Language Planning and Policy in Asia, Volume 1

LANGUAGE PLANNING AND POLICY
Series Editors: Professor Richard B. Baldauf Jr., *University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia* and Professor Robert B. Kaplan, *University of Southern California, USA*

Other Books in the Series
Language Planning and Policy in Africa, Vol.1: Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa
  Richard B. Baldauf Jr. and Robert B. Kaplan (eds)
Language Planning and Policy in Africa, Vol. 2: Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Tunisia
  Robert B. Kaplan and Richard B. Baldauf Jr. (eds)
Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 1: Hungary, Finland and Sweden
  Robert B. Kaplan and Richard B. Baldauf Jr. (eds)
Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 2: The Czech Republic, The European Union and Northern Ireland
  R*ichard B. Baldauf Jr. and Robert B. Kaplan (eds*)
Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 3: The Baltic States, Ireland and Italy
  Robert B. Kaplan and Richard B. Baldauf Jr. (eds)
Language Planning and Policy in Latin America, Vol. 1: Ecuador, Mexico and Paraguay
  Richard B. Baldauf Jr. and Robert B. Kaplan (eds)
Language Planning and Policy in Pacific, Vol. 1: Fiji, The Philippines and Vanuatu
  Richard B. Baldauf Jr. and Robert B. Kaplan (eds)
Language Planning and Policy: Issues in Language Planning and Literacy
  Anthony J. Liddicoat (ed.)
Language Planning and Policy: Language Planning in Local Contexts
  Anthony J. Liddicoat and Richard B. Baldauf Jr. (eds)

Other Books of Interest
Directions in Applied Linguistics
  Paul Bruthiaux, Dwight Atkinson, William G. Eggington, William Grabe and Vaidehi Ramanathan (eds)
Language Decline and Death in Africa: Causes, Consequences and Challenges
  Herman M. Batibo
Language Diversity in the Pacific: Endangerment and Survival
  Denis Cunningham, D.E. Ingram and Kenneth Sumbuk (eds)
Language in Jewish Society: Towards a New Understanding
  John Myhill
Linguistic Landscapes: A Comparative Study of Urban Multilingualism in Tokyo
  Peter Backhaus
Multilingualism in European Bilingual Contexts: Language Use and Attitudes
  David Lasagabaster and Ángel Huguet (eds)
Politeness in Europe
  Leo Hickey and Miranda Stewart (eds)
The Defence of French: A Language in Crisis?
  Robin Adamson

Language Planning and Policy in Asia, Vol. 1

Japan, Nepal, Taiwan and Chinese Characters

Edited by

Robert B. Kaplan and Richard B. Baldauf Jr.

The articles in this book also appeared in the journal of *Current Issues in Language Planning* Vol. 6: 3 (2005); Vol. 9: 1 (2008) and *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* Vol. 20: 4&5 (1999).

Contents

Series Overview

Since 1998, when the first polity studies on language policy and planning – addressing the language situation in a particular polity – were published in the *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 31[1] polity studies (and one issue on Chinese character modernization) have been published in that journal and (between 2000 and 2008) in *Current Issues in Language Planning*. These studies have all addressed, to a greater or lesser extent, 22 common questions or issues (Appendix A), thus giving them some degree of consistency. However, we are keenly aware that these studies have been published in the order in which they were completed. While such an arrangement is reasonable for journal publication, the result does not serve the needs of area specialists nor are the various monographs easily accessible to the wider public. As the number of available polity studies has grown, we have planned (where necessary) to update and republish these studies in coherent areal volumes.

The first such volume was concerned with Africa, both because a significant number of studies has become available and because Africa constitutes an area that is significantly under-represented in the language planning literature. Yet it is marked by extremely interesting language policy and planning issues, therefore in the first areal volume, we reprinted four polity studies – Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa – as:

- *Language Planning and Policy in Africa, Vol. 1: Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa* (2004) Richard B. Baldauf Jr. and Robert B. Kaplan (eds).

We hope that the first areal volume has served the needs of specialists more effectively. It is our intent to continue to publish other areal volumes as sufficient studies are completed. We will continue to do so in the hope that such volumes will be of interest to areal scholars and others involved in some way in language policies and language planning in geographically coherent regions. We have already been able to produce six areal volumes in addition to Africa Vol. 1 and the seven areal volumes presently in print cover 23 polities:

- *Language Planning and Policy in Africa, Vol. 2: Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Tunisia* (2007) Robert B. Kaplan and Richard B. Baldauf Jr. (eds)
- *Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 1: Hungary, Finland and Sweden* (2005) Robert B. Kaplan and Richard B. Baldauf Jr. (eds)
- *Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 2: The Czech Republic, The European Union and Northern Ireland* (2006) Richard B. Baldauf Jr. and Robert B. Kaplan (eds)
- *Language Planning and Policy in Europe, Vol. 3: The Baltics, Ireland and Italy* (2007) Robert B. Kaplan and Richard B. Baldauf Jr. (eds)
- *Language Planning and Policy in Latin America, Vol. 1: Ecuador, Mexico and Paraguay* (2007) Richard B. Baldauf Jr. and Robert B. Kaplan (eds)
- *Language Planning and Policy in the Pacific, Vol. 1: Fiji, the Philippines and Vanuatu* (2006) Richard B. Baldauf Jr. and Robert B. Kaplan (eds)

This volume – Asia, Vol. 1 – is another such volume:

- *Language Planning and Policy in Asia, Vol. 1: Japan, Nepal, Taiwan and Chinese Characters* (2008) Robert B. Kaplan and Richard B. Baldauf Jr. (eds)

The areas in which we are planning to produce additional volumes, and some of the polities that may be included are:

- **Europe**, including Cyprus and Luxembourg.
- **Asia**, including Bangladesh, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Sri Lanka.
- **Africa**, including Cameroon, Niger, Senegal and Zimbabwe.

In the meantime, we will continue to bring out *Current Issues in Language Planning*, and add to the list of polities available for inclusion in areal volumes. At this point, we cannot predict the intervals over which such volumes will appear, since they will be defined by the ability of contributors to complete work on already contracted polity studies.

Assumptions Relating to Polity Studies

We have made a number of assumptions about the nature of language policy and planning that have influenced the nature of the studies presented. First, we do not believe that there is, yet, a broader and more coherent paradigm to address the complex questions of language policy/planning development. On the other hand, we do believe that the collection of a large body of more or less comparable data and the careful analysis of that data will give rise to a more coherent paradigm. Therefore, in soliciting the polity studies, we have asked each of the contributors to address some two-dozen questions (to the extent that such questions were pertinent to each particular polity); the questions were offered as suggestions of topics that might be covered (see Appendix A). Some contributors have followed the questions rather closely, others have been more independent in approaching the task. It should be obvious that, in framing those questions, we were moving from a perhaps inchoate notion of an underlying theory. The reality that our notion was inchoate becomes clear in each of the polity studies.

Second, we have sought to find authors who had an intimate involvement with the language planning and policy decisions made in the polity they were writing about, i.e. we were looking for insider knowledge and perspectives about the polities. However, as insiders are part of the process, they may find it difficult to take the part of the 'other' – to be critical of that process. But it is not necessary or even appropriate that they should be – this can be left to others. As Pennycook (1998: 126) argues:

> One of the lessons we need to draw from this account of colonial language policy [i.e. Hong Kong] is that, in order to make sense of language policies we need to understand both their location historically and their location contextually. What I mean by this is that we can not assume that the promotion of local languages instead of a dominant language, or the promotion of a dominant language at the expense of a local language, are

in themselves good or bad. Too often we view these things through the lenses of liberalism, pluralism or anti-imperialism, without understanding the actual location of such policies.

While some authors do take a critical stance, or one based on a theoretical approach to the data, many of the studies are primarily descriptive, bringing together and revealing, we hope, the nature of the language development experience in the particular polity. We believe this is a valuable contribution to the theoretical/paradigmatic development of the field. As interesting and challenging as it may be to provide a priori descriptions of the nature of the field based on specific paradigms (e.g. language management, language rights, linguistic imperialism) or to provide more general frameworks (e.g. Hornberger, 2006; Spolsky, 2004) – nor have we been completely immune from the latter ourselves (e.g. Kaplan & Baldauf, 2003: Chapter 12) – we believe that our current state of knowledge about language planning and policy is still partial and that the development of a sufficient database is an important prerequisite for adequate paradigm development.

Furthermore, we recognize that the paradigm on the basis of which language policy and planning is conventionally undertaken may be inadequate to the task. Much more is involved in developing successful language policy than is commonly recognized or acknowledged. There are several facets to this complexity of which we will mention but two. First, polity studies like those in this series might suggest that language planning is primarily a macro sociolinguistic activity. However, based on recent work on the micro or the local in language policy and planning (e.g. Canagarajah, 2005; Liddicoat & Baldauf, 2008b), it is becoming clear that the field is far more multidimensional than the previous literature has tended to suggest. The local is not only critical in carrying out top-down macro policy, but in some cases – often for political reasons – it is the only way that local language planning issues – for example, minority language development or work with oppressed languages or varieties – can be addressed. In addition, the availability of language and information through technology has democraticised language use and has lead to greater bottom-up pressures for language policy change.

This leads us to a second major facet – i.e. language policy development is a highly political activity with a variety of actors (Baldauf & Kaplan, 2003) or agents (Liddicoat & Baldauf, 2008a) working at different levels. Given its political nature, traditional linguistic research is necessary, but not in itself sufficient, and the publication of scholarly studies in academic journals is really only the first step in the complex process. Indeed, scholarly research itself may need to be expanded, to consider not only the language at issue but also the social landscape in which that language exists – the ecology of language and its social system. A critical step in policy development involves making research evidence understandable to the lay public; research scholars are not generally the ideal messengers in this context (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2007). We hope this series also may contribute to that end.

An Invitation to Contribute

We welcome additional polity contributions. Our views on a number of the issues can be found in Kaplan and Baldauf (1997); sample polity monographs

have appeared in the extant issues of *Current Issues in Language Planning* and in the volumes in this series. Interested authors should contact the editors, present a proposal for a monograph, and provide a sample list of references. It is also useful to provide a brief biographical note, indicating the extent of any personal involvement in language planning activities in the polity proposed for study as well as any relevant research/publication in LPP. All contributions should, of course, be original, unpublished works. We expect to work closely with contributors during the preparation of monographs. All monographs will, of course, be reviewed for quality, completeness, accuracy and style. Experience suggests that co-authored contributions may be very successful, but we want to stress that we are seeking a unified monograph on the polity, not an edited compilation of various authors' efforts. Questions may be addressed to either of us.

Richard B. Baldauf, Jr. (rbaldauf4@bigpond.com)
Robert B. Kaplan (rkaplan@olypen.com)

Note

1. Polities in print include: 1. Algeria; 2. The Baltics; 3. Botswana; 4. Cameroon; 5. Côte d'Ivoire; 6. Czech Republic; 7. Ecuador; 8. European Union; 9. Fiji; 10. Finland; 11. Hungary; 12. Ireland; 13. Italy; 14. Japan; 15. Luxembourg; 16. Malawi; 17. Mexico; 18. Mozambique; 19. Nepal; 20. Nigeria; 21. North Ireland; 22. Paraguay; 23. The Philippines; 24. South Africa; 25. Sri Lanka; 26. Sweden; 27. Taiwan; 28. Timor Leste; 29. Tunisia; 30. Vanuatu; and 31. Zimbabwe. A 32nd monograph on Chinese Character Modernization is also available.

References

Baldauf, R.B., Jr. and Kaplan, R.B. (2003) Language policy decisions and power: Who are the actors? In P.M. Ryan and R. Terborg (eds) *Language: Issues of Inequality* (pp. 19–40). Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autonoma de México.

Canagarajah, A.S. (ed.) (2005) *Reclaiming the Local in Language Policy and Practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Hornberger, N.H. (2006) Frameworks and models in language policy and planning. In T. Ricento (ed.) *An Introduction to Language Policy: Theory and Method* (pp. 24–41). Oxford: Blackwell.

Kaplan, R.B. and Baldauf, R.B., Jr. (2007) Language policy spread: Learning from health and social policy models. *Language Problems & Language Planning* 31 (2), 107–129.

Kaplan, R.B. and Baldauf, R.B., Jr. (2003) *Language and Language-in-Education Planning in the Pacific Basin.* Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Kaplan, R.B. and Baldauf, R.B., Jr. (1997) *Language Planning From Practice to Theory*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Liddicoat, A.J. and Baldauf, R.B., Jr. (2008a) Language planning in local contexts: Agents, contexts and interactions. In *Language Policy and Planning: Language Planning in Local Contexts* (pp. 1–14). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Liddicoat, A.J. and Baldauf, R.B., Jr. (eds) (2008b) *Language Policy and Planning: Language Planning in Local Contexts.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Pennycook, A. (1998) *English and the Discourses of Colonialism*. London and New York: Routledge.

Spolsky, B. (2004) *Language Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix A

Part I: The Language Profile of ...

(1) Name and briefly describe the national/official language(s) (*de jure* or *de facto*).

(2) Name and describe the major minority language(s).

(3) *Name and describe the lesser minority language(s) (include 'dialects', pidgins, creoles and other important aspects of language variation).* The definition of minority language/dialect/pidgin will need to be discussed in terms of the sociolinguistic context.

(4) *Name and describe the major religious language(s).* In some polities religious languages and/or missionary policies have had a major impact on the language situation and provide *de facto* language planning. In some contexts religion has been a vehicle for introducing exogenous languages while in other cases it has served to promote indigenous languages.

(5) Name and describe the major language(s) of literacy, assuming that it is/they are not one of those described above.

(6) Provide a table indicating the number of speakers of each of the above languages, what percentage of the population they constitute and whether those speakers are largely urban or rural.

(7) Where appropriate, provide a map(s) showing the distribution of speakers, key cities and other features referenced in the text.

Part II: Language Spread

(8) Specify which languages are taught through the educational system, to whom they are taught, when they are taught and for how long they are taught.

(9) Discuss the objectives of language education and the methods of assessment to determine whether the objectives are met.

(10) To the extent possible, trace the historical development of the policies/practices identified in items 8 and 9 (may be integrated with 8/9).

(11) Name and discuss the major media language(s) and the distribution of media by socio-economic class, ethnic group, urban/rural distinction (including the historical context where possible). For minority language, note the extent that any literature is (has been) available in the language.

(12) How has immigration affected language distribution and what measures are in place to cater for learning the national language(s) and/or to support the use of immigrant languages.

Part III: Language Policy and Planning

(13) Describe any language planning legislation, policy or implementation that is currently in place.

(14) Describe any literacy planning legislation, policy or implementation that is currently in place.

(15) To the extent possible, trace the historical development of the policies/

practices identified in items 13 and 14 (may be integrated with these items).

(16) Describe and discuss any language planning agencies/organisations operating in the polity (both formal and informal).

(17) Describe and discuss any regional/international influences affecting language planning and policy in the polity (include any external language promotion efforts).

(18) To the extent possible, trace the historical development of the policies/practices identified in items 16 and 17 (may be integrated with these items)**.**

Part IV: Language Maintenance and Prospects

(19) Describe and discuss intergenerational transmission of the major language(s), and whether this is changing over time;

(20) Describe and discuss the probabilities of language death among any of the languages/language varieties in the polity, any language revival efforts as well as any emerging pidgins or creoles.

(21) Add anything you wish to clarify about the language situation and its probable direction of change over the next generation or two.

(22) Add pertinent references/bibliography and any necessary appendices (e.g. a general plan of the educational system to clarify the answers to questions 8, 9 and 14).

In addition, to the extent that it is either possible or relevant, authors should indicate who the 'actors' or 'agents' are in certain aspects of language policy and planning. Are there particular individuals/bodies/organisations that have played a major role in language planning activities and what has been their role?

Finally, while polity studies by definition are 'macro' descriptions of the sociolinguistic situation, there may be interesting 'micro' or 'local' language policy and planning occurring that would provide some extra depth and detail to the study.

Language Policy and Planning in Japan, Nepal and Taiwan + Chinese Characters: Some Common Issues

Robert B. Kaplan
Professor Emeritus, Applied Linguistics, University of Southern California
Mailing Address: PO Box 577, Port Angeles, WA 98362 USA <rkaplan@ olypen.com>

Richard B. Baldauf Jr.
Professor, TESOL, School of Education, University of Queensland, QLD 4072 Australia <rbaldauf4@bigpond.com>

Introduction

This volume brings together three language policy and planning polity studies related to three countries in Asia as well as a study of Chinese characters[1], the dominant script form in the region. (See the 'Series Overview' for a more general discussion of the nature of the series, Appendix A for the 22 questions each study set out to address, and Kaplan *et al.* (2000) for a discussion of the underlying concepts for the studies themselves.) In this paper, in addition to providing an introductory summary of the material covered in these studies, we want to draw out and discuss some of the more general issues that these four studies have raised.

The polities covered do not in any useful sense constitute a geographic cluster, though as we note they do share some common elements in addition to the fact that all of them are in Asia. While both the Nepal and Taiwan study were initially completed about a decade ago – and have now been updated as unquestionably matters in those polities have changed over time – there are still some commonalities.

One of the important general issues raised by these studies has to do with literacy. Both China and Japan, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, recognized and began to try to solve the complex problem of trying to overcome widespread illiteracy in an environment of extremely complex writing systems. Character standardisation and simplification in China in the decades after the middle of the 20th century was driven by the need for mass literacy to push social reform. Literacy is still a pressing issue in Nepal, with women and minorities having very low literacy rates.

A second issue which has arisen out of the initial literacy concern is related to the use of script-based writing (except in Nepal) in the modern technological era and the ensuing problems of selecting, standardising and modernising character-based systems. A common standard based on Unicode for the overlapping character systems used in Japan, Taiwan and the People's Republic of China would increase the ease of intra- and inter-lingual written commu-

nication, making technological communication on the internet and on mobile devices like phones more reliable, and therefore making possible more wide-spread characters use. However, the mystique of the traditional forms, and their cultural associations, as well as different political agendas, have made agreement on standard forms of characters nearly impossible to achieve (see Zhao & Baldauf, 2008). One of the interesting things about these standards for characters is that they apply to government use and more generally to printed work. Although a guide for handwriting has fairly recently been published in Taiwan, handwritten texts in Japan and P.R. China are unregulated.

A third common issue is the increasing use of, demand for, and teaching of English as a first foreign language. It has even been suggested in Japan and Taiwan that English should be a second *de facto* national language (Kaplan & Baldauf, 2007). In all of the polities, there has been a move to begin the study of English earlier in order to gain communicative advantages that many people believe this will bring, and this demand has meant that English has begun to spread to primary schools, despite a lack of resources, especially of trained teachers (see, e.g., Butler, 2007 for Japan; Li, 2007 for P.R. China). In the character-using polities this spread also has implications for literacy in the national languages, as students are required to learn a new script form before mastering their own writing system. Furthermore, the growth of English as a world language has increasingly marginalized the study of other foreign languages in all these polities (see Baldauf *et al.,* 2007) as the demands for English take increasing quantities of language-related space in the curriculum.

A final common issue relates to the status of minority languages in each of these polities. In recent years, we have seen greater support for indigenous minority languages, especially in Taiwan where their study and greater public acceptance has become a mark of an alternate Taiwanese identity. Neverthe-less, minority languages still remained squeezed by the need for the national language to be taught on the one hand and by the demand to learn English, the world language, on the other. In Japan, exogenous minority languages like Spanish, Portuguese or Korean, spoken by guest workers or returning ethnic nationals, are generally ignored by the government and the educational system, and students with these backgrounds are faced by submersion language-in-education policies. In Nepal until recently, there has been an almost total disregard of minority languages and their teaching, although some signs of bilingual programs are emerging.

Nepal

In the intervening decade since the initial study was first written, Nepal has been marked by continuous instability – protests, riots, civil war, bombings, strikes, school closures, and general unrest. The elected government and the parliament have been quite unstable; Parliament was frequently dissolved, and several political parties and their respective policies have been overturned. The Maoist 'people's war' commenced, and the build-up of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), as well as a larger people's militia, continued to undermine the elected government. At one point, the Maoists claimed to control two-thirds of

the nation. Over 13,000 deaths can be attributed to both sides of the insurgency; schools were taxed or closed, often converted to training grounds and barracks. Originating in west Nepal, the unrest and civil war soon spread throughout the country.

On June 1, 2001, a massacre took place in the palace, murdering the reigning royal family and everyone in the immediate line of succession to the throne, an action regarded as devastating in a Hindu country where the king and his family were considered to be of divine descent. The official investigating commission blamed crown prince Dependra (who also died) for the massacre, but conspiracy theories were plentiful (see, e.g., Gregson, 2002; Raj, 2001; Willessee & Whittaker, 2004). Gyanendra – the younger brother of the murdered king, Birenda – and the new crown prince – Gyanendra's son Paras – were very unpopular and in some conspiracy theories were even suspected of having played a role in the massacre. Since the Maoist insurgency continued and the elected government was not able to control the uprising, in February 2005 King Gyanendra dissolved parliament and took complete control of the government. Civil and political rights were suppressed, large numbers of people, including politicians and journalists, were arrested and imprisoned, and the media were brought under the direct control of the King. Conflict between Maoist troops and the national army and police increased; indeed, many people who were not Maoist sympathizers opposed the actions of King Gyanendra and joined the insurgency. In April 2006 hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated against King Gyanendra in cities and villages throughout Nepal – a demonstration that became a spontaneous 19-day-long people's movement. On April 23, 2006, the leaders of the seven-party alliance[2] re-instated the parliament. On May 18, 2006, the House of Representatives stripped the King of his powers, declared Nepal to be a secular state, and removed the King as commander of the army. The House of Representatives removed the word *Royal* from the name of the Nepal Army, and designated the Prime Minister head of the Nepal Army. A hastily written interim constitution deprived Gyandendra of any administrative rights and removed from him all royal possessions of the massacred family members. Nepal, as a secular state, has pledged to secularize all Hindu symbols associated with the royal family, including the national anthem, and the national bird and flower, and to replace the image of the King on Nepalese currency with the image of Sagarmatha (Mount Everest). In November 2006, the seven-party alliance and the Maoist party signed a comprehensive peace agreement. An interim parliament was empanelled, and an interim constitution was framed, allowing the appointment of Maoist party members to ministerial positions in the interim government. Elections were scheduled to empanel a government body to write a new constitution. In the interim, under the supervision of United Nations peacekeepers, 31,000 Maoist soldiers, deprived of their weapons, have been placed in seven large camps and several smaller camps throughout Nepal. The Maoists have been granted amnesty and promised that consideration will be given to allowing some of them to be integrated into the Nepalese Army. Finally, in June 2007, the government agreed to give a monthly stipend of 3,000 rupees (US$46.00) to those confined in the camps.

Given these vast changes in the social and political environment, much that was reported a decade ago is no longer of any significance. The innu-

merable meetings that have occurred over the intervening decade have not specifically taken up the question of language in the polity. Unfortunately, the people's war and the unrest throughout Nepal have drastically limited or stopped the educational plans (i.e. expansion of education and introduction of second language education to first grade) reported in the initial (now decade) old study. For example, first language education was initiated for some Indo-European languages in the Terai and for Newari in the Kathmandu Valley. However, the lack of textbooks and of trained teachers, and the presence of ineffective management have seriously hindered the establishment of both first language education and first grade primary English education. In September 2007, the Ministry of Education and Sports issued a planning draft (for discussion) entitled 'School Sector Reform, Core Document: Policies and Strategies' (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2007). The report:

- emphasizes the need for a holistic and integrated approach to education, from grade one to grade twelve;
- notes the cultural and linguistic diversity of Nepal;
- states that a child's mother (first) language will be used as the medium of instruction up to the third grade;
- states that existing Sanskrit schools and other traditional schools may continue to operate if they follow the National Curriculum Framework (NCF);
- states that a regulatory framework will define 'the governance, management, quality, and finance functions' of English medium schools which will also follow the National Curriculum Framework;
- asserts that textbooks will be selected based on NCF guidelines;
- states that, in high school, the medium of instruction may be either Nepali or English as determined by the School Management Committee and the local government;
- states that priority will be given to recruiting and training for the teacher corps females, dalits, and other disadvantaged groups.
- avows that scholarships and training programs will be set up to improve the skills of disadvantaged teachers, especially for those who teach first language classes, and
- states that a minimum of 20 per cent of the national budget will be reserved for education.

These are important expectations; unfortunately, given the chaotic situation, they remain expectations.

Japan

Japan has long considered itself to be a mono-ethnic and therefore monolingual society, despite the existence of substantial old-comer ethnic minorities, and this – with the instrumental exception of English – has been reflected in its language planning and policy until quite recently. Increasing immigration (and hence emergent new-comer multilingualism), technological advances affecting the way people write and a perceived need to improve the teaching of English,

however, mean that policies have begun to undergo rethinking. The study of Japan is divided into three main sections: the first discusses in detail the national language and minority languages; the next discusses language spread and maintenance through the education system and by other means; the last concludes with some thoughts on how language planning and policy might develop in the future, in order to give the reader a sense of how major language issues in Japan are evolving in such a manner that many of the policies developed during the 20th century may no longer be totally relevant.

Throughout its modern period (i.e. from the beginning of the Meiji period [1868] to the present), Japan has consistently represented itself in both internal and external discourse as a monolingual nation; for example, Internal Affairs and Communications Minister Aso Taro referred to Japan in a speech at the opening of the Kyushu National Museum in October 2005 as the only nation in the world having ' . . . one civilization, one language, one culture and one race' (*The Japan Times,* 18 October 2005). Official policies and a highly influential essentialist literary genre called *Nihonjinron* (theories of what it means to be Japanese) have both reflected and supported this view.

Historically, *Nihonjinron* theories have constituted a key influence on much of the government, academic and cultural discourse on Japanese society, including ideas about language. A large body of academic research has directly challenged those notions over the last two decades; however, they remain influential in some circles. In this discourse, the Japanese language is portrayed as somehow uniquely different from all other languages; at the same time, Japan is resolutely viewed as linguistically homogeneous despite all evidence to the contrary. The Japanese language is seen as too difficult for any but Japanese themselves to master by virtue of its orthography and its much-touted preference for ambiguity over directness. Race, language and culture are inextricably tied together, so that issues surrounding language carry a heavy burden of sensitive historical, political and cultural significance (Schneer, 2007). This has informed language policy to date, explaining in part the snail's pace at which planning and policy at the national level have responded to demographic change. The national language has been used as a key part of Japanese nation- and empire-building, and diversity has not been encouraged; indeed, in the early modern period the use of minority languages on both the northern and the southern borders was suppressed under a policy of assimilation designed to foster and reinforce the ideology of one whole and unified nation. In the colonies of Taiwan (1895 to 1945) and Korea (1905 to 1945), and later in the occupied territories during World War Two, inculcating use of the Japanese language became a key element in the formation of good subjects of the emperor. During this time, efforts were made to transform the language in both spoken and written form into something that could function as a modern standard – i.e., an effective instrument in the service of national unity. By the 1920s, several major steps in this process had been achieved: a standard language had been designated and was being disseminated through the education system and the national broadcaster (Japan Broadcasting Corporation, widely known as NHK). The classical-oriented written styles that had previously been the language of public life were well on their way to being replaced by a modern written Japanese based on contemporary speech rather than on centuries-old literary conventions.

Monolingualism is certainly a myth, built upon an equally shaky foundation of mono-ethnicity, but it has been an enduring and strongly entrenched pillar of what might be called the foundation myth of modern Japan. It is certainly true that nearly everybody in Japan does speak Japanese, that the language used for official purposes is Japanese and that the bulk of the population is Japanese. However, to insist that Japan is consequently monolingual disregards the existence of large ethnic communities[3] from Korea, China, Brazil and other parts of the world, of the languages of the indigenous Ainu people[4] and of the fact that Japanese students must study English for at least six years.

Language planning may be defined as consciously engineered change in the way language is used; i.e. not natural evolution but human intervention working to achieve specific desired purposes. Language planning of this sort, aimed at achieving particular linguistic and social outcomes in Japan, has covered many areas, among them standardization, script reform, language spread through the teaching of Japanese both as the national language and as a foreign language, the revival of the Ainu language and the teaching of English and other foreign languages. It is only relatively recently, except in the case of English, that language policy has included recognition of a language other than Japanese. At present, one of the most pressing issues for language planning and policy-making in Japan is the growing awareness of emergent multilingualism arising from increasing immigration over the last twenty years. The fact that this is occurring within the lingering framework of the monolingual myth accounts for the slow pace at which the national government has responded to these developments, as opposed to the greater responsiveness of local governments. Language policy change at the national level involves many years of discussion and consultation on issues that affect the nation as a whole. Local governments, however, enjoy greater freedom to respond as area-specific challenges arise, and what seems to be happening in Japan today is a more proactive stance in bottom-up rather than in top-down language planning initiatives. Local governments and NGOs are working to assist the increasing numbers of immigrants living in their areas, moving towards a greater recognition of the actual ecology of language in Japan.[5]

Japan's constitution makes no mention of any official language; it is simply taken for granted that the dominant (indeed only) historical contender is the national language. Native speakers refer to the language in two ways: when used by native speakers, it is called *kokugo* (i.e. the language of our country), but when it is taught to foreigners, it is called *nihongo* (i.e. the language of Japan). The distinction reflects an enduring belief that the Japanese language is a cultural property specific to, and a crucial part of, being Japanese. Nearly all of Japan's 128 million people speak and write Japanese, most as *kokugo*, some as *nihongo*. Standard Japanese, based on the speech of the Yamanote area of Tokyo, is spoken and understood throughout the country. The standard form was designated as such in 1916. The lexicon consists of approximately two-thirds loanwords and one-third words of Japanese origin (*wago*). Of the loanwords, the majority consists of words of Chinese origin (*kango*), borrowed over centuries of linguistic and cultural contact and absorbed into the lexicon to such a degree that most Japanese do not think of them as loanwords. *Kango* are perceived as being more formal in tone than words of Japanese origin, reflecting

the centuries during which Sino-Japanese, a literary style heavily influenced by Chinese, was the major formal written variant used by the upper classes. The remainder of the lexicon consists of *gairaigo*, loanwords from languages other than Chinese (predominantly English), reflecting the historical specificities of Japan's contact with speakers of European languages. Estimates of the exact percentage of *gairaigo* differ: Backhouse (1993: 74, 76) suggests around six per cent, whereas Honna (1995: 45) puts it higher, at around ten per cent of the contents of a standard dictionary. English loanwords make up 60 to 70 per cent of the new words added to Japanese dictionaries each year (Hogan, 2003: 43).

In the absence of a native writing system, ideographic characters (*kanji*) were adopted from China (via Korea) around the 6th century CE. The characters had developed to fit the requirements of the Chinese language rather than those of the very different Japanese language; initially, they were used to write Chinese as a foreign language. Over time, however, characters were adapted to form two phonetic scripts (*hiragana* and *katakana*) in order to represent on paper the sounds and grammatical features of Japanese. These phonetic scripts developed in different parts of Japan for different purposes. *Hiragana* – a flowing and rounded script used in everyday letters and poems and in the literature written by the noblewomen of the Heian Period (794–1192 CE) – abbreviated the whole of a Chinese character until it was intelligible only to Japanese; *katakana* – more angular and used in Buddhist scriptures – extracted only one part of the relevant character. Originally there were several hundred symbols in each; however, they have been standardized at present to only 46 basic symbols, each representing the same syllables.

The prestige of Chinese characters as a mark of erudition was such that they did not fall out of use once the phonetic scripts were available, with the result that at present Japanese is written with a combination of several scripts:

- characters for nouns and the stems of inflected words;
- *hiragana* to show Japanese pronunciation where required and for the copula, pronouns and grammatical features such as inflections and postpositions;
- *katakana* for non-Japanese loanwords and for emphasis;
- Arabic numerals in phone numbers and other situations, and
- the Roman alphabet, though not an official script, nevertheless is prominent as a design feature in advertising and commerce.

Of the many thousands of characters available, current script policy recommends 1,945 of the most commonly occurring for general use, and these are taught in schools during the nine years of compulsory education. In practice, however, as many as 3,000–3,500 characters are needed in order to read the multiplicity of texts found in newspapers and advertisements (Seeley, 1991: 2). Combining the three scripts poses no particular problem once the basic principles are understood. The two phonetic syllabaries are easy to learn. Characters require more time, not only because they are much more numerous and complex in form but also because the pronunciation of each character may vary depending on the context in which it occurs; i.e. most will have at least one each of what are known as *kun* and *on* readings. The *kun* reading is the word's pronunciation in Japanese, the *on* reading represents an earlier Japanese attempt to approximate

the pronunciation of the character in Chinese. *On* readings will usually be found in character compounds. Character shapes from the current list in general use range from the very simple to the quite complex; it is also often necessary to differentiate between which of several similar characters is used for a particular word. Emoticons (*kaomoji*) are also used in both handwriting and in online communication, whether by computer or mobile phone, to convey attitudinal information without words: (^-^), for instance, is one variation of a smiling face. A study by Katsuno and Yano (2002: 211) found that at least 20 dictionaries (hard copy and online) of *kaomoji* have been published since 1993. Mobile phones come with them already built in. A second area of text manipulation is the innovative and well documented *gyaru moji* (girl talk), in which users – usually young women, hence the name – manipulate text messages in a series of maneuvers, e.g. arranging the disarticulated component sections of characters in a vertical line. They may also include Roman letters, typographic or mathematical symbols, Greek letters, etc. in their messages. This orthographic play functions both for privacy (to protect the content of text messages from being understood by fellow passengers on crowded public transport) and as a kind of sub-cultural identity marker for this particular group of young women. Similar 'in-group' language play has been documented in postings to Channel 2, a well known unmoderated website (see Nishimura, 2004).

Talk of online language practices leads to the broader issue of what languages are used on the Internet in Japan. The Japanese language has established a strong online presence: the top six, in descending order, are English (31.3%), Chinese (15.0%), Spanish (8.7%), Japanese (7.4%), French (5.7%) and German (5.0%) (Internet World Statistics, 2007). Chinese and Japanese have risen to their high positions despite early views that their character-based orthographies were not suited for electronic use. An enabling factor in Japan's web presence is the capacity to access large amounts of information in the national language, an aspect usually linked with economic power. Japan is an economically advanced nation with a standard national written language that, in the 1980s, developed the technological capacity to reproduce that written language electronically. Japan:

- has a high literacy rate;
- does not recognize community languages in its language policies;
- exhibits no perceived pressing need to teach and use foreign languages – other than English – for international communication; and
- is an island country secure in its borders.

Its minority groups have, over time, been forcibly assimilated to speak Japanese. Japan has one of the world's largest domestic publishing industries, and a thriving translation industry means that most information is readily available in Japanese not long after it has appeared in other languages. In short, Japan is self-sufficient in developing a web presence and does not need to rely on another language to access information; consequently, the Internet, and particularly the web, in Japan is likely to remain largely monolingual. Within Japan, other languages are used on the Internet in personal emails and messaging, web-based language teaching sites, and major business and cultural websites.

Apart from these, the most proactive official use of other languages occurs at local government level, where foreign-language web pages offer instrumental benefits in facilitating the integration of non-Japanese residents into the community.

Publishing and printing are major industries in Japan. In 2004 there were 4,431 publishing companies, 7,778 bookstores and 2,759 libraries. Despite the stature of the publishing industry in comparative international terms, the industry recently suffered a seven-year slump in sales from which it began to emerge in 2004 thanks to the publication in that year of several very widely-selling books, first among them the translation of *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix.* One area continuing to show lively sales activity is that of books relating to the Japanese language itself, in particular guides to correct usage. The translation industry in Japan plays a major part in the book trade, with many Japanese-language versions of foreign books available in any bookstore. About 5,000 translated works, most from English, are published in Japan annually (Aspect, 2006). Translation has always been important in Japan, from the early translations of the Chinese classics to the modern period's influx of translations of western books. It has provided one of Japan's major sources of information from other parts of the world. Around ten per cent of the books published each year are translations, mostly from English (Kondo & Wakabayashi, 1998: 492). What emerges is a picture of a highly literate population reading widely both domestic and translated books. The intricate writing system, although it may pose problems for children with learning difficulties or for recent migrants, is no barrier to the reading habits of the general public. Those habits are undergoing some change, in part owing to changes in the nature of publishing outlets, in part owing to the influence of electronic media and in part simply owing to the pressures of everyday life. Nevertheless, publishing and reading remain strong elements in Japan's language profile.

Japan has a range of language policies in place at national level, administered by a diverse collection of ministries and other government organizations. Policies relating to the national language and to the teaching of English in schools are administered by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), before 2001 known as the Ministry of Education (MOE). Policies relating to other languages and to the teaching of Japanese overseas are implemented by the following bodies:

- Ainu maintenance (The Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture, set up by the Hokkaido Development Agency and the Ministry of Education in September 1997);
- teaching of Japanese as a foreign language overseas (The Japan Foundation, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs);
- foreign language teaching in schools, while under the control of MEXT in terms of curriculum, is supported by the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program for foreign language teaching (under the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations [CLAIR], administered by three ministries, set up in 1987).

In addition to the official policies, informal language policies are adminis-

tered by the print and visual media, which have strict regulations concerning the kinds of language that cannot be used in print or on screen because it is likely to offend readers / viewers. Other informal language promotion agencies concerned with other languages – i.e. Chinese, English, French, German, Spanish – are active in Japan (see List of Language Regulators http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_language_regulators).

Of the current cluster of policies relating to the Japanese language itself, all deal with the written language, specifically with the orthography. In the case of Japanese, although the writing system had already existed for well over 1,000 years, there was much to be done in the 20th century in order to shape the written language to modern needs. Contemporary policies are the result of almost a century of deliberation on how best to rationalize what was formerly a much more unwieldy system of writing. The major policies in force today are:

- List of Characters for General Use, 1981;
- Modern Kana Usage, 1946, revised in 1986;
- Guide to the Use of Okurigana, 1959, revised in 1973;
- Notation of Foreign Loanwords, 1991.

The current List of Characters for General Use is the outcome of a revision of the earlier List of Characters for Interim Use, 1946, and also incorporates two earlier policies, one on the *on* and *kun* readings for characters (1948) and another on character shapes (1949). These policies were adopted by Cabinet on the basis of reports from the National Language Council, the body – located within the then Ministry of Education – responsible from 1934 to 2001 for investigating language matters and formulating recommendations for policy. In 2001 the Council was reorganized into the National Language Subdivision – the body in charge of language policy relating to *kokugo* – within the Committee for Cultural Affairs in the Agency for Cultural Affairs within the new MEXT super-ministry.

The irony of these policies setting out guidelines for orthography is that they are binding on government (including the education system and all government publications) but not on anyone else. The press largely adopted them voluntarily from the beginning and was indeed instrumental in pushing for them, since rationalization of the orthography was in the media's interest both in terms of printing technology and of boosting circulation figures. Private usage, however, is entirely up to the individual, although most people, having been socialized into writing in accordance with the policies through their years in the education system, write accordingly.

As previously noted, the contemporary List of Characters for General Use recommends a total of 1,945 characters necessary for general everyday writing, but recognizes that writing in specialist fields may require many more. The earlier List of Characters for Interim Use (1946) was slightly trimmer at 1,850 characters, but was more prescriptive in its intent, describing the policy in terms of 'limits' rather than in terms of the current more relaxed 'guidelines.' The 1,945 characters are taught during the nine years of compulsory education; the first 1,006 – known as the 'Education Kanji' – accounting for 90 per cent of the characters used in newspapers, are taught during the six years of elementary

school. The early 21ˢᵗ century situation is very different from that pertaining 100 years ago. It has been necessary to draw up contemporary policies because in the early Meiji Period (1868–1912), when Japan came out of its period of self-imposed feudal isolation and began to modernize in response to both external and internal pressures, the characters in theory available for use numbered in the tens of thousands. Many were much more complex in form than today's somewhat simplified versions.

Major dictionaries list different numbers of characters; the largest, the *Daikanwa Jiten*, records almost 50,000, including those needed to read the classics. A 1933 survey of school readers, newspapers and literary works found a total of 6,478 characters used in those sources (Hayashi, 1977: 112–114). The size of this available character set has not diminished; the characters are still there, but policy priorities have now been set for which ones are of most general use and should therefore be taught in schools.

Quite early in the modern period, it became clear that the writing system needed rationalization, partly as a result of increased contact with European languages and partly as a result of the perception that the many years needed to master the existing writing system hindered the rapid acquisition of knowledge needed for modernization through the national education system established in 1872. A call emerged for a decrease in the number of characters for general use or, indeed, for the complete abolition of characters in favour of one of the phonetic *kana* scripts or the Roman alphabet (Twine, 1991). These early ideas on script reform, however, could not succeed. From the 1870s to the 1890s the still deeply held pre-modern upper-class view of what constituted appropriate writing for public consumption placed great importance on adherence to classical and pseudo-classical Sino-Japanese literary conventions; the men then in power had been educated in this tradition and accepted it as a given. Prior to the modern period, characters had been the preserve of the upper classes (aristocrats and samurai) who had both leisure and sponsored education available to master their use. Education for the lower classes was self-sponsored at temple schools and other places and was marked by a concentration on literacy in *kana* and basic *kanji* rather than by the heavy emphasis on the rote learning of the Chinese classics that was the hallmark of upper class education. Characters were invested with a weighty cultural mystique; despite the fact that they had been imported from China, they had come to be seen as icons of the essence of Japanese culture, an association that they still carry. Suggestions that the number of characters might be rationalized, or that they might be replaced with a different script, were very much frowned upon by the men in power, concerned not only with modernizing the country but also with preserving its cultural heritage in the face of potential Western imperialism. As the modern period wore on, an increasing number of journalists, educators, novelists and civil rights educators, motivated by pragmatic concerns in their own fields to do with literacy and the spreading of ideas, called for some sort of rationalization of the orthography. The writing system was not the only concern; other needs included the development of a written style based on modern spoken Japanese rather than on archaic literary conventions as well as the designation of a standard language understood from one end of the archipelago to the

other despite the multiplicity of dialects, thereby helping to unite the nation and foster a sense of national unity and identity (Twine, 1991).

The resolution of these issues was greatly aided by the return in 1894 from study in Germany of Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1937), the first Western-trained linguist in Japan. Ueda founded the linguistics department of the then Tokyo Imperial University (now Tokyo University) which trained many of the men who were to become influential in Japan's 20th-century language moderni-zation movement. As an undergraduate at the university, Ueda had studied under the British scholar, Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850–1935), and had been influenced by Chamberlain's views on style and script reform for Japanese; he was prepared from the start to join the groundswell of opinion in Japan in the late 1890s calling for language modernization, and his postgraduate study in linguistics had led him to view script as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself. Japan's defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 also helped, as the subsequent upsurge of nationalism prompted a re-examination of the national language, which was now to be used outside Japan in the new colony of Taiwan. Ueda established the Linguistics Society in 1898, participated actively in other language-related pressure groups and lobbied a sympathetic Education Minister for a national body to oversee language matters. As a result, the first national body to deal with language issues, the National Language Research Council, was set up within the Ministry of Education in 1902, with a four-fold charge:

- to look into the feasibility of replacing characters with a phonetic script (either *kana* or the alphabet);
- to encourage the widespread use of a written style based on modern speech;
- to examine the phonemic system of Japanese; and
- to select a standard language from among the dialects.

The Council was responsible for many of Japan's first large-scale language surveys, documenting and classifying information that would in time provide the basis for policy decisions by later bodies. Nothing ever came of the first of the tasks, but one result of the Council's work was that the standard language came to be defined as the speech of educated people in the Yamanote district of Tokyo. The government could see the utility of standardization in education and was prepared to support this. With this one exception, however, no lasting policies were formulated before the Council disappeared in an administrative shuffle in 1913. The official view was that to tamper with the existing writing system, even with the commendable aim of improving it, was tantamount to an attack on the nation's cultural heritage. Attempts to arrive at script policies in the first half of the 20th century were characterized by an unevenly weighted struggle between linguists (who regarded script as secondary to language) and ultranationalists (who regarded the orthography as a sacrosanct icon of national spirit). Govern-ment input into language planning was restored when the Interim National Language Research Council was inaugurated in 1921, but the Interim Council was replaced in 1934 by the National Language Council that remained in charge of language policy formulation until 2001. Since the Interim Council was charged

with finding solutions to aspects of language use which caused difficulties in daily life and education, its members elected to investigate plans to limit characters, to revise *kana* spellings and to rationalize such conventions as the multiple *on* and *kun* readings a character could have. In 1923 the Interim Council proposed a list of 1,962 characters for general use; in 1924, it proposed a change to *kana* spelling based on modern Tokyo pronunciation; and in 1926, it proposed simplification of character shapes. Despite strong support from major newspapers that were keen to see character limits adopted as policy, the proposals (and particularly the *kana*-related one) resulted in a virulent backlash from conservatives, and the government did not accept the proposals. Several years later, in 1931, a revised version of the *kana* proposal almost succeeded when the Education Ministry of the day decided, in the face of ultranationalist opposition, to implement it in textbooks once it had been passed by the Educational Administration Committee; however, a change of minister occurred before that happened, and the Prime Minister shelved the proposal on the grounds that national unity took precedence over the likely social controversy the change would cause. As long as the military, holding rigid views on the sanctity of tradition, held power nothing could be done about script reform. When the subsequent National Language Council offered another proposal to limit characters in 1942, Japan had already been at war for a long time and the *kotodama* (i.e. the spirit of the Japanese language) ideology (never to be altered) had become even more deeply entrenched. During World War Two, those who openly advocated script reform were vilified by right-wing interests; foreign loanwords such as *beesubooru* (baseball) were dropped in favour of Sino-Japanese equivalents; in one incident in 1939 a group of Waseda University students who advocated Romanization were accused of anti-nationalist sympathies and were arrested by the secret police. In this atmosphere the status quo held; the term *language policy* was perceived to refer only to the spread of the Japanese language in the conquered territories and not to the management of language issues at home. Thus, much remained to be done to allow the written Japanese of the early modern period to develop into contemporary written Japanese, but the potential was impeded by vested intellectual and political interests and a strong ultranationalist philosophy; it took the major cultural and intellectual shift resulting from defeat in World War Two to break this stalemate. The purging of right-wing powerbrokers and the concurrent emphasis during the Allied Occupation on democracy provided an atmosphere for both an ideological and a practical break with the past, including the issue of script reform. Members of the National Language Council trying to proceed with reform wisely tapped into the zeitgeist, arguing that the writing system made it needlessly difficult for all sectors of the populace to participate in the written debate on public life in postwar Japan and was thus not democratic. Since the 1946 Constitution located sovereignty in the people of Japan and not in the Emperor, this proved a particularly effective line of reasoning.

When, after a three-year wartime hiatus, the National Language Council reconvened in 1945, the majority of members decided upon a moderate approach, rejecting radical proposals:

- that characters be dropped altogether,
- that the shapes of the more complex ones be modified,

- that *kana* spelling be brought into line with modern pronunciation, and in general
- that related changes aimed at reducing complexity were appropriate.

The policies presently in operation emerged over the following decade out of this compromise, with proposals being first submitted to the Minister as reports from the Council and then being officially promulgated once accepted by Cabinet. Since these policies were binding on government departments, they were disseminated through school textbooks so that the postwar and subsequent generations of school children grew up under their influence. The policies were subsequently slightly revised during the period from 1965 to 1991 as the result of a request for a re-evaluation from the Education Minister, under pressure from a resurgence of conservative opinion fearing that literacy standards had become inferior to those prewar; these changes were largely cosmetic, involving no substantial reversal of direction. Only a few characters were added to the list for general use in 1981, and the revised *kana* spelling remained unchanged. While it appeared that script policy matters had been settled, they do in fact receive ongoing attention even at present, driven by technological developments. Once the Council had produced the last of the current policies in 1991, it turned its attention to the spoken language, producing reports (but not policies) that discussed the use of honorifics and the influx of loanwords from other languages, in particular English. The development of character-capable word processing technology had brought changes to the way Japanese is written. The size of the character set meant that Japan had not experienced a successful typewriter age; while companies certainly did use Japanese typewriters, they were large, clumsy machines requiring specially trained operators, and they never reached the speeds possible with a conventional keyboard. Later, fax technology made it possible to transmit handwritten documents. Consequently, current script policies were predicated on a culture of handwriting shaped by the need to recognize, remember and accurately reproduce a large number of characters; since the invention of the first character-capable word processor (1978) and the subsequent rapid uptake of this technology and its later extension to the Internet has undermined the pillars which had supported postwar script policy. Word-processing software contains many thousands more characters than the 1,945 on the List of Characters for General Use. For a time, until users became accustomed to viewing the technology as a bonus rather than as a source of exotic effects, documents looked somewhat 'blacker' owing to an increase in the proportion of characters in the text. Some very complex characters – long gone from the official lists – also made an occasional comeback in electronically produced documents. Inexperienced users sometimes made mistakes by using the wrong characters from the list of homophones offered by the memory to fit their typed-in phonetic input. The fact that so many characters had become available on demand led some academics and publishers to suggest that language policy might need to be changed to accommodate the presence of the technology, perhaps by altering the current policy so that fewer are taught for reproduction and more are taught for recognition. The Council, recognizing the challenges, was nevertheless slow to respond, choosing instead to focus mainly on rationalizing the shapes of those characters not on the List of Characters for

General Use to be used in computers. However, the 2005 report of the Council's successor (the National Language Subdivision of the Committee for Cultural Affairs) acknowledged that technology was having an effect on how people wrote and announced that it would soon embark on a thorough reappraisal of the existing policy on characters. This move is timely. The proportion of Japan's population who grew up in the period when handwriting was the norm is rapidly ageing, subsequent generations never having known a time when electronic character input and output were not possible.

Written culture in the 21st century includes a technology-mediated aspect that has definite implications for script policy, and changes in script policy are likely. High rates of accessing the Internet by mobile phone and text messaging make Japan distinctive in the transnational arena; cheap messaging available through Internet-mode (a wireless service launched in Japan by DoCoMo in 1999 which enables e-mails to be exchanged between mobile phones) means that e-mail messaging rather than talk is the major use for those phones in Japan, contributing to a type of innovative use of language not envisaged by those who drew up the current script policies. Not only is the language used in messaging more often free of the formality of other written text, it has the added dimension of variations in script use – i.e. greater use of the *kana* script where characters would normally be used. All these things are the focus of current examination by the National Language Subdivision as the beginning of a major shift in policy outlook at the national level in response to now well-entrenched challenges to former ways of using the orthography.

As noted, the National Language Council, after 1991, turned its attention to spoken aspects of the national language. Along with the previously mentioned change in the status of dialects, other aspects of language use were also addressed. Members of the older generation often feel that language standards are being eroded. The National Language Council's report on *Language Policy for a New Era*, for example, noted, 'Most older people rely on linguistic practices that are traditional and typical, and tend to be critical of or feel alienated from the new ways in which younger people speak.' The term used to express these misgivings is *kotoba no midare* (disorder in the language). Two major foci for such perceptions are the increase in loanwords and the supposedly declining use of honorifics. New technologies, in particular information technology, have led to an increase in the number of foreign loanwords in circulation, many of them replacing perfectly good Japanese equivalents. Furthermore, young people seem not to be able to use the complicated system of honorifics in the way that their parents do, making this matter one of the major issues in intergenerational transmission of the language. Concern about *kotoba no midare* is not a new phenomenon, having been a frequently recurring theme in discourse about the national language since the late 18th century. These perceptions of declining ability across all language skills continued a trend that has been apparent since the surveys began in 1995. Many respondents spoke of their belief in a clear connection between the gaps in today's abilities and the erosion of time available for studying honorifics, proverbs and *kango* since the introduction in recent years of the new Courses of Study aimed at a more relaxed curriculum. The government's response was to announce that, as one arm of a strategic plan to foster Japanese able to speak English well, 200 schools at all three

levels of education nationally would be designated flagship Japanese language education providers, with a special emphasis on fostering advanced reading and writing skills, on knowledge of the classics and oral communication skills and on the basis that a good command of students' first language is a prerequisite for successful acquisition of a foreign language. The use of loanwords was to a certain extent unavoidable, given the nature of globalization, and this was bound to be particularly the case in specialist areas such as information technology. In non-specialist areas, however, caution has been urged: to use words not universally understood could impede communication, particularly with older people. Since it is younger people who most enthusiastically adopt loanwords, it was thought intergenerational communication might suffer as a result. The six years of compulsory English study at junior and senior high school no doubt contribute to the high proportion of loanwords from English (Honna, 1995), but the fact of their existence does not guarantee comprehension. In 2002, Prime Minister Koizumi took direct action to counter this problem when he instituted a committee to study the matter under the auspices of the National Institute for Japanese Language, a group that issued four reports between 2003 and 2006 recommending the replacement of certain loanwords with Japanese equivalents.

On the matter of honorifics, it appears that knowing when the use of such language was appropriate in the interests of smooth communication had become more important than the correct forms of the honorifics themselves – a move away from the more prescriptive past attitudes towards a more holistic view of language and communication. Interestingly, whereas a 1952 report on polite speech by the Council had criticized the overuse of honorifics and euphemisms by women, a similar investigation conducted in the early 1990s found no significant difference between the language of men and women in this respect. The less formal language used in text messaging and email has had a definite effect on language use, in areas as diverse as forgetting how to write *kanji* and traditional letter forms, an increase in abbreviations and neologisms, and a loss of nuance. There is a clear tendency to abbreviate characters in online chat and text messaging, including the highly specialized and ludic *gyaru moji* (girl script – qv) that manipulates characters in ways unforeseen by policy makers. The informal text practices used in email chat groups and phone texting are likely to become a subject of discussion in terms of literacy practices in the future. This discussion has highlighted the centrality of the language to concepts of national identity, the central role of the orthography in this, the importance of language policies regulating that orthography and the manner in which they were developed, and the significant challenges now being posed to the current policy stance by electronic media and to concepts of 'proper' writing by mobile phone text messaging. Far from the fossilized and static concept of 'the national language' presented in the monolingual *kokugo* myth, the language itself is a vital organic entity that is constantly evolving, often in ways that provoke controversy among its users.

Taiwan

The island of Taiwan lies some 120 kilometers off the southeastern coast of mainland China, across the Taiwan Strait, and has an area of 35,801 square

kilometers (13,823 square miles) (see *Wikipedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwan>, consulted 4 November 2007.) About 80 per cent of the people in Taiwan (*Minnaruren*) belong to the Hoklo ethnic group and speak both Standard Mandarin (officially recognized by the ROC as the National Dialect) and Taiwanese (a variant of the Min Nan dialect spoken in the costal provinces of Fujian and Guandong). Mandarin is the primary language of instruction in schools and dominates radio and television; however, non-Mandarin dialects have recently undergone a revival in public life in Taiwan. The Hakka, about 15 per cent of the population, speak a distinct Hakka dialect. Aboriginal minority groups – about 1.7 per cent of the population – still speak their native languages, although most also speak Mandarin. English is a common second language, and it is also featured on several of Taiwan's education exams.

Japan and Taiwan fit together more clearly as their histories partially merged from 1895 to 1945 (see the monograph by Gottlieb elsewhere in this volume), but prior to that Taiwan had an extremely complicated linguistic history. Evidence of human settlement in Taiwan dates back 30,000 years, although the first inhabitants of Taiwan may have been genetically distinct from any groups currently on the island. The Austro-Polynesian aboriginal people arrived in Taiwan 6,000 to 8,000 years ago from the southeast coast of the Asian continent. They soon became divided into two groups: the *Pingpu Zu* (plains people), and the *Gaoshan Zu* (mountain people), each group divided into nine tribal configurations. Most aboriginal groups in Taiwan have their own languages that, unlike Taiwanese or Hakka, do not belong to the Chinese language family, but rather belong to the Austronesian language family. The extent of contact with the mainland is not clearly recorded; in 230 CE, during the Three Kingdoms period, Emperor Sun Chuan tried unsuccessfully to conquer the island, and in the 13th century Kublai Khan (1260–1295) made two similarly futile attempts. The Dutch invaded the southern part of the island in 1624, and in 1625 the Spanish invaded the northern part of the island. The Spanish were driven out in 1648 by the Dutch, who ruled the island from 1624 to 1661. In 1662, Zheng Cheng-kong (a.k.a. Koxinga) and his family achieved authority over Taiwan and kept it for 21 years (1662–1683). This period was followed by Ch'ing Dynasty domination from 1683 to 1895; during the early years of this period there was a wave of immigration from the mainland, bringing immigrants from Fujian Province and, slightly later, speakers of Hakka. In 1895, following China's defeat in the first Sino-Japanese war, the island was ceded to Japan, which occupied the island until the end of World War Two in 1945. Over that long period of time (1662 –1945) the aboriginal people were increasingly marginalised, and the Han people achieved great numerical superiority – in 1895 Han inhabitants already outnumbered aboriginal people, and by 1905 there were 2,970,000 Chinese vs. 113,000 aboriginal people – outnumbered by a mass more than 25 times as great.

The influence of Japanese, over a 50-year long occupation, was extensive; Japanese was mandated in all public domains, and Taiwanese was prohibited. Thus, in 1945, most Taiwanese could not use their first language beyond the home registers. And even in those registers, many Japanese loan words were employed. This was completely consistent with larger Japanese policy; i.e.:

- to make the people understand the position of the colonies as members of the East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere (*Dai Töa Kyöeiken*),
- to make them aware of the true meaning of the New Order in that Sphere, and
- to foster among them a new culture based on the self-awareness of the people as Orientals.

Japanese language policy centred primarily on education. Instruction in *kokugo* and in Japanese ethics 'served to mould the outlook of . . . [the] youth and to instil in them a respect for Japan and its political institutions' (Peattie, 1984: 188). In other words, the policy in the colonies of Japan, amassed over a half century between 1895 and 1945, was assimilation into Japan, Japanese ethics, and Japanese language (Coulmas, 2002: 214–217). People educated during the Japanese period (1900 – 1945) used Japanese as the medium of instruction. Some in the older generations speak only the Japanese they learned at school and the Taiwanese they spoke at home and are unable to communicate with many in the modern generations who speak only Mandarin.

There is a need at this point to look at events on the China mainland as these provide the historical background for post-1945 Taiwan. In this section there is an overlap with materials in the final monograph on Chinese characters. When the Republic of China was established in 1911, the country was composed of more than 50 ethnic groups, each speaking one or more languages representing the Sino-Tibetan, Austronesian, Altaic, and Indo-European language families. The Han group was by far the largest, accounting for more than 90 per cent of the population; however, this population was not in any sense homogeneous – rather it consisted of seven major dialect groups:

Mandarin 70%,	Wu 8.4%,	Xiang 5%,	Cantonese 5%,
Min 4.2%,	Hakka 4% and	Gan 2.4%.	

Clearly, such diversity significantly interfered with national unification and political, economic and social development. As early as the end of the Qing dynasty, China's leaders realized that, in order for China to become a strong nation, it would need a national language. Additionally, they realized that the matter of widespread illiteracy had to be addressed. This matter was not really addressed until the time of the Republic, but as recently as the mid-1950s it was estimated that between half and two-thirds of the adult population were functionally illiterate, and the representation among women and girls was significantly higher than among males. Thus, two enormous language-planning problems faced the national leaders of the new republic:

- Which dialect would be selected to be the national language?
- How could it be written so that the masses could learn it in the shortest possible time?

The government began to address the two issues immediately; on 10 July 1912 a meeting on education was convened at the Offices of the Ministry of

Education (MOE) in Beijing. An important resolution was passed requiring the immediate organization of a Committee for the Unification of Pronunciation (CUP). It was agreed that the Committee would have three major functions:

- to examine and standardize the pronunciation of all the words in the National Language (NL);
- to analyze the phonemes of the NL and to determine their number;
- to adopt phonetic alphabets – one symbol for each phoneme.

The 45-member Committee was convened and empanelled on 13 February 1913 as a subcommittee of the MOE. The issue of determining the NL was discussed at length in that initial meeting; there were two candidates: Mandarin and Cantonese. Even though Mandarin was the most obvious choice, the CUP adopted a compromise – an artificial version of Mandarin with important features from major dialects added. This compromise was perceived to be inappropriate for two primary reasons:

- there were no native speakers of this artificial variety to serve as teachers;
- a majority of Chinese people already spoke some type of Mandarin.

As a result, Peking Mandarin was recognized as the National Language, and the National Language Movement (NLM) was born. In 1932, without any announcement of radical changes, the *Pronouncing Dictionary of the National Language,* authorized by the MOE in 1919 on the basis of CUP recommendations, was quietly revised with the new title *National Pronunciation of Common Vocabulary*, containing 9,920 words and 2,299 synonyms based entirely on the educated speech of Peking, was reauthorized by the MOE and was disseminated.

While all this activity was ongoing, another dispute was working its way through the government; what writing system would be selected for the proclaimed National Language? (The following monograph in this volume – Chinese Character Modernization in the Digital Era: A Historical Perspective – deals with this problem in greater detail.) It had been decided, at the 1912 meeting previously mentioned, that characters were to be kept intact but that an auxiliary system of phonetic alphabets – to be devised by the CUP – was to be adopted for education. It was gradually decided that the traditional transcribing alphabet (rather than the Latin alphabet) should be adopted as the official phonetic (transcribing) device (a device roughly between the Latin alphabet and the Japanese syllabary) supplementing the characters. The effect was that the transcribing alphabet – consisting of 25 consonants, 3 glides, 12 vowels and 4 tones – looked exactly like the simplified Chinese characters. On 23 November 1916, the transcribing alphabets were authorized by the MOE. More or less concurrently, in April 1929 the Committee for the Propagation of a Unified National Language (CPUNL) was founded; the CPUNL was charged with improve the transcribing alphabets by way of a system known as the National Phonetic Symbols. In 1928, the MOE, on the recommendation of the CPUNL, authorized a Romanization system for transcription – known as the second form of the National Phonetic Symbols (NPS2); that system was largely developed by Chao, C.R. and Lin Yu-Tang, and it endured until 1984.

As the preceding remarks suggest, there was much activity during the first