

this is precisely because of the essence of overcoming modernity that involves realigning and reconfiguring the national linguistic and epistemological subjectivity.

The beginning of the movement for overcoming modernity that emerged in Japan from the turn of the twentieth century onward can be traced back to the mid-and late-nineteenth century in which the new Japan was founded and led by such super-samurai as Mori Arinori. My argument here is that Mori's unprecedented language reforms plan put forth in the 1870s should be seen as serving as a precursor of a super-samurai linguistic act of overcoming modernity³⁷ which was to be embodied in *kokugo-gaku* established to transcend the Imperial Others' languages (Chinese and English) in the early twentieth century. In order to bring about a better understanding of "modern Japan's language recognition,"³⁸ it is important to verify this hypothesis in the context of the geo-cultural politics of language in the 1860s–80s. As I shall explain in detail in Part II, it was as early as the 1870s when super-samurai intellectuals such as Mori Arinori and his opponent Baba Tatsui, both driven by their "Japanese (indigenous) language" sentiments, had already argued that the further spread of Chinese and English imperialisms in Japan, would inexorably lead to not only "linguistic discrimination" but also "social polarization" in a new society, with the realization that there was an urgent need to create a new language of Japan in defense of national and cultural integrity (Kobayashi 2002: 53–57). In light of much of what I have written so far, it is well worth examining more closely Mori's linguistic and epistemological recognition as well as his counter-colonial politico-linguistic awareness behind his discourses on language

reform and nation-state building. Before conducting a textual criticism of his discourses with those points in mind, we also need to understand how he could have developed his seemingly original idea for the reform of the language of Japan.

5. Mirror for kokugo-building: English linguistic imperialism³⁹

The Dean's English (1864)

As we have seen, the political thought of Japan as an imperial nation was central to National Learning. As with the preceding Western (Dutch) Learning, English Learning based on the ethos of the National Learning, emerged as a new Western Learning that functioned as the “study of a new enemy’s language” that scrutinized the Anglo-American hegemony over the world and thereby sought national linguistic independence. This will lead us further into a consideration of where and how Mori got the idea for the building of *kokugo* or a new national language for imperial Japan. While no studies have ever tried to look deeper into the case, there *is* conclusive evidence that supports our working hypotheses. It is one of Mori’s library books: *The Dean’s English: a criticism on the Dean of Canterbury’s Essays on the Queen’s English*. This small English book was published in 1864 in London by George Washington Moon, an American journalist and Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. The polemic writer first wrote it with the view of criticizing *A Plea for the Queen’s English*, the book which Henry Alford (1810–71), the then Dean of Canterbury, produced in an attempt to defend the “Queen’s English” in the Victorian

Age.⁴⁰ Although Moon himself is essentially an advocate of the “Queen’s English,” he took issue with Alford for more practical and political reasons. This “national language” debate got transatlantic press coverage in Britain and America.⁴¹ Controversial as it was, *The Dean’s English* sold so well that it went into the third edition in the year it was published. Mori had its fourth edition which was printed in New York in 1865.⁴² Mori’s copy, which is now owned by the National Diet Library, has his ownership stamp as well as an official seal on the facing page that says “issued in the eighth year of Meiji (1875) by the Ministry of Education.” It must be noted here that this small publication makes a big difference in our investigation of Mori’s thinking on national language reform. As we shall see, this book provides us with a number of important clues as to the beginning of Mori’s 1872–73 discourse on the adoption of “simplified English” in Japan.

Before turning to a closer examination of *the Dean’s English* in connection with Mori’s own language reform discourse, one more point must be clarified; it is about the place where Mori obtained the book. The year 1865 was not only when the fourth edition was printed, but also when Mori was sent from Japan on a secret mission to Britain. This suggests that Mori was studying in Britain just when there was a heated debate on the national language among the English-speaking people: the Queen’s English. It is therefore reasonable to assume that Mori must have heard and known the Queen’s English issue in Britain, and that it’s highly probable that he obtained the book there. However, one question still remains as to why it was the US version, not the British one that he came to possess. It is possible to build up two hypotheses.

One possibility is that, given that the US version was not readily available in Britain if he had got hold of the book there, there is no denying that Mori might have received the book from someone else, British or American, who must have been very much interested in the debate and wanted to let him know about the issue. Another possibility is that, since the official stamp on the facing pages of Mori's own copy indicated that it was given to the National Diet Library in 1875, Mori might have taken possession of the book either when he traveled from Britain to the U.S. in 1867–68 or while he was working in the U.S. as *chargé de'affaires* in 1871–73. I consider the latter case more likely because of the official position Mori assumed in the Meiji government. Assuming it to be true, then it makes better sense: Mori referred to the book in America when he was contemplating national language reform, and after he returned to Japan he no longer needed the book for reference, so he later donated it to the Ministry of Education, which in turn contributed it to the National Diet Library. Be that as it may, what is more important here is that Mori *did* learn of the “national language” debate (the “Queen’s English” controversy) in Britain long before he developed his own idea for the national language reform in Japan. Therefore, the question which we must consider in the following discussions is how Mori understood Britain’s national language situation and came to develop his idea for the 1871–73 proposal for language reform in Japan. In what follows, we shall take a closer look at what Mori saw in the “Queen’s English” controversy in mid-nineteenth Britain. Then we shall further explore how Mori worked over his plan as he viewed Britain’s “English studies” from the standpoint of Japan’s

counterpart—the English Studies (*eigaku*) or “know-your-enemy” studies.

The debate on national language in Victorian Britain: The Queen’s English and Standard English

As has been noted, the dispute over the issue of national language reform in Britain began when G. W. Moon severely criticized Henry Alford for imposing his “biased” view of grammar and style on the people, although they were both ardent advocates of the Queen’s English. There is fairly general agreement that the Queen’s English served as a model for standard English in Victorian Britain. Connected with this is the emergence of the middle class English that laid the foundations for standard English (Crowley 1989: 129–131). The middle class English came into being in Britain as the pace of national industrialization accelerated with the result that there was a class distinction between the educated and the non-educated. Interestingly, the new English created by the middle class had an effect on the Queen’s English.⁴³ However, the standardization of the middle class English as the basis for the Queen’s English left much to be improved as it was still replete with grammatical, orthographical and conjugational irregularities and regional differences. All this led Moon and Alford to address the issue of the Queen’s English, thereby sparking a debate over the building of the standard spoken and written English. The linguistic situation in Britain at that time was very similar to that of Japan. As Max Müller said of English orthography in those days, “if we compare English as spoken with English as written, they seem almost like two different languages; as Latin

is from Italian” (1876: 209). In the late 1860s, just when Mori was studying in London, this debate received much media coverage as the “Moon-Alford Controversy” not only in Britain but also in America.

In this debate on the “Queen’s English” as the national language of Britain, Alford takes a progressive stance of placing importance on the colloquial style of English as well as arguing for the conventional usage,” while Moon takes up the position as a “conservative prescriptive grammarian who insists on the purity and logic of language” (Tagiri and Egawa 1968: 287) (It is not hard to imagine Mori keenly realizing the need to reform the language of the imperial Japan when he learned from the debate about the issue of the national language in Britain. As we shall see later, Mori took the same position on the national language of Japan as Moon’s. Suffice it to say here that the fact that Mori owned Moon’s *The Dean’s English*, not Alford’s *A Plea for the Queen’s English* attests to his stance on the Japanese language). In his *Jyunsei Eigo* (Pure English), Tagiri Hisazumi, a Japanese expositor on *A Plea for the Queen’s English* suggests that in the 1860s when there was a national language reform movement growing in Britain, a general approach to grammar was seen as “shifting from prescriptive to descriptive.” As for Alford’s insight into language Tagiri also remarks as follows:

We must acknowledge Alford’s foresight in dealing with the language issue. The first edition of *A Plea for the Queen’s English* was published twenty years before the first volume of the Oxford English dictionary, the most authoritative

English dictionary in the world that is the ultimate product of descriptive and positive approaches to language, finally came out in 1884 when Alford's revised edition was printed. (Tagiri and Egawa 1968: 272)

From this view point we may say that the Moon–Alford controversy was well worth considering in the historical studies of the English language. However, our primary concern here is not with the socio-linguistic analysis of the modern English, but rather with the socio-historical study of how the debate on national language reform in Britain came to influence Mori's thinking on English and Japanese. It is important to gain this perspective on what the controversy was all about, for it would allow us to interpret the *Queen's English* differently from Japanese scholars of English such as Tagiri. In light of the historical studies of the English language within the socio-linguistic framework, Tagiri was right in understanding the Queen's English as *jjunsei eigo* (Pure English) in his commentary on Alford's work. But once we place it in a wider context of the cultural politics of the English language in the world, we will find that the Queen's English is not necessarily what it seems to be. Viewed from this politico-cultural standpoint, the Queen's English can be seen not merely as connotating "Pure English" in the academic sense but as representing the *imperial* English language or the language of the British Empire that reigned the world under the rule of the Queen in the nineteenth century. Alford draws a parallel between the Queen's English and the highroad that could extend to every corner of the world ruled by the British Empire as follows:

It [The Queen's English] is, so to speak, this land's great highway of thought and speech; and seeing that the Sovereign in this realm is the person round whom all our common interests gather, the source of our civil duties and centre of our civil rights. (cited in Tagiri and Egawa 1968: 11)

The important point to note here is that Alford regards the Queen's English as the "highway" language of all the British subjects that defines the people who employ it in the realm of the whole Empire. Thus, by extension the phrase "in this realm" could be taken to encompass much broader regions of the British Commonwealth of Nations. For this political and semantic reason, it would be a mistake to understand and translate the Queen's English merely as *jyunsei eigo* or Pure English (as Tagiri did), because the national language in the inland can also mean the imperial language in its foreign parts of the British Empire.

Indeed, as we shall see in the following discussions, it was the "imagined" imperial language of Britain that was emerging as it was triggered by the Anglo-Saxon language purification movement in the 1860s.

It may be worth pointing out, in passing, that Shoichi Watanabe, a Japanese scholar of the English language, has done us a great service in doing pioneer work on the imperial thought of the English language in his *the History of the National Learning in Britain* (Watanabe 1990). In it, he cogently argues that just as there was *kokugaku* (*the National Learning* or *the National Studies*) in Japan which connects the history of imperial nation and that of its native language, so there was a similar counterpart in Britain. The

English version of National Learning demanded that the Queen's English be seen as the model for standard English required to unify the inland nation; and that it further serve as the symbol of the British Empire that was prevailing in the world.⁴⁴ As Nishikawa Nagao remarks on the political realignment taking place in Europe and America in the 1870s, "Victorian Britain was faced with the considerable challenge of furthering the colonial rule to establish Pax Britanica in the world while at the same time trying to realize the new national integration by means of the new revision of election law and the enactment of Education Act" (Nishikawa and Matsumiya 1995: 27). Anticipating such social, political, and cultural transformations at home and abroad, there emerged a new national language (the Queen's English) movement in Britain in the 1860s. It is against this background that Alford's *A Plea for the Queen's English* and Moon's the *Dean's English* were put forth as they triggered national debates about standard language as well as national linguistic identity.

Again, it is worth noting here that all this will lead us further to a consideration of Mori's political and cultural thought of national language in Japan. Given that he wrote a letter to his older brother in 1865 insisting upon "showing the Japanese imperial flag to die for across the globe" (SMAZ, Vol. 3: 51), it is reasonable to assume that if Mori had read *The Queen's English* and found the place where Alford expressed the language of Britain as "this land's great highway of thought and speech," he would have raised hope that the language of Japan would also prevail as the "Emperor's Japanese" throughout the world in the same way. We shall return to this point later.

It is generally agreed that the standard Japanese was established after the model of Western modern languages as Meiji Japan underwent modernization; but it is not always understood exactly why and how the Japanese “native tongue” evolved into what it is today in the international geo-cultural politics of language (see Kaganoi 2002). In the early Meiji period Mori not only saw English as the most “copious and expanding European language” that should be introduced in Japan, but also regarded it as an imperfect language that should be reformed in such a way that non-native speakers of English would benefit from it. As I shall argue in what follows, it was not only in the newly emerging Japanese Empire but also in the British Empire that there was a concurrent movement for national language reform in the mid-and late-nineteenth century.

Cultural nationalism and socio-linguistic Darwinism

Britain saw the economic development and social stability in the 1850s, a decade prior to Mori’s sojourn in London, and there was a growing awareness among the people of their national language and its history (Crowley 1989: 5–54). The question we must consider here is: of all the advanced nations, why did the movement for the Queen’s English and the national unification take place in the 1850s–60s? According to Watanabe (1990: vii), “the National Learning in Britain” can be said theoretically to have developed from the mid-sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, while the counterpart of Japan emerged from the late-seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century. And yet, on closer inspection we can see *the* National Learning in Britain did continue up to the mid-nine-

teenth century. Tony Crowley explains the reason:

The answer lies in the important point that the construction of a national identity is not settled at one point and then fixed for ever (as most of the nineteenth-century commentators would have argued), but a constant process of change and development determined among other things by the political purposes that such constructions were to serve. In this sense nationality is never achieved (in the French sense of *achever*, to complete or finish), but always in the process of being forged. And it is this that explains the processive repetition of claims for the unity of language and nation in Britain during this period. The specific characteristics of a particular nationality are not immutably fixed but historically viable, and thus the self-image of the English people, and of course the very idea that there was ‘an English people,’ would not have been the same in the 1650s and the 1850s. (Crowley 1989: 68)

After Chartism petered out in the late 1840s in Britain, domestic economy and society became more stable in the 1850s when there was a growing movement for the unification of the hitherto less cohesive people through the standardization of the national language (Crowley 1989: 53). As Crowley further explains:

The concern for national and social unity centered around a sense of unease about the contemporary political scene together with reflections upon the national past. The most

striking example of this concern at this period was the set of varying attempts to come to terms with the historical writing of the national past and to evaluate the political and cultural heritage of the nation. The appearance of ‘the history of the language’ as an area of knowledge in the 1830s and 1840s is one such attempt. Another closely linked attempt at ordering and evaluating the cultural heritage of the nation was signaled by the appearance of appeals for the institutionalized study of ‘English studies’ (or more usually ‘English language and literature’) in the 1850s.

(Crowley 1989: 83)

An important point to emphasize here is that “English studies” was institutionalized in the 1850s so as to unify the nation in concurrence with the movement for national language reform. One of the salient features of the mid-nineteenth-century national language movement lies in the rediscovery of the ethnic continuity in the history of one common language. And the image of the nation had to be one that constitutes an ethnic community that continues to evolve in the historical time and space, as can be seen in the following quotation.

For many of the mid-nineteenth-century historians of the language its unbroken existence was undoubted and that in turn therefore entailed that the English nation had itself been a long-standing, continuously evolving entity.

(Crowley 1989: 46)

The same view on language and history can be found in Alford's discourse which says:

The national mind is reflected in the national speech.... Every important feature in a people's language is reflected in its character and history. (Alford 1864: 13; my emphasis)

It is clear from the above that Alford viewed the strength of the people as deriving from the national speech and mirrored in its "character and history." Indeed, as Crowley (1989: 66–68) describes, it was generally believed among many English intellectuals in the 1860s that the national character was reflected in the history of the language of England. What we have here is the emergence in Britain of "cultural and linguistic nationalism" that can also be seen in modern Japan (see Sakai 1997).

Let us devote a little more space to examining how their English studies was conducted in the context of such cultural and linguistic nationalism. In mid-nineteen-century Britain, many British scholars of English attempted to secure the source of politico-cultural demand for a unified nation-state by looking at the history of language in two ways: internal and external. The internal history focuses on the inner structure of language (such as grammar) that remains static in the course of historical and social events, while the external centers on the study of the outer milieu of language (such as usage and inflow of foreign words) that are subject to changing circumstances. Crowley summarizes the dual features of English studies as follows:

the ‘essence’ of the language and nation (the internal), remains always organically ordered in terms of its development and only ‘accidental’ features of language and nation (the external or historical), are constantly open to change.
(Crowley 1989: 47)

This passage reveals that there was a mystical interpretation in Britain of the strength of the national language as deriving from its historical continuity and change. Before moving on to the next argument, I would like to give an overview of how such a mystical view of language developed in Britain.

The roots of National Learning or the studies of national language that underpinned linguistic nationalism in Britain go back to the early sixteenth century when the Reformation took place. The people who spearheaded the movement were the clergymen who belonged to the Church of England. Among the leading figures was Matthew Parker (1504–75), Archbishop of Canterbury (Watanabe 1990). It must be noted here that Henry Alford (1810–71), an advocate of the Queen’s English was also a clergyman who served as the Dean of Canterbury and belonged to the same clerical community as Archbishop Parker. Furthermore, there was another churchman who had the same (or greater) impact on National Learning in Britain as those two figures mentioned above. His name is Richard Chenevix Trench (1807–86) who assumed the position of the Dean of Westminster (later the Archbishop of Dublin). Trench was probably the most influential scholar who played a vital role in advancing the Victorian movement for National Learning or the studies of the English language in the

1850s in Britain (Crowley 1989: 51–90). So it is not surprising that like Alford, Archbishop Trench was of the belief that “a language has within itself the history of a nation.”

Linguistic nationalism directs patriotism toward an “imagined language” which distinguishes between Us and Them. Consequently, the “national language” must be purified by getting rid of “Their” language within “Our” language so that the nation will be unified through the same language. As Crowley quotes Trench as saying of the national unification in relation to language that:

Whenever political and cultural crisis threatened the English language was offered as evidence of the underlining or unconscious unity that held all together despite superficial differences. In this sense language became the political unconscious of the nation since if nothing else there could at least be agreement that ‘we’ (the unifying pronoun) all speak ‘the same language’ and therefore all share ‘the same background’ historically and culturally.

(Crowley 1989: 70)

Indeed, Trench’s philosophy that focuses on “the vast community of the speakers of one and the same language” was a major theoretical tenet of historical linguistics in which Max Müller (1823–1900) played a crucial role in the nineteenth-century. Like Trench, Müller regarded English as “the living and speaking witness of the whole history of our race” (Müller 1862: 27). Here we find commonality between these leading Western students of language—Moon, Alford, Trench, and Müller; these people sought authentic-

ty, legitimation, and continuity in the internal history of their national language, namely, English.

As for the external history of national language, let us turn our attention to Alford's statements highlighting the needs for the unification of the nation through the institutionalization and standardization of the Queen's English. To this end, Alford was keen on purifying English and preventing it from deterioration by sticking less to grammatical rules that might go against the trend of the times.

He argues:

It expresses ... what every one who values *our native tongue in its purity* must feel: that most of the grammars, and rules, and applications of rules, now so commonly made for our language, are in reality *not contributions towards its purity, but main instruments of its deterioration.*

(Alford 1864: 9–10; my emphasis)

In spite of methodological differences, Moon, who criticized severely Alford's *the Dean's English*, shared his Teutonic philosophy of cultural superiority that extols the beauty of the Anglo-Saxon language (This can be seen as a form of cultural revivalism/nativism against the influence of Latin from the European Continent). Both were concerned about the deterioration of the Queen's English, and so firmly believed in the purification and rebuilding of the national language. As we have seen, the purpose of the national language movement in 1850s Britain was twofold: one is to unify the mainland nation; the other to govern the British

Commonwealth of Nations with the Queen reigning at the top of the Empire. As far as the reformation and realignment of what Robert Phillipson (1992) terms “English linguistic imperialism” is concerned, such rising Teutonic movement in the mid-and late-nineteenth century was to gather momentum in the decades that followed, laying the groundwork for the development of ELT (English Language Teaching) professionalism in the early twentieth century.

In this connection, it is worth noting that in 1873, the book called *The Sources of Standard English* by T. L. Kington-Oliphant was published. In it, the author details how the Teutonic revivalism was emerging as a countermovement against the “fashionable” prevalence of Latin particularly among the English middle class, and in so doing defines Good English as based on a “sound Teutonic style, and Bad English as characterized by the “long Latinized words” (1873: 322).

He finds it disconcerting that many middle-class people, whose English provided a base for developing the Queen’s English into a centripetal and unifying force, were badly affected by gross Latinization to the point where it further influenced the people in the lower class.⁴⁵ He states:

Our middle class (we beheld something of this kind in the Thirteenth Century) has an amazing love of cumbrous Latin words, which have not long been in vogue ... the offspring of our shopkeepers are taught bad French and worse Latin.... The books used in our National schools show a lofty disdain for homespun English.... The corruption is

now spreading downward to the lower class.

(Kington-Oliphant 1873: 323)

Furthermore, Kington-Oliphant sardonically castigates “penny-a-liners” in the newspaper trade for setting a bad example for the middle class who tend to speak and write in bad English reveling in Latin. Kington-Oliphant deplores the sorry linguistic situation as follows:

After all, it is rather hard to grudge him his chance of showing off that he learned Latin in youth. One of this breed, in the last years of the French Empire, was never tired of telling us in a queer Anglo-Gallic Jargon what he ate and drank at Paris, and what Dukes and Marquesses he slapped on the back. Such stuff could not have been served up, day by day, if it had not hit the taste of the English middle class, a taste thoroughly corrupt. A writer of this kind must have readers like minded with himself. (ibid.: 328–329)

Here we find that in the 1870’s many a “penny-a-liner” was depicted as reveling in the “corrupt” practice of recalling their good old days in France, boastfully employing Latin or “queer Anglo-Gallic Jargon” in their writings. What has to be noticed here is that Kington-Oliphant regards such ultra-Latinized writers as a bad influence on the middle class culture in Britain. The reason Kington-Oliphant expressed concern over the overuse of Latin in the English language has to do not so much with his personal academic interest in the linguistic aspects of the situation, but rather

with his general observation on the cultural politics of English as against French at the time. With the public awareness of the Queen's English (= national language) growing in Britain, Kington-Oliphant realized the need to de-Latinize English and thereby redefine the identity of the nation as well as strengthening the unity of the peoples in the British Empire.

As has been pointed out, *the* National Learning or the historical study of English in Britain can be traced back to the Reformation period in the sixteenth century when Johannes Goropius Becanus (1518–1572), a Dutch physician-linguist, expounded his theory about German (not Hebrew) as the protolanguage of the world. And his view on the superiority of German over Latin on the Continent came to exert so strong an influence on British linguists that “almost all of the seventeenth-century English grammarians were the followers of Johannes Goropius Becanus” (Watanabe 1973: 7–19). It is worth noting that behind such Teutonic view of language lies the rivalry between Protestant nations whose language is of German origin, and Catholic nations whose language is of Latin origin. The emergence of the former as a new political and cultural force against the latter led to the concomitant cultural politics of reactionary religio-linguistic reformation in Europe. Relevant to this is that in *The Sources of Standard English*, Kington-Oliphant cites a typical example of how Protestantism and Catholicism clashed over the cultural politics of English (German-derivative) and Latin in the realm of Christianity; in an Irish (Catholic) church, there was once a heated dispute over a conversion of “English” appellation of “our grand old Teutonic name” (for The Third Person of the Trinity) into Latin one. As for the stupidity of

such religio-linguistic aberration, Kington-Oliphant remarks, “It is needless to say what a reception this piece of unwisdom met with from a scholar like Archbishop Trench. No vulgar hands should be laid on the Ark” (ibid.: 328). Kington-Oliphant, however, holds the Anglican church people in general equally responsible for the propagation of “bad English” that latinizes. He comments:

If we wish to know the cause of the bad style employed in preaching by too many of the Anglican clergy, we must ask how they have been taught at our Schools and Universities. Much heed is there bestowed on Latin and Greek, but none on English. (ibid.: 335)

What we find here is the religio-linguistic implications of good English as deriving from the Teutonic/Anglo-Saxon-Protestant culture, and of bad English as coming from the Latin/Gallic-Catholic. Kington-Oliphant’s perception of proper English in the 1870’s reflects the growing religio-linguistic sentiment for the purification (= de-Latinization) of national language. Related to the cultural politics of English is the fact that Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* was published in 1859 and prevailing in the very fabric of society in the 1860s when Mori was studying in London.

Moreover, I want to argue that it was Herbert Spencer’s idea of social Darwinism that played a critical role in propelling the movement for the building of the Queen’s English in Britain (It is well known that Mori’s worldview was significantly influenced by Spencer’s political and cultural thought). Indeed, social Darwinism was being applied to the science of language in the 1860s. As

Tanaka Katsuhiko (1993: 46–47) explains, this Darwinian view of the evolution of language is most exemplified in August Schleicher (1821–1868)’s *Linguistic and Evolutionary Theory* (1863, 1865, 1869) and *Darwinism Tested by the Science of Language* (1863, 1869, 1873). Max Müller, Mori’s mentor, who lectured on *Mr Darwin’s Philosophy of Language* (1873) was a confirmed believer in socio-linguistic Darwinism; he declared that “language is meant as an instrument of communication, and that, in the struggle for life, the most efficient instrument of communication must certainly carry the day, *as long as natural selection, or, as we formerly called it, reason, rules the world*” (1876: 207; my emphasis). When Mori was studying Western technology and philosophy in English, such a Darwinian philosophy of language evolution as Schleicher’s and Müller’s permeated the social and cultural fabric of society in Britain.

There is one further point that we must not ignore. Apart from seeking advice on language reform in Japan from U.S. linguist William Whitney in the 1870s, Mori also consulted with German-born British linguist Max Müller about the problems of language and religion in Japan.⁴⁶ Both Whitney and Müller were leading linguists who looked at language and religion from a Darwinian perspective. It is in this social and historical context that Moon and Alford engaged in a controversy over the Dean’s and Queen’s English in the 1860s.

Taken all together, it is reasonable to suppose that Mori’s thinking on language in society was affected by what might be called “socio-linguistic Darwinism.” Indeed, in an interview held in London in 1884. Mori disclosed the fact that he was educated on

social Darwinism when he said of the commercial competition:

I am taught that the progress of the race is by the survival of the fittest and the elimination of the weak by a process of natural selection; and the commercial competition is one form by which superior organisms triumph over the lower. In that competition I hope Japan will now take a much prominent part than she has hitherto done.

(SMAZ, Vol. 1: 438; my emphasis)

The point to observe is that he was *taught* by someone about the progressive perspective on the world. Given the circumstantial evidence cited above, it is obvious that he learned the “law of the jungle” from Western thinkers such as Spencer and Müller, whom he solicited advice from in person in the 1870s. It follows from what has been said that Mori not only learned social Darwinism in Britain but also applied the philosophy of socio-linguistic Darwinism to the language reform in Japan. In his letter to William Whitney, he explicitly linked his logic behind the proposal for the adoption of English in Japan to the commercial competition driven by the law of the jungle as follows:

If we would keep pace with the age, we must adopt a copious and expanding European language. The necessity for this arises mainly out of the fact that Japan is a commercial nation; and also that, if we do not adopt a language like that of the English, which is quite predominant in Asia, as well as elsewhere in the commercial world, the progress of

Japanese civilization is evidently impossible.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 51–52)

Here we find Mori speaking revealingly about his rationale behind the introduction of English into Japan: for the sake of the progress of Japanese civilization in the international commercial competition. It is important to note that Mori understood the “survival of the fittest” principle as operating in the geo-cultural politics of the language of Japanese civilization. It was not merely because of the commercial advantage but because it was part of a larger question of the clashes of civilization between East and West: the hegemony of language in the international competition. Indeed, for Mori, it all came down to “a question concerning the competition for supremacy between the races and the religion as well as for intelligence, power and wealth between two of the great divisions of the world” (SMAZ, Vol. 1: 379). “In that competition,” Mori declared, “I hope Japan will now take a much prominent part than she has hitherto done.”

From his English discourse we can understand his conviction that in the same way that the Japanese Empire once competed with the Chinese Empire that had long symbolized Eastern civilization, she would be ready to take on the British Empire that represented Western civilization. In 1873 Mori published *Education in Japan* as a form of an official declaration that the new Japan would break away from the Chinese Empire’s sphere of influence and join in the new civilizational contest. As we have seen, in the preface to the booklet was revealed Mori’s comprehensive views of history, language, and religion. Apparently his thinking on lan-

guage in history was very much influenced by British linguistic nationalism and social Darwinism. In the subsequent discussion, we shall not only look at how the image of the British imperial language emerged as the Queen's English, but also examine the parallel aspects of Mori's scheme for the imperial Japanese language.

The Queen's English vs The Emperor's Japanese

The important point to observe before moving on to the main task in Part II is the epigraph and quotation that appear on the facing pages of and in the preface to *The Dean's English* (the fourth 1865 edition) by George W. Moon. The epigraph was extracted from a magazine called *The Reader*, which says:

He who cannot express his thoughts correctly in his own language, is not likely to obtain credit for much knowledge of any other; nor will an ill-spelt, ungrammatical letter impress anyone with the idea that the writer of it is an 'educated' man; while, on the other hand, the Englishman whose linguistic acquirements do not extend beyond the language of Shakespeare, but who knows that thoroughly and can wield it well, possesses an instrument with which he may fight his way to almost any position he may choose to aspire to, whether he turn his thoughts to poetry or to politics, to literature or to commerce. —The Reader, January 28, 1865. (my emphasis)

What Moon emphasized by quoting the above passage was that the true national strengths of England could and should emanate from the history of the English language. Here Moon refers to the

language of Shakespeare as the symbolic and cultural capital of England which made it possible for the Anglo-Saxon race to gain linguistic independence from Latin (or French). Clearly, Moon lets the epigraph speak for itself; he believed in making England an independent nation-state by capitalizing on the strengths of their own language. In the same way, Moon further quotes in the preface to *The Dean's English* German poet August Wilhelm von Schlegel (1767–1845), who was famous for his excellent translation of Shakespeare, explaining why he wrote the book in the first place as follows:

The care of the national language I consider at all times a sacred trust, and a most important privilege of the higher orders of society. Every man of education should make it the object of his unceasing concern to *preserve his language pure and entire, and to speak it, so far as is in his power, in all its beauty and perfection.*⁴⁷ (my emphasis)

It is highly probable that after reading *The Dean's English*, Mori, as stated in the above passage, came to understand the “care of national language” as a “sacred trust and a most important privilege of the higher orders of society.” For the Japanese to preserve their native language “pure and entire” and to speak it “in all its beauty and perfection,” Mori must have conceived a similar idea for language reform as the cornerstone of education in Japan.

If we assume that Mori intended to conserve the Japanese language “pure and entire,” we need to examine more closely his English introduction to *Education in Japan* in a bid to unravel the

complex webs of his motives behind the text; his long introductory essay on the outline of Japanese history in the book can be seen as disclosing his Weltanschauung that might give us an important clue as to how his discourse on language and religion is connected with his overall strategy of educational reform. As shown in the quote above, Mori devoted much space to tracing the beginning of Japanese Empire to remote antiquity. What is significant here is his historical view of the origin of the Japanese language as going back to the mythical age when the Japanese Empire began.

In the age of spirits there can be found nothing that will excite our curiosity, except the language. Its structure is similar to the modern Japanese, though the considerable difference in the manner of expression and in pronunciation makes its acquirement difficult. Its origin, as well as that of our race, is not yet determined.
(SMAZ, Vol. 5: 134; my emphasis)

The passage above speaks volumes about what Mori really thought about the native language in Japan; it provides a conclusive clue to unlock the secret behind Mori's language reform discourse. Here we have his mystical and mythological view of the origin of the Japanese indigenous language as driving from the "age of spirits." Related to this point is the fact that, Max Müller, from whom Mori earnestly sought advice on the issues of national language and state religion, also disclosed the similar view in his *Lectures on the Science of Language Delivered at the Royal Institute of Great Britain in 1861* when he said that language is "the living and speaking witness of the whole history of our nation" (Müller 1862:

27). It is obvious that Mori shared Müller's view on language and history. Given that Mori publicized his mythological view on language in the book entitled *Education in Japan*, it is plain to see that he wanted not only to establish the imperial legitimacy of the Japanese language but also to emphasize the potential strength of the mother tongue that could fully develop into a modern language.

Then, how is Mori's view of the imperial history of Japan linked with the language of Japan? The evidence shows that he "discovered" the meaning of the time-honored structure of the Japanese language in the ancient history of the imperial nation. The history of the language of Japan, Mori remarks, can be traced to the beginning of the Japanese Empire in the mythological age. It is important to note here that the structure of the Japanese language that stood the test of time is characterized as having an unchanging and ever-lasting historical continuity. Mori thus discusses the language problem in Japan towards the end of the introduction to *Educaition in Japan*; Mori reiterates the point that the linguistic foundation, whether of the spoken language or the written, remains in essence unchanged since the founding of the Empire.

These facts should strengthen our hypothesis that Mori's recognition of the Imperial Japanese language is grounded in the historical continuity represented by the genealogy of the Emperors in Japan. Since this has much to do with cultural eclecticism Mori employed to realize his ultimate goals in many other fields, it seems reasonable to suppose that he must have considered using the traditional language structure as a medium that would help incorporate a phonetic alphabet and simplified English into the

vernacular language of Japan, thereby creating a new Japan's Imperial language. Indeed, Mori looked at the historical development of the imperial Japanese language in terms of its internal (grammatical) and external (phraseological and phonetical) characteristics. Let us look at Mori's reference to the oldest Japanese chronicle that purports to warrant the authenticity and legitimacy of the native language in Japan.

According to the record of Koziki [sic], which was written [in Japanese] 1,160 years ago, and is one of the oldest, the traditions of our country exhibit the creation in evolution.... (ibid.: 134–135)

Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters) is well known in Japan as the first national record written in the style of the native language, not the Chinese which, up to that point, had long functioned as the formal written language in Japan. Recall here Schlegel's rhetorical statement quoted in Moon's *The Dean's English* that refers to the language of Shakespeare as symbolizing the national strength of England. Considered in this light, we can better understand why Mori cited *Kojiki* as the "sacred text" legitimating the history of the imperial Japanese language" (see Koyasu 2003: 44–48). In doing so he was implying that Japan is perhaps one of the oldest imperial nations which has the official record bearing witness to not only the historical continuity but also the authenticity and legitimacy of the Empire and the native language; therefore, imperial Japan and her language could stand up to those in the West. In other words, the logic of his mythological-historical narrative implies that it

was the structural continuity of the internal matrix of the Japanese language that established and solidified the cultural integrity of the imperial nation. What is interesting is that the same can be said of the history of the British Empire and the English language. As Crowley writes regarding the relation between the durability of the national language and the unification of the nation:

In concentrating upon the formal continuities of the language (the internal history), ‘the history of the language’ successfully portrayed its object as *having a complex but unified pattern of evolution*. (Crowley 1989: 47; my emphasis)

Meanwhile, under the influence of the Romantic and mystic aspects of nineteenth-century historical linguistics, Mori expounded on the internal history of the national language of Japan. Furthermore, he looked at the external history of the Japanese language from a rational and scientific point of view. Indeed, inspired by the works of Max Müller and William Whitney, Mori saw language and religion as the object of scientific study. Unlike today’s scientific study of language, however, their scientific views of language were based on Spencerian and Hegelian philosophies in which the world would continue to evolve and progress as a result of enlightenment and civilization. Consequently, such moral and social imperatives at the time led Mori toward a revamping of the external—variable and seemingly retrogressing—functions of the Japanese language; it was not the internal continuity of the structure of the Japanese language, but rather its external system of notation that governs expression and pronunciation. In the 1870s,

the biggest problem with the language of Japan was to do with the clear separation or linguistic conflict between the spoken and the written language due to the conventional Chinese character-based ideographic writing system. This necessitated establishing a new standard written Japanese that would reconcile the separation between the spoken and the written so as to unify the nation.

Interestingly, Britain had the same problem for the same reason in the mid-and late-nineteenth century. Alford's *The Queen's English*, with its subtitle "*Notes on Speaking and Spelling*," clearly shows that there was an urgent need to rebuild the nation by unifying the spoken and written English in Britain. The Queen's English, with middle-class English as its matrix, was beginning to emerge as the model of the standard spoken language in the 1860s. Similarly, in the same period, the Tokyo dialect standard was being accepted as the spoken standard language that was to lay the foundation for building a new standard written language that would help solidify national unity (Sanada 1991: 70–72). In other words, just as the creation of the larger imperial language in Britain required building the standard English, spoken *and* written, and elevating it into the Queen's English, so the creation of the imperial language in the new Japan necessitated a radical transformation of the standard spoken into the full-fledged written languages. Viewed in this light, we can better understand why Mori began his letter to Whitney by first broaching the issue of standardization of the spoken language of Japan as follows:

The spoken language of Japan being inadequate to the growing necessities of the people of that Empire, and too poor to be

made, by a phonetic alphabet, sufficiently useful as a written language ... the progress of Japanese civilization is evidently impossible. Indeed a new language is demanded by the whole Empire. (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 51–52; my emphasis)

Moreover, Mori goes on to argue for the need to build a new written language based on the spoken language of Japan:

The only course to be taken, to secure the desired end, is *to start anew, by first turning the spoken language into a properly written form, based on a pure phonetic principle.*

(ibid.; my emphasis)

What Mori refers to as the “spoken language of Japan” here is nothing short of the indigenous language of Japan. He then continues to suggest that Japanese and English should have the same power at both spoken and written level:

It is very important that the alphabets of the two languages under consideration—Japanese and English—be as nearly alike as possible, in sound and powers of the letters. (ibid.)

The significance of this statement cannot be overemphasized precisely because this very sentence attests to Mori’s ultimate agenda for inter-civilizational competition in which he attempted to create the Emperor’s Japanese as a counter imperial language of the East against that of the West, namely, the Queen’s English. Then he goes on to suggest that there is a serious problem calling for imme-

diate solutions.

It may be added, in this connection, that *the written language now in use in Japan, has little or no relation to the spoken language, but is mainly hieroglyphic—a deranged Chinese, blended in Japanese, all the letters of which are themselves of Chinese origin.* (ibid.; my emphasis)

Here he insinuates that the Chinese characters constitute the extraneous element that governs the external structure of the Imperial Japanese language. The same idea can also be found in his statement in *Education in Japan*:

In the style of expression, the spoken language of Japan differs considerably from the written, though in their structure they are both mainly the same ... the vowel-sounds are each defined and all short. The style of the written language is like the Chinese. In all our institutions of learning the Chinese classics have been used. There are four different methods of writing a character, and all of them are of Chinese origin.... (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 185)

As for the problem of foreign language interference in national education in Japan, Mori thus singles out Chinese characters for preventing the progress of the native language. Mori adds:

All the schools the Empire has had, for many centuries, have been Chinese; and, strange to state, we have had no

schools nor books, in our own language for educational purposes. These *Chinese schools*, being now regarded not only as *useless*, but *as a great drawback to our progress, are in the steady progress of extinction*. (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 52; my emphasis)

Here we must draw attention to the words Mori employs to describe the “progress” of Japanese and Chinese by comparison and contrast. Obviously, Mori saw the language of China as deteriorating *progressively* toward extinction. In the same period, concerning the issue of national language education, such similar discourse inspired by social Darwinism can be found in Britain. As Alford says of the Anglo-Saxon English as against Latin as follows:

The language [English] ... is undergoing a sad and *rapid process of deterioration*. Its *fine manly Saxon is getting diluted into long Latin words* not carrying half the meaning....

(Alford 1864: 145; my emphasis)

In 1873, Kingston-Oliphant similarly criticizes the schools in Britain for taking light of the linguistic situation in which the students too often overuse foreign (Latin) words in place of Anglo-Saxon English:

we must ask how they have been taught at our Schools and Universities. Much heed is there bestowed on Latin and Greek, but none on English (Kingston-Oliphant 1873: 335)

The above descriptions suggest that there had been a striking simi-

larity in national linguistic awareness between Japan and Britain in the 1860s–70s: linguistic-cultural nationalism; there was a high degree of commonality in the nature of the problems surrounding public education and national language-building between the two nations (see also Seeley 1867 and Newman 1877). From this we can conjecture that Mori learned about national language reform in Britain while he studied there in 1865–66, and later developed an idea for the revamping of the language of Japan. Indeed, when Mori made a tentative proposal for national language reform in 1872, he focused on *our* (native/Japanese) language in contraposition to *their* (foreign/Chinese) language, in analogy with Britain’s language reform movement in which the central problem was the internal linguistic conflict between Anglo-Saxon and Latin/French words in the English language. Just as Anglo-Saxon words were seen by many purists and reformers as superior to Latin/French archaic words, so Mori saw Japanese as authentic and Chinese as “useless” because he believed that by the laws of nature and progress the language of China was to follow a course of extinction in the future. This is why Mori’s proposal included “doing away with Chinese characters” which had long been embedded in the national language of Japan.

How did Mori look at the language of China? This question has a great deal to do with how Westerners viewed the Chinese language. Referring to leading linguists such as August Schleicher (1821–68) and Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835), Tanaka (1989: 152–170) points out, it was generally believed by Westerners that it is chiefly because of their ideographic characters that prevented the language of China from flourishing as the counterparts of Western

countries did. It must be noted that Mori shared such a typical Western view of the Chinese language as doomed to decline because of the very nature of its ideographic characters. Tanaka goes on to comment on Schleicher's philosophy of language by focusing on his idea of phonocentrism in which one's thought is brought into being by its sounds; to put it the other way around, language gets more complete and advanced when there is less incongruity between its sound and letters. There is a similar logic behind Mori's discourse on language reform in Japan in which he regards Chinese characters as governing the written language of Japan and thus preventing the Japanese spoken language from developing into a modern written language. In this way, Mori's view of language was obviously influenced by the then prevailing Western philosophy of social Darwinism that dictated the survival of the fittest and natural selection.

Relevant to this point is the fact that Whitney's statement about the Darwinian prospect of Chinese significantly matches Mori's opinion on the language of China. In reply to Mori's letter, Whitney suggests:

This last matter, the writing of Japanese for the use of its own people in a phonetic mode, with the European alphabet, appears to me the first and most important of possible reforms. I am told, by those who know your language much better than I, that the task would be one of no particular difficulty; and, knowing what great and insuperable obstacles have been found in other parts of the East, in the way of carrying out a substitution of the European for the

native code of writing, the utmost I have ventured to hope has been that the Japanese would signalize themselves, showing *their superior independence and freedom from prejudice, by making this reform.* (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 339; my emphasis)

Apparently Whitney not only sees the adoption of the European alphabets in Japan as “the first and most important of possible reforms,” but also as a means to “signalize” the Japanese “showing their superior independence and freedom from prejudice.” It is worth recalling here that Mori believed in “cleansing himself of old values and norms deriving from Chinese style feudalistic conventions in Japan” (Inuzuka 1986: 39–42). For Mori, the European alphabet was a medium for de-Sinicizing Japan and outstripping China in civilization and modernization. Apparently, Whitney shared Mori’s view of the European alphabet as liberating the Japanese people from the shackles of the language of China. Whitney states:

There can be no question that, whatever benefits Japan may have derived in the past from China, nothing of value can any longer be hoped for thence; that the pupils have outgrown their old teachers, and are ready to surpass them. Nor can it be doubted, I think that the influence of the Chinese language on the Japanese has always been a *harmful and a regrettable* one, and that *complete emancipation from it would be exceedingly advantageous to Japan.* And it is, in great measure, as a furtherance to this *emancipation that I desire to see Japanese written in European characters.*

(ibid.: 339–340; my emphasis)

In the passage above we find Whitney not only having no doubt that Japan had “outgrown” China and “ready to surpass them,” but also going so far as to say that European characters should be adopted in Japan only in the interest of “complete emancipation” from the “harmful and regrettable” influence of the Chinese language on the Japanese. Clearly, Whitney’s view of Chinese as inferior to European languages because of the linguistic notation system, accords with Mori’s perception of the language of China as “useless and a “drawback” to the progress of Japan. Like Müller, Whitney who was Mori’s adviser on language reform was also a Darwinian.

Thus, influenced by Western intellectuals who advocated socio-linguistic Darwinism, Mori began to consider abandoning declining linguistic symbols (the Chinese characters) in favor of progressive ones (the Roman alphabet and English vocabulary). As we shall see in Part II, what he was aiming at in emulating the Queen’s English was creating a new national language by purifying the imperial Japanese language of the Chinese elements, as well as by rationalizing it with the aid of European elements. Hence, his radical triple schemes: abolition of Chinese, romanization of Japanese, and simplification of English. Mori was keen on building what might be called “the Emperor’s language”⁴⁸ for the Japanese Empire that would enable the new Japan to stand on an equal footing with the British Empire. In short, the model of the imperial Japanese that attracted his attention in forming his idea for national language reform was the Queen’s English, arguably

the most powerful imperial language in the West.

Having established a new theoretical and interpretive framework for understanding within Mori's *Weltanschauung* the "method and intention" of his linguistic attitude and performance, in what follows, we may now conduct an in-depth textual criticism of his language reform discourse in juxtaposition with other related discourses in an attempt to find more evidence that corroborates our working hypothesis.

PART II TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Mori's Hidden Agenda: The Creation of a New Language⁴⁹ for a New Imperial Nation

These were not for him, and ought not to be for us, inconsistent positions. Truth is rich and complex enough to accommodate both the abstract and the concrete, the temporal and the eternal, the general and the specific, the absolute and the relative, the probable and the certain.

(Weiss 1940: 254)

[T]he people of the Japanese Empire, aspire to attain the highest degree of civilization, but are unprovided with that great essential to their individual as well as national progress, —a good language—.

(Mori Arinori 1872: SMAZ, Vol. 2: 56)

1. The polysemy of “a new language”: A means and an end

Mori's idea of “the desired end” in language reform

It was in 1872 that Mori Arinori wrote a personal letter to U.S. linguist William D. Whitney asking for advice on the adoption of Roman letters (a phonetic alphabet) and a “simplified English.” At that point in time, exactly what kind of idea did he entertain of Japan's language policy? To trace his train of thought on the issue,

we will begin by examining this letter closely:

Dear Sir:

The fact that a high rank is awarded to you in the fields of Science and Literature has induced me respectfully to request your opinion on a project I have in contemplation, connected with the introduction of the English language into the Japanese Empire. The spoken language of Japan being inadequate to the growing necessities of the people to be made, by a phonetic alphabet, sufficiently useful as a written language, the idea prevails among us that, if we would keep pace with the age, we must adopt a copious and expanding European language. The necessity for this arises mainly out of the fact that Japan is a commercial nation; and also that, if we do not adopt a language like that of the English, which is quite predominant in Asia, as well as elsewhere in the commercial world, the progress of Japanese civilization is evidently impossible. Indeed a new language is demanded by the whole Empire.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 51–52)

What linguistic situation does he have in mind when he says “the introduction of the English language into the Japanese Empire” and “adopt a language like that of the English” here? What is his ultimate goal of the proposal? How does he see the relation between Japanese and English, and the problem of the spoken and the written languages of Japan? Why does he only mention the spoken language, excluding the existing written language as part of

the project? What does the conversion by a phonetic alphabet of the spoken language of Japan into a written language have to do with the adoption of the English language? If he ever talks about language reform, why not romanize both the spoken *and* the written? He appears to discount the written right from the beginning. Here we need to consider its implications for his whole idea of language policy in Japan, for it is generally believed that he proposed to *abolish* Japanese by adopting English as a new language in Japan. If the truth accords with the established idea, then why does he have to refer, from the outset, to the *spoken language of Japan and a phonetic alphabet* at the same time when he wants to do away with Japanese by introducing English into Japan? To understand his true intentions, we need to keep looking for the clues in the letter. Concerning “a new language” in Japan, Mori continues as follows:

It having been found that the Japanese language is insufficient even for the wants of the Japanese themselves, the demand for the new language is irresistibly imperative, in view of our rapidly increasing intercourse with the world at large. All the schools the Empire has had, for many centuries, have been Chinese; and, strange to state, we have had no schools nor books, in our own language for educational purposes. These Chinese schools, being now regarded not only as useless, but as a great drawback to our progress, are in the steady progress of extinction. Schools for the Japanese language are found to be greatly needed, and yet there are neither teachers nor books for them. The

only course to be taken, to secure the desired end, is to start anew, by first turning the spoken language into a properly written form, based on a pure phonetic principle. It is contemplated that Roman letters should be adopted. Under such circumstances, it is very important that the alphabets of the two languages under consideration—Japanese and English—be as nearly alike as possible, in sound and powers of the letters. (ibid.)

The first question to be raised here is whether Mori views English itself (a language belonging to a different language family) as an ideal and sufficient language that would serve as “a possible future language of the Japanese Empire” or as *the* national language. It follows from the popular discourse about Mori’s language policy that English is being referred to here as a “substitution” for the language of Japan. We can safely state here that English, as Mori himself makes clear later in the passage, is regarded as *a* new language in Japan. Yet there is no mention in the text of the English language being *the* best possible future language of the Japanese Empire.

While it is true that English is the language he intends to introduce into Japan, it is not yet clear whether he equates the adoption of a new language with the abolition of an old one. If we assume that his aim is to replace the old with the new, it will then be difficult to understand his logic when he says that “the only course to be taken, to secure the desired end, is to start anew, by first turning the spoken language into a properly written form, based on a pure phonetic form.” And he goes on to suggest that it is

imperative that the *spoken* language of Japan be romanized in order for both Japanese and English to become equal in sound and powers of letters. If Mori truly believes in abolishing the Japanese language, it would seem so strange to argue for the importance of establishing “schools for the Japanese language” where students can study in their own vernacular instead of a foreign language.

Apparently there is a contradiction between what the popular belief says about Mori’s language reform and what he actually says in the letter. Pointing out the inconsistencies in his statement, Ivan Hall (2004: 215–218) observes that Mori contradicts himself when he first stresses the need for a new language due to the incomplete function of the romanized spoken language as a sufficient written language, and then restates his belief that the spoken language of Japan should be written in Roman letters. Hall goes on to say that “it is not unreasonable to assume that Mori had half a mind to preserve the Japanese language when he wrote the letter to Whitney, and saw the whole idea of introducing a phonetic alphabet into Japan as a process of the proposed adoption of English.” Thus Hall puts forward the hypothesis that Mori must have imagined a new linguistic situation: Like India, Pakistan, and Wales in which “diglossia” would be a way of life; the Japanese people would use English as a host language in the field of science and technology, politics, trade, and education, while they speak their vernacular (Japanese) in daily conversation at home.

What was the real objective that he was trying to achieve? Did he not realize that he was contradicting himself in his argument? If he really had known what he was talking about, then how would he have reconciled the romanization of the spoken language of

Japan with the introduction of English? Or did he suppose that diglossia would be the answer to the problem? The key to unlocking the mysteries of his proposal lies in his phrase “to secure the desired end.” In order to understand what he means by this expression, it is very important to reexamine the import of the passage that follows. If we pay close attention to the context and read more carefully through the letter in order to reorganize the process of his language reform, we can see that his objective was not to replace Japanese by English but:

- 1) To utilize Roman letters (phonogram) in order to unify the spoken and written styles of the language of Japan, thereby establishing a base for *a new Japanese* that is “as nearly alike as possible, in sound and powers of the letters” when compared to English.
- 2) To abolish Chinese characters (ideogram) at the same time as the introduction of a phonetic alphabet (phonogram).
- 3) To introduce *a new English* (a simplified English) into Japan with a view to incorporating the vocabulary of Western civilization into *a new Japanese*.⁵⁰

With this in mind, we need to go over what he has to say about the introduction of English in Japan and how he says it in the letter. Following the logical thread of Mori’s argument, we find that he begins his argument by pointing out the Japanese *spoken* language’s insufficient conditions for a (new) written language and then emphasizing the urgent need for the introduction of an European

language or *a new language* in the Japanese Empire. The discussion to be followed is about the futility of Chinese characters as the written language of Japan. He sees the Chinese language not only as “useless” but also as being “a great drawback to our progress” and “in the steady progression of extinction.” It is after he refers to the Chinese schools that he insists on founding schools for the Japanese language and yet has to admit that there have been no foundations for the Japanese language-based educational system in Japan. What has to be noticed here is that Mori talks about his “desired end” and “the only course to be taken” in connection with the abolition of the conventional Chinese institutions and the creation of the Japanese ones.

Indeed, Mori says in the letter that to achieve his goals it is necessary to “start anew by first turning the spoken language into a properly written form, based on a pure phonetic principle.” What this sentence shows is that he intends to remove the conventional written language of Japan (Chinese-based ideogram) by expressing the spoken language in a phonetic alphabet as a new written language. If we assume this is his true intention, then we can understand why he does not have to mention at the beginning the “old” written language of Japan (Chinese) as a crucial part of his plan for language reform. It is clear that he does not consider romanizing the “old” written language on a pure ideogramic principle in the first place. This is chiefly because of his firm belief in “progress” and denial of the feudalistic ethos permeated in Chinese characters. Thus Mori’s conception of the development of Japanese suggests that he sees the introduction of a progressive and “copious” European language as indispensable for a new Japanese written

language; his language reform is to be carried out by revamping the foundations of the whole text written in the language of Japan.

Here I would like to focus attention on the operative word in the passage quoted above that might give us a clue as to Mori's "desired end." We should not overlook the fact that he employed the adverb "first" as he begins to unfold his plan for language reform. This clearly indicates that romanization of the spoken language of Japan constitutes only *phase one* of his scheme where a Japanese vernacular-based written language should be made on a "pure phonetic principle" with sound and powers of the letters equal to English. However, as already referred to in Part I, he pointed out the major obstacle as follows:

the written language now in use in Japan, has little or no relation to the spoken language, but is mainly hieroglyphic—a deranged Chinese, blended in Japanese, all the letters of which are themselves of Chinese origin. (ibid.)

Judging from the logical progression, it could be argued that what Mori was aiming at in the first phase was to *abolish* Chinese characters with the introduction of Roman letters and thus lay the foundation for the next stage. The point to observe here is that Mori evidently views the introduction of a phonetic alphabet as a prerequisite for ridding Japan of the characters "of Chinese origin." As for the first phase in his plan, corroborative evidence can be found in his definite statement in the preface to *Education in Japan*:

most of them are of Chinese origin. There are some efforts

being made to *do away with* the use of Chinese characters by reducing them into simple phonetics.

(SMAZ, Vol. 5: 185: my emphasis)

Having got this point firmly established, we get nearer to the next phase that Mori was contemplating. Soon after the discussion of the distinction between the spoken and written language of Japan, he then goes on to talk about the introduction of a “simplified English” into Japan. Yet he does not explicitly mention that it is the second phase to be followed by the adoption of Roman letters in the first phase. By his line of reasoning, however, it seems reasonable to suppose that he thinks of the adoption of simplified English as the next phase of his proposed draft. Assuming that it is the second part of “the desired end,” we may say that Mori was making a consistent argument all along; Hall’s view that Mori makes a contradictory statement in the letter is unsound here (Unger 1996: 5). The reason why Mori states at the beginning that the spoken language of Japan is “too poor to be made by a phonetic alphabet, sufficiently useful as a written language” and then maintains that the spoken language needs to be romanized is that his “desired end” in his language reform is to be implemented by a *two-stage* procedure: first, the introduction of Roman letters; second, the adoption of simplified English. When he argues that the spoken language of Japan could not be made by Roman letters into a sufficiently useful written language, he implies that it is *not enough just to use a phonetic alphabet* to create a new written language of Japan because it still lacks vocabulary necessary for education in the new Japan; in addition to the introduction of Roman letters, a

“copious and expanding European language” also needs to be adopted as a lexical supplement. There is much justice in this interpretation, for it accounts well for “the desired end” Mori had in mind, which we shall be discussing further in the later sections. What must be noted here is that his logic says that the whole project requires *not only* one thing *but also* something else; it never says that one thing is quite sufficient; therefore it should be replaced or abolished with the introduction of another. While Mori considers “introducing into all schools of the Empire, and gradually into general a ‘simplified English’,” it does not necessarily follow that he intended to substitute English for Japanese. Here we should be extra careful in interpreting his “desired end” behind his statement; otherwise we would fall into the trap of accepting the popular belief that Mori was a keen proponent of the abolition of Japanese and the adoption of English. What Mori is attempting to do here is to fill the gap between the spoken and written language of Japan in terms of notational system, and to build up the lexis of the Japanese language. This idea is far from replacing Japanese by a foreign language. In sum, his language reform plan is twofold: Phase One involves romanizing the spoken language of Japan; Phase Two adopting a simplified English as a means of enriching the new (romanized) Japanese. If we take into consideration all other evidence relating to his linguistic strategy, it is highly probable that Mori is aiming for a “revamped” language along the lines of the two-stage plan.

The new English for building an “imperial language”

Let us examine further Mori’s ultimate goal of the phased lan-

guage reform by illustrating the point that we have been considering. Based on our analysis, we can posit the following hypothesis: What Mori is aiming at here is creating *koukoku-gengo* or a new language of the Japanese Empire that could hold its ground against, and in the ultimate sense, surpass the two big imperial languages: Chinese and English. We have good grounds for thinking that this may be the case, for there are many examples where Mori has made statements which support this view. As we have already seen in Part I, the key word that best characterizes his “geo-cultural strategy” and fully explains what his “desired end” was all about and how it was to be done, is *eclecticism* which he regarded as a highly effective traditional method for producing something new in Japan. Since ancient times, eclecticism has long been viewed as a strategic or compromising integration of “heterogeneous cultural elements” in Japan. This is none other than what Meiji Japan embodied in its national constitution; indeed, Meiji Restoration in 1868 means restoring the old (cultural matrix) on which the new must build. This idea of eclecticism can be interpreted as what Bourdieu (1991) terms “cultural capital,” which the Meiji government was ready to exploit.

As we have seen in Part I, there is strong evidence showing that Mori apparently strategically used Japan’s cultural capital (time-tested eclecticism) as a way of obtaining a wealth of knowledge from Western civilization. Mori placed eclecticism in its historical and cultural context and talked about the role of Japan’s cultural capital in developing a higher culture of its own and “surpass the state of civilization” reached by “her Asiatic neighbors” (China and Korea). The most important part of this statement is

the motive behind his pronouncement on Japan's eclectic tradition. We can be fairly certain that Mori had a keen sense of rivalry with the countries which were doing better than Japan. While Mori spoke of the cultural significance of the political engraftment in the context above, it would be logical, given his spirit of emulation, to assume that he found it imperative that the Japanese language should be more competitive with those of advanced countries. In my understanding, it is Mori's competitive spirit that served as a driving force behind his strategic use of traditional eclecticism to create a better language in Japan. It should be clear that he hoped to develop and perfect a new language of the Japanese Empire as compared to any of the European languages. This explains why he advanced the idea of introducing a "simplified (improved) English," not the conventional English full of orthographic defects (irregular spellings). The *new English* would have to be adopted as a (perfectly modified therefore) better language than the "old" English being used in the world. He was acutely aware that Japan could not afford to introduce any European language if it was imperfect precisely because it would not give Japan a competitive edge over her rivals at all. What needs to be emphasized is that it is only by looking at his "desired end" in terms of cultural eclecticism that we can understand how he planned to carry out his language reform. To repeat the major point, he views the introduction of the Roman alphabet and a simplified English not so much as an end in itself but rather as a process of creating a new imperial Japanese language.

A point to note concerning his language strategy is that Mori insists on revamping both Japanese and English *at the same time*; he

states, as we have seen in the letter, that it is significant that the two languages be made equal “in sound and powers of the letters” based on a “pure phonetic principle.” His intention is to adopt the Roman alphabet that consists of 26 letters by which to convert the Chinese-hieroglyph-ridden written language of Japan into the phonetic-based one. This idea is tantamount to the abolition of Chinese in Japan. Furthermore, he argues, concurrently, for the improvement in English orthography which is full of irregularities. He asserts:

the world at large, would be greatly benefited by a through recast of English orthography, —making the language actually what it claims to be phonetic instead of hieroglyphic on a phonetic basis, which is what it now really is.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 56)

Thus Mori considers modifying not only Japanese but also English in terms of orthography. No matter how you look at it, this is far from putting English in place of Japanese as the new language of Japan.

The second point that requires clarification is that Mori qualifies his statement by stressing that his proposal for a simplified English is intended only for the use of the Japanese people. He writes:

many of the reasons which might make Americans and Englishmen hesitate to attempt radical changes in their language for their own people, do not apply to the case under

consideration, which is the adaptation of the English language to the necessities of a foreign nation of forty millions of souls, separated by thousands of miles from the English-speaking nations, and which affords an entirely free field, for the introduction of a new language; there being no obstacle whatsoever within the Empire itself.

(ibid.; underline in the original)

Here Mori specifically explains his intention of the introduction of English into Japan; he intends to *adapt the simplified English to the necessities of Japanese* without imposing it on the English-speaking people. This statement above clearly demonstrates that the primary purpose of his proposal to implement the use of English in his country is not to substitute (simplified) English for Japanese, but rather to make it suitable for the needs of the Japanese people. In other words, Mori regards it not as a replacement for Japanese but as an “auxiliary language” required for the creation of the Imperial Japanese language. Apparently, what he is trying to do is to incorporate a new vocabulary of Western civilization into Japanese by virtue of a pure phonetic.

However, Whitney, responding to Mori’s letter, disapproved of his idea for a simplified English on the grounds of intelligibility as follows:

And I think that any alteration, in the process of adoption, of the essential structure of English, would constitute an interference. You cannot join the community of English speakers without frankly accepting English speech as they

have made it, and now use it. All change of that speech, such as you propose, would be a barrier between the Japanese and English speaker of English, and would shut out the former from access to the English literature.

(SMAZ, Vol. 5: 336)

As a native speaker of English, Whitney does not shy away from revealing his sentiments as to Mori's "provocative" scheme. Further he adds:

The new English (such is the power of prejudice) would seem *laughable and absurd* to the speakers of the old, and those who used it would be visited with the contempt of the latter. Nor do I think there would be any appreciable gain to set off against this loss ... to regulate them would be to give the whole language a new and strange aspect, *offensive* to those whom it now belongs. (ibid.: my emphasis)

Indeed, Mori's proposal is radical in that in improving the English language he not merely tries to correct its "fantastic" orthography which is not based on a pure phonetic principle but goes so far as to change the "essential structure of English" such as the rules of conjugation of verbs and irregular forms of nouns: just to give a few examples of verbs, Seed for saw; Speaked for spoke and spoken; Bited for bit and bitten; Thinked for thought (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 54). Notwithstanding possible difficulties in communication with the English-speaking peoples, Mori gives his plan a serious thought. What is clearly shown is that the whole idea of the adop-

tion of English in Japan is meant for an extensive improvement on the language of Japan. Here we find disagreement between Mori's intention and Whitney's interpretation; Mori wants to adopt a modified English as a means of developing Japanese into a language comparable or superior to European languages, while Whitney would like to see the Japanese people "make themselves a part of those (Anglo-Saxon) races" by coming to accept and use English as it is. It is neither assimilation into the English-speaking community nor the abolition of Japanese, but the development of Japanese as a strong and independent language, that Mori is really aiming for. Obviously, he gives priority to national interests here. This is why Mori maintains that it is primarily for the benefit of the Japanese people and that he would never force the simplified English on the English-speaking peoples.

Furthermore, another significant point as regards his imperial language creation scheme is that Mori declares that it would be "nearly useless to make an effort in that direction" and that "it might be quite impossible to force upon them the language in its present form." As to the estimated amount of time required for the study of the new language, he goes on to suggest:

Indeed, I could not conscientiously recommend my countrymen, to cause their children to devote six or seven years of their lives to learning a language so replete with the interchange of thought and acquisition of knowledge are rendered so difficult by a fantastic orthography—years which should be devoted to the study of numerous branches of human development. (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 57)

The statement above would not make sense if we assumed that Mori's intention was to abolish Japanese. It is unreasonable to think that one can expect a people to learn a foreign language so as to do away with their native language in "six or seven years." Mori also makes it clear that he could not and would not adopt English (unless it is modified) for two reasons. First, he finds it *economically* unfeasible to introduce an "imperfect" English into Japan. Second, he believes it is *morally* wrong to waste people's precious time on the acquisition of a foreign and cumbersome language.⁵¹ All this reminds us of Gandhi who "also held English responsible for distorting education, where because of the time spent learning English the standard reached in other subjects was 'pitifully inadequate' (cited in Phillipson 1990: 35–36)."

There is a further point which needs to be clarified: How did Mori think the language of the Japanese Empire was to be legitimized as a "imperial" language (so as not to be outdone by English, arguably the largest imperial language in the world)? All this has to do with the question of imperial linguistic legitimacy. If it is an imperial language that Mori endeavored to construct, then it must be connected with some features that constitute an imperial power. The best account for this could be found in the "history of the Japanese Empire." Facing the impending national crisis caused by the Western imperial powers, most intellectuals in Meiji Japan would draw on the history of Japan as "symbolic capital" in justifying their claim that Japan is a true empire: an unconquered nation with an unbroken line of Emperors. This is the popular rationale behind the Meiji government's empire building. Mori was no exception. As has been noted, he views Japan as a legiti-

mate empire on the grounds of the long history of the unbroken imperial dynasty. Mori's perception of Japan as a long-standing empire is based on the "great constitution and authority" of the Japanese Emperor. The point I wish to emphasize here is that Mori believes it is by becoming united as one legitimate imperial nation that Japan can "stand on equal footing with other imperial nations." It is clear that for Mori, the Japanese Empire was embodied in a nation with the emperor as a cultural matrix. Having got this point made, we are now able to see what Mori means by "securing the desired end" in his language reform. Before we move on to the next section, I would like to extend our observation into a little more comprehensive theory that better illustrates the point that we have been considering. As has been suggested, "a new language" is referred to in Mori's letter as a simplified English—a "new English." But at the same time Mori also sets out to convert the spoken language of Japan into a whole new written language—a "new Japanese"—by adopting a phonetic or Roman letters for the purpose of creating the Imperial Japanese language—the "new language for the Japanese Empire." All this can be summarized in the following formula: (1) a new Japanese + (2) a new English = (3) the new language for the Japanese Empire [(1) and (2) are a means; (3) is an end].

What is shown here is that there are three different new languages involved in his language reform plan. A significant point to emphasize is the process of (1) and (2) that is exactly where eclecticism comes into play; (2) [a new English] can be regarded as a means of strengthening (1) [a new Japanese] in terms of enriching its vocabulary. In other words, a simplified English is to be

introduced into Japan as a new language that can be defined as *a means* to an end; in this sense, (1) [a new Japanese] constitutes another *means*. And *the end* (what Mori calls the “desired end”) is (3) [*the* new language for the Japanese Empire]. This triple formula indicates that the meaning of what Mori implies by “a new language” can be interpreted as being threefold. In Mori’s letter, however, only (2) [a simplified English as a means] is discussed and called “a new language.” Of course, (1) [a romanized Japanese] is also mentioned but not expressed as a new language that comes with (2). Summing up, since (3) [Mori’s desired end = his linguistic strategy] is not explicitly mentioned in the letter, (1) and (2) [means] are liable to be misinterpreted by many scholars as an end in it self or Mori’s ultimate goal.

Another important aspect of Mori’s polysemous words “a new language” is that, as we shall see later, it is closely intertwined with his political thought that is best characterized as what I call “transcendental imperialism.” This notion offers the key to an understanding of what motivated Mori to revamp the language of Japan. By transcendental imperialism I mean that when faced with the Empires of the East and the West (China and the Britain/the U.S.), Mori tried to introduce the knowledge and technology of Western civilization into Japan in order for the new Japanese not only to catch up and stand on an equal footing with Westerners but eventually to “beat them at their own game.” From this perspective, it could be argued that Mori sees the images of a new language as follows: (1) a new Japanese (a romanized spoken language of Japan) would make it possible for the Japanese people to break away from the “fetters” of the old civilization’s legacy (= compli-

cated Chinese hieroglyphics). (2) a new English (simplified English) would allow the Japanese to compensate for lack of vocabulary in a new Japanese. (3) the new language for the Japanese Empire would enable Japan to educate the people with the best possible language in the world.

We can attribute these images of a new language to the geo-cultural and political idea of *datsua nyuou* (“Leave Asia, Enter Europe [the West]”) in which Yukichi Fukuzawa encapsulated the then popular political thought in Japan (Fukuzawa uses the umbrella word “Asia” to mean the “uncivilized” countries in the East, which he specifically referred to as China and its vassal state, Korea). Similarly, Mori’s image of Asia that represents the representative civilization in East Asia was China, and in Europe Britain and its off-shoot America. Mori’s political thought was more ambitious than Fukuzawa’s idea of *datsua nyuou*. He carried the idea one step further, which is best described as *datsua nyuou chouou* (Leave Asia, Enter and Transcend Europe [the West]); his strategy is not simply to copy a higher civilization but even to rise above it. Mori wanted Japan to be modeled on countries that enjoyed *the highest* civilization in the world, for he believed that Japan would never be the best if she started aiming lower from the beginning. Therein lies the secret of Mori’s idea for a new language in Japan. The following is a summary of the above reification of his explicit and implicit images, means, and purposes of realizing a new language (Table 1).

It should be concluded, from what has been observed so far, that Mori’s discourse on language reform should be regarded as a plan for the creation of the imperial Japanese language, not as

Table 1. reification of Mori's hidden agenda

Images	Tactics (Means)	Strategy (Ends)
(1) <i>a new Japanese</i>	The adoption of Roman letters as a de-hieroglyphing agent	Leave the East (= China)
(2) <i>a new English</i>	The adoption of a simplified English as a lexical supplement	Enter the West (=Britain and the U.S.A.)
(3) <i>the new language for the Japanese Empire</i>	All of the above	Transcend the imperial Others

what is commonly known as a “wild view on the adoption of English and the abolition of Japanese.” In the next section, we shall continue to examine how Mori would pursue the problem of the language of Japan as he became more cognizant of the difficulties in implementing the proposed reform, and what caused his discourse to be wrongly construed as an “irrational statement.”

Taking into consideration these observations, it seems more reasonable to assume that what Mori was trying to achieve was not to introduce the simplified English as an end itself, but to use it as a means of translating into reality his idea for *the* new imperial lan-

guage of the Japanese Empire.

2. The semantics of “the language of Japan” and “its disuse”

As we saw earlier, the full import of Mori’s letter to Whitney is understood as being implicitly expressed in his linguistic strategy to construct a basis for *the* new imperial language in Japan. This drives us to the question whether he had an alternative option if his plan turned out to be impossible to carry out; his failure to adopt Roman letters and a simplified English in Japan meant either choosing another option of trying the second best European language along the same line as the original plan, or accepting “English as it is written” with the Chinese hieroglyphics intact in the language of Japan. It can arguably be imagined that Mori was well aware that the only choice left in dealing with the problem would be “translation”—the conventional means of incorporating the best elements of foreign languages into Japan.

Nevertheless, at the time of asking Whitney for advice, Mori viewed the translation method as inadequate in terms of his “desired end”; with the traditional approach the new Japan would not be able to unify the spoken and written language; nor would it be possible to transcend China and Europe by creating the best language in the world. Added to this, because of his belief in socio-linguistic revolution, he feared that choosing the option certainly involved putting the fate of Japanese in with that of Chinese which is, to use Mori’s own term, “in the steady progress of extinction.” It is for this reason that Mori was trying hard to find ways to preserve Japanese in an unconventional way. For him it is about a

“requisite of the maintenance of national independence in the international community.”

Yet it was not long before Mori had to admit at the end of the introduction to *Education in Japan*, that his language reform plan reached an impasse when the romanization of the language of Japan was blocked by the intractable problem of Chinese hieroglyphics. And due to his “suggestive” expressions in the statement, this confession of his abandonment of the idea has long been used by many scholars as a major premise on which they argue that Mori “recklessly” decided to “abandon” the Japanese language by adopting English instead as the national language. But this leaves room for further investigation. In order to illuminate how Mori was going to engage with the language problem in Japan, we need to re-examine the original text more closely.

In discussing the introduction of English into Japan, Mori begins to talk about the language situation in Japan by giving a brief account of the difference in the style of expression between the spoken and the written language of Japan. And he goes on to suggest that it is extremely difficult to do away with complex Chinese hieroglyphics even by employing a phonetic alphabet. The reason is:

The words familiar through the organ of the eye are so many, that to change them into those of the ear would cause too great an inconvenience, and be quite impracticable. Without the aid of the Chinese, our language has never been taught or used for any purpose of communication. This shows its poverty. (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 185–186)

Here he realizes the technical difficulties in removing Chinese characters. Since most Chinese characters have visual meanings resulting in a number of homonyms, Mori finds it “impractical,” if not impossible, to implement the script reform in Japan. In his letter to Whiney, however, he had stated that “the written language of Japan now in use has little or no relation to the spoken language,” thereby implying that his language reform *should and could* separate Chinese (characters) from the Japanese vernacular. This suggests that he had not yet been cognizant of the intractability of sound and letters mostly dictated by Chinese that defines the integrity of the language of Japan. In other words, it is by attempting to carry out such drastic language reforms that Mori came to grapple with the hard fact that Japanese had long been governed by Chinese in Japan. Over the last few hundred years, the predominance of Chinese over Japanese had already been discussed by many scholars of language. It is said to be first taken up in *Toga* (a Japanese etymological dictionary published in 1717) by Arai Hakuseki (1657–1725), a distinguished scholar of Western Learning in the mid-Edo period. Arai writes:

Since time immemorial our language (Japanese) had been predominant in our country with foreign languages being only of secondary importance. However, as the Chinese characters began to prevail against our language, there was virtually nothing that could escape from their domination. As a result, the newcomer ended up becoming the predecessor’s master; the one-time chief turned into the servant of the foreign agent. (Cited in Irie Takanori 1990: 297)

It is clear that Mori shared Arai's view of Chinese as ruling the written language of Japan when he said that "Without the aid of the Chinese, our language has never been taught or used for any purpose of communication." This is why Mori was forced to reconsider his original plan; cancellation of the first stage of the proposed reform—romanization of the spoken language of Japan—automatically meant withdrawing from the introduction of a simplified English in the second phase (It would not be practical politics without a common notational system (a phonetic alphabet) that facilitates the integration of Japanese and English). It is highly likely that this unanticipated setback made Mori realize why Whitney disapproved of a simplified English as a "new English." Interestingly enough, Whitney refused to give his approval to Mori's idea for exactly the same reason that Mori decided to preserve the spoken language of Japan by all means: the conservative nature of language. Mori attempted to devise a plan for maintaining the Japanese vernacular by means of an alphabet but did not succeed in implementing the language reform owing to the fundamental character of the language that repels artificial change in the orthography. By the same token, Whitney sees Mori's idea of simplifying English as too radical and reckless in light of historical and cultural binding that comes into play when a language is forced to change. Furthermore, dealing with the conservative nature of language, Mori arrived at the conclusion that the proposed introduction of a phonetic alphabet in Japan would "cause too great an inconvenience and be quite impracticable." Likewise, regarding the possible outcome of the change in the essential structure of English, Whitney reached a similar conclusion. Many scholars

argue that Mori got the message from Whitney's negative response to his idea and was "dissuaded from carrying out his wild plan." Yet, as observed already, that was not really the case. It should be emphasized that Mori and Whitney both had their own reasons for making their cases and that they ended up arriving at the conclusions on their own. It is reasonable to suppose, then, that Mori, after deliberating on his proposal on its own merits, decided that it was not viable.

At the same time this means that when Mori wrote to Whitney he had not thought it over well enough to see how it would turn out in reality. All this explains why Mori did not take into consideration in the letter both the prospects of the conventional Chinese-based written language of Japan. Consequently, it was only a matter of time before he had to accept the fact that the spoken language of Japan would be hard to become independent of the written language. With regard to the inseparability of Japanese phonological system from Chinese hieroglyphic space, Mori sums it up by saying "this shows its (= Japanese) poverty." Moreover, now that failure in this respect dashed his hope of enriching the Japanese vocabulary with the simplified new English, he called the language of Japan a "meager" and "weak and uncertain medium of communication. Nevertheless it would be fallacious to say that Mori was ready to "abandon" the language of Japan simply because he felt at the end of his tether concerning his original scheme. In order to develop a better understanding of Mori's linguistic strategy, it is essential to see that his seemingly pessimistic statements pertaining to the future of the Japanese language are no more than an objective (and tentative) assessment of the possibility

of linguistic independence, which is only based on a hypothetical assumption.

Then, what leads most scholars to believe that Mori was determined to abolish Japanese in favor of English? The cause of the misinterpretation lies in the following statement made by Mori in the preface to *Education in Japan*, where he refers to the language problem and makes a “tentative” judgment on the then linguistic situation.

The laws of state can never be preserved in the language of Japan. All reasons suggest its disuse. (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 186)

The established theory of “Mori’s abolition of Japanese and introduction of English in Japan” comes from the ambiguous interpretations of the key phrases in the above quotation: “language of Japan,” “suggest,” and “its disuse.” Do these phrases really mean Mori’s determination to abrogate Japanese? According to the generally accepted theory, “the language of Japan” refers to the so called the native language. As for the vague and ill-defined expression, Lee argues that the word is used so ambiguously that it is not to be equated with “Japanese” without reservation; she sees it rather as a concept of “Japanese and Chinese in a chaotic state.” Following Hall’s (1973) interpretation of the term, however, Lee (1996) also cautiously defines the word Japanese as Japan’s indigenous vernacular, an entity separated from Chinese elements. Does this equivocal interpretation do justice to Mori’s understanding of the language of Japan? A closer examination of the usage of the word in its particular context shows that it fails to delineate the

denotation in the strict sense. For Mori clearly uses the term in question to mean “Japanese” as opposed to “Chinese,” representing the homey language in Japan as Japanese when it is contrasted with Chinese as the language of China. Furthermore, the word “Japanese” signifies the spoken language of Japan, while “Chinese” means the written language of Japan. Thus, the language of Japan is Japanese or the spoken language of Japan. This specific usage can be found in both Mori’s letter to Whitney and the preface to *Education in Japan*. If we look at it from the standpoint of *datsua* (de-Sinicization), which was the spirit of the times in the late nineteenth century, we can develop a better understanding of what Mori means by “our (own) language.” In the aforementioned preface, Mori speaks of the inadequacy of the language of Japan as he calls it “our meager language (= Japanese)” and “a weak and uncertain medium of communication.” Here we must pay attention to the word “our” because it holds the key to Mori’s language attitude to Chinese. For Mori, the concept of Japanese is not so ambiguous as Lee suggests it is. On the contrary, Mori even sees the origins of the two languages as deriving from different cultures. He made an attempt to “rediscover” the Japanese language which had long been overshadowed by Chinese in Japan. It is indeed precisely because of the rise of nationalism in early Meiji Japan that influenced people to redefine their national identity.

As Pennycook (1998: 173) observes, what we find here is the “processes of dichotomizing between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ and essentializing the resultant Other (the ‘Chinese’).” This construction of Self and Other helped to “produce images not only of Us and Them” but also of “Our language and culture and Theirs”

(Pennycook 1998: 30). It is important, therefore, to observe that from this new perspective Mori considers Japanese in contraposition to Chinese: he looks upon Japanese (= the spoken language of Japan) as Our language, while he sees Chinese (= the written language of Japan) as Their language. What Mori attempted to do is the reversal of the ethno-cultural politics of Chinese and Japanese with the latter under the domination of the former in Japan.

Lee argues that “Mori did not have a clear-cut image of Japanese. For him, it was an obscure entity” (1996: 12). Following Hall’s (1973) comment on the usage of the key words (“Japanese” and “Chinese”), Lee only ends up endorsing the view that states the obvious and thus fails to get to the heart of Mori’s language attitude; her assumption prevents her from understanding his ethno-cultural and political thought that dictated the usage of his words. One must not confuse the fact that historically the language of Japan had been a mixture of Japanese and Chinese with the fact that from a theoretical if not practical perspective Mori makes conscious efforts to dissociate Japanese from Chinese. Apparently he tried to distinguish between Our Language and Theirs instead of obfuscating them.

The primary purpose of the romanization of the spoken language of Japan was to turn the indigenous Japanese language into a new written national language which would be free from the Chinese characters. In order to understand the logic behind Mori’s language reform, we need to recognize the patent fact that like many other samurai intellectuals, he equated the indigenous language with the spoken language of Japan. Indeed, a careful analysis of the text of Mori’s letter to Whitney and his other English dis-

courses demonstrates convincingly that for Mori, the “spoken language of Japan” refers to the “Japanese language” or “our own language,” as opposed to the Chinese language (characters) or the written language of Japan. Let us look at the following examples:

- a) *The spoken language of Japan* being inadequate to the growing necessities of the people of that Empire, and too poor to be made, by a phonetic alphabet, sufficiently useful as a written language. (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 51: my emphasis)
- b) It having been found that *the Japanese language* is insufficient even for the wants of the Japanese themselves, the demand for the new language is irresistibly imperative. (ibid.: 52; my emphasis)
- c) All the schools of the Empire have had, for many centuries, have been *Chinese*; and, strange to state, we have had no schools nor books, in *our own language* for educational purposes. *These Chinese schools*, being now regarded not only as useless, but as a great drawback to our progress, are in the steady progress of extinction. Schools for *the Japanese language* are found to be greatly needed. (ibid.; my emphasis)

Given that the above passages (a) and (b) appear in the same context of the same paragraph in Mori’s letter to Whitney, it may be safely inferred that the phrases “the spoken language of Japan”

and “the Japanese language” are being used interchangeably. This is also confirmed by the sentence (c) following the paragraph that refers to the Japanese language as opposed to the Chinese language. As already quoted and discussed, obviously Mori viewed the spoken language of Japan as different in origin from the written. For the sake of clarification, let us once again take a closer look at the pertinent evidence in succession below.

- d) It may be well to add, in this connection, that *the written language* now in use in Japan, has little or no relation to *the spoken language*, but mainly hieroglyphic—a deranged *Chinese, blended in Japanese*, all the letters of which are themselves of *Chinese origin*. (ibid.; my emphasis)
- e) An allusion to the subject of *the Japanese language* bears a most direct relation to the contents of this book. In the style of expression, *the spoken language of Japan* differs considerably from the written, though in their structure they are both mainly the same.... The style of *the written language* is like *the Chinese* ... and all of them are of *Chinese origin*. (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 185; emphasis added)

Taken together, we can see that Mori regarded the spoken language of Japan as symbolizing the indigenous Japanese language, while looking upon the written language of Japan as governed by the foreign (Chinese) language. Thus Mori calls the spoken language of Japan (the Japanese language) “our own language” (as against “their language”). Based on this interpretation, it becomes

easier to clarify what Mori implied by the following statement:

- f) Without the aid of *Chinese*, *our language* has never been taught or used for any purpose of communication. This shows its poverty. (ibid.: 186; my emphasis)

As has been noted, it is obvious that the “spoken language of Japan” (the indigenous Japanese language) is referred to as “our language” here in contrast to the Chinese characters that predominantly constituted the written. Therefore it is reasonable to suppose that “its poverty” implies the inadequacy of the spoken language of Japan (the indigenous Japanese language), not the other entity—the Chinese-governed written language. Again, this can be further corroborated by the foregoing sentence (a) that says that “the spoken language of Japan being inadequate to the growing necessities of the people of that Empire, and too poor to be made, by a phonetic alphabet, sufficiently useful as a written language.” The same interpretation applies to the passage below.

- g) Under the circumstances, *our meager language*, which can never be of any use outside of our islands, is doomed to yield to the domination of the English language. (ibid.; my emphasis)

It is clear by now that as in the case of (c) and (f) “our meager language” in contrast to their declining language (Chinese) means none other than the indigenous spoken language of Japan. The same can also be said of the following passage:

h) Our intelligent race, eager in the pursuit of knowledge, cannot depend upon *a weak and uncertain medium of communication* in its endeavor to grasp the principal truths from the precious treasury of Western science and art and religion. The laws of state can never be preserved in *the language of Japan*. All reasons suggest its disuse.

(ibid.; my emphasis)

Here Mori uses the phrase “a weak and uncertain mediums of communication” to mean “our meager language.” As evidenced in the passages quoted above, Mori used the “language of Japan” in contrast with Chinese characters that were perceived as the “language of China.” In short, for Mori, “our own language,” and the “Japanese language” were a parallel expression of “the (spoken) language of Japan.” And there is further evidence to suggest that several years before Mori’s discourse on language reform was made in 1872–73, he had already perceived the native language as a different entity from the Chinese language. In his diary that contained a short account of his travel to Russia (1866), Mori touched upon the potential for the native language of Japan made by quoting a conversation he had with Russians who were fluent in Japanese.

So I asked them this question “What do you think about *wago* (the indigenous Japanese language)? It seems to me that foreigners may find it very difficult to master *wago* where there are no dictionaries or reference books.” Then they replied with one voice, “Not necessarily so. If the text

was ever written all in *wago* it would be much easier for us to learn. Not only that. *Wago* is a very elegant language. To our regret, however, it is always being used with *kango* (the Chinese characters), which we think makes the language system more complex than it has to be. These days, things are getting worse when the people overuse *kango* instead of *wago*, which really troubles us foreigners.”

(SMAZ, Vol. 3: 28)

All this goes to show that Mori recognized *wago* as a different entity within the *kango*-dominated language system in Japan. Mori called the former “Our (Japanese) language” as against the latter “Their (Chinese) language.” Thus, Mori’s language recognition, as I suggested above, is manifest in his Us/Them binary thinking which frequently appeared in his English discourses in exactly the same fashion.

Turning to another keyword “suggest” in his statement in question, most scholars have misconstrued what he meant by the word “suggest” as making a proposal, not as making a forecast. According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (1996), the meaning of the verb “to suggest” can vary depending on the subject of the sentence. If it takes a person as its subject, then, the verb means “to put sth/sb forward as an idea or a candidate to be considered or “to propose sth/sb.” And if an inanimate subject is used instead of a person, the verb is taken to mean “to put an idea, etc into sb’s mind.” Clearly Mori meant the latter when he used the word, since the verb in the sentence in question takes “all reasons” as its subject. It follows from this that he was making a forecast, not a

proposal. The next logical question we have to ask, then, is what was he making a forecast about?

Which leads us to the other controversial term “disuse” that Mori used in closing his statement regarding the linguistic situation in Japan. As the earlier discussion made clear, what Mori wanted to abolish was Chinese characters governing the written language of Japan, not along with the Japanese vernacular. So Swale (2000: 64–65) is wrong when he says that “Perhaps one of the most radical elements among Mori’s views on education at the time was his *kokugo haishiron*, the proposal that the Japanese language ought to be replaced by English as the main official medium of communication. Mori was later to regret his rather bold rejection of the Chinese literary legacy and within a fairly short time completely abandoned the idea.” On the contrary, Chino Tomoko (1992) is right in pointing out that the major reason why Mori’s discourse on language reform in Japan has been liable to cause misunderstanding has a great deal to do with the ambiguous usage of the term “disuse” in his statement. The import of this word can change depending on whether it is used as a noun or a verb. As Chino argues, while it is possible to interpret it, if employed as a verb, to mean “to abolish,” the word “disuse” in his sentence is used as a noun meaning the “a situation in which sth is no longer being used” (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 2005). Consequently, what Mori was saying was that he was making a forecast about the linguistic situation in Japan in which the language of Japan (= Japanese as against Chinese) would cease to be used; he was making no proposal whatsoever to abolish the language of Japan altogether.

Furthermore, in interpreting accurately the meaning of the sentence in question, we should not overlook a group of preceding sentences that qualify the expression (“suggest its disuse”). The important point to note is that those qualifying statements start with the sentence with the clause of condition as follows:

Under the circumstances, our meager language ... *is doomed* to yield to the domination of the English language.... Our intelligence race ... *cannot depend upon* a weak and uncertain medium of communication.... The laws of state *can never be preserved* in the language of Japan. All reasons suggest its disuse. (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 186: my emphasis)

A careful reading of the context suggests that the phrase “under the circumstances” modifies all the main verbs that follow: “is doomed to yeild,” “cannot depend upon,” and “can never be preserved.” Mori, then, groups them together as reasons for forecasting the future of the language of Japan. It is important to consider that all this seemingly pessimistic view of the linguistic situation in Japan was mentioned in the introduction to *Education in Japan*, which was published with the intention of seeking advice from “many leading minds of the United States” on the critical issues including language and religion in the Japanese Empire. As Mori writes in *Education in Japan*:

One of the difficult problems for our solution is the restraint of our youths, so that their little knowledge will not prove a danger, but will become, in its maturity, a pow-

erful weapon of defense, and a beneficent influence in the grand advance of our nation. *Wise advice from abroad on this vital question is called for. Education has become imperative. Schools are happily being established on an extensive scale throughout the empire.... The many radical changes that are and have been in operation in Japan have produced a transition period, for which allowance, sympathy, and assistance are solicited.* (ibid.: 182–183; emphasis added)

In light of what Mori was meaning to accomplish with the publication of *Education in Japan* in the U.S., we have every reason to believe that Mori was afraid that “under the circumstances” in which there is a paucity of knowledge coming from the advanced language of Western civilization, the “absolute necessity of mastering the English language is thus forced upon us” (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 186). But again, we should be careful not to jump to the conclusion that by that he intended to abolish the language of Japan in favor of English.

In spite of the ambiguity in the statement, we need to read carefully his hidden agenda behind this discourse. As we have seen, what he was aiming at was creating a new imperial language that would catch up with, stand on an equal footing with, and surpass the significant Others in the contest for superiority between the East and the West. A strategic diplomat, Mori was negotiating in the game of cultural diplomacy for “wise advice,” soliciting “allowance, sympathy, and assistance” from abroad in order to achieve what he thought was “the desired end” in his educational reform in Japan.

These observations lead to the conclusion that in his long-range “forecasts” Mori understood “the language of Japan” as the spoken Japanese carrying the potential for its “disuse” in Japan “under the circumstances” while at the same time showing potential for its development into a new imperial language with the appropriate solutions implemented at the right time. Having made this distinction, we may further examine in the following section how Mori’s new national linguistic awareness was to be misunderstood, distorted, and stigmatized as unpatriotic and reckless.

3. Intertextual misinterpretation and fraternal perpetuation

Whitney’s scholarly response to Mori’s proposal

As discussed earlier, the creation of the Imperial Japanese language was the ultimate goal of Mori’s language reform plan. To this end, he had come up with a two-stage project: the adoption of an European phonetic (= the romanization of the spoken language of Japan) and the adoption of a simplified English. As time passed, however, his discourse came to be interpreted to mean the introduction of English and the abolition of Japanese; the second stage is highlighted with the first dropped. And it can be argued that the beginning of this misinterpretation can be traced back to the Whitney’s reply to Mori’s inquiry. We can see that it all began because of Whitney’s interpretation which was to be later referred to by many as the most authoritative and legitimate source of information regarding the import of Mori’s proposals disclosed in his personal letter to Whitney. Although Whitney was careful

enough not to misread Mori's intent, his interpretation and rhetoric were to trigger a public outcry against Mori's "foolhardy scheme" in Japan.

After brief introductory remarks in his reply, Whitney begins his argument with the following hypothetical inference:

Were the Japanese merely seeking a best language to put in place of their own, they would want to look carefully through the world, ancient as well as modern, and choose, after a mature weighing of the merits of many dialects. The history of languages, also, shows this consideration to be of minor consequence. There have been many instances in the world of a people's abandoning its ancestral speech and adopting another; but so far as I know, it has always been under the influence of the superiority in culture of the speakers of the other language—usually, indeed, aided also by political supremacy or social preponderance. The people in question has, as it were, by adoption of another language, joined itself on to another community, linking its cultural progress with that of the latter. So I imagine it would be with the Japanese....

(SMAZ, Vol. 5: 335; my emphasis)

The question we must ask here is why Whitney had to use the subjunctive mood in responding to Mori's proposal. The major reason is that as shown in the preceding sections, Mori did not clarify his "desired end" as he tried to justify introducing simplified English as "a means to an end." As a consequence, Whitney was

working on the assumption that Mori intends to “abandon the ancestral speech” and instead adopt simplified English as *the* new language. The important point to note is that Whitney understood what Mori intended by the word “adoption” to mean “put a foreign language in place of their own” or “abandon its ancestral speech and adopt another.” Evidence for this can be found in the repetition of the synonym “substitution” that he uses to refer to his major premise (hypothetical assumption) throughout the letter (ibid.: 334–343). Whitney apparently misinterpreted Mori’s idea when he talked about “the substitution that you propose”; while Mori did propose “introducing” or “adopting” an European language in his letter to Whitney, he never said a word to the effect that Japanese vernacular should be “abandoned.” On the contrary, he even suggested that Japanese language schools and teachers were greatly needed.

Nevertheless, while Whitney failed to figure out Mori’s true intention with good reason, Mori himself employed each of the two misleading terms (“abandon” and “substitute”) once in the letter. Here is the passage where the word “abandon” appears:

In spelling, I propose merely to complete what all English and American lexicographers, from Dr. Samuel Johnson, down to the authors of the changes, contained in the latest editions of Walker’s, Webster’s and Worcester’s Dictionaries, all commenced, but timidly *abandoned*.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 54; emphasis added)

In this context, it is clear that “abandon” means to “give up,”

which has nothing to do with the abolition of “the ancestral speech.” And the following is the sentence in which the word “substitute” appears:

I propose, for example, to *substitute* Seed *for* saw and seen.... (ibid.; my emphasis)

This context, too, is so unambiguous that it admits of no other interpretation. Despite the specified usage of those two words, however, Whitney employs them outside the contextual domains, thus creating a completely different site where misinterpretation is inevitable (or possible). This is obviously a question of semantics; within any text there is always a possibility of a word generating a number of connotations and polysemic images which give rise to “intertextuality”⁵² leading to a misunderstanding (see Tsuchida et al. 1998: 171). The point I wish to emphasize is that Whitney’s frame of mind operates within this hypothetical setting of his own device. And it is this site that provides a conceptual basis for the beginning of misinterpretation of Mori’s idea for language reform. The notion of intertextuality helps us to better understand how Whitney’s interpretation took place. At the time when Whitney first read the letter from Mori, he might have already heard about Mori’s idea from Joseph Henry in advance⁵³; then he must have had the preconceived idea that Mori had a radical language reform in mind. It is reasonable to assume that after examining the project Mori had in contemplation Whitney automatically interpreted the operative words in the “pre-arranged” semantic field wherein intertextuality automatically led him to associate

Mori's proposal for "the adoption of the English language in Japan" with the "abolition of the Japanese language"; this inference naturally occurred because of the semantic combination of Whitney's preconception and the equivocality which the above-mentioned "abandon" and "substitute" induce.

Since the logical connection between the romanization of the spoken language of Japan and the introduction of simplified English was not made clear, Whitney had no other choice but to make a reasonable inference regarding Mori's true intention by considering all the possibilities that he could think of. Consequently, he candidly gives Mori some advice on language policy in Japan. What is significant in our observation is that his whole argument is predicated on the assumption that Mori is willing to substitute English for Japanese; all the other specific points are being made on this hypothesis which he carefully builds up using a conditional sentence at the beginning. These specifics can be summarized as follows:

- 1) His objection to the idea for a simplified English
- 2) His approval of the romanization of Japanese
- 3) The primary importance of the vernacular in Japan
- 4) The secondary role of English as the classical language

So far as his arguments are concerned, Whitney seems to understand what Mori was aiming at. And yet there is no mention in his text of the possibility of "eclectically" integrating simplified English and romanized spoken language of Japan into a new, single entity. This indicates that Whitney, after all, was not able to

fathom out the motives behind his proposal. The reason why even the leading light in linguistics in America could only give a plausible conjecture on what Mori was really trying to do is not merely because his idea was way ahead of his time,⁵⁴ but also because the nature of his language strategy was best characterized by its overdetermined triple aspects of his geo-political and cultural thought *datsua nyuou chouou* (“Leave Asia, Enter and Transcend Europe [the West]).

Furthermore, Mori’s discourse can also be viewed as challenging English hegemony in the world. As Hall points out, Mori devoted two-thirds space in his letter to the question of simplified English (SMAZ, Supplementary Vol. 2; 216). Indeed, it appears at first sight that his intention was not so much to ask for advice on language reform in Japan but rather to mildly criticize Western scholars of English for failing to deal with the reform of English successfully. So it is only natural that Whitney should find it “offensive” when Mori declared resolutely that he would “complete what all English and American Lexicographers commenced, but timidly abandoned.” Not surprisingly, in his reply to Mori, Whitney objected in principle to the reform of English orthography, though he expressed his approval of the introduction of the Roman alphabet in Japan.

After discussing (1) and (2), Whitney goes on to (3) and (4) commenting that it is essential that the vernacular should be employed as the first language for education in Japan. Interestingly, Mori and Whitney coincide in opinion on maintaining the native speech. Just as Mori states that there is a desperate need for “schools for the Japanese language,” so Whitney argues for the

“ennobling and enriching of the native speech.” Mori, as we saw in the previous section, was contemplating introducing the English language (in simplified form) into Japan essentially because he knew it was most urgent that a new vocabulary of Western civilization be added to the Japanese language through the common symbols (= the Roman alphabet). Nevertheless, Whitney does not seem to notice the common ground between them; as a result, Whitney wound up advising Mori on what he had been already well aware of. We can recognize from this that Whitney came to the “right” conclusion on the “wrong” assumption that Mori advocated abolishing Japanese in favor of English.

A more important point is the implications and ramifications of the publication of Whitney’s letter in *Education in Japan* (1873), which was supervised by Mori himself, served to complicate matters further. In the preface to the book Mori used the controversial term “disuse” with respect to the future of the language of Japan. Taken together, the word was not employed in his letter to Whitney. It is in this newly-emerged semantic field that once again triggered “intertextual effects,” thereby obscuring and confusing Mori’s original intention. While Whitney’s interpretation has contributed enormously to the established theory about Mori’s radical language reform, it may be too much to say that Whitney is the first to label him as an irrational abolitionist of the national language in Japan. For Whitney’s letter is couched in scholarly yet sincere terms. Be that as it may, it will be useful to keep in mind that his (mis)understanding of Mori’s language reform was to be treated by later Japanese scholars as an authoritative basis for their arguments, which only serve to perpetuate the commonly-held

view of Mori's enterprise as abrogating the native language.

Something else to be born in mind here is that by the time Whitney's letter was published in 1873, Mori's original plan to create a new language in an eclectic matter had already broken down for technical reasons. Most importantly, Mori's letter to Whitney (written in 1872) was not printed together with Whitney's in *Education in Japan*. A set of the letters exchanged between Mori and Whitney was not made available to the general public; it turned out that only Whitney's reply became partially highlighted with Mori's letter of inquiry out of sight in the book.

Baba's brotherly response to Mori's proposal

Although it was Mori's own choice, he did not seem to be able to anticipate that Whitney's "inducements" in the letter would arouse a tidal wave of protests against him. Among the strong antagonists was Baba Tatsui (1850–1888), a fellow countryman in London, who was to misinterpret and condemn Mori's idea as irrational and absurd in his *An Elementary Grammar of the Japanese Language, with Easy Progressive Exercises*. It is highly probable that Baba had a chance to read *Education in Japan* soon after it was published in New York in 1873, and he came to grips with what Mori appeared to have in mind concerning Japan's language policy through Whitney's letter and Mori's controversial statement about the "dis-use" of the national language. Outraged by Mori's purported proposal for the adoption of English and the abolition of Japanese, Baba, as a rebuttal, wrote in English the book entitled *An Elementary Grammar of the Japanese Language*, and published it in London in autumn of 1873. In the preface to this grammar book (henceforth

referred to as EGJL), he tried to refute Mori on five counts.

- (1) The purpose of this Japanese grammar book
- (2) A balanced perspective on the Japanese language:
its structure and vocabulary
- (3) The efficiency of foreign language learning
- (4) The polarization of the society: English divide
- (5) The importance of the vernacular as an educational language

In order to demonstrate (5), Baba begins with (1) and gets down into specifics [(2)(3)(4)]. What I'm interested in showing here is how he reproduces and perpetuates Whitney's interpretation in his argument. Let us now consider Baba's line of reasoning in detail.

First of all, we will focus our attention on the beginning of EGJL which reads:

We have two objects in publishing this book-the first, to give a general idea of the Japanese language as it is spoken; and the second, to protest against a prevalent opinion entertained by many of our countrymen, as well as foreigners who take some interest in our country, and to show the reasons why we do so. It is *affirmed that our language is so imperfect that we cannot establish a regular and systematical course of education by means of it; and that the best way is to exterminate the Japanese language altogether, and to substitute the English language for it.* (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 58; my emphasis)

Baba says that he wrote the book because he wanted to prove by analyzing the structural and lexical aspects of the spoken language of Japan that it is possible to educate the Japanese people by means of the vernacular, thus bringing forward a counterargument to Mori's purported proposal for the introduction of English in Japan. Thus he denounces the proposal as an ill-advised attempt to "exterminate the Japanese language altogether" and "substitute the English language for it." What we should notice here is that he uses rather strong verbs such as "exterminate" and "substitute" to express his understanding of the "prevalent opinion" that he protests against. In his later arguments Baba paraphrases the word "exterminate" by using such synonyms as "supplant," "give up," and "discard"—these words Mori never employed in his letter. In this connection, we may recall here that Whitney understood what is meant in Mori's letter by "introduction" and "adoption" to mean "abandon," "substitute" or "put in place of one's own." And Baba's statement is being couched in much stronger (and more accusatory) terms than Whitney's. Furthermore, the word "substitute," as in the case of Whitney's letter, is repeatedly used in his text.

All this suggests that despite the fact that it was not "our language" (Japanese/the spoken language of Japan) but "Chinese" (the written language of Japan) that Mori was trying to abrogate, Baba did not have sufficient information to puzzle out what Mori's "desired end" was really about. The following remark attests to his misinterpretation:

Mr. Mori says, "All reasons suggest its disuse," referring to

our language. We are very sorry to say that he does not enumerate all the reasons which suggest the disuse of the Japanese, which perhaps would have enlightened our minds. (ibid.: 63)

What is immediately apparent in this passage is Baba's understanding of the implication of the operative words "suggest its disuse." As discussed earlier, it means a prediction that the spoken language of Japan will cease to be used in the future, not a suggestion that the vernacular in Japan should be abolished or abandoned. Yet he obviously takes the latter view and goes on to say

Although we admit many advantages of *supplanting our language by the English tongue*, yet at the same time we cannot help thinking that there are many reasons for *preserving the Japanese in our country as the medium of education....* Even when one nation was forced to introduce a language by the superior power of the conqueror, the former did not *give up their native tongue* which they had been accustomed to speak for hundreds of years, and which was consequently most convenient to them.... Hence it will be seen that there is a great difficulty in the way of *this proposed substitution*.

(ibid.: 63–64; my emphasis)

The question now arises: Why did Baba have to jump to the conclusion so rashly? The main reason is that he did not get to read Mori's private letter to Whitney, since it was not readily available. Consequently he had no clue as to exactly what Mori was really

contemplating as his hidden agenda. Thus, he had no other alternative but to refer to the third party's interpretation to find out about his idea for language reform. In fact, there were three sources of information on the matter available to Baba.

- (a) hearsay⁵⁵
- (b) newspapers
- (c) *Education in Japan*

There must have been some rumors circulating about Mori's language reform at that time. But a close study of hearsay evidence is not necessary for our purpose. So, we are not concerned here with (a). Our immediate concern is to look at (b) and (c) in a new light. Let us first discuss (b) in detail. Given that Baba published his grammar book in the autumn of the same year Mori's *Education in Japan* came out, it is not unreasonable to think that Baba learned about the U.S. newspaper *Tribune* (1873; the specific date unknown) carrying an article on Mori's inquiry letter to Whitney of 1872. The problem with the report, however, is that based on the editor's interpretation, it was severely edited to such an extent that Mori's original message was distorted. It reads:

[I]f we keep pace with the age, we must adopt some copious, expansible and expanding European language, print out laws and transact all public business in it, as soon as possible, and have it taught in our schools as the future language of the country, *to the gradual exclusion of our present language, spoken and written.* (1873; my emphasis)

Although Mori did argue in his letter to Whiney for the “introduction of a simplified English into all the schools of the Empire, and gradually into general use,” he never mentioned that the idea was to phase out the “present language, spoken and written” by replacing it with the new. Here we can say with fair certainty that Mori’s language reform was reported by the press in English-speaking countries as the “proposal for the abolition of the Japanese language.” For lack of conclusive evidence, however, it cannot be proved that Baba read this article before writing his grammar book (EGJL). Consequently, We must narrow the above list of collateral evidence down to the last one.

With respect to (c), there is a more important point that I wish to stress. What deserves explicit emphasis is that Mori’s 1872 inquiry letter to Whitney, as observed ealier, was *not* printed in *Education in Japan*. That is to say, Baba only had access to the following documents.

- I. Mori’s “controversial” statement in the preface to *Education in Japan* regarding the problem of the national language
- II. Whitney’s letter (in reply to Mori’s inquiry letter of 1872)

We are justified in assuming from the above that chiefly because of the unavailability of Mori’s letter to Whitney, Baba was not able to examine in detail what Mori was attempting to do with the “desired end” in mind in 1872. Consequently, it emerges that what Baba saw in *Education in Japan* was an exchange of opinions

between Mori and Whitney (I and II); the former “suggests the disuse of the language of Japan”; the latter recommends the vernacular-based education as a better alternative. We have to bear in mind that these were two separate *conclusions* drawn by Mori and Whitney from different standpoints; Whitney’s discussion of the point at issue was all based on Mori’s preceding 1872 letter of inquiry regarding his proposed language reform.

Meanwhile, the different picture emerged before Baba. First, he saw Mori’s (tentative) conclusion as an “assertion” that Japanese should be abrogated. And then, he viewed Whitney’s conclusion as an “objection” to Mori’s proposal for the introduction of English into Japan. Thus, he concludes that Whitney is right when he disapproves of Mori’s seemingly irrational and impractical suggestion. The important point to note here is that Baba is doubly misled about his interpretation of Mori’s suggestion. For one thing, he misread the meaning of what Mori understood by “suggests the disuse”; for another, as we shall see later on, he depended on Whitney’s conclusion so as to confirm him in his understanding of Mori’s intentions behind the proposal. And the reason is in the first place because he was not familiar with all of what Mori said in his letter to Whitney, and in the second place because the juxtaposition of Mori’s and Whitney’s conclusions that appeared in the same book gave rise to a new semantic field of interpretation, projecting an image of Whitney objecting to Mori’s assertion.

Now that we have got this point firmly established, we are in a better position to suppose that Baba bases his rebuttal on Whitney’s interpretation. Such a hypothesis helps to better explain why Baba’s argument is similar to Whitney’s in many

respects. Beyond that, Baba himself goes so far as to “affirm” Whitney’s hypothetical assumption that Mori intends to substitute English for Japanese largely because of the poverty of the language of Japan; Baba uses Whitney’s carefully couched supposition as a basis for his own criticism when he predicates that “it is affirmed that our language is so imperfect ... and that the best way is to exterminate the Japanese language altogether, and to substitute the English language for it.” In the immediate context, of course, this refers to a “prevalent opinion entertained by many of our countrymen, as well as foreigners who take some interest in our country.” Clearly, the person Baba singles out for criticism here is Mori Arinori. And in my understanding, by treating Whitney’s assumption as the rationale for his counterargument to Mori’s idea, Baba created a renewed semantic field that would in turn tempt him to think that Mori *was* the keenest proponents of the abolition of Japanese. Then, it is feasible to speculate that Baba is the first to turn the hitherto assumption into a *fait accompli*. This point deserves special emphasis.

Similarities and differences in language attitude between Baba and Mori

There is another significant aspect of Baba’s argument that needs to be considered. It is the fact that the specific points Baba discussed in his refutation were already taken up by Mori in his private letter to Whitney. In this section, we shall be examining in greater depth how their views of language coincide and differ. To begin with, it is interesting to note that Baba defines “our language” as the spoken language of Japan or Japanese. He writes:

Before the introduction of *Chinese* we must have had *some sort of language* which served as a means of communication. Since we introduced the *Chinese classics, literature, &c.*, we have been obliged to use *Chinese words or phrases* which we could not express in *Japanese*, and so it became necessary to teach *our language* with the aid of *Chinese*.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 59; my emphasis)

In this passage Baba contrasts Chinese with what he calls “some sort of language” in ancient Japan, “that is,” our language. “As stated earlier, the aim of Baba’s grammar book, is to demonstrate the adequacy of the structure of the Japanese language as it is spoken.” This suggests that Baba’s language awareness, like Mori’s, was obviously dictated by *datsua shiso* (the political thought of de-Sinicization). With the national language movement growing at the time, Mori was aiming to separate Japanese from Chinese. Similarly, compared to the traditional written language of Japan (= Chinese), Baba emphasizes that the grammatical structure of the spoken language of Japan (= Japanese) is sufficient enough to work as the written.

As we have seen, the purpose of Baba’s writing the book is to demonstrate that the grammatical structure of the spoken Japanese would function as a sufficient basis for establishing a new education in Japan. However, not knowing what Mori was aiming at, he called the spoken Japanese “our language” as opposed to the Chinese characters as the written Japanese. And he goes on to argue that the grammar and syntax of the spoken language of Japan functions well enough to serve as the written language.

It is sufficiently perfect to teach the elements of common education *so far as grammar itself is concerned*.... We think that our language is sufficiently systematical to accomplish these ends with certain exceptions.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 61; my emphasis)

Even though he was convinced of the stability of grammatical structure of the Japanese language, he had to admit its lexical inadequacy. He therefore comes to the conclusion that a new vocabulary should be added to the spoken language of Japan (presumably through translating foreign languages) while preserving the grammatical structure of the native language in Japan. Relevant to this point is his following remark:

We think, also, that it is more desirable *to try to enrich and complete that which we have already*, and which is, consequently, familiar to us all, *than to discard it and substitute*, at a great risk, that which is entirely different and necessarily strange to us.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 66; my emphasis)

This is what he has to say about the vocabulary problem. The observant reader will notice that his argument parallels closely with the larger point made by Mori about the Japanese versus English issue. As I suggested elsewhere, Mori considered compensating for the insufficiency of Japanese vocabulary by means of “simplified English” while at the same time preserving the core grammatical structure of the spoken language of Japan for legitimate and practical reasons. A closer look at Mori’s discourse on

the Japanese language reform would reveal that he appears to have regarded the Japanese grammar and syntax as the time-tested cultural matrix of the native language of the Japanese Empire whose history is as long as that of the Japanese imperial dynasty. Accordingly, it can be argued that he believed in the strengths of the “imperial language” of Japan so long as it could maintain the integrity of the Japanese based on the cultural matrix preserved in the grammar of the native language. Thus the imperial language, he hoped, would stand on an equal footing with Western counterparts.

This is one of the major points that Mori wanted to make in the introduction to *Education in Japan*. This is why he had to mention the compatibility between the written and spoken languages of Japan in spite of the difference in the style of expression. Mori writes:

An allusion to the subject of the Japanese language bears a most direct relation to the contents of this book. *In the style of expression, the spoken language of Japan differs considerably from the written, though in their structure they are both mainly the same.* (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 185; my emphasis)

Then he goes on to argue that it is not the Japanese grammar and syntax that he intended to abolish, but the ideographic Chinese characters that he strove to “get rid of” all together primarily because they prevented the “language of Japan” from making progress in accordance with the law of social evolution. As a matter of fact, what he was attempting in his language reform scheme

was to unify the spoken and written language of Japan by means of phonogramic English alphabets: thus, his unofficial and tentative proposal for the romanizing of the spoken Japanese and the adoption of simplified “written” English. It should be noted that this is where Baba failed to understand Mori.

If we take a closer look at Baba’s argument, we will realize that there is another significant parallel with the premises offered in Mori’s letter to Whitney. The same logic can be found in Baba’s critical analysis of the defective aspects of the English language as well as the Japanese language. What is surprising is that Baba is criticizing orthographical and phonetic irregularities of the English language. This should be said with some emphasis, for Baba unknowingly makes exactly the same argument as Mori’s about the defects in English in comparison with the language of Japan. Baba writes:

We admit that in several respects the English is far superior to the Japanese, but at the same time, we think in many respects the latter excels the former. For instance, generally speaking, English has the advantage of brevity of expression.... On the other hand, we have a *regular orthography and more uniform pronunciations in the Japanese*, while it is generally admitted that *the English language in both these respects is very defective*. Thus, after a careful examination, it will be found that there are perfections and imperfections in both languages. (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 62; my emphasis)

What the above passage makes clear at once is that Baba rela-

tivizes the English language in relation to the Japanese and thus sees the latter as superior to the former in terms of orthography and pronunciation. The point I wish to stress is that in doing so he points out that English is no better than Japanese except for the richness of vocabulary. It is important to bear in mind that this is the very issue Mori was tackling when he proposed an English language reform—simplified English—as part of the reform of the language of Japan (Mori saw the Japanese language reform as simultaneously embracing the solution to the problems with English).

One further point that we must draw attention to is that Baba, looking at the national language issue in Japan, also refers to social polarization as seen in the case of India. In this respect, as Lee (1996: 16–17) explains, Baba’s view on linguistic relativity and “language in society” (Romaine 1997) shows “sociolinguistic foresight.” However, let me stress again that every point Baba makes about the language of Japan had already been made in Mori’s letter to Whitney (SMAZ, Vol. V: 340–341). It is not surprising that Baba’s argument seems to be almost identical to Mori’s in these respects, for the former could have gained from the latter’s published letter to Whitney his sociolinguistic perspective on linguistic relativity that the idea for simplified English and romanized Japanese is based upon.

Thus, it can be argued that it was not Baba, but Mori who was the first to bring up the question of linguistic relativity and social polarization in connection with the issue of national language reform in Japan; it turned out that Baba responded indirectly to the issues in the same way *after* Mori started the discussion with

Whitney. Like Baba, Mori showed foresight in his proposal for a “dual” reform of Japanese *and* English. If it had not been for his deeper insight into linguistic relativity and sociological perspective on language, Mori would have never suggested reforming English *and* Japanese in terms of orthography and pronunciation at the same time. The idea was to create a new language of Japan—which was supposed to be better than any other language in the world—by conflating reformed English and reformed Japanese as efficiently as possible. Thus it was all about the rational if not practical unification of the spoken and written languages of English and Japanese.

In this regard, Tanaka (1989: 33) is right in pointing out that “although ever since Mori has often been considered to be a traitor, in fairness we must not overlook the fact that he intended to accept English as an element of a new language in Japan only if and when the international language was to be improved (in such a way as to make it easier for all the learners, native or non-native, to acquire it).” Tanaka goes on to say: “Fifteen years before Esperanto, the first artificial international language, was devised in 1887 by Lazarus Ludwig Zamenhof (1859–1917), a proposal for a “language for all” was put forth by Mori, a man from a non-English speaking nation, and I would like to see it as his international spirit of innovation at the time. Tanaka’s observation is very much to the point: indeed, Mori had originality and insight in that he had realized the need for a radical reform of *English* as well as Japanese: hence, the idea of simplified English.

According to Tanaka’s interpretation, it is reasonable to suppose that Mori shared the same view on the issue of social polar-

ization as Baba's. In fact, Mori himself acutely points out in his letter to Whitney that the problem of orthographic and conjugational irregularity of the English language might result in polarizing the whole society and dividing the people into two groups: the learned class and the unlearned class. Mori goes on to argue that this would be a serious social problem not only for foreign learners of English but also for English-speaking people:

In other words, I propose to banish from the English language, for the use of the Japanese nation, all or most of the exceptions, which render English so difficult of acquisition by English-speaking people, and which discourage most foreigners, who have the hardihood to attempt to master it, from persevering to success. (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 53–54)

not only English speaking people, but the world at large, would be greatly benefited by a through re-cast of English orthography. (ibid.: 56)

These above comments suggest that it is only the wealthy who have more time than the poor that can devote themselves to mastering a “language made up of many irregularities and exceptions.” This is all the more reason for Mori to make a proposal to *simplify* English in order to reduce the amount of time required of not only non-native speakers of English but also English-speaking peoples, thus preventing socio-linguistic polarization and unnecessary waste of time. If Mori had not taken such a stance on the issue, he would not have said:

It might be quite impossible to force upon them the language its present form. Indeed, I could not conscientiously recommend my countrymen to cause their children to devote six or seven years of their lives to learning a language so replete with unnecessary irregularities, and in which the interchange of thought and acquisition of knowledge are rendered so difficult by a fantastic orthography—years which should be devoted to the study of numerous branches of human development. (ibid.; 57)

Notwithstanding, Baba leveled his criticism at Mori on those two accounts: socio-linguistic/racial polarization and time-consuming acquisition of foreign language as a native language. Baba's argument concerns the economics of learning such a new foreign language of different origin as English that entails more time and energy than necessary; this would inevitably lead to the "English divide" between the learned and the unlearned. Baba observes:

The English language, which is one of the most difficult of modern languages, *and entirely different from our own*, will require a very long time to be mastered by so many people, so that much precious time will be thrown away. *It is quite a different case from that which Mr. Mori and others propose to do in Japan....* This will be seen amongst the Welsh, Irish, and Scotch, who, in fact, are learning two languages at present, and throwing away the time which is precious to us all. (ibid.: 63–64; my emphasis)

It must be noted here that Baba reaches practically the same conclusion as Mori's; the English language is difficult for the non-English speaking peoples to acquire, and learners, if forced upon them, would find it so time-consuming that they end up wasting more time than necessary in life (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 340) (The observant reader would notice the striking similarity between Baba's logic and Whitney's regarding the problem of efficiency in foreign language learning). An important point to note is that like Baba, Mori had made much the same argument about the efficiency of a second language acquisition on the same ground that Japanese and English are "entirely different" in language system.

As we have seen, Mori intended to preserve the whole system of the indigenous (spoken) language of Japan only by replacing long-embedded Chinese characters with the Roman alphabet. The idea was to maintain the syntactic matrix of the language of Japan by modifying its *notional and phonetic* system, rather than its grammatical one. This explains why Mori stressed in Whitney's letter that "it is important that the alphabets of the two languages under consideration—English and Japanese—be as nearly alike as possible, in sound and powers of the letters." It is apparent that Mori's concern was not with the replacement of the grammatical structure of Japanese with that of English. Rather, as he explicitly stated, his interest was in making Japanese compatible with English in "sound and powers of the letters," not in grammatical system. Never did he mention that there was a need to abolish the Japanese syntactic matrix (= the grammar) in favor of the English one.

Furthermore, Mori goes so far as to suggest that it might be

quite impractical to adopt the English language in Japan if and when the problem of efficiency in English Learning remained unsolved. Mori believed that adopting English in Japan at the expense of the indigenous syntactic/grammatical matrix would be a mistake on the ground of both cultural legitimacy and practical efficiency. Never did he say one word about making English as *the* new language of Japan. Mori's "desired end" in language reform was to utilize English as an efficient way of building a new "imperial language" of modern Japan. It appears natural to assume that Mori knew that a new imperial Japanese language would be morally impossible without the time-tested grammatical matrix as *linguo-cultural* legitimacy that goes hand in hand with the history of the imperial dynasty.

Nonetheless, Baba presumed and stated that Mori was determined to "exterminate the Japanese language altogether, and to substitute the English language for it." It is no wonder that Baba could not understand at all why Mori wished to simplify English before adopting it in the country (Indeed, there is no mention of Mori's idea for simplified English in Baba's argument). Whereas the two Japanese were both well aware of the risks involved in English language acquisition, the only difference between their arguments was that Baba compared and contrasted the two languages trying to highlight the syntactic strength of Japanese, while Mori similarly took a critical look at those languages by focusing the notational/phonetic strength of English.

Here we can see how Baba and Mori were talking at cross-purposes on the issue of the economics of language learning. It is clear that Baba makes the right argument for the wrong reasons.

Misunderstanding arose when Baba interpreted Whitney's inference as a *fait accompli* that Mori was "presumed guilty." The same can be said of the issue of socio-linguistic polarization. Baba goes on to argue:

Naturally the wealthier classes of people can be free from the daily occupation to which the poorer classes are constantly subjected, and consequently the former can devote more time for learning the language than the latter. If affairs of state, and *all affairs of social intercourse are to be transacted through the English language*, the lower classes will be shut out from the important questions which concern the whole nation...; the consequence being that there will be an entire separation between the higher class and the lower, and no common sympathies between them.... These evils appear to be felt in India ... a deep gulf there separates the higher and educated from the lower portion of society. (ibid.: 64–65; my emphasis)

As has been noted, the question of social polarization was already raised by Whitney in his letter to Mori. Then it would appear that just as Baba touched upon the question of the efficiency of foreign language learning, he repeated another issue Whitney had addressed earlier (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 340–341). If we assume that Baba himself took up the question of national language building in connection with Mori's proposal for the adoption of a "simplified" English in Japan *only after* reading Whitney's argument as well as other related newspaper articles, it would all make sense; despite

the fact that Mori's scheme for language reform was arguably intended to deal with the issues of the efficiency of foreign language learning and socio-linguistic polarization, Baba overplayed his hand as he jumped to the hasty conclusion that Mori was considering abandoning the native language of Japan in favor of English, and thus ended up criticizing him for his allegedly "unpatriotic" enterprise (ibid.: 56–57). Conversely, if Baba had had a chance to read an unedited version of Mori's letter to Whitney in addition to Whitney's letter to Mori, he would have reacted differently.

It turned out, however, that there was no way Baba could have surmised Mori's "desired end" in his new language creation plan: the romanization of the spoken language of Japan for the abolition of the Chinese characters, and the adoption of simplified English for the enrichment of the native language. As a result, Baba failed to understand what Mori meant in the introduction to *Education in Japan* by "This shows its poverty" when he clearly referred to the paucity of Japanese vocabulary, not the inadequacy of the system (grammatical structure) of the language of Japan. Baba did not realize that Mori was talking about the same problem from a different and larger perspective. Unlike Baba, what Mori was tackling was not only the problem of the discrepancy between the spoken and written language of Japan, but also the socio-linguistic question of Chinese characters involved in the process of modernization (Lee 1996: 22). Just as Baba advocated enriching the vocabulary of the native Japanese based on the conventional grammatical structure, Mori also sought to achieve the goal by adding into the romanized (= rationalized) spoken language of Japan the

new vocabulary through the simplified (or rationalized) English.

Thus, they only differed in their approaches to developing the native language into an independent national language. While Mori regarded the Roman alphabet and simplified English as a means of obtaining a new vocabulary, Baba rather found a better solution in translation. As Baba remarks:

In case we have to translate English, Roman, or any other laws into Japanese, of course we shall find many words which cannot be answered in the Japanese language, this owing to the difference in customs and ideas; *but we can retain them with explanations.* (ibid.: 63; my emphasis)

It is worth noting, in passing, that Baba was one of Fukuzawa Yukichi's pupils. Fukuzawa, a leading intellectual and prominent figure outside government, preached about the importance of translation as the only means to develop the Japanese language into a full-fledged, independent modern language.⁵⁶ It is no wonder that Baba's basic approach to improving the vocabulary of the native language parallels Fukuzawa's.

Yet there is one big difference between their approaches to the development of Japanese. Baba, who was not good at writing *kanji* (Chinese characters), considered using English alphabets as a means of better interpreting and developing the spoken language of Japan, while Fukuzawa saw *kanji* as a medium of translation from European languages into Japanese. Baba, on the one hand, is adamant that Japanese grammatical structure is sufficient to provide a basis for the development of spoken Japanese. On the

other, he begs the question of the prospects of Chinese characters in the language of Japan, which Mori problematizes in his scheme for the reform of the spoken language of Japan. In fact, as Lee (1996: 22) points out, Baba was unable to express himself sufficiently well in Chinese characters and so had to employ English instead when writing; he had long been “expelled from the realm of the written language of Japan” when he attempted to counter Mori’s argument in his work.

Consequently, he ended up rushing to a hasty conclusion without focusing on the other half of the problem: the Chinese-bound written language of Japan that prevented the spoken from being represented with the Roman alphabet. Note that it was for this very reason why, like Baba, Mori also considered expelling Chinese characters from the written language of Japan once and for all, which is what Baba should have argued as a matter of course. Although in his grammar book (EGJL), Baba focused on the prospects of the Japanese language, he never said a word about the issues of adopting the Roman alphabet and simplified English (Lee 1996: 14–15). It is clear that Baba failed to fully understand what Mori’s “desired end” was about and how he set out to achieve it. To reiterate the major reasons, the only available materials Baba could avail himself of in constructing his argument was a few of what was published in *Education in Japan*: (1) Mori’s brief statement about the prospects of the language of Japan and (2) Whitney’s reply to Mori’s letter. As we have seen, Mori’s letter to Whitney—what would have become the primary source for Baba’s counterargument—was *not* included in *Education in Japan*; Baba did not have a chance to read exactly what was said in the

letter. As a result, as he surmised Mori's motive, Baba had to base his refutation upon Mori's seemingly extreme and pessimistic rhetoric in his assessment of the future of Japanese, in addition to Whitney's comments in reply to Mori's letter. As mentioned earlier, Whitney failed to understand the hidden agenda behind Mori's letter. And Baba shared Whitney's view on Mori's grand design of language reform. All this may alone be enough to explain why Baba was bound to misunderstand Mori.

Quoting Whitney in his grammar book (EGJL), Baba emphasizes the importance of preserving the vernacular language in Japan by making the most of its time-tested grammatical structure as well as enriching its vocabulary by means of explanatory translation. With his basic argument based on Whitney's assumptive remark about Mori's idea for the introduction of English in Japan, Baba understood Mori's motive for language reform as unreasonable and unpatriotic.⁵⁷ Thus, taking Whitney's assumption as a fact, Baba pressed his argument as if Mori was a traitor to his country.

In this light, we may say that Mori was one step ahead of the Japanese language reform: Baba only talked in English about the possibilities of the Japanese language but the problem of Chinese characters. He never discussed the possibilities of adopting the Roman alphabet and simplifying English for the benefit of the Japanese. Meanwhile, Mori not only looked upon Chinese characters as the root problem in language reform but also upon the adoption of the Roman alphabet and the introduction of simplified English as its ideal solutions.

It should be concluded, from what has been said above, that

Baba was too rash in turning Whitney's argument to his advantage so as to disapprove Mori's supposed renunciation of the language of Japan in favor of English, and that Baba thus misunderstood Mori's "desired end" in his language reform, perpetuating his own misinterpretation.

4. David Murray Report: Translation and compilation

The next question we have to ask is whether Mori ever found any solution to the pending problem after failing to follow through with his initial linguistic reform plan. Despite the unexpected setback, he continued to look for ways to achieve his goal. And it was in David Murray's version of what the Japanese should do with educational reform that Mori finally found the answer. In the same year (1873) when Mori's *Education in Japan* was published in New York, an American scholar was purportedly recommended by Mori as the chief advisor at the Ministry of Education in Japan. Murray was to take charge of working out an educational policy for the new Japan. This indicates that Mori agreed with Murray's philosophy of education; Murray argued for the importance of building on the native language in improving national education, stressing that the most effective way to realize the untapped potential of the Japanese people is by resorting to the conventional translation method. His educational and linguistic reform proposal is known as David Murray Report of 1873. He had a high opinion of Japan's education because of the level it had already achieved up to that time: the literacy rate in the country was relatively high when compared with those in Western countries.

Taking into account this remarkable aspect of Japanese culture, Murray suggests how foreign language education should be placed in the existing educational system.

It would be wrong to jump to the conclusion that the Japanese are not an educated people (just because Japan is behind Western countries in “modernization”). In fact, we may even say that in education Japan is on the same level as the best in Europe. For there are very few people who are unable to read and write in this country. I heard this from an educated Japanese. If this is true, then the Japanese can rightly take pride in the conventional education which can be comparable to that of Europe and the U.S. I have been told that even the poorest of the poor are able to read and write regular *kana* characters, and moreover some women are better than men. I find it amazing that good bureaucratic education made it possible for Japan to control the government in a consistent and stable way for the past two thousand years. At the popular level, however, it was not as effective as it was with the bureaucrats due to some defect in the system. As a result, there has been little progress in the concepts of individualism and self-responsibility. And yet it is fair to say that because of the traditional education people have always had enough vitality with which the government can maintain the whole system. Viewed in this light, we may say that the traditional education in Japan has already laid the groundwork for the future education of the nation.

and

Thus, further progress should be made gradually based on the existing foundations; it would be unwise to abolish the long-established and effective enough system and start over in laying out a plan for the new one. For successful education is always to be provided step by step and to be geared to the needs and disposition of the people in a particular age and in a particular place. There are things that should be changed and things that should not. As for the national language, it is too important a means of education to be artificially changed under no circumstances. Education is bound to fail unless it is conducted through the “national” language in Japan. While it is extremely difficult, at this point in time, to teach Western subjects in Japanese, there is no country in the world that could realize general education without using its most common popular language. Hence one can say that employing Western languages in the present situation should be considered as the only available temporary measure, and that Japan is going through the same phase as seen in the medieval Europe where Latin was used as the universal language in education. Since there is now only a limited number of people who receive education in European languages such as English, French, and German, these students are expected to be able to teach Western subjects in Japanese in due course of time ... the building of foreign language schools is a matter of the greatest urgency in Education Order of 1872; it is

therefore very important for the government to provide sufficient support for increasing the number of the schools. But at the same time one should bear in mind that the mere size of the Education Ministry controlling these national institutions will not help in establishing an educational system of its own.

and

The purpose of the whole project is twofold; the first is to compile textbooks in Japanese that cover various fields of Western arts and science. Work on *translation and compilation* has already begun with the necessary equipment installed ... the second is to turn out teachers and instructors ... it would be only possible to provide and receive Western progressive education at teacher's college ... where the students have an opportunity to form a close relationship with and study hard under foreign teachers, and they are thus expected to become good teachers themselves after graduation and contribute to the betterment of the Japanese people.

(*Meiji Bunka Kenkyukai* 1967: 127–128; my emphasis)

Here Murray concludes that since, on the whole, traditional education in Japan had worked well enough to compete with Western countries, it would be inadvisable to completely deny the past and start anew. He views foreign language education as the expedient of complementing the language of Japan, and so insists that foreign

language should be considered in terms of national language education. The purpose of promoting foreign language education, he says, is twofold: first, there is an urgent need to produce by translation and compilation Japanese textbooks that deal with practically all the fields in Western studies; second, a number of teachers should be trained to teach every subject in Japanese. Thus, Murray finds it most effective to take temporary measures to reinforce or enrich the language of Japan by making the most of foreign languages. Taking into account Murray's position on language policy and the fact that Mori recommended him as adviser to the Ministry of Education in Japan, it is entirely fair to say that Mori finally found in Murray's idea of "translation and compilation" the solution to the language problem in Japan.

What has to be noticed here is that Mori's accepting Murray's proposal does not necessarily mean that Mori backed down on his own original proposal; although Mori's initial tactics was different from Murray's, they both had practically the same goal: the creation of an independent and strong national language. When Mori already knew that his two-stage tactics was no longer viable, Murray provided him with a more realistic and pragmatic approach to building a new language. Then Mori began to reconsider the possibility of translation, which had been excluded from his original method for "securing the desired end."

But now that his original plan is aborted, he comes to realize the fact that the relatively high level of education in Japan has been made possible only by virtue of what Ishikawa (1999) calls "dual medium" as an eclectic entity which consists of both *kango* (Chinese) and *wago* (Japanese). Thus, Mori sees the language of

Japan in a fresh light: *kango* acts as an agent that helps in interpreting Western ideas and creating new words; it therefore lays the groundwork for further development of the Japanese language.

Upon returning from a tour of inspection of schools in Japan, Murray put forth another report of 1874 on the gradual improvement in the language situation. It says that “with the help of foreign teachers along with the on-going translation work, there have been a number of students who seek to study only in Japanese. And now we have some schools where classes are all conducted in Japanese.” Murray writes at the end of the report:

In order for the Japanese-conducted education to make steady progress, it is necessary to employ more advanced textbooks than those published so far; the subjects that need text revision are geography, algebra, geometry, and natural history. To this end it will not be enough just to *translate but further to compile* the best Western textbooks for a new version for the use of the Japanese people.
(ibid.: 138; my emphasis)

Here he stresses the need to speed up the translation and compilation work in order to produce more of better textbooks in Japanese. It may safely be inferred from what is written in Murray Reports that Mori, too, deepened his conviction with respect to the translation approach that he once regarded as less desirable. In fact, Mori’s approach to language policy was to remain unchanged until he died. In 1888 (the year before he was assassinated), Mori, in his capacity as Education Minister, gave a speech to the instruc-

tors at the Japanese Imperial University in Tokyo, stating almost the same thing as Murray's language policy:

Today it is now quite common practice for most schools in Japan, especially colleges, to provide tuition in foreign languages, which is inevitable under the present circumstances. But this will not continue forever.... In connection with the language for teaching, I need to make a comment on instruction in law. It seems to me that there is some misunderstanding on the part of the Ministry of Education regarding the use of foreign languages in giving classes in law. I need to clarify the purpose here. We must be careful not to let employing foreign languages in teaching law become an end in itself; the ultimate objective is not to study British, American, French or German laws, but to (be better able to) learn and teach Japanese laws.... Thus, utilizing foreign languages for the present should be considered to be only a temporary expedient. And when Japanese laws are established, it will be necessary to translate them into foreign languages. In short, if there is something missing in the existing laws in Japan which need to be further complemented, then it necessitates looking into Western laws. One must always bear in mind that foreign languages are now being used in Japan in order to facilitate the process of learning and teaching Japanese laws more effectively; Western laws per se are only of secondary importance here. (SMAZ, Vol. 2: 489-490)

What is important here is how Mori views translation in the context of foreign language education. He maintains that the purpose of the study of law in foreign languages is not so much to learn foreign laws themselves but rather to acquire knowledge of the laws of state from Western civilization through translation and compilation with a view to establishing our own legal system in Japanese later. Mori's translation approach is best characterized by the notion of eclecticism, which he believes is the key to the reform of the country. Concerning the importance of eclecticism in introducing the Western laws into Japan, Mori had in his younger days written to his brother Yasutake as follows:

Unless we get well acquainted with our own political system, it is difficult to compare it with those of other (Western) countries. Laws, if not implemented in accordance with the mode of life of a given nation, will do more harm than good. Thus, knowing both our country and other countries enables us to develop and integrate the best elements into a new institution that will accommodate the indigenous climate and environment. This approach makes for an ideal and fair institution that requires little clarification. All this, however, is impossible unless we know what is necessary in the first place.

(SMAZ, Vol. 3: 56)

Likewise, in the formal letter called *gakusei katakoto* of 1882, he presented to Ito Hirobumi (1841–1909) who was later to become the first prime minister, a suggestion as to the matter of education;

in it he states that it is essential to utilize Japan's cultural matrix as a basis for a new educational system. Mori writes:

With regard to education, we must first take into account the disposition of the people and the conventional practices, and then scrutinize the old Education law in terms of merits and demerits in order to judge how the system has worked in Japan. And when discussing the matter of education there is one most important factor to be considered: the national polity unique to our country.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 141–142)

Here, we notice that Mori's statement above is in complete agreement with Murray's aforementioned philosophy of education in Japan:

[F]urther progress should be made gradually based on the existing foundations; it would be unwise to abolish the long-established and effective enough system and start over in laying out a plan for the new one. For successful education is always to be provided step by step and to be geared to the needs and disposition of the people in a particular age and in a particular place.

What is especially important is that Mori sees "the disposition of the people and the conventional practices" as coming from the "the national polity unique to our country." In addition, the application of eclecticism, as observed above, is characteristic of Mori's

approach to the nation's progress in general: this is especially true with the “translation and compilation” approach to the creation of a new imperial language.

There is yet another point that we should consider regarding the translation project in the field of law. Mori says that it is not enough to render the Western laws into Japanese, and once the Japanese laws have been made, it is equally important to translate them into English. It will be clear from this that he looks upon translation as an eclectic means of not only receiving information from abroad but also sending out information abroad. This language attitude corresponds to the fact that he himself tried hard to represent Japan abroad by speaking and writing in English about the history of the Japanese and their way of thinking. Thus, for him, translation was the medium of selective integration of the old with the new based on the national polity.

A telling example of his two-way translation strategy is the English textbook *English Readers*, which Education Minister Mori asked Walter Denning (1846–1913), a British scholar of Japanese language and culture, to compile in 1887. In those days, it was quite common practice for *oyatoi kyoshi* or “hired foreigners” (see Shimada and Hall, et al. 1987) to teach the Japanese in foreign languages. And the *oyatoi* English teachers would write for the Japanese students—from the standpoint of native speakers—such popular English textbooks as *Sander's Union Readers* and *Barn's New National Readers*. Although *English Readers*, like other “standard” textbooks, were made by an Englishman, their contents were totally different from the mainstream subject matter; they deal not only with the history of Japan and China but also with the two coun-

tries' legends, old tales, and anecdotes about famous historical characters such as Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Tokugawa Ieyasu, Confucius, Mencius, and others. As to why such new English Readers were needed, Dening explains in the preface:

the object of this Series of Readers is to express in the English language ideas with which the Japanese are more or less familiar. The difficulty which the Japanese youth finds in understanding Readers which have been compiled for the use of English or American scholars, is very considerable. This is attributed to the fact that not the ideas only, but the modes of stating, explaining, and illustrating them are entirely new, and, in many cases, out of harmony with Japanese habits of thought. (Dening 1887)

Since the textbooks were compiled under the supervision of Mori, his language attitude to English as well as his language policy was obviously reflected in Dening's statement above. This suggests that whether or not Dening was aware of the cultural politics of English textbooks for non-native learners, Mori knew how important it was to "negotiate voices in English" by making a "discursive intervention" strategically so that people might not lose their cultural identity completely when confronted with the Western values (Pennycook 1994: 312–315; 324). And it should be clear that by translating Asian values into English Dening's textbooks were designed to enable students to express the ideas in harmony with Japanese habits of thought. It is worth noting, in passing, that we can interpret Mori's aggressive language behavior as a precursor of

post-colonial language movement in the late twentieth century in which people in “periphery-English countries” (Phillipson 1992) started resisting the hegemony of the English language in the world by writing and speaking back (to the core English-speaking countries) in “World Englishes.” In order to better understand Mori’s dual language strategy, we need to look upon Denning’s English textbooks as a clear example of how a site of political and cultural struggle for equality and superiority comes into play in the realm of discourse. At any rate, what is clearly shown here is that Mori’s approach to translation is marked by its aggressive language attitude to English and Japanese; only by strategically (or eclectically) translating what was needed into both languages was it possible to create a new language for the Japanese Empire. This was Mori’s ultimate solution to the language problem in Japan. And the above evidence suggests that despite technical setbacks in tactics his strategy for language policy in essence remained unchanged from beginning to end.

Pragmatism in Mori’s dual language policy

According to Kawasumi (1996: 32–33), he cites Yokoyama Kendo’s *The History of Japanese Education with Reviews by Education Minister and Others* (1914) and Sakurai Mamoru’s *The History of English Education in Japan* (1936) as evidence to suggest that Mori was leaning toward the Japanese-oriented education. Kawasumi points out that both books contain the same quotation from Mori’s speech in which he says, “In foreign countries, we find no schools where classes are conducted in foreign languages. Similarly, in Japan, we should be working toward the national language based education.

Although we now have to employ foreign instructors temporarily to teach Japanese new subjects in foreign languages, we should see it as politically and culturally expedient.” The source of this statement, Kawasumi notes, is not identified in the above books and nor can it be found in *A New Complete Collection of Documents Relating to Mori Arinori*—the present writer also tried to locate the original source but to no avail. Yet, Mori’s above statement closely accords with the import of the following passage in Murray’s Report:

While it is extremely difficult, at this point in time, to teach Western subjects in Japanese, there is no country in the world that could realize general education without using its most common popular language. Hence one can say that employing Western languages in the present situation should be considered as the only available temporary measure, and that Japan is going through the same phase as seen in the medieval Europe where Latin was used as the universal language in education. It is precisely because of the nation’s urgent need to produce teachers who attain a high level of scholarship. And the whole idea is based on “the principles of economy” in which time and energy devoted to an enterprise should be measured according to the results in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in order to see if it really “pays.” Thus, it is not necessary concerned with the financial aspect of the project. What is important here is that when you consume goods, you should expect them to generate enough utility.

Although Yokoyama and Sakurai do not indicate the sources for their pertinent quotations, we can confirm the striking parallel between these two citations, giving credence to the authenticity of the possible common source. Then it is reasonable to suppose that Mori viewed education through foreign language as an expedient measure for paving the way to education through the full-fledged national language (Japanese). Indeed, what Mori had in mind was the phasing out of foreign language-based education in Japan. Citing his speech at Tokyo Imperial University, Kawasumi suggests that Mori proposed teaching only one foreign language for practical and economic reasons, while aiming at abolishing the use of foreign languages as a means of teaching lessons at school. Thus Kawasumi sees Mori's later policy for foreign language control as shifting toward national language education. If this is the case, Kawasumi argues, then we should reconsider Sakurai's generally accepted view that "it was Inoue Kowashi that reviewed Mori's policy for encouragement of foreign language education and changed its course."

What exactly did Mori hope to achieve in his "foreign language incentive policy?" Does it not conflict with what Kawasumi terms "Mori's later policy for foreign language control?" It is true that Mori's "foreign language incentive policy" began with the proclamation of the School Edict in 1886 when he was appointed as Minister of Education by the first Ito Hirobumi government (Sakurai 1936: 146–149). It is worth noting that Mori issued the "school textbook screening" edict, placing the compilation of ele-

mentary and junior high school instructional books under his charge; Mori was eager to solicit good materials from the private sector with a view of producing inexpensive and practical school-books written in simple, conversational Japanese (Inuzuka 1986: 272). At the same time, it was under such circumstances that Walter Dennig was requested by Mori to write unconventional English Readers in which all the contents dealt with Asian stories, not Western ones for the benefit of Japanese learners. We should notice that this has a great deal to do with what Mori attempted to realize in his “desired end” in his national language reform plan in the 1870s. Thus, Mori’s education policy focused on foreign language from the standpoint of national education.

This line of foreign language policy continued to February 1889 when Mori was assassinated. However, we must not overlook the fact that he advocated foreign language control in the same period, and soon after Mori’s death, English curriculums were to be slashed in favor of Japanese curriculums by a group of proponents of national language education such as Inoue Kowashi (1843–1895). How did Mori ever reconcile these seemingly conflicting policies of foreign and national languages education? As a matter of fact, the established idea that Education Minister Mori Arinori’s encouragement of foreign language learning was curbed and reappraised by Inoue should be seen as half true and half false. The reason is semantic. What Mori intended by “foreign language control” meant the restriction on the use of foreign language in teaching, not necessarily the reduction of the amount of time required for foreign language teaching and learning. A closer look at Murray report corroborates this view; Murry report says

“Therefore, in terms of the present school system, it is out of expediency (not principle) that the schools which provide education by/through foreign language have been approved by the government and thus increased in number. The education authorities, however, deem it temporarily inevitable yet still reformable in Japan.”

Another corroborating evidence in support of our view can be found in Mori’s speech at Tokyo Imperial University, which says that “Education through foreign language is inevitable at this point time. But this, of course, will not last forever.” That is to say, he was considering curbing the use of foreign languages as a means of teaching (by “employed foreigners”), not necessarily the learning of foreign languages by the Japanese students. Obviously he meant the latter when he advocated the policy of “encouraging foreign language learning.” His emphasis on national language, which Kawasumi, Sakurai, and Yokoi highlighted in his educational policy, had much to do with the substitution of Japanese for foreign language as a means of teaching subjects in schools in Japan; it was not intended to go so far as to discourage foreign language learning because of Japanese language education.

Taken in this light, we can better understand why Mori had to control foreign language teaching for politico-cultural reasons: national/linguistic independence of the Japanese Empire from the British- American English hegemony. He positively states in *Education in Japan* that “The absolute necessity of mastering the English language is thus forced upon us. It is a requisite of the maintenance of our independence in the community of nations” (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 186). This resulted in his seeking outside help

from David Murray who strongly recommended exploring the possibilities of translation and compilation as an alternative to building an independent national language.

Meanwhile, the reason why Mori encouraged English teaching even after he became Education Minister in his later years is plausibly because he hoped that they would be able to not only read and absorb the essence of Western civilization through English but also represent their own culture in English, only if in the future the Japanese people reached the point where they could conduct national education using their own textbooks compiled in their own language.⁵⁸ He believed in the future of foreign language education in Japan which is evidenced by his own bilingual performative acts in cross-cultural communication. Since he believed in reciprocal performance in the realm of national and foreign education, he experimented with such an unprecedented English textbook as Walter Denning's whose content actively represents the ethos of Asian cultures, not Western ones. Mori believed in nurturing individuals with independent language attitude. This explains why he endorsed a proposal that "when laws are to be enacted in Japan, they had to be translated into foreign language." Thus, he strategically continued to promote active foreign language learning while simultaneously establishing a national language-centered education.

Viewed in this light, Kawasumi seems to be only scratching the surface of the established theory about Mori's language attitude. He suggests that in his later years Mori's once ultra-Westernized policy of language education in Japan shifted the emphasis from foreign language (English) toward national language (Japanese).

As Sonoda (1993) argues, the underlying a priori assumption behind such an argument derives from the conventional view of Mori as converting from an ultra-Westernized liberalist/internationalist in his early life and to an ultra-nationalist/statist in his last years. Such a binary theoretical framework can only offer an either-or interpretation, which compels us to regard Mori as a “convert” one way or the other. This automatically makes it difficult for us to explore other possibilities. As a result, this line of reasoning only allows us to interpret Mori either as a one-time fervent advocate of the introduction of English and the abolition of Japanese, or as a converted proponent of national language education and foreign language control.

As the discourse analysis revealed so far, Mori recognized in his letter to Whitney the importance of state education by national (native) language. It has generally been established that Mori’s later conversion from English-oriented to Japanese-oriented education and language policy was triggered by his reaction against his personal ultra-Westernization in his earlier phases of educational planning. However, that is quite far from the truth. On the contrary, it would appear that in 1872 Mori had already reached the conclusion that the native language (Japanese) was supposed to develop further into the dominant language for national education in the future. Although at the time of his writing a letter to Whitney Mori had not made clear the feasibility of translation and compilation, he positively stated that there was an urgent need for the schools and textbooks that could be taught “in our own language for educational purposes.” It was not until Mori read the David Murray report on the need for the “national language” and

strengths of the high literacy percentage in Japan that Mori realized that the translation approach from English (to Chinese) to Japanese would be more efficient and effective in terms of the economics of education than the two-staged language reform he contrived in the original plan: the abolition of Chinese characters (the adoption of the English alphabets = romanization of the spoken language), and the introduction of simplified (reformed) English vocabulary into the Japanese language. The more rational and economic approach to language convinced Mori of the procedural convenience of translation in developing the native language into the “national language” that would make it easier to produce not only textbooks but also teachers who could teach in their own language. A strong advocate of “rational economization,” Mori encouraged the people to do more with less in education so that the Japanese might be able to catch up with the West as fast as they could. As Mori states in his following public speeches made in 1887 to regional educational directors and school teachers:

What we are aiming at is nothing less than producing teachers who can meet the needs of the state. We will attain this goal with the principles of economy by which we measure how we spend time and energy on an enterprise, and evaluate the performance and the end result in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. The principle of economy means more than just taking into account the amount of money and time spent; it involves ensuring that consumption produces a good result and investment returns a good profit.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 413)

Here Mori refers to the “principles of economy” not as narrow economy that “merely takes into account the amount of money and time spent,” but rather as broad economy that “organizes a most rational system which maximizes returns on your investment such as money, time, labor, and knowledge” (Inuzuka 1986: 281). All this may alone be enough to explain why Mori clearly stated in his letter to Whitney that he had no intention whatsoever of introducing the unreformed (therefore uneconomic) English language into Japan unless it was made into a simplified (reformed therefore economical) one that rids itself of grammatical and orthographical irregularities, thus saving the Japanese more time and energy for learning. For the same reason he suggested in his speech at Tokyo Imperial University that a single foreign language be used for academic instruction. Thus, if we check his language reform discourse carefully against what is stated in the David Murray Report, we can better recognize what he really intended by his “desired end” as well as how he strived to achieve it.

Seen from this angle, we are now better able to see that Mori’s hidden agenda for the new Japan’s language reform was to create an imperial language or the Emperor’s Japanese in analogy with the English language of the British Empire or the Queen’s English. Again, we must not forget that for Mori, the Queen’s English was not to be introduced into Japan as *the* imperial language. English was only meant to be *a* new (foreign) language that would help the Japanese to develop their own imperial language: the Emperor’s Japanese. The original idea was to integrate the *reformed* therefore new English (= simplified English) into the *reformed* therefore new Japanese (= romanized spoken Japanese).

However, it turned out that it was virtually impossible to remove Chinese characters from the written language of Japan even through romanization; Mori, following Murray's advice on the issue of national language, changed his tactics/means, not his strategy/end, for he instead decided to employ the translation and compilation method to syncretise the *conventional* (unreformed) Japanese with the *conventional* (unreformed) English in order to develop an independent language for education in Japan. Let me stress again that even though Mori tactically retracted his original proposal, his strategy for creating a new independent imperial language for the Japanese Empire remained unchanged. His early idea for language reform based on eclecticism and the "principles of economy" can still be seen in his later educational policy.

It follows from what has been said that in his discourse on language reform Mori did change his tactics, but not his strategy. This explains why most scholars of Mori Arinori have ended up mistaking his tactical move for his strategic one, thus misinterpreting his true intentions. In reading Mori's unofficial letter of inquiry to Whitney that was to be later published in English, many scholars misunderstood his means (the adoption of simplified English) as the ultimate end in his language reform. Consequently, they made a fatal mistake in reading the passage in question ("All reasons suggest its disuse") as Mori's final judgment on the issue of the national language of Japan. The passage, however, should be read in a much broader context. We should be careful not to jump to a conclusion without carefully placing it in a diplomatic context. When Mori published the letter in *Education in Japan* in his capacity as diplomat, the book itself was intended as a

means to an end, not an end in itself. In it he was just trying to convey the seriousness and immediacy of the problems of the language of Japan, and to seek advice from Anglo-Saxon intellectuals. That is why Mori expressed the passage the way he did. Although the passage may sound too radical, it is not to be taken as his ultimate end, for, if read in this light, one might be tempted to understand it as meaning that he suggested the language of Japan be disused. Again, the book itself was published in a diplomatic context and was aimed at seeking advice on a final solution to the problem. Therefore, the passage from his treatise published in the booklet should be interpreted as such. If we place it in the context of the geo-cultural politics of early Meiji Japan, we find that Mori felt the urgency of the problem so much so that he was desperate for advice on the solution. From this viewpoint, it is more reasonable to assume that Mori rhetorically expressed it in such a way as to imply that something must be done about the language of Japan before it was too late.

And his such efforts paid off. Soon after the advice was publicly sought in the booklet, he found the answer. It would appear that in the translation and compilation approach recommended in the David Murray report did Mori find the final solution to the issue of building an independent national language for imperial Japan. Propelled and characterized by his *eigaku* performance, the interactive process of translation and compilation in Mori's dual foreign language policy was to allow for representing between English and Japanese the imperial Self and the significant imperial Others by way of discursive intervention at home and abroad.

5. Parallel “reformation” of religion and language

In this section, we will take a closer look at how Mori’s counter-civilizational pragmatic language attitude is reflected in his English discourses in cultural diplomacy. By so doing, we will demonstrate Mori’s mind-nature with respect to the representation of Self and imperial Others in connection with his linguistic strategy.

As previously stated, in his capacity as a samurai-diplomat, Mori developed his Weltanschauung in the context of the global geo-cultural politics. The key to understanding his world view and his thinking on the language reform issue in Japan lies in analyzing chronologically his English discourses in terms of noteworthy factors which he might have highlighted with specific purposes in mind as he shifted his geo-cultural positions. These major factors to be used as explanatory variables here are gender and religion. It is from these two perspectives that we want to examine Mori’s other discourses made in English on his own initiative while he was during his stay in America, China, and Britain (in this order) from 1872 to 1884. What we are concerned with here is Mori’s English linguistic strategy for differentiating in terms of the two variables mentioned above the image of the Self (the new Japan) as a distinct (virtually and potentially superior) race from those of Imperial Others (China/U.S./Britain). The following are Mori’s English discourses to be discussed here from chronological and geo-cultural/political standpoints.

(1) Discourses made in English in America:

The Life and Resources in America (1871)

The Religious Freedom in Japan (1872)

The Japanese in America (1872)

Education in Japan (1873)

(2) Discourse made in English in China:

The Interviews between Mori Arinori and Li
Hongzhang (1876)

(3) Discourse made in English in Britain:

An Interview with the Japanese Ambassador of
Public Affairs on his Departure from England
(1884)

It is important to bear in mind that all his English discourses were put forth within the cultural geo-political context when Mori acted as a diplomat between East (China) and West (Britain and America). One of the main reasons that his discourses were often misconstrued was chiefly because of the nature of the diplomatic documents that would involve a careful reading of the geo-cultural politics of Japan in relation to the big powers of the East and the West. The texts of the documents were so political and diplomatic that there were many different interpretations of his language reform discourse as ambiguous, contradictory, and paradoxical. The question we have to consider here is how Mori appeared to have “changed his tune” in 1872–73. It has been generally accepted that ultra-Westernized Mori’s “radical” proposal for language reform in Japan was sheer nonsense, and he was chided by U.S. linguist William Whitney into retracting his audacious plan.

But evidence shows that his scheme was not irrational at all in light of the fact that he learned about the Moon-Alford controver-

sy in Britain when he studied there in the late 1860s, which gave him a chance to develop his idea for creating an imperial language of Japan. Then it seems more reasonable to think of his idea disclosed in his 1872 letter to Whitney as his tactical (not strategic) plan.

That said, the fact remains that he made a statement that could be taken to mean that he intends to “abolish” Japanese in favor of English as a new national language. Did he literally mean what he said and say what he really meant regarding the language reform issue? Was it his tactics or strategy for the grand design for the new Japan that he seemed to have abandoned after receiving advice from Whitney? To solve this mystery, we first need to find out exactly when his apparent “conversion” took place and what other geo-political and cultural factors came into play.

It was May 21st, 1872 that Mori wrote to Whitney asking for advice. In it, Mori tried to sound him out about the two-tier language reform plan for creating a new imperial language in Japan: the Japanese reform (romanized Japanese) and the English reform (simplified English). In other words, what he wanted was *jyunsei nihongo* (pure Japanese) and *jyunsei eigo* (pure English) combined into one (Kobayashi 2001). At the end of the letter, Mori plainly states that “It might be quite impossible to force upon them (the Japanese people) the language in its present form.” In reply to Mori’s inquiry, Whitney wrote him back a month later when he endorsed the idea of the romanization of the spoken Japanese but politely yet adamantly opposed the simplification of the written English; he instead recommended adopting conventional English as a classical language like Greek or Latin. The point to observe

here is that six months later, he seems to have changed his point of view concerning the adoption of both romanized spoken Japanese and simplified written English when he comments in the introduction to *Education in Japan* as follows:

There are some efforts being made to do away with the use of Chinese characters by reducing them to simple phonetics, but the words familiar through the organ of the eye are so many, that to change them into those of the ear would cause too great an inconvenience, and be quite impracticable. (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 185–186)

Mori further adds that “the absolute necessity of mastering the English language is thus forced upon us.” This comment is sharply contrasted with the one he made six months earlier that “it might be quite impossible to force upon them the language (English) in its present form,” and that “I could not conscientiously recommend my country men, to cause their children to devote six or seven years of their lives to learning a language so replete with unnecessary irregularities.” Thus he abandoned the original idea of simplified (purified) English for unavoidable technical reasons. As to his abandonment of the initial plan, three months after Mori wrote to Whitney, Mori made a remark to the same effect in his speech at the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the National Educational Association Session held in Boston:

Our language is poor, and is limited within ourselves, because we have no occasion to use it for higher purposes: and it

became very short.... As I said, *our language is so very poor that it will become useless very soon*. I expect that when foreign schools are established throughout our country, *the English language will become predominant, and our own language will be very much diminished*, and finally a kind of curiosity; and what I say now is in the part of that curiosity. [Laughter and applause.]

(Mori 1873: 105–107; my emphasis)

This statement accords with what Mori declares at the end of the introduction to *Education in Japan* (1873).

Without the aid of the Chinese, our language has never been taught or used for any purpose of communication. This shows its poverty ... the English language ... suppresses the use of both Japanese and Chinese.... Under the circumstance, *our meager language, which can never be of any use outside of our islands, is doomed to yield to the domination of the English tongue ... the laws of state can never be preserved in the language of Japan. All reasons suggest its disuse.*

(SMAZ, Vol. 5: 186; my emphasis)

It has been widely accepted that Mori converted from progressive (liberal) to conservative. As we have seen in the section on sociolinguistic Darwinism, the assumption behind the established fact is based on Mori's famous discourse that just as Chinese was becoming "useless" and "extinct," so the spoken language of Japan would become as useless as Chinese and disused in the future.

The question we must consider here is at what point in 1872 he decided to change his mind about his case. The key to identifying the time is in the public speech he made at the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the National Educational Association Session held in Boston on the sixth of August, 1872. On the third day of the proceedings—soon after the Iwakuwa Mission left America for Europe—Mori spoke in public of the future of education in Japan, commenting on the urgent need for national language reform. Seeking for professional advice, Mori wrote to Whitney on the 21st of May, 1872, and Whitey wrote back on the 20th of June, 1872. It follows from this that it was sometime between September and August that Mori must have had second thoughts about his “hidden agenda” for the coalescing of reformed Japanese and reformed English.

Did Mori really change his mind by following Whitey’s advice? A closer examination of Mori’s discourse on the issue shows that it was not really the case. Whereas evidence suggests that after reading Whitney’s feedback Mori did have a rethink of his tactics to improve the language of Japan, he never went so far as to abandon his strategy. It is generally believed that Mori gave up his plan on Whitney’s advice, which has in fact distorted the truth. Mori backed off his plan for simplified English which was one of his tactics to achieve his “desired end,” not because Whitney opposed it but because at his own discretion Mori found it “practically impossible” to implement the other tactics—the romanization of the spoken language of Japan—which was to set the stage for the former (Kobayashi 2001: 62–78). As we have seen, his “desired end” in his language reform plan was not merely

to abandon Japanese in favor of English, but to create a new imperial language of Japan by attempting to coalesce reformed Japanese (romanized spoken Japanese) and reformed English (simplified written English) into one integrated whole. Thus, it would be a mistake to think that Mori gave up his whole plan to build a new imperial language that could beat all the Western languages just because its tactics were jettisoned for practical reasons in 1872.

More important is the fact that Mori's discourse on language reform played a significant role in projecting the new Japan's image in cultural diplomacy. Although often misconstrued and dismissed as an irrational personal scheme, his English discourse on language reform should be interpreted rather in the form of diplomatic correspondence. If we treat it as an unofficial yet diplomatic document, then we are better able to understand diplomatic rhetoric Mori strategically employed in English to secure national interests in the game of international power game. It is of great significance to consider how Mori tried to negotiate the new Japanese voice in the matter of education in Japan at home and abroad in English as well as in Japanese while actively engaging in cultural diplomacy. In dealing with Mori's English discourses on Japan, it should be kept in mind that Mori not only represented his country in English abroad by giving a detailed account of the history of Japanese politics, society, and culture, but also played a crucial role in producing the first "comprehensive account of American politics, society, and culture written (in English) by a Japanese" (Van Sant 2004: x). It should be noted that much of his discourse on language reform that stirred a controversy at home was made abroad in English, not in Japanese. What does this tell

us about the implications and ramifications of the globetrotter's language behavior? We are misled if we do not understand why and how he had to perform mostly in English in representing Japanese and Western (especially Anglo-American) civilizations abroad; it is difficult to get to the heart of the matter if we swallow the established theory without placing his English discourse on language reform in the proper context.

Considered in this light, it would emerge that there are three aspects of his diplomatic discourse on language reform operating simultaneously in the politico-cultural context of the time.

- (1) Mori's cultural diplomacy and his 1872–73 political maneuvering for the revision of unequal treaties
- (2) Mori's belief in socio-linguistic Darwinism
- (3) Mori's confidence in the Japanese cross-cultural eclectic and creative adaptation to a higher civilization

It goes without saying that in all ages, one would disclose his tactics/means in the process of international politico-cultural diplomacy, but rarely reveal his hidden agenda. Therefore, it is wrong to think that there are no politically charged terms and rhetoric used in Mori's English diplomatic discourses, and that there was no ulterior motive behind his discursive maneuvering. In analyzing his English discourse in terms of the three aspects above, we need to understand the logic behind the text operating in the power game. Accordingly, all his English discourses including

Whitney's letter to Mori, his introduction to *Education in Japan*, his speech at the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the National Educational Association Session in Boston must be seen as working toward the one objective: Japan's national interest. The period between 1872 and 1873 saw the new Japan launching out into the international community; the Iwakuwa Mission traveled to America and Europe in the hope of observing and discovering the secret of progress of Western civilization as well as laying the ground for the revision of unequal treaties. As Ivan Hall (2003: 15–20) explains, in 1872 Mori was doing just that in America on behalf of the Iwakura Mission. It is also important to note that the "Iwakuwa Mission's greatest contribution to the new Japan was manifest in the cultural rather than political aspect of its activities," and that "there was no one else who was fitter and capable enough to become an intermediary in cultural diplomacy." Indeed, Mori acted as a first-class cultural attaché and spokesman for the new Japan; he was able to see Japan from a global perspective and talk about the problems of its education, religion, language, political system, and modernization in a larger context.

As Irie Akira remarks in his foreword to Vant Sant's *Mori Arinori's Life and Resources in America* that at the time when he served as Japanese ambassador to the U.S., the "nation was rapidly transforming itself, in the process of redefining its identity" after the Civil War, and that "Reconstruction (although the term is not used) of America may have reminded him of 'restoration' in the name of which his compatriots back home were trying to transform their society" (Vant Sant 2004: xi). Obviously Mori believed that in order for the Japanese society to successfully transform into

a modern nation, the foundations of the new Japan's national independence must be firmly based on quality education among other things. Thus he considered the problems of language and religion as part and parcel of educational reform in Japan as well as the revision of unequal treaties.

Using English or the “language of Christianity” fluently and diplomatically, Mori publicized in America as well as in Britain the Japanese opinion and stance on religion (Christianity) and language (English) in connection with education in Japan. There are two major reasons for this. First, given the political conditions at the time, Mori had keenly realized the need to let Western (particularly Anglo-American/English-speaking) Christian nations know that the new Japan was ready to assimilate into the Anglo-American communities. Mori recognized the fact that the international laws of the time virtually applied only to “civilized” (read Christian) nations, although it was an unwritten code (Nishikawa and Matsumiya 1995: 28). “Civilized” nations were synonymous with Christian peoples. This is why Mori found it urgent that he write in English *Religious Freedom in Japan*; as he personally believed in freedom of faith, he published it in Washington, the center of diplomacy in America, primarily for diplomatic purposes; he did so in order to urge the Japanese government to put an end to the great persecutions of Christians in Nagasaki (1868–1873) before the Iwakuwa Mission visited America and Europe; he knew that such anti-Christian stance of the government would certainly work against the preliminary negotiations with the civilized (Christian) nations.

A second reason is practical. The English language held hege-

mony over the realm of religion (Christianity) as much of the knowledge of science and art. Mori regarded English as the language of religion and science. This is why Mori stated in his letter to Whitney (and in *Education in Japan*) that it is imperative that the Japanese learn English “to grasp the principle truths from precious treasury of Western science and art and religion.” Thus he believed that the “laws of state” was well preserved in the language of “science and art and religion,” namely, English. And he was convinced that the laws of modern nation-state must be “preserved in the language of Japan” some way or the other.

Here we can see Mori’s language thought unfolding that the key to the advance of a nation can be found in the evolution of language. This idea of national language can be seen in what might be called the socio-linguistic Darwinism. As we have seen, Mori was studying in Britain in the mid-1860s when there was a national language movement growing in which many scholars and priests (such as Max Müller and Trench) associated religion (Christianity) with the English language and saw in the history of language the strength of a nation. As I have argued, Mori’s language thought was profoundly influenced by the English religio-linguistic paradigm in which language and religion are inextricably linked. Thus, Mori set out to get at the essence of Western civilization embodied in their religion (Christianity) and language (English) in his grand design for the building of a new language of an imperial nation. Seen from this angle, we can understand why he found it politically and culturally important to publicize the new Japan’s stance on Western religion and language abroad as the Japanese ventured at home to incorporate some elements of

both Christianity and English into the fabric of Japanese society in the same period (1872–73).

In reading Mori's diplomatic English discourses we must take into account the political context of the revision of unequal treaties and his strategy for his "public relations" activities at home and abroad. Citing his *Religious Freedom in Japan* as a case in point, Ivan Hall points out:

In the pamphlet Mori argued that modernization necessitates religious liberalization, assuring Americans of the prospect of religious reform in Japan. This tract was also sent to Sanjyo Sanetomi, but was never translated into Japanese. Yoshino Sakuzo, a philosopher and scholar in the Taisho period, interpreted Mori's argument as a form of public relations in his cultural diplomacy, I concur with Yoshino in this respect. (Hall 2003: 20)

Trying to place Mori's discourse in the context of international cultural diplomacy, Hall also qualifies Yoshino's opinion:

Then again, I think Yoshino's interpretation does not fully explain where Mori stood on the religious issue. In spite of his diplomatic rhetoric, Mori himself really believed in the freedom of conscience and religion. This is why he did not approve any religion as the state religion. (ibid.)

According to Hall's view, Mori's *Religious Freedom in Japan* was a very political discourse. It was not so much the issue of religion,

but rather as a question of raising the level of national status by revising unequal treaties; it was intended to assure Western (Christian) nations of the new Japan's unwavering resolve to lift the ban on Christianity at home and thereby become a "civilized" country. (Indeed, the following year, February in 1873, the new Japan opened its door to Christianity. As Hall remarks, Mori was reluctant to accept any particular beliefs as a state religion presumably because he was attempting to establish a new education in Japan by seeking a new model for a new Japanese civilization which was neither to belong to Eastern (Chinese therefore Confucian) civilization nor to follow the path of Western (Christian) civilization. Mori was looking to find a way to dissociate a new education in Japan from any religious doctrines, thus emulating the conventional hegemonic religious ethos at the same time for a more liberal and therefore higher civilization (Kobayashi 2004). Hall further explains:

Mori's political and cultural thought was influenced by American intellectuals of the time, but also inspired by British philosopher Herbert Spencer. Indeed, Mori looked at state education from a Spencerian point of view in the belief that while the government is responsible for educational administration, religion (including Buddhism, Shintoism, and Christianity) should be excluded from the system. Instead, Mori was searching for alternative national ethics that would replace conventional Confucian ethics.
(Hall 2003: 20)

As I have already suggested, Mori's outlook on life was greatly influenced by Spencer's theory of social Darwinism. Mori himself disclosed his view on religion as follows.

All those doctrines (Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shintoism in Japan) are now suffering a decline and are ebbing away before the new lights of science and art, which are being introduced from Europe and America.

(SMAZ, Vol. 5: 184)

Here we should not fail to notice that although Mori predicts the gradual declines of Japanese religions due to the law of social evolution propelled by the advancement of science and technology, he never intends to adopt Christianity instead of old Japanese religious doctrines. On the contrary, he levels his criticism at Christianity. The following statement he made in *Life and Resources in America* (1871) in the previous year proves the point.

That while Christians claimed to have the only true religion and pretended to be better than all other men, they did not, in that particular, differ from the Chinese or Japanese, who assert the same claims for their religions.... It would be a wonderful thing, should the time ever arrive, when the so-called Christians, who profess the faith, but do not live up to it, shall cease to boast of the superiority of their religion, and regard themselves as worse than all other people, because of their guilt in making insincere professions. True Christians may not be considered as identical with the gen-

eral sense of civilization—in which the good and the bad participate, —but true philosophy would seem to teach that it should be a leading element in such civilization.

(SMAZ, Supplementary Vol. 1: 197–198)

Here Mori sees Christians for being no better than other religious peoples in that they can become too dogmatic and self-righteous to be called “believers in a true religion.” He also comments that Christianity should not be equated with civilization, although he acknowledges the “true philosophy” of the religion as a legitimate cause of Western civilization.

Given that Mori was very cautious about accepting the Western religion as superior to other religions, it is not difficult to understand that when he appealed for the lifting of the ban on the Christianity in Japan, he was never an ardent advocate of the introduction of the Western religion into the country as a state religion. As Mori himself argues:

The department specially established for the administration of our religious affairs, has indicated to the public as yet no mark of its success in gaining the confidence of the people. Far from it. Its policy of combining the two antagonistic faiths of Buddhism and Shintoism, which some time since was inaugurated under its sway, has utterly failed to command our respect. Its attempt to impose upon our people a religion of its creation cannot receive too severe condemnation, because such attempt not only disregards our sacred liberty of conscience, but its effect is to crush the very soul

of man.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 68)

It is plain to see that what Mori is trying to say here is not that Christianity is a better religion than Buddhism and Shintoism, but rather that a state religion would neither guarantee the people's "liberty of conscience" nor protect the "very soul of man." Put simply, he did not believe in any particular "religion" that catered to the government's interests at the expense of man's moral sense and dignity (Just as Mori looked at the problem of religion in Japan, so he took a critical look at Christianity). However, because of his tract *Religious Freedom in Japan*, Mori wound up being labeled by many nativists as an "abominable Christian" who had a plot to abolish Shintoism. The right-wing libelers would never have thought that Mori bothered to write the pamphlet in English with good cause; he did so in the diplomatic context with the view of improving the image of the new Japanese and thus revising unequal treaties for national independence.

Religio-linguistic reconfiguration in cultural diplomacy

It is clear that Mori's English discourses produced in diplomatic settings were intended to make a difference in the geo-cultural politics of the Japanese and other peoples. I would like to lay special emphasis on his discursive strategy in which Mori, on the one hand, seeks to project a Christian-like image in the realm of Chinese (Confucian/Buddhist) civilization, while he, on the other, appears to attempt to create a non-Christian-like image in the sphere of Western (Christian) civilization. The point to observe is that Mori almost always keeps the strengths and weaknesses of

both civilizations in perspective. The prime example can be found in his interview with Li Hongzhang. In the meeting conducted in English and Chinese, Mori takes up the question of what is today called the “gender” issue that he says hinders the progress of Asian societies in a broader context of the clashes of the religious ethos of Eastern and Western civilizations.

In the diplomatic meeting, Mori and Li first broach the subjects of the rights and wrongs of discarding the old Asian ethnic costumes for the new Western clothes. Then Mori discusses its advantages and disadvantages, not the rights or wrongs, of replacing the old with the new, emphasizing the Japanese rational and pragmatic attitude to the new civilization. Obviously he is trying to differentiate the Japanese (“Us”) from the Chinese (“Them”) here. Unable to understand why the Japanese are so eager to de-Orientalize and Westernize themselves, Li asks him a general question, “by the by what do you think upon the probable effect which is to be seen the sooner or later of the intercourse now held between Asia and Europe? Mori remarks:

That is a very great question. It is, I should say, a question concerning the competition for supremacy between the races and the religion as well as for intelligence, power, and wealth between two of the great divisions of the world (= Asia and Europe). Though an Asiatic man, I must confess that there will, in my humble opinion, be a very long time or some centuries before Asia to become capable of competing with Europe. The Asiatics as a people, live so low and degraded a life only little better than that of beasts.

This statement indicates that for Mori, the issue of women's status also has a great deal with the "competition for supremacy" between East and West. When Mori said, "The Asiatics as a people, live so low and degraded a life only little better than that of beasts," he obviously had the women issue in mind. Puzzled by Mori's deprecating comment on the life of Asians, Li had to ask him "How so?" Mori answers as follows.

The position ordained for woman to occupy, is one of the highest and most sacred ever created by the will of the Supreme Being. It is that of the mother of mankind in general, and of a country and family in particular. Now look at the actual condition of the women everywhere in Asia, and the position they occupy. They are both regarded and treated as little better than some other animals. You will see, without my telling any further, the truth of what [I] said before respecting the low life of Asiatic people. (ibid.)

Surprised by Mori's Christian-like view of women as well as his use of the term "the Supreme Being," Li uttered, "Do you belong to the Christian religion?" In response to his question, Mori replies:

I profess none of those so called religions: the Christian, the Buddhist, the Mohammedan or anything else. I am a plain man, just as appearing now before you. The aim of my life is

simply to live an honest and harmless life. I nevertheless find it extremely difficult to so conduct myself, in consequence of the constant interference of the same self of mine against it. (ibid.: 380; my emphasis)

Li was so impressed by Mori's religious and life philosophy that he exclaimed, "What great wisdom in you! Even the greatest Confucius would like to attentively listen to such interesting a conversation like this."

The questions we must consider here are, exactly what did Mori mean when he said "created by the will of the Supreme Being?" Was he ever a true Christian? Did he really understand what God means in the Christian sense of the term? Then why did he positively state he had no faith whatsoever in "any of those so-called religions?" Did he not realize he was contradicting himself? What is more, why did he bother to speak to Li in English through a Chinese interpreter on the "gender" issue? Why in English? Why not in Japanese or Chinese? What did the use of English have to do with the "gender" issue Mori raised in the interview?⁵⁹ In order to answer these questions, we need first to examine how Mori interpreted the concept of the Christian "God."

As we have seen, when Mori talked about the position of women in Asian nations in such Christian parlance as "the highest and most sacred ever created by the will of the Supreme Being," he seemed to ascribe the root of the problem of gender inequality in Asian countries to the Confucian/feudal ethos that originated in China. Meanwhile, he was immensely impressed by the Christian ethos that set a premium on gender equality. Indeed, while stay-

ing in London, Mori learned that Christians treated kindly not only women but also non-Christians and especially physically handicapped people as equals with human dignity (Inuzuka 1986: 57–58).

The question we must consider here is what exactly Mori meant when he mentioned the “Supreme Being.” Or did Mori ever think of “the God” as an entity which has personal feelings and character like a human being? In light of the fact that he mentions the “will of the Supreme Being” in an interview with Li Hongzhang, we may recall here that during his stay in Britain ten years before, Mori had understood Christianity as *kishin no setsu* (the theory of demons). Before he traveled to Russia in 1866, he stayed at an inn in Newcastle where he met a “Christian” hostess named Millie. In his travels of Russia, he writes that the lady took good care of him and he was “deeply moved by her kindness.” At the same time, a devout Christian and churchgoer, she talked to him about the “will of the Christian God (Shang-ti) who decrees that people love and help each other,” which “distinguishes between humans and animals.” And she strongly urged him to “go to temple” with her. Mori “had a hard time declining her kind ‘religious’ offer.” Failing to fathom out what the woman could possibly mean by the “will of God,” he looked upon it as the “theory of demons” (SMAZ, Vol. III: 8).

Another point to observe here is that using the quasi-religious concept of *kishin no setsu*⁶⁰ (the theory of demons), Mori tries to understand the Christian God within the Confucian and Buddhist frames of reference (see Koyasu 2002); he uses the terms “Shang-ti” representing God, temple meaning “church.” Retuning to his

interview with Li Hongzhang, we must consider the following question again: Did Mori really mean “Shang-ti” when he said “the Supreme Being?” Or could it be that Mori came to understand “the Supreme Being” as the absolute Christian God with personal feelings and human-like character? As far as I can gather from my research, there is compelling evidence to prove his position on the religious matter. The evidence can be found in Mori’s letter to British linguist and scholar of Eastern religions Max Müller (1823–1900). The letter is included in *The Life and Letters of the Right Honourable Friedrich Max Müller* compiled by his wife Georgina Adelaide (1794–1919).⁶¹ According to Adelaide’s exposition of the letter, we find that when Mori was working in the U.S. in the capacity as chargé de’affaires in 1873, he traveled to Britain and rushed into Müller’s house seeking advice on the question of state religion in Japan. Adelaide writes:

The following letter from Arinori Mori, at this time Japanese Minister in England, is of interest as giving the view of *an enlightened Buddhist* on the ‘Shang-ti’ question. Arinori had been staying with Max Müller, and delighted every one by his bright, joyous manner. It was he who, years before, when Minister in the United States, had rushed into Max Müller’s rooms asking him in ten minutes to fix on a state religion for Japan. He was very different now, and with all his high spirits there was an earnestness of purpose about him which inspired his host with a feeling of strong regard. (1976: 97–98; my emphasis)

Several years after he consulted Müller about the problem of state religion in Japan, Mori in turn wrote to the distinguished scholar of Oriental religions and languages advising as to how the Chinese term “Shang-ti” should be rendered into English. The letter reads as follows:

JAPANESE LEGATION, LONDON, November 22, 1880

DEAR PROFESSOR MAX MÜLLER, —I scarcely need to say that my recent visit to Oxford greatly benefited me, and that I immensely enjoyed myself during my stay under your kind care and most hospitable roof. ‘I have since read with much interest the copy kindly given me by Dr. Legge of his letter addressed to you on the “term-question” Shang-ti. I venture to express that Dr. Legge’s translation of the term into God is on the whole correct, though in some cases the word God, when rendered by Shang-ti, may not be intelligible to the Chinese or any of the Far Eastern people, as being used to represent a living, sympathetic Being with all His attributes of love and tenderness. It is true that Shang-ti has been regarded as the Supreme Being and the Dispenser of all justice and benevolence, but never as so sympathetic a Being as is held by the Christian faith.

In Mori’s understanding, “Shang-ti” can be construed as the cultural equivalent of “God” or “the Supreme Being” or “the Dispenser of all justice and benevolence.” However, he draws a line between impersonal and personal God; he figures that people from non-

Western countries may find it “intelligible” if translated as the humanized divinity such as “a living, sympathetic Being with His attributes of love and tenderness.” It will be clear from the Adelaide’s description of Mori and what is said in this letter that Mori *was* a cultural relativist.

As regards the question of whether or not Mori was really a Christian, there is further compelling evidence to unravel the mystery showing how Mori interpreted the concept of Western/Christian God. He wrote in English *Religious Freedom in Japan* and published it in Washington in 1872. The point to note is that the pamphlet was also to be addressed to Grand Minister of State Sanjyo Sanetomi (1837–1891) in Japan (The pamphlet was to be later translated into Japanese). The reason that it was written in English to his countryman was plausibly because Mori, serving as cultural diplomat, understood the importance of explaining to the Western/Judeo-Christian nations where the Japanese government stood on the issue of religious freedom in Japan. At that time, Japan was being severely criticized by Western countries for the persecutions of Christians in Nagasaki by the government. So he was well aware that the political and cultural implications and ramifications of the anti-Christian policy adopted in Japan in 1868 would work against the negotiation for the revision of unequal treaties with Western powers.

Mori, looking at the cultural politics of Christianity at home and abroad in light of the revision of unequal treaties, intervened in the “international” (read Christian) community by writing in English, so that he could redress the situation where Japan was labeled as an anti-Christian therefore “savage” nation as opposed

to Christian therefore “civilized” Western nations. This is why the pamphlet was doubly addressed to both anti-Christian Japanese government officials and Western Christians in general. Appealing to Minister Sanjyo for religious freedom in Japan, Mori argues as follows:

Since religion is entirely a matter of individual belief, no one or government can be presumed to possess the authority of repudiating whatever faith any man may cherish within himself ... and that irrespective of our class organization of society, *nature or the Creator* distributes human qualities unequally among us, and therefore it cannot be expected that all will take the same view of such a question.

(SMAZ, Vol. 2: 72; emphasis added)

What is significant in this quote is that while Mori takes a liberal attitude toward religions in general, he seems to be very careful in his choice of words in his discussion of what makes humans equal; he referred to it as “nature” or “Creator” instead of “God.” Obviously he must have intended to use the alternative terms so that the non-Christian Japanese and Christian Westerners both would understand the point he made about the issue of religious freedom. In those days, the word “nature” was taken by intellectuals in Japan to mean *shou* (one’s disposition) or *ten* (heaven) in the Confucian sense. In other words, it was never supposed to mean “personified God” in the Christian sense (see Yanabu 2001: 127–148). Consequently, when he also mentions in the pamphlet, “Every one that lives is himself solely responsible to his Creator for

all his thoughts and deeds,” he takes the “Creator” to mean “nature” as well. As shown already, this corresponds to his interpretations of “God” and “Shang-ti” in his letter to Max Müller.

As Saeki Hiroto (1958: 236) explains, historically the concept of “religion” itself had not been fully developed and discussed in Japan until early Meiji when Mori first brought up the question of “religious freedom” as a national issue. From a historical and etymological point of view, Saeki (*ibid.*: 237) goes on to suggest that the Japanese were traditionally not ready to discuss the Western concept of “religion” that “presupposes a superhuman and supernatural entity, clearly distinguishes it from humans, and connects the latter with the former emotionally and imaginatively.” We may say, in this respect, that Mori was one of the modern Japanese intellectuals who tried to interpret “religion” as a personal faith in “what is neither a human nor nature,” which guarantees one’s conscience and goes beyond a particular belief in a particular god or goddess, non-Christian or Christian. It should be clear that the purpose of Mori’s pamphlet on *Religious Freedom in Japan* was (1) to prevent the Meiji government from establishing the state religion in Japan that would impose upon the people one particular religious belief; (2) to let it be known abroad that Japan was becoming “civilized” enough to embrace Christianity.

The question then arises as to whether Mori was a true Christian or not. Since Hayashi Takeji (1968) tackled the question of Mori’s faith in Christianity, it still remains shrouded in mystery. Then there appears to be some strong evidence in Mori’s letter to Max Müller to settle the matter. In it, Adelaide (Müller 1976: 97) implicitly described Mori as being *not Christian*: “The following

letter from Arinori Mori, at this time Japanese Minister in England, is of interest as giving the view of an *enlightened Buddhist* on the ‘Shang-ti’ question” (my italics). To the best of my knowledge, there is no other literature, in English or Japanese, which depicts Mori as being an “enlightened Buddhist.” While it is still debatable whether he was really a Buddhist, what is more important here is not so much whether or not he was a Buddhist, but rather that he was not what is called “a true Christian.”

To put this into perspective, the confession of his religious faith must be recalled here. As we have seen, when asked by Li Hongzhang, “Do you belong to the Christian region?” Mori clearly answered *in English*, “I profess none of those so called religions: the Christian, the Buddhist, the Mohammedan or anything else.” In this sense, Kimura (1986: 112) is right when he says that “As the question of whether or not Mori was a convinced Christian, when all is said, it seems reasonable to conclude that in a way he was *both* a Christian *and* a non-Christian. For Mori, however, it was neither a contradiction nor a conversion at all.” In short, Mori believed in his own religion in his own way.

Then, what exactly was his religious view of nature like? Concerning the Japanese philosophy of *shizen* or nature, Yamamoto Shichihei and Komuro Naoki (1981: 161) explain in *The Sociology of the Religion of Japan* that “for the Japanese, the word *shizen* encompasses three forms of orders: personal (inner), social (outer), and natural (the other outer). And these three correspond with one another.” As regards the difference in the meaning of nature between the Chinese and the Japanese words, they go on to suggest:

On the other hand, there is no exact Chinese equivalent of the Japanese *shizen*. In Chinese, all the outer aspects of nature are seen as *tenchi* or the heaven and the earth, while the inner aspect is called *shou* or innate traits. Unlike the import of the Japanese word, therefore, the Chinese “nature” in itself does not become social and cultural norms, although Confucianism and Taoism differ in the interpretation of the concept. (ibid.)

There is much justice in this view. Assuming that Yamamoto and Komuro are right about the Japanese religious view on nature, it can be argued that Mori was no exception; his outlooks on nature and religion coincided as such. Indeed, there is collateral evidence to support our argument. Mori’s personal view of religion as part of his philosophy of *shizen* (nature) is manifest in *An Interview with the Japanese Ambassador of Public Affairs on his Departure from England* (1884). What is really interesting here is that, based on his “natural” reflection of people in society, Mori discloses his view of the religion of Japan as he talks about the “position of women in Japan” in the context of “Japanese civilization versus Western civilization” in exactly the same way as he did in an interview with Li Hongzhang in China. He states:

There is, however, one thing in which you have an advantage over us and that is in relation to the position of women. I don’t know whether it is your religion, of what it is. In the Old Testament the idea of the relations between the sexes was not what it is now; neither was it for some

centuries after Christ. But then there came a change, and woman was lifted to a position of greater equality with man. Polygamy and bigamy were treated as crimes. That is very good. With us we have still much to do. Our women are not in the same position as yours. They have not the education, neither have they the same advantages of social intercourse. They are gentle and pure; they are industrious, and perform their domestic duties, but they are not on an equality with men. That is one of the greatest problems with which we have to deal—the education and elevation of women. We are establishing girls school, in which we are giving them a liberal secular education, like to that of the boys; but there is a great difficulty ever with us. The pressure of religious principle is very slight, and the future is full of difficulty. How we shall settle it we do not as yet know but we will press onward.

(SMAZ, Vol. 1 440–441)

Interestingly, as he highly praises the respected position of women in Britain and sees it as part of the strength of the country, he views its origin as not being in the Judeo-Christian tradition. This corroborates our working hypothesis that he never believes in the Bible story that the Christian God created all men and women equal. Related to this is the fact that in *The Japanese in America*, he traces the history of Japanese civilization, suggesting that in the beginning there was no tradition of male chauvinism or a disdain for women in Japan, and that it is largely due to the Chinese feudalistic influence that the Japanese people came to see women as

inferior to men. There is a passage in *The Japanese in America* that says:

The nations of Asia pay little respect to ladies, and it is true, in many cases. This degradation of woman unfortunately arose from mistaken views, inculcated in the philosophy of China, for Chinese classics found their way into Japan much as those Greece and Rome did among scholars of Western nations. (SMAZ, Supplementary Vol. 1: 472–473)

The foregoing extracts reveal that in this interview held in Britain he wants to let Westerners know that even though Japan is ahead of China in social evolution, he admits that “women’s status” is one of the key issues which still remain to be solved. However, it is important to note here that in the discourse he does not necessarily associate the “gender” issue with the Christian ethos. Instead, while he acknowledges the superiority of Christianity in gender equality over other religions, he asserts with emphasis that there has been a commonsense religion in Japanese civilization. He argues:

When you ask me to compare Japanese with English civilization, and especially to say whether it is better to be born a Japanese or an Englishman, I must decline to reply. I am a Japanese in blood. I cannot be impartial; but I must say there is one thing in Japan which you have not here, and which if miss [sic]. You had it perhaps hundreds years ago to some extent, but we have it to a much greater extent in

Japan. I refer to *the sense of brotherhood* which binds together all the members of one family, and extends from them to all dwellers in one district. There is no member of our family, no matter how weak or poor, who has not a right to come upon the head of his household for assistance, with the full conviction that it will not be refused him. When I am in Tokio [sic], for instance, there is no man from my native village, no matter how poor, how mean, or how destitute he may be, who would not have the utmost confidence in coming to me for assistance. Nor can I refuse it him.

Emphasizing the Japanese sense of brotherhood, Mori goes on to say:

You may say if you like is one great element of *practical religion* among my people. Thus it is that we keep the second commandment of Christ: "Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. Among other things this sentiment has very good results.

and

In the city of Tokyo, with a population of 1,500,000, there are only 800 or 900—certainly less than 1,000—persons who depend upon the State for their support—that is, who correspond to your paupers. In London, with three times the number of inhabitants, you have something more than

thirty times the proportionate number of paupers.

(SMAZ, Vol. 1: 439–440; emphasis added)

The above passages show that Mori used a few key Christian terms such as “sense of botherhood” and “second commandment of Christ. The fact that Mori focused on the idea of “brotherhood” as part of his philosophy of social solidarity may have to do with his youthful experience with Thomas Lake Harris (1823–1906)’s Christian community called the “Brotherhood of the New Life.” Incidentally, as Kimura (1986: 107) remarks, Mori’s religious thought is much closer to that of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772) than that of Harris who was Swedenborgian as well. Both Swedenborg and Harris were not orthodox Christians; they were reformed Christians who looked at Christianity critically. Although Hayashi (1968) thoroughly explored whether Mori became Christian at the Brotherhood of the New Life, he seemed to have failed to see how Mori managed to reconcile the moral compass that he had had before he met Harris with the doctrine of reformed Christianity he later came to grips with.

The pertinent question we must consider is, did he really come to have faith in Christianity? If so, from what did he convert to it? Had he practiced any other religions? If he did not embrace Christianity after all, what “religion” did he practice? Was he an atheist? To get to the heart of the matter, we need to search for the truth in his statements quoted above. As he makes clear himself in the above quote, Mori *was* a believer in none other than what he calls “practical religion” which “is based on “the sense of brotherhood which binds together all the members of one family, and

extends from them to all dwellers in one district.” And from a cross-cultural point of view, he likened such common-sensical, down-to-earth ethic to the “second commandment of Christ” which says “Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself.” These comments would make him sound not so much like an “enlightened Buddhist,” as Müller’s wife called him, but rather as if he was an enlightened (= reformed) Christian who can tolerate other religious beliefs as long as they make sense.

We may, therefore, reasonably conclude that Mori was the kind of Japanese who gave Westerners the impression of being both an enlightened (= reformed) Buddhist and Christian. From this cross-cultural point of view, I want to argue that this is precisely what Yamamoto and Komuro (1981) refer to as *nihon-kyouto* or a believer in “Japanese religion” based on situational ethics that will allow people to relativize and embrace conflicting elements in the ideal and practical worlds (see also Reader and Tanabe (1998) for other aspects of “practical religion” in Japan). There is every reason to believe that Mori was a *nihon-kyouto* who practiced what might be called “Japanese practical religion.” This, however, is not to suggest that Mori had faith in one of those particular religions (Shinto, Buddhism, and Confucianism) that had long existed in Japan.

According to Yamamoto and Komuro’s theory, *nihon-kyou* (Japanese religion) is not so much a belief in a particular religion in Japan as a social and cultural system that underlies the dynamics of the intra-and inter-personal communication (1981: 123–156). The principles of what Yamamoto and Komuro call “Japanese religion” are unique in Japan in that it has no such doctrines or scrip-

tures as seen in Western religions. So there is less likely to be a clash of different values and norms among the *nihon-kyou* believers. Moreover, since it is the Japanese language that plays a crucial role in constituting the bedrock of the whole system, *nihon-kyou* would not be easily understood and practiced in foreign languages.

However, Mori ventured to practice it in English in cross-cultural settings. Consequently, Mori can be seen as an “enlightened (= reformed) *nihon-kyouto*”; because he further applied the particular/domestic principles of Japanese religious philosophy to the cross-national/cultural settings, trying to interpret and communicate them in English. He was probably the first Japanese diplomat-politician who, in his cultural diplomacy, attempted to explain in English to Westerners what “religion” means to the Japanese and how it works in Japan.

What needs to be emphasized at this juncture is that, as we have seen, Mori claimed to practice what he called “Japanese practical religion” in the East (China) and the West (America and Britain). On the one hand, in his interview with Li Hongzhang, he used such Christian terms as “the Creator” or “the Supreme Being” for non-Confucian effect, thus making himself sound like a Christian, but later made a statement to the effect that he was none other than a *nihon-kyouto* who could understand the universal ethics found both in Confucianism and Christianity. On the other hand, in America and Britain, he once again implicitly and explicitly claimed to be a *nihon-kyouto* by strategically avoiding Christian terms (e.g. God) and instead employing Oriental terms (e.g. nature), thus embracing Christianity. In this way he not only suc-

ceeded in English in establishing his position as a believer in his own “Japanese religion,” but also in relativizing dominant religious ethos—Confucianism and Christianity—in the East and the West in much the same fashion.

All this points to the geo-cultural international politics of Meiji Japan in the late nineteenth century. Since “Japan consciously acted as a proxy of the ‘West’ on such occasions of foreign diplomacy (Murata 2000: 35),” Japan also sought to serve as a new representative of the “East” when confronted with the West. Engaging in cultural diplomacy in Britain, America, China, and the old Japan, for that matter, Mori appears to have tactically played the inter-and intra-national games by switching the proxy roles of old and new civilizations so that the new Japan could secure a performative or transformative position between the significant Others, as alternative civilization.

In this geo-cultural and political position lies his stance on the pressing issues connected with education in Japan. For educational reform to be effectively implemented, Mori believed, the issues of religion and language had to be given top priority. As he clearly states in his *Education in Japan*, “Religion and language are two subjects in which our people are generally interested,” and “An allusion to the subject of the Japanese language bears a most direct relation to the contents of this book.” This is precisely why he put forth proposals for reformation of religion and language in the same period (1972–73).

As I suggested earlier, Mori was a *nihon-kyouto* (a believer in the Japanese “practical religion” that goes beyond traditional religious, moral and ethical norms—Shinto, Buddhism, and Confu-

cianism—that had existed in Japan for a long period of time. And after much deliberation he thought it best to designate none of them as “state religion” in Japan simply because he believed in universal rather than particular norms that would allow freedom of conscience regardless of race, creed, and nationality. Consequently, his idea of “religious reformation” was meant to be realized not only in Japan but also in her significant Others’ nations (Britain/America, and China). In short, Mori was the embodiment of an enlightened *nihon-kyouto* who set out to break down the barriers of different religions and languages.

Meanwhile, we must not forget that Mori, an out-and-out reformer at home, was also a game player in the international power politics. As Hall (2003: 20) points out, his English discourse on religious freedom in Japan should be seen not only as coming from his personal beliefs but also as intended for diplomatic purposes. The acceptance of Christianity and English in Japan, he hoped, might pave the way for Japan to be allowed entry into the international (English-speaking) communities and to revise the unequal treaties signed by the Tokugawa government with the Western powers.

Given his such diplomatic stance on the matter of religion (especially concerning Christianity at home), it is only reasonable to suppose that he must have applied the same principle to another urgent issue: language reformation in Japan (Kobayashi 2004). Hall, however, makes no further comments on the other side of his package plan: the issue of language reformation that he was tackling in parallel with that of religious reformation. As we have seen, he had a Spencerian and scientific view of language as well

as religion in Japan. Indeed, he set much store on social-Darwinism and science. He was deeply convinced that unless no progressive measures were taken, irrational social system would deteriorate in due course of time.

In spite of his radical thought of social reformation, Mori never said a word for the abolition of “doomed” religions and language in Japan, although he remarked that there was an urgent need to “do away with the use of Chinese characters” in the language of Japan. According to the established theory about his political and social thought, he is often regarded as an ultra-Westernized pessimist who was eager to abolish Japanese culture in favor of Western civilization. I must say that this is a gross misinterpretation of his discourses that was operating in the dynamics of the Self and the Other. The distortion of the discursive reality of his cultural diplomacy arises from the literal interpretation of his statements made in the larger context of the geo-cultural politics of Meiji Japan.

It is true that there were public occasions and places in his discourses where he referred to the negative aspects of the social/political/cultural systems using controversial and contradictory terms. That, however, is merely a half-truth. Contrary to the accepted theory, throughout his introductory discourse in *Education in Japan*, he strongly emphasized the collective strength of the Japanese people: the outstanding ability to evolve by absorbing a higher civilization without compromising their ethnic identity legitimized by the historical and cultural continuity of the imperial family. As already discussed in Part I, he had an absolute faith in the great strengths of Japanese civilization as well as its weakness-

es. Otherwise, in spite of commenting on the possibility of the decline of religion and language in Japan due to the law of social evolution, he would have never closed his introductory essay in *Education in Japan* by declaring that “our intelligent race” are “eager in the pursuit of knowledge,” and that “Japan as a nation has no aspiration but that of the highest, and no intention but that of the best in her relations with her foreign friends.”

Here we must also draw attention to the fact that Mori not only had a Spencerian view of the Japanese culture but also looked critically at Western religion and language—Christianity and English—from a Darwinian standpoint. As we have seen, he keenly realized the need for religious freedom in Japan in terms of both his inner convictions and political circumstances at the time. By the same token, he impartially criticized Christians’ arrogant and self-righteous attitude toward other peoples from non-Christian cultures, as being no less uncivilized—definitely unchristian—than rather dogmatic priests in Japan and China. Just as he viewed Eastern religions as declining because of or in spite of the law of nature, so he saw Christianity as a Western religion that could be no better than other religions when its believers became too dogmatic and prejudiced against what they call “gentiles” in the East. Thus, it was Mori’s firm conviction that Westerners as well as Asians needed what might be called “religious reformation” in pursuit of a higher civilization.

What I want to argue is that Mori must have applied the very same logic of religion to the issue of language reform in Japan. He was absolutely convinced that there is no such language that is absolutely perfect in terms of orthography and notation. For Mori,

as with their religion, their language was no exception. A new language of imperial Japan that he had in mind would have to be better than any other existing language in the world. Thus he needed professional help in deciding on the future of national language as well as state religion; then he asked Whitney, a distinguished U.S. linguist, for advice on national language in 1872 and then consulted Max Müller, a prominent British linguist and scholar of Eastern religions, about state religion in 1873. In his *Religious Freedom in Japan*, Mori denounced Shinto and Buddhism as too dogmatic to ensure religious freedom for Christians in Japan; his image of an ideal religion was one that treats people equally regardless of race and creed, and above all, guarantees “our sacred liberty of conscience.” In a word, he was keenly aware of the need for religious reformation in Japan. Correspondingly he found it urgent that there be language reformation as well; he proposed introducing not only a reformed (simplified) English but also as a reformed (romanized) Japanese at the same time in order to integrate them into a better language of modern Japan.

Then it is reasonable to suppose that just as he saw the Japanese language as declining because of or in spite of the law of nature if nothing was done to prevent it, so he also viewed English as a Western language that could and should be improved before it yielded to the law of the progress and decayed. Indeed, in his language reform scheme, he pointed out the orthographical defects of Japanese and Chinese while at the same time indicating that there is a basic defect in the orthographical system of the English language. When he first found in Britain that there had not been much progress in the reformation by Western scholars of the

English irregular spellings for the past several centuries, he dared to declare that the Japanese would take up the challenge of “completing the unfinished work” for the benefit of “not only English speaking people but the world at large.” What we have here is none other than a parallel reformation of religion and language.

Furthermore, the point we should not overlook at this juncture is the way in which Mori’s discourses on religio-linguistic reformation began to be constructed in the early 1870s. In 1871–72, when *Life and Resources in America* and his letter to Whitney were written, he fairly criticized Western religion (Christianity) in the former, and language (the English language) in the latter, for their incongruities and inadequacies. It is interesting to note, however, that in *Religious Freedom in Japan and Education in Japan*, which were published in 1872–73, he discussed the issues of religion and language in Japan critically without mentioning the Western counterparts at all. What this suggests is his diplomatic strategies and tactics for representing the cultures of America and the new Japan on behalf of the right people at the right time. As far as *Religious Freedom in Japan* and *Education in Japan* are concerned, the message he wanted to convey through the discourses was that the new Japan was eager to accommodate itself to Western civilization in terms of religion and language and thereby assimilate into the Anglo-American religio-lingual community in the hope of revising unequal treaties. Viewed from this angle, it is not hard to imagine why he decided to include Whitney’s letter in reply to his inquiry in *Education in Japan* but did not release his private letter to Whitney to the public. In this way, he could make his diplomatic discourses sound less critical of Western civilization. And by high-

lighting Whitney's approval for the adoption of English (if not simplified English) in Japan, he wanted to emphasize the message that the Japanese were more than willing to introduce into the country *their* language (English) along with *their* religion (Christianity) in order to join the Anglo-American religio-lingual discourse community.

Thus, Mori's language attitude is inextricably linked to his view of religious relativity. In fact, while on the one hand, acknowledging the universal principles of science and art, he took a thoroughly relative approach to language in the same way as he did with religion. He disclosed his firm belief that the key to a successful reformation of religion and language lies in education in Japan that would seek to embrace universality while resting on its own particularity or long-standing tradition that absorbs, digests, and surpasses.

What is of most significance in this argument is Mori's relativistic position on what was often represented and prescribed as "absolute boons" from Western civilization: Christianity and English. His mentality concerning state religion gives us a clue as to how he looked at national language. Unfortunately, remarkably little historical research has been conducted on the question of whether he was really an aggressive advocate of the abolition of indigenous language (Japanese) in favor of foreign language (English), and of whether he was really a so-called Christian. As a result of religio-political backlash that ensued from his strategic yet controversial proposals for state religion and national language, he ended up being only assassinated by an ultra-nationalistic fanatic; and he has up to the present been branded as a traitor to his coun-

try.

It has been demonstrated in the preceding discussion that there is sufficient evidence to show that Mori was neither what is called a true Christian nor an abolitionist of the indigenous language of Japan. His attitude to language and religion is characterized by his critical insight and belief in cultural relativity. All this is reflected in the way he treated language and religion, Western or Eastern, as a means of education (or enlightenment) for the new Japanese people from the perspective of a rather rational and pragmatic super-samurai Japanese intellectual: hence, the ideas of reformed Japanese and reformed English as well as reformed Shintoism (/Buddhism) and reformed Christianity.

English Studies as geo-cultural/political scheme for LEEWCTIO

The most arresting feature of Mori's attitude to Western civilization in relation to Eastern civilization can be seen in his critical approach to the relativizing of Christianity and the English language in an effort to modernize the religions and language in Japan. As for the issue of religious reform, since the new Japan was aiming at creating a new civilization higher than any other in the world, Mori not only considered unthinking and liberalizing old Japanese religious ethos by introducing Christianity into the country; he was also simultaneously unthinking and liberalizing old Western religious ethos by relativizing Christianity under the influence of Christian reformist Tomas Lake Harris. By the same token, he proposed revamping the old hieroglyphic written language of Japan by introducing the Roman alphabet into the country, while also attempting to further modernize the conventional

English language by simplifying its irregular spellings and conjugations before it could be adopted by the Japanese. His idea of such reformation of religion and language was for the new Japan to reach a higher plane of civilization in the world. Here let me stress again that this global and competitive mindset of his was developed and operated in the English Studies that arguably provided him with a geo-cultural/political scheme for LEEWCTIO; it was first nurtured in his Satsuma days, then cultivated in his government-designated student days in Britain and America, and fully activated in his days as ambassador to those two countries.

As we saw in Part I, Mori was engaged in Chinese Learning and English Learning, which must have caused a serious clash of cultural values deriving from different religious and moral ethos—Western (Christian) and Eastern (Confucian)—and different languages based on different mediums—a phonetic alphabet and hieroglyphic characters. In other words, his formative years in Satsuma and student days in Britain and America were a momentous period when he was to prepare himself to break with convention and build a new identity and character in the new world. Apparently there was a fundamental paradigm shift in the way he looked at language and religion. We may recall here that just before he first traveled to Britain he wrote his own “Ten Commandments”⁶² in the traditional Chinese style that dictated his behavior in general ranging from psychological to dietary to sexual to linguistic habits. Our concern here is the quasi-religious significance of his precepts for his life. Although he did not have and practice any particular religion at that time, he had his own moral codes of conduct based on *bushido* that embodied the spirit

of what Hall called “the super-samurai.” Of particular relevance in this paper is his first precept for language use that says, “language must be used strictly for pragmatic reasons; nothing more, nothing less.” This statement can be interpreted to mean that one should be careful enough not to make language learning become an end in itself. It suggests that Mori had seen Chinese Studies often becoming too metaphysical—overly formalized and exalted—to function as pragmatic learning in the physical world. Seen from this perspective, we are better able to understand why Mori had to make a remark in his letter to Whitney to the effect that language should be taught as efficiently as possible in order for the learners to minimize the time spent in the study of a foreign language and instead maximize the time “devoted to the study of numerous branches of human development.”

Related to this point is the difference in nature between Chinese Learning and English Learning which Mori applied himself closely to in his Satsuma student days; English Learning was intended to know their new enemy nation, while Chinese Learning was not. Put simply, the purpose of the “know-your-enemy” studies that had emerged in nineteenth-century Japan after Dutch Learning was to beat Western rivals (especially Britain and America) at their own game. To this end, super-samurai were expected to know their own weaknesses and the enemy nation’s strengths in order to improve themselves and win in the game. It is this geo-cultural and political background that would lead Mori to take a critical and eclectic approach to the issues of language and religion in Japanese and Western civilizations.

What needs to be emphasized at this juncture is that behind

English Studies in late Edo and early Meiji Japan was the stream of *kokugaku* or *the National Learning* that had existed since Motoori Norinaga, the founder of Japanese language studies based on emperor-centered historiography which portrayed Japan as a divine country or imperial nation under the unbroken rule of the imperial family. What is significant in this argument is that it is none other than the current of the National Learning that was instrumental in generating a driving force behind the newly emerging English Studies in mid-nineteenth century Japan, which would in turn set the stage for a new National Learning at the turn of the century. What has to be noticed is that Mori clearly had a strong motive for establishing a new National Learning, which is why he published *Education in Japan* in 1873. It follows from this observation that for Mori the English language was a means of studying the Anglo-American community with a focus on the British Empire as the greatest rival of all and on America as an imperial offshoot of the former. Furthermore, we may say that English, by extension, was a mirror image language for the Japanese Empire. In fact, this is how he developed his idea for language reform as he sought to challenge the Queen's English by creating a new language in Japan as the Emperor's Japanese.

What Mori experienced in his student days in Britain and America—between Western and Eastern civilizations—had a great impact on his methodological tactics to problematize and transcend old and new linguistic paradigms at the same time so that he could establish a new identity on an individual and national level. As we have seen, there were two immediate and vital cross-cultural influences on Mori's geo-political and cultural

thought: language reformation movement in Britain (and America) typified by the “Moon-Alford controversy”; and religious reformation movement in Britain (and America) advocated by Thomas Lake Harris.

As to the former influence, since Mori was trained through English Studies in Japan to look critically and cross-culturally at Western civilization, he must have had no difficulty in identifying in the English language the weakness of the same kind as found in the language of Japan; discrepancies between spoken and written languages. In other words, Mori had already developed his critical and relative attitude to language and languages by focusing on English Studies (English Learning) in Japan and was thus able to understand the nature of the problems in Britain’s English studies (see Crowley 1989: 83–90). Indeed, Mori saw the essence of Britain’s English Studies as historically legitimizing the national (Anglo-Saxon/Teutonic) and imperial language for the British Empire.

It is also possible to suppose that Mori understood the Moon-Alford controversy from the perspective of a comparative study of civilizations, interpreting the following geo-cultural politics of the English language as implied in the discourses about lingo-cultural nationalism or national language reform movement in nineteenth-century Britain: namely, (a) Britain’s de-francization/de-Latiniization; and (b) America’s un-Anglicization. Obviously the former (a) can be seen as a model for the new Japan’s de-Sinicization whereby the abolition of Chinese characters (the written language of Japan) was considered along with the liberalization of conventional cultural and social ethos based on Confucianism. The proc-

ess of de-Sinicization took place in concurrence with Westernization by way of the introduction of the Roman alphabet (romanization of the spoken language of Japan) and the introduction of Christianity as a new element of cultural and social ethos in favor of Shinto-centered religio-political system. Furthermore, the latter (b) can also be viewed as a model for the new Japan's un-Westernization or un-Anglo-Americanization in which Mori put forth a proposal to problematize the old English orthographical system and thus create a new English (simplified English) for the benefit of "not only the English speaking people but the world at large." In this context, Mori confidently asserted in his letter to Whitney that "The people of the Japanese Empire aspire to attain the highest degree of civilization," arguing for the need for "a good language" that is "essential to their individual and national progress." In trying to open up a new dimension of language and religion as sites of the geo-cultural politics of Meiji Japan, Mori was seeking a new model for the new Japan's liberalization and relativization of those two cultural symbols of Western civilization in relation to Japanese civilization or vice versa: hence, language as well as religious reforms for the benefit of not only Japan but the "world at large." And Mori envisioned a new civilization with a new language and a new religion which could be characterized as both Eastern and Western, and neither Eastern nor Western.

It was in his days as ambassador to America and Britain that Mori revealed his hidden agenda regarding the issues of language and religion reforms in Japan; educational reform that entailed cultural transformation was the government's urgent priority at the time. He was enthusiastic about building up an educational foun-

dation for *shin-kokugaku* or a new National Learning of the new people, by the new people, for the new people. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the government decided to choose America, not Britain, as its model for laying the foundations for the national education system in the first half of the Meiji era. The reason is obvious. In those days, America was way ahead of Britain in educational reform, which is probably why Mori seemed to have tried to win over more friends in America than any other countries. Indeed, his cultural diplomacy worked best in the U.S. when he became acquainted with many influential politicians and intellectuals who helped and worked for him, one of whom was the then Secretary of State Joseph Henry who introduced Mori to linguist William D. Whitney (SMAZ, Supplementary Vol. 2: 218–220). Why was he first sent to America in the way he did before he was appointed ambassador to Britain? Why did he make conscious efforts to have more sympathetic politicians and intellectuals in America when trying to publish pamphlets and books dealing with education in Japan?

Again, the answer lies in the geo-cultural politics of the new Japan. Britain and America comprised the heart of the English-speaking and Christian community. But they were not always a monolithic one. Britain was the world's greatest Empire which once beat Satsuma and Choshu which was to lead the Meiji government; while Britain then was seen by the Japanese as the biggest “enemy nation,” it was also the biggest rival to America vying for worldwide hegemony. In the art of war, one's enemy's enemy becomes one's friend. Thus, America was the new Japan's reliable friend or strategic partner which would allow the Japanese

to compete with and relativize the British Empire.

Consequently, in order to ultimately surpass Britain, Mori (and the Meiji government) felt the urgent need to emulate America as the enemy's enemy and began to thoroughly study the strengths and weaknesses of the country employing the method and techniques he developed from English Studies; he adopted a critical, eclectic, and self-reflexive approach to the Self and Other; he represented not only the Other but also the Self in their language. *Life and Resources in America* (1871) and *Japanese in America* (1872) were products of such "know-your-enemy" studies. The same is true of *Religious Freedom in Japan* (1872) and *Education in Japan* (1873). Mori first published all these discourses in English in Washington in a bid to win over to Japan's side as many American politicians and intellectuals as possible in building an imperial nation-state in Japan as well as staking out an advantageous position in the international geo-cultural politics ruled by the British Empire.

Interestingly enough, the geo-cultural politics of the English language can be seen in the dispute between the British and Americans over the problem of English spellings and usages of words. In the Moon-Alford controversy, Moon (American) severely criticized Alford (Englishman) for blaming Americans for bad English or the abuse of "proper" English (Tagiri 1968: 289–291). It is assumed that many British intellectuals must have felt quite bitter about American linguistic independence from the Queen's English. This has a great deal to do with the fact that British linguist Max Müller "was said to have expressed disapproval" of the whole idea of Mori trying to simplify English and

introduce it into Japan (SMAZ, Supplementary Vol. 2: 513),⁶³ while American linguist Whitney expressed basic support for the plan except for the simplification of the language. Because of the geo-cultural politics of language within the English-speaking discourse community, Americans were, if anything, more sympathetic and open-minded than the British about Mori's proposal to adopt their language in Japan, although the general response from the media in Britain and America to Mori's idea for a simplified English was negative. This is part of the reason why Mori first sounded out Americans' view on his language and religious reforms in Japan while at the same time critically expressing the Japanese opinion on the English language and Christianity mainly in America. It should be clear by now that Mori strategically allowed for the geo-cultural politics of the reform of their language as well as their religion in the English discourse communities.

These observations lead to the conclusion that we can find a direct parallel in his attitude to language and religion reforms that were evidently intended to realize *datsua nyuou choou* [LEEWCTIO] at both local and global level. Thus we can recognize that the "desired end" in Mori's language reform was to level the playing field in educating the people about the ways of Western civilization while trying to opening the third way for the Japanese to improve the national Self with the LEWCTIO approach to the imperial Others, so that they could attain the highest level of civilization in the end. As Hall (1873: 463) states concerning the outcome of educational reform in the intercivilizational competition that involved modernizing the language of Japan, "Japan, therefore, entered relatively early in the game in the 1870s, and "took

what seemed best or most appropriate, and by 1900 had outstripped each of her tutors on certain accounts: better technical education than Britain; popular education unburdened by the confessional quarrels of Germany or France; recognition of talent than America.” Indeed, as far as his strategy for building a new imperial language in Japan is concerned, Mori’s image of national language building would be ultimately realized in a few decades, although he did not live to see it himself.

Conclusion

In an effort to verify our working hypothesis, I have so far tried to show how Mori Arinori's attitude to the imperial languages of Self and Others is inextricably linked to his *Weltanschauung* formed in the 1860s–80s when there was a reconfiguration and realignment of the world-system taking place on an unprecedented scale. It happened that against the backdrop of the Western impact on Japan, Mori's geo-cultural politics of language was nurtured and driven by *the* English Learning that had carried on the long uninterrupted tradition of Japanese linguistic imperialism from *the* National Learning. Throughout the paper, we saw a body of evidence suggesting that his *Weltanschauung* was typified in his *thymos*-based desire for personal and national transformation by way of *datsua nyuou choou* [LEEWCTIO]; as a matter of course, his geo-cultural/political thought was to be reflected in his language attitude and behavior leading to his drastic two-tiered language reform in 1872–73. His linguistic strategy was marked by what might be termed “dialectic linguistic imperialism” that allowed him to challenge the ideogramic writing system of the Chinese Empire and the phonogramic writing system of the British (or Anglo-American) Empire; the idea was to create a new imperial Japanese language by taking advantage of what he claimed to be a “new language” of Self and Others in the context of the geo-cultural politics of the Chinese-Japanese-English triad (ILT = Imperial Language Triangle) in East Asia. As observed in Part II, what can be found explicitly and implicitly in the text of his language reform discourse is his daring attempt to “introduce a ‘new lan-

guage” or a new writing system into the Japanese Empire and thus realize *chouou* in creating an imperial language of Japan in two ways: by reforming (romanizing) the spoken language of Japan [= abolishing Chinese (the language of the Chinese Empire)] with *datsua* in mind, and by reforming (simplifying) English (the language of the British Empire) with *nyuou* in view. In spite of his hidden agenda behind the text in question, misinterpretations occurred primarily due to the intertextuality between Whitney’s and Baba’s supposition, inference and denunciation of Mori’s English discourses on language reform, and partly due to Mori’s lack of “systematic and explicit articulation” (Hall 1973: 469). Although he ended up being forced to abandon his tactics in his scheme—romanization of Japanese and simplification of English—he never gave up on his strategy for building a new language of the imperial nation-state—his seminal idea for language reform in Japan.

In retrospect, despite the fact that he wound up unjustly incurring the unsavory reputation of being a traitor to his country, his drastic and therefore controversial proposal for a new language for a new education in the early post-Restoration period eventually succeeded in creating a stir in the geo-cultural politics of Japanese versus English on an international scale; it involved many intellectuals, politicians, and educators at home and abroad, thus contributing to the remarkable progress of the new National Learning in Japan. If Mori’s language reform discourse had not been publicized in *Education in Japan* and sensationalized by the media on a large scale as it did in 1873, the progress of educational reform in Japan might have been impeded by the insular and parochial

views of some anti-reform nativists; it might have not been possible to establish a “national language” in the shortest period of time possible; the new Japan would have missed the opportunity to educate and modernize the nation by means of what Mori thought the Japanese lacked—“a good language.”

It should also be added by way of conclusion that by examining closely Mori’s *Weltanschauung* that was reflected in his language attitude and use in the geo-cultural politics of the new Japan, we have found substantial clues for better explaining why he acted bilingually in carrying out what he intended to do the way he did. In elaborating on and solidifying our conclusions with respect to his LEEWCTIO approach, we can look at certain defining characteristics of globe-trotting Mori’s language behavior emerging from this study. Based on what has been discussed in this paper, Mori can be better portrayed as an *enlightened samurai pragmatist*. The reasons are threefold. First, he was a super-samurai who overtly and covertly strove to deny the old Self and confirm the new Other crossculturally while at the same time “writing/speaking back” to the significant imperial Others bilingually in a bid to attain the highest level of the new Self in the new world order. It may be recalled here that Mori was educated as one of the new super-samurai intellectuals in late-Edo and early-Meiji Japan; his total behavior was driven by what Fukuyama (1992) terms *thymos* (*isothymia* and *megalothymia*) or *kigai*, which urges one to seek both equality and excellence alternately in the struggle for existence. In essence, the super-samurai’s *kigai* mentality was disciplined by *bushido* (warrior’s codes of conduct) which led them to fight and compete with the imperial Other (Westerners).

Secondly, most super-samurai intellectuals were ardent advocates of *jitsugaku* (pragmatism). Mori was no exception. His pursuit of learning was highly motivated and propelled by personal ambition and individual/national honor that required more “physical” (pragmatic and technical), if not metaphysical (theoretical and theological), knowledge of the new world.

Thirdly, the super-samurai, engaging in *the* English Studies, were ready to develop an “enlightened (as opposed to feudalistic)” attitude to almost every aspect of life before and after the Meiji Restoration. By “enlightened” I mean “having or showing an understanding of people’s needs, a situation, etc. that is not based on old-fashioned attitudes and prejudice” (*Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* 2005). Indeed, Mori was one of the leading super-samurai intellectuals of the time who were not afraid of taking risks and venturing into the unknown world. With all these characteristics combined, we may reasonably conclude that Mori Arinori *was* an enlightened samurai pragmatist.

Our personal characterization of Mori Arinori from a comprehensive perspective allows us to reevaluate other scholars’ views of Mori’s political philosophy. The crucial question frequently raised by scholars of Mori Arinori is: was he a conservative or a progressive? Without slipping into this binary characterization, Swale (2000: 16) attempts to challenge the hitherto accepted theory based on either-or assumptions, arguing that Mori was a *progressive-conservative*. While Swale deserves much credit for his reinterpretation and integration of antithetical and conflicting discourses on Mori’s political thought, his new synthetic concept is still a little too weak to capture the unprecedented samurai thinker’s more

complicated and dynamic mind-nature. The reason for this is that since he was an enlightened samurai pragmatist, his strategic attitude to the new civilization was most symbolically exemplified by his geo-cultural and political maneuvering in cultural diplomacy. Swale seems to make a mistake in concluding that Mori's line of thought can be seen as intrinsically inclined toward conservatism with progressivism as a secondary feature. My argument, however, is that Mori's mind-nature and his behavior were too dynamic to be statically defined as essentially conservative; rather, it would be more accurate to state that the nature of his mentality was geopolitically/culturally and historically conditioned to be strategically *dialectic* and therefore highly adaptive. The position Mori tried to negotiate in the geo-cultural politics of Western imperialism in the new world order demanded that he adopt (1) progressive conservatism toward the West (the imperial Other: notably Britain/America)—which was both assimilative and resistive; (2) conservative progressivism toward the East (the imperial Other: China)—which was particularly separative and resistive; (3) conservative progressivism *and* progressive conservatism toward the Self (new Japan) with political and cultural uncertainties—which appeared in both cases to be particularly innovative. In short, Mori could be at once progressive and conservative. This is why he was often labeled by both camps (the Right and the Left) as a (converted) nationalist or internationalist.

However, as we have seen in the case of the issues of state religion and national language reform in Japan, we must always bear in mind that he was a *thymos*-driven and honor-seeking samurai intellectual diplomat with a geopolitically strategic mind, who con-

stantly aimed at winning economic and cultural wars between civilizations of the East and the West. As with other Japanese intellectuals who had advocated Japanese conventional emperor-centered historical approach to cross-cultural assimilation and resistance, his tactical methodology can be found in his historical perception of Japanese dialectic/eclectic imperialism. From this point of view we can see that there is no point in discussing whether he was a convert or whether he was really a progressive/leftist/internationalist or a conservative/rightist/nationalist. Rather, he should be seen as a strategist who would take risks and do whatever was necessary for the new Japan to adapt to changes in competitive environments in the new world order. Thus, he was certainly “an enlightened samurai pragmatist” who could go to extremes in both directions for tactical purposes. Even when he seemed to have made contradictory and inconsistent statements, for Mori, as Kimura (1986: 112) put it, “it was neither a contradiction nor a conversion at all.” With respect to the “complexities” of Mori’s political and cultural thought, Kaminuma (1979: 267) is right when he suggests that in spite of his inner conflicts and political compromises, Mori persistently continued to reconcile differences between the ideal and the real by accommodating evolving domestic and international environments. And it was Gōjū education in Satsuma that played a significant role in developing Mori’s critical and pragmatic mind.

While Swale highlights the significance of the influence that Spencer’s political thought had on Mori views of history, society, and nature, Kimura (ibid.: 142–143) maintains that there are different ends of spectrum between Mori’s *Weltanschauung* and

Spencer's, arguing that it is not so much Spencer as Swedenborg whose philosophical elements had a much greater impact on Mori's interpretation of the world. In addition, it is worth noting Kimura's observation that there are distinct commonalities between Mori Arinori and Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), founder of American pragmatism; they were both Swedenborgian (*ibid.*: 113). As Kimura explains:

At the time [1868] when Peirce, resonating with the teachings of Swedenborg, was creating pragmatism, a new philosophy indigenous to America, Mori happened to have acquainted with the philosophy of Swedenborg through an entirely different channel while taking great pains to work out a solution, in a very pragmatic manner, to the problems connected with education in a nation-state.

(*ibid.*: 145–146)

Indeed, a parallel between the two figures can be found in the following portrayal of Peirce. As Paul Weiss (1940: 254) observes:

Peirce was a metaphysician as well as a logician, a realist as well as a semiotician, a speculative thinker as well as an experimental scientist, an idealist as well as a naturalist, and a pragmatist who had a theory of ethics which acknowledged a fixed and universal ideal. These were not for him, and ought not to be for us, inconsistent positions. Truth is rich and complex enough to accommodate both the abstract and the concrete, the temporal and the eternal, the

general and the specific, the absolute and the relative, the probable and the certain. Peirce was a philosopher precisely because he saw that these different factors were facets of one encompassing truth and reality, and that philosophy was not a point of view but a study of that which embraces all points of view.

The above quote reveals that Peirce's *Weltanschauung* bears a surprisingly close resemblance to Mori's. Like Peirce, Mori believed in the Swedenborgian and Thomas Lake Harris's philosophy of the "One-Twain, the Two-in-One"⁶⁴ in which the world was to be interpreted in terms of not "either A or B" but "both A and B" as well as "neither A nor B." It is on such a higher (all-embracing and synthetical) plane that Mori discovered the path of the new Japan to create a higher (alternative) civilization on its own terms. It was at once "both the East and the West" and neither "the East nor the West." That is, Mori was seeking the "third way" to reconcile and integrate the universality ("general historical facts") and particularity ("special historical facts") into a new civilization by studying the advantages and disadvantages of civilizations of the East and the West through the *eigaku* approach (SMAZ, Vol. 5; 401–425). In short, Mori was a cultural eclectic who would syncretise "Our and Their" civilizations. As we have seen, in Mori's *Weltanschauung* the competition between the East and the West was all about struggling for "supremacy between the races and the religion as well as for intelligence, power, and wealth between two of the great divisions of the world." In this way, Mori's cultural diplomacy in an inter-civilizational competition was intended to

allow the new Japan to seek and create a new civilization and thereby secure a better position in the realignment of the new world system with then-emerging countries (such as Germany and Japan) building nation-states in the late nineteenth century. The idea was for Japan to overcome the weaknesses of Oriental (Chinese) and Occidental (Western) civilizations by incorporating their strengths into Japanese civilization. It is clear that the purpose in Mori's English diplomatic discourses was to realize his geo-cultural and political strategy for transcending the significant imperial Others in the East and the West. As I have already suggested, Mori's cultural eclectic/relativist approach was applied to the then-pending issue of state religion in addition to national language that he set out to tackle. In looking at how Mori understood the Western concept of the term "God" or the absolute, we have made it clear that Mori's geo-political position in his cultural diplomacy was strategically varied in such a way as to reinterpret the "absolute" depending on where he addressed his personal religious faith in connection with the issue of state religion.⁶⁵

Furthermore, Mori's severe criticism was leveled not only at old Japan's die-hard religious and linguistic traditions, but also at other imperial nations' religious and linguistic ethos and dogmas found in the old and new civilizations of the significant imperial Others.⁶⁶ As Sonoda convincingly argues, Mori's critical attitude to Western civilization reveals how he worked toward "de-Westernization" (1993: 305–306; see also Nitta, Maruyama, and et al. 1994). Likewise, stating that Mori's critical thinking on the West can be traced way back to the early period when he studied in Britain and America, Hayashi (1968: 121) suggests that "before

they (Mori and other Satsuma students) found out the principles of orthodox Christianity and Western civilization they had been taught how to view them critically.” Sonoda (1993: 305) also explains that “Mori had met and learned from Oliphant, a fierce critic of orthodox Christianity who was deeply disappointed in Western civilization ... It was through the eyes of those Western critics that Mori developed his critical acumen.” More important, however, is that Mori’s critical mind had already been cultivated by local education in his Satsuma days long before he met Western critics. We should not overlook the fact that it was when Satsuma’s “know-your-enemy” studies actively incorporated a new Western (English) Learning into their existing Gōjū education, that Mori was urged to critically examine the strengths and weaknesses of Western civilization. As Hall (1973: 46) states, it was “young Mori’s academic training which provided a springboard to the Occident.”

Similarly, de-Westernization was reflected in his language attitude. As we have seen, just as Mori’s critical mind-nature decentralized and so relativized the position of Christianity as the absolute religion in the world, so he assumed a relative attitude to the English language. His position on the dominant language in the world was greatly influenced and developed by English Learning which was part of Satsuma’s progressive “know-your-enemy” studies. In terms of the geo-cultural politics of the new Japan, Mori considered the weakness of the Japanese language to be one of the major problems arising from the “particularity” of the country as opposed to the “universality” of the advanced Western nations. By the same token, Mori also saw the weakness

of the English language as stemming from the similar root problem facing the British Empire. Thus, Mori advocated his idea for overcoming the weaknesses of the two languages as well as incorporating the strengths of the particularity and the universality into the new language of Japan. As Stanlaw (2004: 4) correctly observes, “the English used in Japan” is *not* “actually *borrowed* per se, but “most ‘English’ found in Japan is *created* in Japan for Japanese purposes.” In analogy with the “logic exhibited in other proposals of reform,” ss Swale points out, Mori believes in “an indigenous trait and seeks to develop it into a new universal model” (2000: 124). From this standpoint, Mori’s hidden agenda for the creation of the modern Japanese (national) language can be seen as a synthesis of the dialectic compromise between “particular” (Japanese) and “universal” (English) languages in Meiji Japan. It follows from this that Mori’s language reform discourse in the 1870s should be viewed as the beginning of modern Japan’s counter-civilizational imperial language building as against the English language as an international language. To sum it up, Mori’s thinking on the geo-cultural politics of the language of the new Japan can best be characterized as transcendental and dialectic linguistic imperialism which developed from *datsua nyuou* (Leave the Imperial Other in the East, Enter the imperial Other in the West—the abolition of Chinese characters and the adoption of the Roman alphabet) into *chouou* (Transcend the Imperial Others—the introduction of simplified/reformed English as part of the imperial Japanese language). Again, all this points to the new Japan’s geo-cultural politics of linguistic differentiation and discrimination in the ILT (Imperial Language Triangle) in East Asia;

it is this trilateral reciprocation of linguistic intersubjectivity in the ILT that defines national, racial, and cultural identity of the modern Japanese. This geo-cultural politics of the new linguistic intersubjectivity in turn necessitated revamping the whole educational system whereby the building of a “new language” for a new National Learning was demanded.

It follows from what has been discussed so far that Mori’s language attitude and his view on national language should be considered in a larger context of the international geo-cultural politics of Japan. To ignore Mori’s cross-cultural outlook on history and religion is to fail to appreciate the significance of his struggle for a new language that assumed social and economic as well as religious and cultural dimensions. Mori’s discourse on national language building was unprecedented in that it attempted to create a new imperial language of Japan by relativizing and reforming all the three pivotal languages involved (Japanese, Chinese, and English) at the same time; it was too original and innovative (therefore radical) for ordinary people to comprehend (It was due to such unconventionality and unintelligibility often recurring in his later discourses that Mori would meet his fate).

In trying to get behind Mori’s linguistic strategy, we need to understand his cross-cultural approach to pursuing a new paradigm. The hallmark of Mori’s *Weltanschauung* and his language attitude can be depicted as the spirit of dialectic Self-denial for Self-creation, which was undoubtedly the forerunner of *kindai no choukoku* (Overcoming Modernity) movement that would develop in the early twentieth century. By denying the old Self in the old world order, he took a chance to create a new Self in the new

world order.⁶⁷ In his spirit of Self-denial for Self-creation we can find his LEEWCTIO approach (“Leave the East, Enter the West, and Challenge and Transcend the Imperial Others”) to building a new imperial language for a higher civilization. It is important to bear in mind that while the tactics in his LEEWCTIO approach would allow Japan to represent either/both the East or/and the West according to the situation, the strategy would demand that she always take the position of neither the East nor the West. Considered in light of his LEEWCTIO strategy, we can comprehend the mysteries of his seemingly contradictory behavior as a diplomatic attempt to seek the third way in the context of international geo-cultural politics (Kobayashi 2003: 190–204). In this way, Mori sought to create a new Japanese language that was neither conventional Japanese nor conventional English. Mori’s philosophy of language use and attitude can be best marked by his counter-civilizational mentality that simultaneously and critically attempted to assimilate into and resist the imperial Others. It was all about maintaining not only human dignity—independence and self-respect—but also racial intersubjectivity in the midst of the “clashes of civilizations” between the East and the West.

Finally, the same observation applies to the international geopolitics of Japan today; it still remains an unsettled question how she competes and cooperate with the imperial Others in the face of Anglo-American and Chinese neoimperialism and neo-colonialism (Chomsky 1993). Just as the nineteenth century saw the first wave of globalism in world history that forced Japan to open the country and build a new nation-state, so we are now living in the age of ever-accelerating globalization that calls for

realigning the existing modern world system which was established more than a century ago. History repeats and recycles. Given the global and local sociolinguistic situations today, it is worth considering the contemporary relevance of Mori's discourse on language and educational reform in the past; for that will give us a clue as to the on-going question of how the geo-cultural politics of the imperial Others' languages—English and Chinese—will inevitably affect the Japanese perception of the native language in redefining the (imperial) Self in the foreseeable future. Only after serious consideration is given to the age-old issues of Japanese linguistic intersubjectivity as well as ethnic/cultural identity, can we not only understand from a larger perspective how *the* English Studies should be conducted by the new Japanese in this ever-changing world, but also find a better way to reform “English language education” vis-à-vis “*kokugo* (national language) education” in 21st century Japan.

NOTES

- 1 As to the translation problem in the English discourse community, Akira Irie comments: “there is a real paucity of translated material, despite the fact that literally hundreds of books about United States have been written by Japanese since the “opening” of the country a century and half ago” (Van Sant 2004: x). The reason that translation volume from Japanese into English is smaller than that from English into Japanese is not so much because the Japanese mind is closed to “foreigners” but rather because inequality in the total amount of translation between English and Japanese publications has much to do with a question of the cultural politics of the English language that still holds sway over Japanese “public sphere.” This writer sees the politics of translation as a phenomenon arising from the asymmetrical reciprocity between English and Japanese in the arena of international cultural exchanges. This is closely linked to the central theme recurring throughout this paper.
- 2 The theories put forward by native and non-native Japanese can explain what English as an imperial language is, and how it has spread all over the world. But almost all of them appear to fail to fully explain how the Japanese have responded to the Western (notably Anglo-American) impact and dealt with the cultural politics of English as an international language since it began to prevail in Japan. Extensive descriptive work has been done by many scholars, Japanese or non-Japanese, on the socio-economic and political factors relevant to the teaching and learning of the English language in the periphery-English speaking countries such as India, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong (now as part of China), and the Philippines. And yet many seem to avoid exploring thoroughly the historical and politico-cultural problems connected with the diffusion of English linguistic hegemony in modern Japan.
- 3 In the original sense of the terms, “textual (lower) criticism” (and

higher criticism) are used to mean the “process of attempting to ascertain the original wording of a text” and the “study of the literary methods and sources discernible in a text, especially as applied to biblical writings” (Oxford Dictionary of English 2003). A most inspiring work done using such a methodology is Bart D. Ehrman’s *Misquoting Jesus*. In it Ehrman (2005: 207) succinctly describes the salient feature of textual criticism of biblical writings as follows: “I began this book on a personal note by describing how I became interested in the question of the New Testament text and why it took on so much importance for me. I think what has held my interest over the years has been the mystery of it all. In many ways, being a textual critic is like doing detective work. There is a puzzle to be solved and evidence to be uncovered. The evidence is often ambiguous, capable of being interpreted in various ways, and a case has to be made for one solution of the problem over another.” Meanwhile, textual criticism, lower or higher, is also applied to the historical study of literature in general other than the Bible. There are a number of significant earlier works related to this paper in terms of its methodology: the classic examples of discourse analyses employing similar methods of approach that also influenced me a great deal are Kobayashi Hideo’s *Motoori Norinaga* (1992) and Maruyama Masao’s *Bunmei ron no gairiyaku wo yomu* [the Reading of Fukuzawa Yukichi’s *An Outline of a Theory of Civilization*] (1986).

- 4 As far as I can gather from my research, Sakai Naoki (1997) was the first to place the problem of the Japanese language in the context of the geo-politics of Japan in the world; his work thus allows us to interpret it as a serious cultural problem in terms of translation and national subjectivity. Regrettably, Sakai has not given any consideration to Mori Arinori who problematized the language of Japan in light of English-Japanese translation and national subjectivity in the early Meiji period.

- 5 According to Watanabe Shoichi (1990: vii), given the proper meaning of its specific historicity, *kokugaku* (National Learning) in the mid Edo and early Meiji periods would be more accurately termed *the* National Learning or *the* National Studies. Watanabe argues that the same is true of Britain's National Learning in which the history of English language was thoroughly studied in the context of English cultural nationalism vis-à-vis European (Latin) cultures. By extension, I want to argue that the same applies to the developments of what is generally called "English learning" or "English studies" in modern Japan, not to mention Chinese learning and Dutch learning. Therefore, depending on the context, I shall use the term "*the* English Studies (English Learning)" with the definite article in order to emphasize its specific historicity and politico-cultural implications attached to the studying of the English language at the time.
- 6 It is very interesting to note that Mori Arinori, the very subject of study here, had thought of learning as a way of primarily studying a particular person's character and his thought from a prosopographical perspective (Inuzuka 1986: 42–43).
- 7 In the Japanese linguistic context, the English word "Chinese" could doubly mean either *chugoku-go* (the language of China) or *kan-go* (Chinese characters embedded in the written language of Japan). In the subsequent discussion I will use the word in two ways according to the context; as a rule, I employ it to refer to the latter in comparison and contrast with "the spoken language of Japan"; I also intend it to mean the former, when I want to suggest that in relation to "the language of Japan." Mori symbolically used it as the language of a "different racial community" from the "Japanese race."
- 8 It is noteworthy that Mori's English discourse should be seen as the beginning of the modern Japanese "writing back" in English from the Japanese standpoint and thereby intervening into the

English discourse community. The later Japanese writers (such as Okakura Tenshin, Uchimura Kanzo, and Nitobe Inazo) who were famous for their English writings can be regarded as Mori's successors who played an active role in cultural diplomacy in terms of defining national identity and negotiating their voice in the English discourse community.

- 9 Here I prefer to use the German word *Weltanschauung* instead of the English term “world view,” for it connotes more than just one’s objective and analytic view of the world; it also implies his/her Gestalt and intuitive understanding of the world.
- 10 Hall (1973: 32–46) aptly describes those who were well educated and trained in Satsuma’s educational institution as “the super-samurai.”
- 11 The Gōjū can be likened to young men’s confraternities which “provides not only physical training, moral guidance, and political indoctrination but also, in an era before the establishment of a modern educational system, the only formal schooling available to most Satsuma children of primary-and secondary-school age.” And the Zōshikan functioned as an institution as an extension of the Gōjū educational system.
- 12 *Oxford Dictionary of English* (2003) defines the word “pragmatic” as “dealing with things sensibly and realistically in a way that is based on practical rather than theoretical considerations.”
- 13 The essence of Satsuma’s pragmatic learning is epitomized in “Gakumon no taihon” (cardinal principles of learning) posted at the Zōshikan in 1854. It castigates the conventional Chinese Learning based on neo-Confucianism as overemphasizing purely literary skills and for preoccupation with arid textual criticism at the expense of more useful learning” (quoted in Hall 1973: 50); “Today’s scholars, so-called, are far removed from the mundane affairs of the moment; they are disdainful of matters economic and live in a world apart, quite like the Buddhist clergy” (ibid.: 55).

- 14 Hall's (1973: 62) comment on this point summarizes Mori's early learning environments quite well: "The respect for education which permeated the Zōshikan and which was reinforced by the presence of scholars in the family and among the closest neighbors was entirely within the scope of Confucian tradition, as was also Nariakira's call for scholarship that was politically aware and public-service minded. Yujo's imperial sentiments and Hayashi Shihei's strident warnings, finally, must have combined to create (within entirely traditional intellectual terms) some political and strategic awareness of Japan as a national entity, set against other national entities and beset by internal dissensions it could ill afford."
- 15 As Hall (1973: 48) observes, "the comprehensive political and moral philosophy which the Zōshikan presented, however, must at least have trained Mori to think systematically about these two areas of life. And the samurai school must have communicated Mori in abundance that respect for learning and that joy in the life of intellect which were to be among the most precious legacies from traditional to modern Japan."
- 16 It is worth noting that although Mori was not fond of keeping documents and belongings in his entire life, his note on "Ten Commandments" was an exception. He had long had it in his possession until he met his fate (Inuzuka 1986: 20).
- 17 Hall (1973: 45) translated this precept on language behavior as "in speaking, come quickly to the point and go no further." While it grasps a meaning of what it connotes, it seems to be too specific a translation to cover its general meaning of the original sentence.
- 18 Die-hard scholars of Dutch Learning and critics such as Watanabe Kazan (1793–1841) and Takano Choei (1804–1850) were the archetypal political activists who engaged in the know-your-enemy studies.
- 19 The original Japanese expression for "know-your-enemy" studies

is *tekikoku kenkyu*, which can be literally translated as “the study of one’s enemy nation.” English Studies, which started as “know-your-enemy” studies, gradually transformed into a branch of study that would take on a more academic (and less political) coloration from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century; as a result, it became a branch of learning engaged mainly by the politically unconscious students who were highly interested in character-building and the cultivation of the mind through English learning (see Kawasumi 1988: iii). What must be kept in mind is that in late Edo and early Meiji periods, *the* English Learning was not so much a specialized (and less political) academic branch of learning that would emerge in the twentieth century, as a kind of “area studies” that aimed primarily at penetrating the essence of the civilization of “barbarian” enemies.

- 20 Unlike today’s learners of English in Japan, the first-generation *eigakusha*’s overriding concern was not to speak but to read the language through translation. What is worth observing here is that no sooner did the Japanese first encounter English than they began to learn the language and translate them into their own. The pinnacle of the first-generation *eigausha* can be represented by what is known as *eigo-meijin* (masters of the English language)” such as Nitobe Inazo (1862–1933), Uchimura Kanzo (1861–1930), and Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913), who were all born in the early 1860s. They were educated mostly in English in the 1870s–80s and thus developed their English proficiency as if it were their native language.
- 21 There were many scholars of Dutch Learning who were seen as *seiyō kabure* or “pathologically infatuated and obsessed with Western (Dutch) culture.” Some even gave themselves Dutch names, indulging in behaving like the Dutch.
- 22 In 1860 Mitsukuri Genppo (1799–1863) rendered into Japanese *Chikyu setsu ryaku* (Theories of the Earth) which was published in 1856 in China by US missionary Richard Quarterman Way

(1819–1895). This was done not merely for academic reasons but rather for geo-political and military reasons. Such being the case, there was no room for English Learning to be studied for purely linguistic reasons.

- 23 The double-bind situation is perhaps best summarized by Matsumoto Kenichi (1994: 224) as follows: “Right from the beginning modern Japan ran into a dual problem of attaining Western modernity while simultaneously challenging and overcoming it. This is why Sakuma Shozan insisted on “conquering the enemy with their weapons.” Paradoxically, Japan, after all, had to deal with the aporia of “opening the country to expel the enemy.”
- 24 In the introduction to *Education in Japan* Mori clearly revealed his understanding of restoration and re-legitimization of the national polity (imperial genealogical line) in the history of Japan. There Mori details how Satsuma usurped imperial authority from the Tokugawa government. Referring to Ashigaka, a general in Muromachi period (1338–1573), as a traitor to the emperor, Mori maintains: “It is familiarly known as the epoch of the two courts, the North and the South, the court of Ashikaga’s sovereign being that of the North. The Southern dynasty yielded to that of the North, after many desperate efforts, through nearly sixty years, during which all the parties to the original difference died naturally or perished miserably on the battle field. From that day to the present time it has been a constant habit of our historical writers to seriously discuss the claims of the rival courts to be considered the legal representative of the imperial dynasty. Those who regard the northern court as an illegal offshoot of the imperial line, are generally respected as the authoritative historians of the period. Our recent revolution in its causes may be clearly traced to the growing interest in the record of the epoch just described. The increasing influence of these historical authorities prevailing among the people, particularly in the south Western part of the country (the

Satsuma domain), inspired them with a strong desire for the restoration of the imperial power in its fullness and entirety. This spirit of imperialism, having been hostile to all but the royal domination, increased in strength with every blunder of the government of the Shioguns, and especially with those of the latter quarter of the last century. When the late revolution began, the war-cry which led the imperial party to victory was the *daigimeibun*, or the King and the Subject! whereby it was understood that the distinction between them must be restored, that the Shiogun should be reduced to the proper relation of subject or servant to his sovereign" (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 155–156). Similarly, Mori further remarks, "The declining power of the Shiogun was naturally inimical to the rising influence of the daimios, and particularly that of the Satsumas. The supporters of the Shiogun thought they had discovered in the proposition to abolish the Shiogunate an ambitious design upon the part of the Satsumas to succeed the Shiogun in power" (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 180). As for the truth about "the late revolution," Mori intimates that "The state of affairs there developed served to increase the anxiety of the Satsuma party, which desired the complete overthrow of the Shiogunate. *Coup detat* was, therefore, resolved upon. Okubo and Saigo, both of the Satsuma clan, displayed great intelligence and vigor in devising and consummating the plot which was to produce the result. Iwakura was a prominent and efficient leader in this conspiracy, which succeeded not only in overthrowing the Shiogun's power, but also in completely changing all of the old offices in the imperial court" (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 174). The point to observe here is that "the complete overthrow of the Shiogunate" involved imperial restoration and relegitimation by Satsuma which connived with a court noble in committing "regicide" (On this subject, see Bergamini 1972: 248–254). Admitting that Satsuma was morally responsible for the *coup detat*, Mori suggests that all the people involved need a patriotic act of atone-

ment in the new era as follows: “The general features of the new era, of Oseiishin (restoration of kingly government), will now be briefly noted. The causes of its rise have already been stated. The influence of a plot or conspiracy like that of the *coup d'état* in the winter of 2527–’28, has always been injurious to the moral character of a nation, and to restore confidence or prevent demoralization requires great sacrifices, self-denial, energy, and perseverance. Patriotic motives of high order inspired the leaders of our revolution” (SMAZ, Vol. 5: 176–177).

- 25 Commenting on the historical awareness of the (new) imperial Japan as a counter-civilizational (imperial) power against Chinese imperialism, Mori relates in *Education in Japan*: “The relations between the empires of Japan and China began to be more intimate and permanent in our thirteenth century (A.D. seventh century). This intimacy was maintained for nearly five centuries... Our political and social institutions were at an early day reformed after the models of the Chinese....”; “Returning to the subject of intercourse between Japan and China, which has occupied our attention in this paper, we find that the communication first became irregular, and finally ceased altogether....”; “Thirteen Shioguns composed this dynasty. Most of them are contemptuously regarded and cursed for their misdemeanor, in acknowledging the authority of China. They even insulted the national dignity by accepting their title of King of Japan from the Chinese government” (SMAZ, Vol. 5; 146; 153; 158). Relevant to the image of imperial Japan as a counter-civilizational power is Murata’s observation that “the decisive factor that enabled this reorientation in the Chinese imperial narrative toward national subjects was the example set by that ‘country which rose to sudden prominence in recent years’ and which possessed an ‘imperial lineage of unbroken succession for countless eras” (2000: 34). What we have here is major changes in the geopolitical dynamics of the empires of Japan and China.

Raising a challenge to the formerly universal Chinese order in East Asia, Japan gradually came to flex its muscles by attempting to “trade places” with its regional neighbor(s). Thus, Japan, as Okada (2001d: 24) states, emerged as a “counter-civilizational force against imperial China” as she was to reestablish her own imperial authority from the legal offshoot of the imperial line in 1868. Kawakatsu briefly (2001: 59) sums up the point as follows: “The history of Japan is best marked by its process in which she sought to secede from the Chinese-centered world in East Asia and thereby define itself as a distinct entity—historically and culturally—from China.

26 That Mori traveled to Britain, the cradle of maritime technology, on a steamship owned by English political merchant Thomas B. Glover who resided in Japan, was symbolic of his subsequent globetrotting life.

27 The following are major discourses Mori produced in English. (1) in America: *The Life and Resources In America* (1871); *The Japanese in America* (1872); *The Religious Freedom in Japan* (1872); *Education in Japan* (1873); *Leading Men of Japan—with a Historical Summary of the Empire* (1882); *The Proposed National Assembly in Japan* (1883); (2) in China: The Interviews between Mori Arinori and Li Hongzhang (1876); (3) in Britain: [The Japanese in America (1872)]; Correspondence Respecting the Revision of the Treaty between Great Britain and Japan (1881–1884); [*Leading Men of Japan—with a Historical Summary of the Empire* (1882)]; *On a Representative System of Government for Japan* (1883); An interview with the Japanese Ambassador of Public Affairs on his departure from England (1884).

28 The records of his extant documents reveal that *Education in Japan* was due to be translated into Japanese in Japan later, but it turned out that the full translation did not see the light of the day.

29 We must understand the geo-cultural politics of the Iwakura Mission which was also called in Japanese *beiou shisetsudan*, which

means “the Japanese legation sent to the United States of America and Europe.” The point to observe here is that US comes *before* Europe in the wording of the appellation. What this indicates is that the Meiji government put a higher premium on America than Europe in terms of national strategy; indeed, many Japanese politicians and intellectuals at the time regarded “Europe” as forming the general concept of the “West” with Britain and America at the top of its hierarchy. To be more precise, Britain does not entirely belong to the tradition of the European Continent from a geo-political and cultural standpoint; by the same token, the United States of America should not be seen neither as part of the European tradition nor as constituting a part of the British Empire, although these two nations comprise the Anglo-American (English-speaking) communities. It can be argued that the Meiji Japan looked to America for guidance in catching up with, competing with, and excelling the British Empire.

- 30 Drawing on a number of historical sources, Ko (2001) demonstrated that modern Japan’s de-Asianization amounted to de-Sinicization.
- 31 Note the fact that in his Japanese and English discourses Mori strategically used both at home and abroad the terms such as “Japanese civilization,” “the Japanese Empire,” or “the Empire of Dai Nippon.” He also liked to say that the imperial Japan had the oldest civilization in the world because of the unbroken line of the imperial family. It is clear that what he was trying to do was to represent the new Japan as the “oldest” (therefore most legitimate) imperial nation in the world that “could stand on an equal footing with the nations of the earth”—Western countries, most notably the British Empire (SMAZ, Vol.5; 173).
- 32 Although I do not necessarily endorse Fukuyama’s Hegelian view of world history, I share his argument that human *thymos* is what drives people as they make history.

33 It is worth noting that in the post-war English Studies in Japan, Suzuki Takao (1975) and Nakamura Kei (1989) officially resumed the debate on the geo-cultural politics of Japanese in connection with the “English language” question in Japan in the 1970s–80s. Aside from differences in position and perspective, Suzuki’s and Nakamura’s works can be seen as part of the early *eigaku* tradition of modern Japan’s tactical resistance to Western imperialism and colonialism. (In spite of his thought-provoking political agenda, Suzuki’s earlier work on the “deconstruction” of what is called “Standard English” deserves more credit; his 1971 proposal for “Englic” (a de-Anglo-Saxonized English) for the benefits of non-native speakers of English precedes Nakamura’s “sociology of English in Japan” and Kachuru’s World Englishes movement in the 1980’s. Clearly, Suzuki’s and Nakamura’s strategic and tactical approach to English is remarkably similar to that of Mori Arinori, a pre-colonial Meiji intellectual statesman, who seriously considered the problem of the Japanese language in relation to the English language; he made a proposal for the introduction of a “simplified English” in 1872 as a counter-linguistic strategy in the face of Standard English (see Kobayashi 2001). This paper owes much to Nakamura’s socio-historical/linguistic theories about English and Japanese. In his *My Personal View on English Education in Japan* (1980), Nakamura tried to give a general overview of post-war English education and thereby take a critical look at how the Japanese have taught and learned the language. In his *What is English?* (1989) he also attempted to formulate an explanatory model for analyzing the question of the “English language” in Japan by placing it in the global and historical context of Western colonialism. Furthermore, he sought to show in his *Foreign Education and its Ideology* (1993) how we can and should conduct an in-depth analysis of the social (and colonial) attributes of English teaching and learning. Thus he set out to provide us with a theoret-

ical and hermeneutical base for putting in its socio-political and ethno-cultural context Japanese resistance to and assimilation into “English linguistic hegemony.” Drawing on past national experiences, he views Japan’s pre-colonial period as the beginning of Japanese conflict between the English and Japanese languages (Nakamura 2000a). His interest is in exploring how the Japanese had approached English as the language of Other, how they interpreted and represented English while experiencing a socio-linguistic conflict between their language (English) and our language (Japanese), and what aporias they came to confront in the process.

- 34 Using the terms “colonial” and “post-colonial” in the original sense in the context of Japan only makes it difficult for us to comprehend the Japanese historical and geopolitical situation. If we look at the history of early modern Japan, it is clear that she was being “half-colonized” under the unequal treaties imposed in 1853–4 by the great Western powers, but not totally colonized like India. That was when the Japanese had to put up a desperate resistance, which I would like to call the “pre-colonial period” with the word “pre-colonial” implying that Japan was on the verge of being colonized by the Western powers. This pre-colonial period continued until the late 1890s when Japan became more and more independent and imperialistic as she began to colonize neighboring nations. All this came about as a result of her resistance to Western colonialism/imperialism; in 1895 Taiwan was ceded to Japan after the victory in the 1894 Sino-Japanese war (colonization in Asia); in 1899 she succeeded in abolishing Western extraterritorial rights in Japan (resistance to Western colonialism); in 1910 she annexed the Korean peninsula (colonization in Asia); in 1911 she finally restored her own tariff autonomy and thus fully revised unequal treaties (resistance to Western colonialism); in the 1920s–30s she “advanced” to mainland China and founded Manchukuo (colonization in Asia); in the 1930s–40s she went to war with China and the

U.S. including other Western powers (colonization in Asia and resistance to Western colonialism). Here we have what can be termed a “spiral structure” of resistance and colonization. Thus, the geopolitics of modern Japan in East Asia was driven by her desire to gain independence through colonization in Asia and resistance to Western colonialism. This I would like to call the “independent period” which means Japan being independent of the West as well as colonizing Asia. Whilst Lee (1996)’s work highlights modern Japan in the independent period, it fails to give the larger picture of the politico-cultural continuity from the pre-colonial period. After the end of World War II in 1945, Japan eventually fell under the control of the U.S. which directly “colonized” the country for 7 years. In contrast to the preceding independent period, this was when Japan lost independence as her resistance to the West and colonization in Asia were completely nullified. Therefore it was the post-independent-colonial period which involved the U.S. playing the role of the “colonizer” and Japan being deprived of her political autonomy. And yet, Japan officially regained her independence in 1952. Over the next 40 years she was to make another attempt to challenge Western powers by virtue of economic (not military) strength. Again, the logical analysis, then, categorizes this period as “post-colonial” in Japan. Strictly speaking, however, unlike other Asian and African nations’ post-colonial experiences, it should be seen rather as the “post-independent-colonial” period since it was after Japan had once had independence and control of the former colonies that she became “colonized” and then independent once again (But it is still debatable whether Japan is politically, economically, and culturally independent of the U.S. even in the “post-independent-colonial” period). Viewed in this light, we are now able to recognize that modern Japan underwent four different experiences in the age of imperialism and colonialism.

- 35 Here we're not concerned with *nanbangaku* or Portuguese and Spanish Learning that preceded Dutch Learning.
- 36 I must hasten to add here that during this period, among the other imperial languages, German also placed a significant role in contributing to the establishment of the new imperial Japanese language. Yet the total effects of German upon Japanese in the geo-cultural politics of translation were of secondary importance, compared with those of Chinese and English.
- 37 As to modern Japan's *kindai no choukoku* or "overcoming modernity" by "dialectic nationalism," Dowak's (1994) argument about "nationalism as dialectics" gives us an insight into the dynamics of language and culture in modern Japan. In this context we need to examine how the founding fathers of the modern Japanese language such as Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1937) and Okakura Yoshizaburou (1868–1936) were instrumental in branching out modern Japan's linguistic enterprise; those two both studied under the same *oyatoi kyoushi* (hired foreign teacher) named Basil Hall Chamberlain (1836–1914), who is known as the father of the study of the Japanese language. Thus Ueda and Okakura were trained to become leading philologists and linguists who would later contribute to the modern language building of Japan. As they both inherited the cultural tradition of *koku-gaku* (*the National Learning*) underlying the emergence of *ei-gaku* (*the English Learning*), Ueda played a crucial role in the development of *kokugo-gaku* (*the study of the national language*) and *koku-bungaku* (*the study of national literature*), while Okakura especially led the way in the differentiation of *ei-gaku* into *eigo-gaku* (*the study of the English language*) as well as *ei-bungaku* (*the study of English literature*), and other specialized branches (On this theme, see, for example, Saito 2006; Yamaguchi 2001; Yasuda 1997).
- 38 Lee (1996) examines how the once-small Japanese language developed into *kokugo* or the imperial Japanese language in the

early twentieth century, and how the then-expanding *kokugo* caused linguistic oppression in Korea. To be sure, modern Japan's language policy, as she points out, was intended to assimilate peoples in the colonies in Japanese instead of making use of their own languages through translation, which is certainly a problem that the Japanese today need to reflect on. But in my view, she analyzes the "effect" of modern Japan's resistance to Western imperialism/colonialism without giving a full and particular account of the "cause." Thus she fails to explain the cause-effect sequence of events from the pre-colonial to the independent period in terms of the Japanese linguistic resistance to English hegemony. Japanese scholars, therefore, are expected to do more research on the beginning of the Japanese linguistic imperialism (as well as the English counterpart) so that we may have a clearer understanding of how it came about the way it did and what it meant not only to the colonized but also to the colonizer (Kobayashi 2001: 91).

39 While Robert Phillipson (1992) defines "linguistic imperialism" as the geo-cultural and political situation that constitutes and perpetuates the "center-periphery" economic structure resulting in inequality and discrimination on a global scale, I use the term rather as the modern Japanese awareness of language that derives from the imperial history of the country.

40 The Japanese title of the "Queen's English" was translated by Tagiri (1958) as *jjunsei eigo* literally meaning "pure English."

41 The media's reactions to this issue were included at the back of the Moon's *The Dean's English*.

42 According to Egawa (Tagiri and Egawa 1968), this book went into the eleventh edition in 1878; the twelfth edition was published in 1892 with the new title: *Learned Men's English*.

43 Knowles (1997: 151) states that "after about 1860, there is an increasing association of incorrect English with the language of the working class. Educated usage is equated with middle-class usage,

and is asserted to be the natural standard for the nation, and even promoted to be the rank of royalty. In the twentieth century, attention is increasingly drawn to matters of pronunciation.”

- 44 According to C. J. Wan-Ling Wee (2003), the twentieth-century realignment of the English language entailed not only “national imperialism” that had a centripetal force at home but also “imperial nationalism” that generated a centrifugal force abroad.

- 45 As Knowles (1997: 146) points out, “From the later nineteenth century there is a growing association between allegedly bad or incorrect English and educational failure. At this time scholars knew a lot about the etymological roots of English words and nothing about the sociology of language. For the teacher in the classroom faced with the clash of cultures, the obvious inference to be made was that working-class usage was incorrect. There must also have been a high correlation between this usage and failure on educational tests, and in the absence of an understanding of statistics, the inference to be made is that working-class usage is the cause of educational failure.”

- 46 Before he returned from America to Japan in 1873, Mori traveled to Britain on the way to meet German-born British linguist Max Müller and consulted with him about the issue of “state religion” in Japan (Müller 1976: 97–98). It is highly probable that he also talked with him about the issue of national language building in connection with his proposal for English spelling reform. Another important point to note here is that Mori wrote *Education in Japan* dealing with the history of Japan in connection with mythology, language religion, and science: this strongly suggests that his Weltanschauung was being greatly influenced by those two Darwinian linguists Max Müller and William Whitney whose important works on relevant topics were published between Mori’s student days in Britain and his diplomat days in America. The following are their representative works: Max Müller put forth

Lectures on the Science of Language, Delivered at the Royal Institution of Great Britain in April, May, & June, 1861 (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1862), *Essays on the Science of Religion* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, 1873), *Essays on Mythology, Traditions, and Customs* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, 1873); Whitney also produced through the same publisher as Müller's, *Language and the Study of Language* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, 1869), *The East and West, Religion and Mythology, Orthography and Phonology* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, 1873).

- 47 In the 1864 edition Moon cited this passage from Schlegel's work again, explaining the purpose of defending The Queen's English.
- 48 In Japanese, "the Emperor's Japanese" can be most appropriately translated as *koukoku-gengo* which literally means "the language of 'Japan as the imperial nation'." As far as I can tell from my research, Nakamura Kei (2000a) is the first to discuss Mori Arinori and his language reform discourse in terms of the historical and ideological formation of *koukoku-gengo* (= the imperial Japanese language) as against the imperial English language (= the Queen's English) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.
- 49 When I refer in this paper to the "creation" of a new language in Japan, I mean the development or evolution of an indigenous language of Japan into a full-fledged (modern) one, rather than the bringing into being of an *entirely new* language with no elements of the traditional Japanese language; as I shall argue in Part II, the multiple meanings created of the words "a new language" in Mori's discourse on language reform afford the key to an understanding of his true intentions.
- 50 In the early Meiji period there were many other samurai intellectuals who advocated making *the new Japanese language* by means of the Roman alphabet. Nishi Amane (1829–1897) was one such proponent of the abolition of the Chinese characters and the adoption

of the English alphabets; he was one of the cofounders of *Meiroke-sha* or the first academic society of which leader was Mori Arinori.

- 51 Here we may recall Mori's pragmatic position on language acquisition: "Be proficient in languages for pragmatic purposes. No more, no less."
- 52 Tsuchida et al. (1998: 171) point out that "the subsequent text (or duplicate /baby text) is not allowed to inherit its intellectual property right from the preceding text (or original/paternal text) without serious infringements in the form of misinterpretations. Thus, the theory of "intertextuality" nullifies the concept of "textual influence" and thereby reduces the supposed intertextual orders to the nth degree."
- 53 It was the then Secretary of State Joseph Henry who introduced Mori to Whitney (SMAZ, Supplementary Vol. 2: 218–220).
- 54 It was not until the post(/neo)-colonial context in the late twentieth century that an eclectic linguistic strategy was asserted by English speakers from periphery nations such as India to be an effective tool for resistance and assimilation in de-hegemonizing English as *the* world language and instead legitimizing their World Englishes.
- 55 Indeed, there was a rumor going around both at home and abroad at that time that Mori Arinori was planning to abolish the Japanese language and instead adopted English as a new national language in Japan.
- 56 A determined and outspoken proponent of national language-building in the early Meiji period, Fukuzawa Yukichi (1972: 148) relentlessly castigated students for being unduly pessimistic about the future of the Japanese language and losing the spirit of *dokuritsujison* ("independence and self-respect") as follows: "Nowadays I find quite a few students saying trivial things to the effect that since the language of Japan is so inadequate and inconvenient that it cannot be used as a tool for writing and speech-making, one should use

English instead. I think they are so stupid they do not know what they are talking about. The way I see it, they were born Japanese, but have never learned to use the Japanese language as effectively as possible. The number of vocabulary of national language increases in proportion to the growing number of books published in the country. There should be nothing inconvenient about it. Before anything else, the Japanese today should work hard to improve their speaking skill in Japanese.”

57 Regarding the patriotic leftist view of national language, Umesao (1987: 123–124) got it right when he says: “If you argue in Japan for the abolition of conventional written characters of national language in favor of foreign (roman) alphabets, then you will probably be labeled as leftist, internationalist, or even anti-nationalistic/unpatriotic. But I must say this is a gross misunderstanding. On the contrary, the leftist’s arguments for national language reform had always taken on rather nationalistic or statist overtones; they should be seen as political activists who would go to all lengths to boost the national policy for wealthy nation and strong army. In fact, they were much more patriotic and nationalistic than the rightists in this respect. They always looked to the future.”

58 We can find trustworthy and corroborative evidence to support our view in British diplomat Sir Ernest Satow’s diary. In his journal dated July 12 1886, Satow writes that “Called on Mori, who is now Minister of Education: he talked nothing else. Is friendly to the Romaji Kai, but believes the result aimed at by them will be reached through the wider knowledge of English which the teaching of that language in all the middle schools will bring about” (SMAZ, Supplementary Vol. 2: 222). This plainly shows that Mori still retained a firm belief in the “desired end” which he first disclosed in his letter to Whitney in 1872 and then seemed to have partially abandoned in *Education in Japan* in 1873 for technical reasons: the romanization of the Japanese language and the teaching

of (simplified or unsimplified) English in the “schools of the Empire.”

- 59 His unconventional language code-switching behavior in international diplomatic settings struck the media as rather peculiar (SMAZ, Vol. 1: 388–389).
- 60 The Japanese word *kami* and the Chinese term *shen* are two different religious concepts (Yanabu 2001).
- 61 The passage quoted here was partially taken from Mori’s letter to Müller by Georgina Adelaide (1794–1919), the editor of *The Life and Letters of the Right Honourable Friedrich Max Müller*. Although the whole letter is not available in the work cited above, it is one of the few English discourses made by Mori himself that reveals how he thought and felt about religion.
- 62 While his personal precepts mainly consist of eight verses in the original, Hall’s English translation is rendered as “ten points to be cultivated” (1973: 45). Following Hall’s interpretation, the present writer likens them to the Biblical “Ten Commandments.”
- 63 Contrary to popular belief, Müller shared Mori’s Quixotic idea for English reform as far as orthography is concerned. Müller himself supported the idea of the orthographical and phonetic reform of the English language for theoretical if not practical reasons. He stated: “What I wish most strongly to impress on my readers is that I do not write as an advocate. I am not an agitator for phonetic reform in England. My interest in the matter is, and always has been, purely theoretical and scientific. Spelling and the reform of spelling are the problems which concern every student of the science of language. It does not matter whether the language be English, German, or Dutch. In every written language the problem of reforming its antiquated spelling must sooner or later arise; and we must form some clear notion whether anything can be done to remove or alleviate a complaint inherent in the very life of language. If my friends tell me that the idea of a reform of spelling is

entirely Quixotic, that it is a mere waste of time to try to influence a whole nation to surrender its historical orthography and to write phonetically, I bow to their superior wisdom as men of the world. But as I am not a man of the world, but rather an observer of the world, my interest in the subject, my convictions as to what is right and wrong, remains just the same. It is the duty of scholars and philosophers not to shrink from holding and expressing what men of the world call Quixotic opinions; for if I read the history of the world rightly, the victory of reason over unreason, and the whole progress of our race, have generally been achieved by such fools as ourselves ‘rushing in where angels fear to tread,’ till after a time the track becomes beaten, and even angels are no longer afraid. I hold, and have confessed much more Quixotic theories on language than this belief, that what has been done before by Spaniards and Dutchmen—what is at this very moment being done by Germans, viz., to reform their corrupt spelling—may be achieved even by Englishmen and Americans” (Müller 1876: 206–207). Another evidence to suggest clearly that Müller was sympathetic with Mori’s radical stance on language reform can be found in his following statement: “I have expressed my belief that the time will come when not only the various alphabets and systems of spelling, but many of the languages themselves which are now spoken in Europe, to say nothing of the rest of the world, will have to be improved away from the face of the earth and abolished. Knowing that nothing rouses the ire of a Welshman or a Gael so much as to assert the expediency, nay, necessity, of suppressing the teaching of their languages at school, it seems madness to hint that it would be a blessing to every child born in Holland, in Portugal, or in Denmark, in Sweden and even in Russia—if, instead of learning a language which is for life a barrier between them and the rest of mankind, they were at once to learn one of the great historical languages which confer intellectual and social fellowship with the

whole world. If, as a first step in the right direction, four languages only, viz., English, French, German, Italian is more precious than time?—would be infinitely greater than what has been effected by railways and telegraphs. But I know that no name in any of the doomed languages would be too strong to stigmatize such folly. We should be told that a Japanese only could conceive such an idea; that for a people deliberately to give up its language was a thing never heard of before; that a nation would cease to be a nation if it changed its language; that it would, in fact, commit ‘the happy dispatch,’ *a la Japonaise*. All this may be true, but I still hold that language is meant as an instrument of communication, and that, in the struggle for life, the most efficient instrument of communication must certainly carry the day, as long as natural selection, or, as we formerly called it, reason, rules the world” (ibid.).

- 64 This is one of the central dogmas of Swedenborgian Thomas Lake Harris who founded the Brotherhood of the New Life in which Mori did some serious soul-searching in quest of individual and national freedom and independence (see Kimura 1986).
- 65 As regards Mori’s strategic position in the geo-politics of cultural diplomacy, Irie’s observation of modern Japan’s long-standing stance on international politics also applies in his case: “It is plain that the East-and-West dualism served as the one and only principle of modern Japan’s diplomacy.... There seems to have been no universal principle that penetrates the international diplomacy of Japan except for the East-and-West ideology. And it sometimes places more stress on its fatalistic cooperation; at other times it laid more emphasis on its fatalistic collision course. Furthermore, there are cases where it would emphasize not only the particularity of Japan in Asia but also the universality of the country that amalgamates Eastern and Western civilizations into one. In either case, Japan tended to adapt to the changes in the geo-cultural politics of

Europe and other Asian nations as circumstances demanded” (1966: 172–173).

66 Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835–1901) was perhaps the most prominent super-samurai intellectual who took a critical look at Western civilization. Like Mori, Fukuzawa never failed to observe objectively both sides of Western religion and society.

67 Here we need to remind ourselves of Mori’s conscious and pragmatic effort in his youth to deny his old self (overly feudalistic identity) in the dialectical pursuit of the new self (enlightened and modern identity) in a bid to reach a much higher plane of civilization.

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