

Symbolic Values of Foreign Language Use

Contributions to the Sociology of Language

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Symbolic Values of Foreign Language Use

From the Japanese Case to a
General Sociolinguistic Perspective

by
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**In loving memory of
my wife Anna-Liisa**

Preface

Most parts of this book deal with the language situation in modern Japan, a fact which should not dim the curiosity of potential readers who are not familiar with Far Eastern cultures or to whom a country such as Japan is of minor interest. Although the findings in this study will, it is hoped, be of use to Japanologists and other experts on Japan, the presentation of the research results is not meant to address groups of specialists whose scholarly work is related exclusively to Japan, its language, and culture. On the contrary, my main concern is to address a wide array of language-and-culture specialists (sociolinguists, anthropologists, language teachers) for whom the investigation that has been carried out in the Japanese context might provide an incentive for similar research projects in other countries. To my knowledge, the subjects treated here have never before been the target of scientific research in any country. This is one of the reasons why, in this book, the situation in Japan is predominantly analyzed and, at present, a comparative view of the pertinent problems treated here has to be limited. In order to achieve a broader basis for comparison, sociolinguistic fieldwork is needed in other cultural settings, and this requires the cooperation of potential researchers who are not specialists in Japanese affairs. So, for different reasons, the findings of this study might promote further research in the vast problem area of language contacts and ethnic identity, and experts on Japan as well as sociolinguists and anthropologists with general interests will hopefully participate in this process.

Since the opening of Japan to the Western world in the second half of the nineteenth century, Japanese society has undergone changes which are mainly a consequence of the adoption of Western cultural items and patterns of lifestyle. As regards the Japanese language, thousands of borrowings have penetrated its lexical structures. To a Western observer it is amazing that Japanese culture has never been disrupted, and that modern industrialized society in Japan is based on Japanese social values. This persistence is astounding in a double sense. On the one hand, Japanese culture has been strong enough to absorb a multitude of foreign elements for more than a hundred years without losing the basic shape of its traditional patterns. One of the basic cultural patterns, for instance, is the network of writing systems

in Japan. These complex writing systems have been kept alive to the present day, and they are fully integrated into the software programs of computer high technology. On the other hand, Japanese culture is strong enough to tolerate a network of foreign language use in its own society. Although some aspects of societal multilingualism in the Japanese context resemble the settings in countries with a colonial import of Western cultural traditions (e.g. India, Vietnam, Philippines, Hong Kong), there is no weakening of basic features in the mosaic of modern Japanese culture. Foreign languages and their prestige functions are additional stones in this mosaic of cultural patterns, but their role cannot be misunderstood as superseding traditional patterns of social and speech behavior among the Japanese.

When reference is made in this study to foreign language use in an almost monolingual country such as Japan, a sociolinguist would probably expect a thematical approach, such as the studies in the volume edited by Fishman, Cooper, and Conrad (1977). But, although much is said about the practical use of English in Japanese public life, such remarks do not play a role in the present study other than that of providing background information. The foreign language use outlined here is that of symbolic values which are attributed to a non-national language by non-native speakers. At first sight, this seems to lead to research on attitudes toward a foreign (or additional) language used for practical communicative purposes. In the case of Japan, however, it is obvious that the practical usage of foreign languages (i.e. the business world, academic contacts, administrative usage, etc.) is of less importance for the shaping of attitudes than the fanciful usage (i.e. outside the realm of practical communication), which is meant to create moods among the Japanese public. To clear up any doubt, symbolic values as attributed to the use of English, French, German, and other languages are the key to understanding attitudinal problems.

Japanese mass media, especially those forms using commercials, are a "playground" for foreign language use which is not intended to transfer information, but rather to appeal to the readers' and TV viewers' feelings. The emotional impact of this usage can hardly be overestimated, and Japanese mass media producers base their strategies for reaching the public on widespread prestige values. Whereas Japanese is the basic means for the transfer of practical information, foreign languages (such as English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, and a number of others) predominantly serve as "exotic spices" in

order to titillate the visual and auditory senses of the public. Along with Japanese, English also functions as a means of information transfer, e.g. bilingual or monolingual English programs on television, English press in Japan, etc. The symbolic values of English, however, have a greater impact on shaping stereotypes concerning American and British cultures and ideas of a "cosmopolitan" lifestyle than any practical information transfer.

The symbolic values of foreign languages and their use in Japan are analyzed here for the first time in terms of Japanese ethnicity. A social psychological approach to the role of the English language for Japanese people has already been presented (see Hildebrandt — Giles 1980). This study, however, does not look at the problems relating to the symbolic functions of English in Japanese public life. The present study claims that symbolic values of English shape Japanese identity to a decisive degree, and that foreign language use is a mirror of Japanese mentality. Such an interpretation of the role of English in Japanese society goes far beyond the social psychological attempt mentioned above. English as a symbol of modernity can be best understood when it serves as a companion to other foreign languages, including French and German, which attract their own special prestige values. Any of these languages can be used along or in combination with Japanese, thus forming bilingual varieties of symbolic values in the whole mosaic of foreign language use. Any of these bilingual patterns, however, are meant for the great majority of monolingual Japanese. As there is no equivalent in the Japanese speech community to Japanese-English, Japanese-French and other bilingual patterns, this use of bilingualism is impersonal and restricted to the mass media.

Symbolic functions of foreign language use as specified for the Japanese settings in this study have to be understood as phenomena of a world-wide trend. English, and to a lesser degree also French, serve as vehicles of stereotyping views of Western lifestyles (i.e. English as the symbol of modernity, French as the symbol of female elegance) in many communities where these world languages are foreign. An attempt is made in this study to assign symbolic values as associated with foreign language use a role in the world-wide trend of internationalization. As regards the role of English, the major vehicle of internationalization, three main functions are distinguished. One is the role of English as a world language in intercultural relations, the other its impact on lexical modernization, especially in the technical and technological fields, of communicational means in many

countries with non-English speaking populations. The third function is the use of English for the purpose of symbolizing a modern lifestyle, a use which remains beyond the ranges of practical communication or intercultural relations. This latter function, which incorporates all the symbolic values attributed to English as a foreign language, is defined as symbolic internationalization.

Foreign language use in the mass media, and in the field of commercial advertising, in particular, is a prominent factor of symbolic internationalization. As such, it has been the target of sociolinguistic research in the present study. The analysis of symbolic values of foreign languages as used in Japanese mass media yields findings which are a valuable basis for comparison. In order to make the working of symbolic internationalization transparent in its specifically Japanese context, some main features are discussed from a comparative view, with special attention being paid to settings in Western Europe. Among the parameters of comparison are preferences for foreign names for domestic products and trademarks, the use of English, French, and other languages for naming national (i.e. non-foreign) companies, shops, and agencies, the impact of foreign languages on the creation of texts in commercial advertising (e.g. English slogans, French expressions in an explanatory text for evoking the stereotype of "Frenchness") or their role in the lay-out of magazines. From a comparative perspective, preferences for foreign names reveal themselves to be an indicator of symbolic internationalization which enjoys a wide popularity in many communities. Japan participates in this general trend, especially in giving of foreign names to Japanese industrial commodities. As it seems, the Japanese settings differ considerably from others in that there is frequent use of English in the mass media, to the extent that mass media texts offer a particular parallelism in language usage: foreign expressions as components of the English code along with adopted borrowings from English as elements of the Japanese code. Arguably, this duality of language use in the framework of impersonal bilingualism is one of the outstanding features of symbolic internationalization, for which the Japanese settings deserve the special interest of sociolinguists.

I am grateful to the Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung (Bonn) and to the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (Tokyo) which granted me a fellowship from July 1982 to July 1985 for research in Japan. My thanks also go to the Hōsō-Bunka Foundation (Tokyo) which provided a grant for carrying out sociolinguistic fieldwork

(in cooperation with M. Waseda). Findings and evaluations resulting from this project are integrated in chapters (3) and (4). I would like to thank Prof. Joshua A. Fishman for his suggestion to evaluate the Japanese settings in a comparative perspective. As far as material and studies have been available, I have tried to exploit experiences for a comparative view on the working of symbolic internationalization. I would also like to express my thanks to Dr. Beverly Hill (Tokyo) and Eugene Holman (Helsinki) for their kind editorial assistance as well as for their critical comments on the text. Hopefully, the present study will stimulate research in the problem area of symbolic values of foreign languages in Japan and their role for Japanese identity. In addition, I hope that researchers looking for a challenge will carry out parallel fieldwork in other communities in order to produce findings which could be used for substantial comparison. Last, but not least, I hope that the weaknesses of the present study might be evaluated generously in view of the complexity of the subjects treated here.

Helsinki, November 1987

Harald Haarmann

Contents

Preface	vii
1. Prestige functions of foreign languages in Japanese society – A glance at ethnicity problems	1
2. Verbal strategies and multilingual patterns of language use in the Far Eastern context	53
3. Foreign elements in Japanese TV commercials – A quantitative and qualitative analysis	85
4. Attitudes toward foreign language use among Japanese TV viewers – An inquiry into the fashion of liking English	129
5. The impact of English on lexical modernization in sensitive domains of acculturation	159
6. Semiotic implications of foreign language use as a source of linguistic variation	219
7. Symbolic internationalization and intercultural relations – A world-wide trend in a comparative view	249
Bibliography	283
Subject Index	289
Index of Names	291

1. Prestige functions of foreign languages in Japanese society-

A glance at ethnicity problems

Japan is widely believed to be a monolingual country with a mono-ethnic population, views which are both incorrect. Some experts know that in Japan a number of ethnic minorities are scattered throughout the country. The best known minority, perhaps, is the Ainu in Hokkaido (see Refsing 1983), whose language is on the verge of extinction. Much research has been carried out in recent years on the most populous minority, the Koreans of Japan (see Lee 1983). They number about 0.75 million, with their main center of settlement in and around the city of Osaka. Japan has indigenous and immigrant minority groups as do many other so-called "monoethnic" countries (e.g., West Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Turkey, Greece). It must be acknowledged, however, that the total number of all minority members does not even account for two percent of Japan's total population, and that only the Koreans play a significant role in the regional economy of the country. Despite the fact that there are ethnic minorities in Japan, the Japanese people have not developed an identity as members of a multilingual society. On the contrary, it is the Japanese themselves who, through the channel of public education, create the image of a monoethnic country.

Any foreigner coming to Japan is surprised and puzzled by the extensive foreign language usage (alongside Japanese) in Japanese mass media. The foreign languages used as means of communication, however, are not the minority languages, but, notably, some of the world languages, including English, French, German, Spanish, and Italian. Although multilingualism in Japanese mass media (television, radio, magazines, newspapers, etc.) is a daily occurrence for millions of people, no serious approach has been made up to now to investigate the motives for such a special use of language or to relate the phenomenon to ethnic identity in modern Japanese society. It is specifically for this purpose that phenomena of mass media multilingualism are to be analyzed here. Although about ninety-eight percent of Japan's population is monolingual, the majority of these native speakers have

2 *Symbolic values of foreign language use*

developed additional features in their monolingual identity, namely, prestige functions of foreign languages.

As the Japanese people are monolingual, the multilingualism evident in Japanese mass media does not reflect multilingual communicational patterns in Japanese society. Therefore the phenomenon of multilingual usage in the mass media can be categorized as "impersonal multilingualism" (making use of a sociolinguistic term coined by Kloss 1969: 61). To obtain a general idea of the special use of foreign languages alongside Japanese, it is necessary to compare communicational patterns and verbal strategies in the mass media with patterns of Japanese speech in modern society. In other words, one has to compare the language use in the mass media with communicational patterns of colloquial Japanese. It has to be pointed out that communicational patterns involving foreign languages vary considerably within single domains of Japanese mass media. Of these, the domain of commercials displays the greatest variety and highest frequency of foreign language usage (alongside Japanese). Comparing the verbal strategies of the language in mass media with those of colloquial Japanese will enable us to specify significant differences between the two codes (see below).

A comparison between the language use in mass media and language techniques in colloquial Japanese carries a number of methodological implications which require some explanation. The comparison may concentrate on a macro- as well as on a microlevel. The microsociolinguistic analysis focuses on a comparison of features in mass media Japanese (Japanese used in mass media texts) versus colloquial Japanese. Such a comparison reveals variations in modern Japanese, and it is the linguist's task to clarify the relations between these two varieties of Japanese. A microsociolinguistic analysis, with the aim of specifying salient features which distinguish mass media Japanese from colloquial Japanese (i.e., syntactical, lexical features), will provide insights into a special aspect in the network of relations between the language use in mass media (especially in commercials) and in daily personal interaction. The whole network of relations, however, can be illustrated only within the framework of a macro-sociolinguistic analysis, thus taking into consideration all communicational means applied in modern Japanese society. This view broadens the comparison by including verbal strategies of all foreign languages. The most fundamental relation in a macroanalysis of modern language usage in Japan is therefore the following:

Multilingualism (as reflected in mass media communication; impersonal multilingualism in mass media language use)

versus

Monolingualism (as reflected in colloquial Japanese; monolingualism in the Japanese speech community)

This is a fundamental but by no means a simple relation between domains of language use in modern Japanese society. On the one hand, monolingualism in daily interaction is characterized by a strong impact of English as the predominating foreign contact language. On the other hand, however, the combinations of languages in multilingual communicational patterns (including or excluding the national language) vary considerably in different domains of the mass media. The relation **MULTILINGUALISM VERSUS MONOLINGUALISM**, therefore, does not indicate a schematic or static contrast, rather it has to be understood as a dynamic relationship between communicational patterns used under varying conditions and for different purposes.

As multilingualism is restricted to the domains of mass media communication, it is reasonable to specify all phenomena which are linked to multilingual patterns of language use as salient features of these domains. All verbal strategies of multilingual texts which have been illustrated in Haarmann (1986a:65ff.) are typical of language use in Japanese mass media and untypical of colloquial Japanese. Such language techniques play an essential part in the network of features which distinguish the language use in the mass media from other ranges of speech behavior. However, these features negatively define the communicational patterns of colloquial Japanese because they are absent from this realm of the language. Whenever or wherever multilingual strategies occur in modern communication in Japan, they are an indication of mass media language use. Phenomena of code switching may also occur in colloquial Japanese, but only among members of small bilingual communities. There are cases of code switching among bilingual Koreans (speaking Korean and Japanese), bilingual Chinese (speaking Chinese and Japanese), bilingual Americo-Japanese (offsprings of ethnically mixed marriages between Americans and Japanese), and bilingual Euro-Japanese (speakers of German and Japanese, French and Japanese, etc.). With respect to the great majority of monolingual Japanese, however, code switching phenomena are unknown in their use of colloquial Japanese.

4 *Symbolic values of foreign language use*

Japan is widely regarded as a country with a closed society, and this view can be generally agreed with. Although Japan has the most advanced industrialized society in the world, it has, at the same time, developed the most effective support mechanism of ethnic boundary marking. At first sight, one might consider multilingualism in the mass media to be a channel of foreign influence on Japanese language and society. Such a view, however, can be shown to be but a superficial perception in as much as the active use of foreign languages mostly follows standards which are "homemade", in Japan. There is no live exchange of information between Japan's population and other countries through the medium of English, French, or other languages, and Japanese mass media producers do not attempt to follow European or American standards when using foreign languages. They are interested in affecting a cosmopolitan feel, in making believe they are members of the world community. To be cosmopolitan is an essential of modern life, a mark of modernity.

The key to understanding multilingualism in Japanese mass media and the relationship of such communicational patterns to language preferences and stereotyping images popular among Japanese about Europe and North America is the prestige functions of foreign languages. Although all foreign languages utilized in Japanese mass media enjoy prestige, it is the English language which doubtlessly is the most fashionable. Anybody in Japan may tell you that it is fashionable to use English on different occasions and for different purposes, particularly among younger people, for whose speech behavior the language usage in the mass media sets basic standards. A general statement such as this, alone, however, does not explain the motives for such a use of foreign languages in a monolingual society.

The fact that foreign languages are frequently applied in the mass media because of their high prestige can only be explained by the positive attitudes many Japanese have toward foreign cultures in Europe and North America, in particular. Thus, the use of foreign languages in Japanese mass media has much to do with the views the Japanese hold about foreigners, their cultures, and languages. While investigating such views about foreigners, one learns much about the Japanese mentality and the Japanese themselves. The term *gaijin* (short form of *gaikokujin*) in Japanese is generally applied to all foreigners, referring mostly, however, to white foreigners. As most foreigners who came to Japan after it opened to the West in the second half of the nineteenth century (and still earlier) were white people,

the term *gaijin* reflects the experiences of the Japanese with white foreigners. As a matter of fact, in contrast to the use in many countries of expressions with negative connotations, such as the terms *yankee*, *gringo*, *žid* (Russian term for Jews), *Knoblauchfresser* ("garlic-eater", used by Germans referring to Turkish guest workers), etc., the term *gaijin* does not have such a negative connotation, and could even be called a venerating expression. Although many foreigners in Japan may not understand it as such, its venerating value is evident in expressions such as *gaijin-san* or *gaijin-no kata* (lit. "Mr. foreigner").

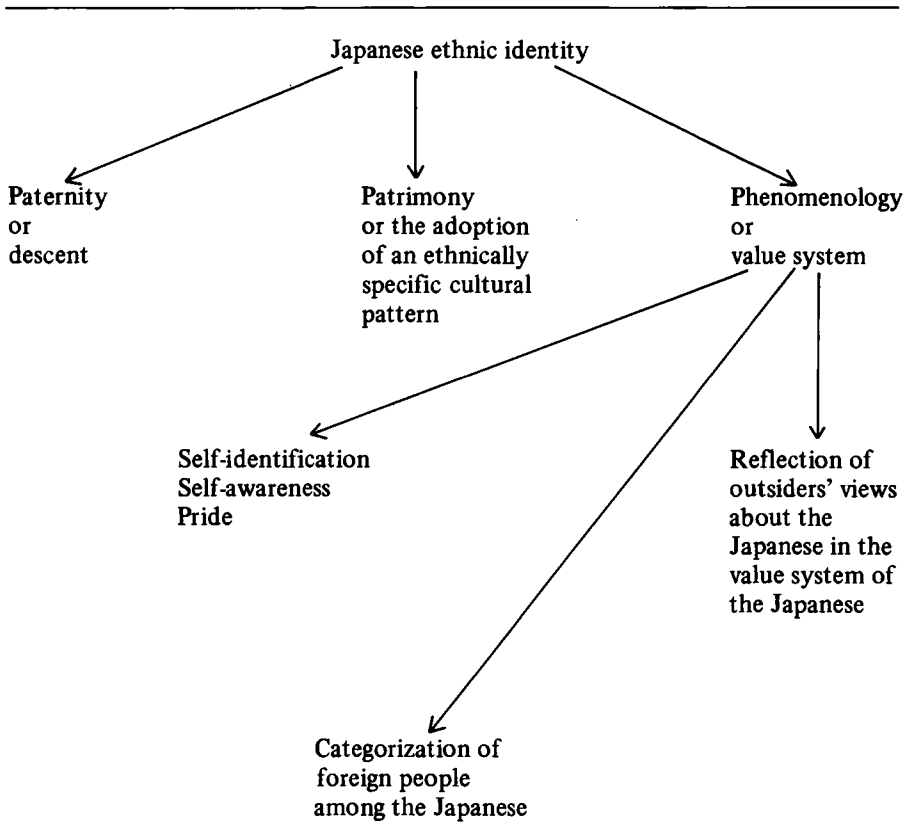
In discussing problems related to people's attitudes toward foreign cultures and their languages, it is necessary to take the relationship between language and ethnicity (ethnic identity) into consideration. Many experts in the field regard paternity (descent), patrimony (distinctive cultural patterns), and phenomenology (self-categorization) as the basic elements of ethnicity. With special reference to the latter element, Fishman (1977:16) distinguishes two aspects in connection with problems of evaluation:

Ethnicity is rightly understood as an aspect of a collectivity's self-recognition as well as an aspect of its recognition in the eyes of outsiders.

According to this view, Japanese ethnicity is characterized by self-awareness among the Japanese themselves, as well as by the reflection of such a self-categorization in the eyes of non-Japanese people. It seems reasonable to include attitudes toward foreigners as well, since these form a direct link between different ethnic groups and thus reveal ethnicity to be a phenomenon of interethnic relations. The Japanese view of foreigners, therefore, would be a third component in Japanese identity because it is closely associated with Japanese self-awareness. In connection with the question of so-called "multiple identities", I have tried to include the foreigner-related aspect of ethnicity (categorization of other ethnic groups) into the notion of phenomenology (see Table 1). Views which an ethnic group has about other groups are also an essential element of their self-awareness as a community distinct from other people. Thus, the image the Japanese have about other peoples (Americans, English, French, Germans, Koreans, etc.) is a reflection of Japanese identity, just as much as is their pride in their cultural heritage and language.

The images an ethnic group has about other peoples can be considered stereotyping, as such images refer to foreign cultures as a

Table 1 What makes a Japanese a Japanese?



Note. Despite the fact that phenomenology is the most complex cluster in ethnicity, it is patrimony in relation to language which is the most crucial factor of ethnic identity. The system of ethnic entities shown above, which together form a complex “ethnic identity”, is fully represented by Japanese in Japan who speak Japanese. Different is the identity of Japanese Americans who, in the second or following generations, have adopted English as their native language. For most Japanese Americans (or Americans of Japanese descent), the English language is the cultural vehicle of patrimony. The situation is similar among Chinese Americans.

whole. Given the fact that such images are widespread, they tend to include only the most general features. Stereotyping images about foreign cultures (including language as a cultural pattern) will here be called “ethnocultural stereotypes”. Ethnocultural stereotypes have always existed among peoples of different ethnic origin, and there

is enough evidence to suggest this has been true historically, before notions such as "nation" or "nationality" were shaped as concepts of political thought in Europe, starting at the end of the eighteenth century. Well known is the Greek term *barbaros*, which originally was applied to any foreigner whose language could not be understood. As most ethnic cultures surrounding the Old Greek civilization were considered to be inferior, the term *barbaros* carried all manner of negative connotations. Such connotations live on in modern languages which have adopted the term as an item of antique "cultural" heritage (English *barbarian*, French *barbare*, German *Barbar*, etc.). The attitude among northern French people toward ethnic cultures in France as being inferior to the French culture has deep roots and was thriving even before the French Revolution (see Gruber 1976 for the situation of the Occitan language and culture in the eighteenth century). The prestige which the French language has achieved as the national language of France since the nineteenth century is a reflection of older resentments and open discrimination of regional languages in France since the days of the French revolution (see Balibar – Laporte 1974).

Ethnocultural stereotypes may include schematic views about foreign people (as a community or ethnic collectivity), their culture, as well as their country. The Americans have had their stereotypes of the Mexicans as the latter have had of the Americans. The Swedes have held their stereotyping views of the Finns (and vice versa). For centuries, strong stereotyping images have been widespread among the Germans about the French, Italians, Russians, Turks, and other ethnic groups. In the Soviet Union, there is a broad variety of ethnocultural stereotypes. In Soviet Central Asia, there is resentment among Muslim nationalities (Uzbeks, Kirgiz, Tadzhiks, etc.) toward the atheist Russians, and the Russians themselves often regard Jews as second class Soviet citizens. In the Baltic republics, there seems to be a strong feeling of superiority over the Russians among the Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians (see Allworth 1977 for the latter). Stereotypes which are related to ethnic groups, cultures, and languages may change during the course of social and political development, but there is one fundamental feature in the nature of stereotypes which is universal in human society: the persistence of stereotypes, regardless of ideology, societal organization, or civilization. It can be regarded as a general phenomenon that ethnocultural stereotypes exist in any community, be it socialist or capitalist, totalitarian, or democratic. Stereotypes are a part of a community's ethnic identity which, in the role of

defensive manifestations including mistrust, intolerance, or discrimination toward other ethnic groups, also function as part of the support mechanism stabilizing a group's ethnicity.

The generalizing view many Japanese have about the foreigner is certainly an element in the support mechanism of Japanese identity. The *gaijin* is generally thought to be isolated in Japanese society because he has little access to Japanese language and culture. While stressing the isolation of the *gaijin*, Japanese people isolate themselves by making their language and culture stranger or less accessible than they actually are (see Miller 1982:102ff. for such attitudes). There are many foreigners in Japan and in the world who have mastered the Japanese language, and a considerable number among them may be regarded as Japan experts because they have contributed in research or teaching to the knowledge and understanding of Japanese culture. In day to day reality, many Japanese do not make a distinction between foreigners who have overcome the language barrier and those who have not managed to get a grasp of Japanese.

In modern industrialized societies of the Western world, it is generally agreed that ethnocultural stereotypes should be overcome through education aimed at reducing their effect on interethnic relations. One has to acknowledge that any kind of stereotype, including positive manifestations such as an uncritical admiration of or an unreflected esteem shown toward other ethnic groups, only serves the purposes of boundary marking in ethnic identity and not those of mutual understanding or improved cultural relations. It is interesting, however, to observe that in Japanese society, which has been strongly influenced by American political and social thought since the end of the Second World War, and which is believed to have rapidly developed a Western style of living, the attitude toward ethnocultural stereotypes is quite clearly unakin to that in the West. In meeting with Japanese stereotypes about other nations and cultures one encounters stereotyping in a pure and stable form such as is hardly to be found in any other modern industrialized society. Ethnocultural stereotypes about Americans, Europeans, and others, flourish among the members of all generations. Although one can no longer say that Japanese society is monolithic, it is nevertheless true that attitudes and evaluations among the Japanese have undergone little change compared with the astounding impact of Western influence in other areas of life in Japan. It is often said that Japanese youth have adopted attitudes and a way of thinking in recent years which is quite different

from that of their parents. Growing individualism, however, appears to be more an additional feature of the Japanese mosaic culture than a breaking away from established values.

Japanese people's attitudes toward foreigners include a broad panorama of positive and negative stereotypes. An American or Canadian is generally given high prestige (provided he has white skin). This is also true for West Europeans. Stereotypes about Westerners and their cultures took shape after Japan's opening to the west in the 1850s, and were mainly based upon experiences with Americans and Europeans. The attitude toward black Americans or Koreans is much different from the prestige given white foreigners. A Korean faces difficulties when trying to find an apartment or a job, and he may find himself in a position similar to that of the Turkish guest worker in Germany, who is forced into a ghetto life because of the negative stereotype maintained by the surrounding majority. The persistence of a variety of ethnocultural stereotypes, which, paradoxically, do not seem to have stirred any concern among educators, for example, or other members of Japanese society, despite the American influence regarding democratic thinking, etc., may be explained by several factors. First, most Japanese have little sustained, direct experience with foreign cultures. When they leave Japan to go abroad, it is mainly for business or in large sightseeing groups. Japanese tourists in a foreign country are normally members of a sizeable group escorted by a Japanese speaking guide, and they have little contact of any sort with the local people during their travels. Second, there are few foreigners in Japan, unlike the "open" societies in countries like the United States, Britain, France, or West Germany, where millions of people of different ethnic origin live together and where there is much motivation to change stereotyping attitudes. As the great majority of Japan's population has little experience with interethnic contact and intercultural relations, there is little reason to reflect about stereotypes and related clichés. The persistence of ethnocultural stereotypes is one clear indication of the relative isolation of Japanese society.

Japanese commercials in the mass media are a domain of communication where ethnocultural stereotypes and social clichés play the most active role in modern life. As the Japanese economy greatly depends on high speed production and sales, commercials on television and radio, in magazines and newspapers, as well as in the form of shop and spot advertising virtually pound the consumer's mind with seductive offerings to stimulate the buying of products. Commercials

play a key role as a factor in determining the pace of industrial production. Company managers know that sophisticated strategies in commercial production are as essential for the success of business as are international market shares. Commercials in the Japanese mass media are more sophisticated than in the U.S., and certainly more crammed with ethnocultural stereotypes than in any other country. Advertisers aim for a broad audience and rely on those elements in people's minds which can be easily mobilized to raise attention for a product. Stereotypes are the biggest reservoir of those elements. The ethnocultural stereotypes appealed to by the commercial sector appear in their positive manifestations, thus serving to underline the high prestige of the product and the producer's name. Thus, commercials are given an English, French, or Italian "touch" by advertisers to evoke the intended stereotype in the consumer's mind.

If a producer wants to emphasize the good quality and the reliability of a car model, he is guaranteed best success if he gives the model an English name (e.g., *bluebird*, *skyline*, *lancer*, etc.), and has it introduced by an American actor with a California landscape or the skyline of New York as background. If the elegance of a car model is to be stressed, the advertiser is best advised to give the car a French name (e.g., *ballade*, *mirage*, *gazelle*, etc.), and to have it introduced by a French VIP in an elegant quarter of Paris. A speedy sports car often has an Italian setting and an Italian name (e.g., *carina*, *leone*). It has to be pointed out here that the foreign names are chosen by Japanese producers for Japanese products with the aim of achieving the highest possible attractiveness to consumers in the *domestic* market. Japanese commercials address Japanese consumers, despite the appearance they may have of having been produced by foreign managers for a non-Japanese public. For the purposes of utilizing ethnocultural stereotypes, even texts in different languages are used in commercials. Although Japanese is the most frequently used language, there are other communicational means which also provide the right "stereotype injection", such as English, French, Italian, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. Commercial advertisers do not hesitate in presenting the most exotic settings (including language) to television viewers. A recent sensational example is that of a bushman from Namibia posing on the screen with a portable cassette recorder produced by a well-known electronics company, speaking to television viewers in his native language. The obvious effect intended by the producers was amazement that the prestige of company X was such that its products were known even to a bushman in Namibia.

English and French are used as communicational means alongside Japanese, whereas other languages are usually applied only in connection with product names, background music, and settings. To my knowledge, Japanese television is the only mass medium in an almost *monolingual* country which produces *multilingual* commercial texts (e.g., English-Japanese, French-Japanese, or English-French-Japanese texts alongside monolingual Japanese, English, or French texts). Whereas Japanese is neutral with respect to stereotype or prestige functions, all other communicational means are linked to those functions. English or French, thus, are not used without purpose, but with deliberate calculation. This means an English text cannot be replaced by a French text because English is associated with a different stereotype than French. The same is true for words and phrases from Italian, Spanish, German, Greek and other languages used in Japanese texts. In the following overview, I illustrate how features of stereotypes are attached to different products. In Haarmann (1986a:39ff.) I discussed stereotype functions for a variety of languages; here I concentrate on English and French.

<i>Language used in commercials</i>	<i>Features of a stereo- typing image associated with the language</i>	<i>Product attached to the stereotype</i>
ENGLISH	international appreciation reliability high quality confidence practical use practical life style	alcoholic drink, tennis racket car, tire, engine television set, stereo tape-recorder, cassette sports wear scooter
FRENCH	high elegance refined taste attractiveness sophisticated life style fascination and charm	fashion, watch, biscuit coffee, sweets, tasty food car, handbag interiors, furniture makeup, cream, perfume

Some languages reveal a restricted application in Japanese commercials. Spanish, Portuguese, Greek, or Finnish, for example, only play a certain role in product naming strategies as well as in background settings (photo or film settings). The Portuguese language is not used for product naming, but plays a role as the language in some settings. In one commercial, for example, the stereotype of the simple life in a rural area is evoked by typical Portuguese village scenery presented with a *fado* (melancholic Portuguese folksong) as background music. In another commercial with a Brazilian setting (featuring the skyline of Rio de Janeiro), a samba dancing Brazilian is shouting “*é isso aí*” (“that’s there”) to the audience. The role of foreign languages in commercial settings thus varies widely. Leaving out the most important languages such as English and French, which are both used in a variety of functions in the Japanese mass media, minor languages such as those listed above, often provide only single elements (isolated words) serving as requisites for the reproduction of stereotyping images about certain countries.

One could describe the handling of ethnocultural stereotypes in modern Japanese society as a conflict-free activity as this stereotyping refers to cultures abroad and not within Japan. Stereotyping seems to be one of the basic techniques of commercial settings, and it is in commercials where ethnocultural as well as social stereotypes find their strongest psychological backing. It is fashionable to “play” with ethnic symbols like cultural patterns and the related languages. This is obviously the philosophy of commercial agencies, and the Japanese public seems to enjoy the presentation of ethnocultural stereotypes as a kind of refined humor, thus reinforcing stereotyping trends among the consumers. Although the Japanese language itself is rarely the object of stereotyping the Japanese culture, there are a number of ethnic symbols which often serve to reproduce a clearly shaped image about “Japaneseness” in the mass media (and especially in advertising). As there is a steady flow of symbols relating to foreign cultures it seems plausible that – for the purpose of reassuring one’s self-identification and of underlining one’s ethnic character and cultural characteristics – “Japaneseness” has to be stressed correspondingly. In many cases of commercial settings (including screen presentation and the layout of magazines) a special signal is associated with Japanese ethnic symbols, and this is the foreigners’ name for Japan or the Japanese. Thus, “Japaneseness” is reflected in the mirror of foreigners’ attitudes. Some of those settings shall be mentioned here; e.g.

- Ekizochikku Japan* – slogan (in katakana writing for “exotic Japan” of Japan National Railways which is associated with ethnic symbols like Shinto or Buddhist shrines, Mount Fuji and Japanese landscapes; see below for administrative functions of English)
- Japanesque cushion* – reference to the typical Japanese floor-cushion with Japanese designs (cherry blossoms, peony blossoms)
- japanīzu akusesarī* – slogan (in katakana writing for “Japanese accessory”) in connection with the presentation of combs, pins, ribbons, small jewelry with Japanese designs
- jipangu system* – name of a Japanese-style sofa on the basis of floor-cushions in combination with a back support (*jipangu* or *zipangu* is the old European name for Japan)
- Japan life* – name of a Japanese product, namely a Japanese-style bed-cover (Jpns *futon*)

One of the most frequently applied Japanese ethnic symbols in mass media commercials is the Japanese woman dressed in a kimono. A foreigner may find it natural that this ethnic symbol is popular because it seems to be one of the elements in Japanese culture stable enough to have persisted until modern times. Such a view, however, is only partly true. Colorful kimonos disappeared from Japanese daily life many years ago. Nowadays only older women (grandmother-age) sometimes wear a kimono when they go out shopping or to meet friends. Children, girls or young women only wear a kimono on special occasions (national holidays, festivals or family anniversaries). Thus, a Japanese woman dressed in a colorful kimono is a nostalgic symbol of Japanese tradition for the modern Japanese themselves. Often another ethnic symbol is closely associated, that of the Japanese umbrella with a colorful waxed paper cover. In one commercial, a woman dressed in a kimono and holding an umbrella presents a typically modern Japanese product, a scooter.

The most sophisticated ensemble of Japanese ethnic symbols was presented by a well-known Japanese fashion-designer who calls herself “Miss Takao”. This name may be a reference to a famous woman

who was called "Miss Takao", and, thus, the name itself could be labeled a Japanese ethnic symbol. In the commercial setting, a Japanese woman of extraordinary beauty is leaning on a table with her hands on a Japanese sword in a decorated sheath. In the subsequent film sequence, the same woman appears clad in the typical dress of an ancient Japanese warrior, slowly walks into the scene from the background while at the same time drawing the sword. When she holds up the sword (Jpns *katana*) the light reflects on the blade, flashes, and the scenery disappears in a glaring light. The only text in this commercial is the mention of the name (Miss Takao). The settings are unreal and provide some basic impressions, like a mirage, which stimulate a mood of "Japaneseness": graceful almond-eyed femininity and martial traditions (with a set of ethnic symbols as requisites). The female model without any doubt appeals strongly to the sensuality of both foreigners and Japanese.

The reproduction of ethnocultural stereotypes in Japanese mass media involves a complex network of settings and language use. In order to understand the relations between the creation of stereotyping images and the application of foreign languages it is necessary to distinguish stereotype and prestige functions. Although it seems that there is a natural link between features of an ethnocultural stereotype and the use of the related language in Japanese mass media, such a linking is not reduced to any kind of automatism. English is most probably used in a commercial text where there is an American setting. The same is true for French in connection with a commercial presenting a Japanese product in a French setting. An Italian setting is most likely related to an Italian name of a product. There are many examples of such an associational usage of foreign languages as a requisite to emphasize the features of ethnocultural stereotypes reproduced in commercial settings. As there is no schematic linking between setting and language commercials presenting an American scenery, Parisian environments, or Italian urban life may be presented entirely in Japanese (written or spoken text). On the other hand the foreign languages may also be applied without any direct connection with commercial settings of the corresponding cultures. Thus, French may appear in a commercial text introducing a Japanese car in Japanese surroundings, or it may be used for a slogan concerning a dairy product from Hokkaido. In those cases the foreign language is applied because of its own value outside the framework of stereotype functions. English, Italian, and German may be used in similar separation from

settings featuring the specific traits of English-speaking cultures, Italian or German environments. What are the reasons behind such a separation of foreign language usage from the framework of related ethnocultural stereotyping features?

Those settings in which an American scene or the urban environment of London is displayed together with a text – either in English or in Japanese with English words inserted – strengthen the stereotype functions of English and serve as a support for the stereotyping image about Britain and America in the minds of consumers. Similar observations are true in connection with the support of stereotype functions of the French, Italian, and German languages. All stereotypes about the English-related, French, Italian, and German cultures comprise positive features, as the ethnocultural settings produce positive impressions. Provided a foreign language – together with an associated culturally specific setting – evokes a positive image about the culture, and of itself, it enjoys prestige among mass media consumers. The basically positive features involved in each stereotype are the key to understanding why foreign languages are also used separated from actual cultural settings typical of the related speech community of native speakers. It is the prestige which makes such languages attractive both to Japanese commercial producers and consumers. Whenever a foreign language is used outside the specific framework of settings related to its own culture (i.e. the speech community's culture), it is the prestige function – not a mere stereotype function (i.e. function of evoking an ethnocultural stereotype) – which counts. The prestige function of foreign languages in Japanese mass media will be referred to again with respect to product names. In the following passages some basic features of prestige functions will be outlined for individual foreign languages. It is true at least for the major foreign languages like English and French (also Italian and German to a certain degree) that they are assigned special roles and ranges of application in Japanese mass media.

English is by far the most widely used foreign language in Japanese mass media. This implies that English is second in rank to Japanese according to the frequency of using different communicational means. The prestige functions of English are concentrated on such a high level that they include all features associated with social advance and modernization. In this respect the English language is assigned a role which makes it the vehicle of modernity in Japan. Such a role explains why English is so fashionable among younger people and why it is

so extensively applied to a broad variety of different purposes. As a matter of fact, the English language is the only means of modernization in Japan, as the modern shaping of Japanese technical and technological terminology has been entirely based on adopting and integrating English expressions (cf. *hītā* < heater) or on coining internal expressions on the basis of English words (cf. *wāpuro* = abbreviated form of word processor). In addition, English has strongly influenced the Japanese language in the mass media. English loanwords are abundant in mass media Japanese, and a general statement such as the following can certainly be agreed with.

English loanwords are very popular in Japanese broadcasting, and they are not limited to advertising. (Stanlaw 1982:182)

However, limiting the perspective to the analysis of English loanwords in the Japanese language — as Stanlaw does in his study — means narrowing the view on partial aspects of the English impact on modern Japanese society.

The English language is handled like a symbol of modernity and thus, its use in public is associated with the image of modern life in Japan. This general function of English indicates a stereotype which is different in nature from ethnocultural stereotypes. The use of English in Japanese mass media has been shaping the image of modernity in Japan. This is a societal stereotype. Social advance, progress in economic development, the functioning of institutions in a democratic society, and other features in modern Japanese society are closely linked to the impact of English. The impact of English has to be understood not only as an influence from outside Japanese society (via contacts with North America) but also as an effective tool applied by mass media in Japan itself.

There are people who view Japanese society as a social body under a strong American influence and call the use of English a feature of "Americanization". This was certainly true in the early years after the war and perhaps still applied in the sixties. But during the past fifteen years the use of English in Japan has developed many characteristics of its own, especially in its ranges of application. Additionally, the Japanese-English vocabulary incorporates many elements which are not understandable for Americans or other people who speak English as a native language. The Japanese mass media producers have created their own standards for using English and have thus promoted English as a special symbol of modernity in Japanese society. It appears

that TV viewers and magazine readers have accepted this role for English and willingly identify themselves with the "fashionable" style of the mass media. Although English elements in the lay-out of magazines (e.g. table of contents, section titles, slogans) may not be understood by all readers, it is the optical effect alone which evokes the impression of fashionable speech behavior and the image of modernity. The fact that a program on TV is called *sports 9* (spoken as 'sports nine') and is not given a Japanese title can only be understood as the intention to underline the reality of the sports report at 9:00 PM. The English language can hardly be considered to be a foreign language to the Japanese in the way that French, Italian or German are foreign. Although it has not achieved the status of a "second national language" as seems to be the case in modern India, English is nevertheless closely linked to the Japanese people's identity in modern industrialized society.

There are many features which characterize the use of English as a stereotype of modernity in Japanese mass media. Some of the phenomena which illustrate the prestige functions of English best shall be outlined here. One of the salient features in commercial language usage is the application of the English expression "new", which conveys more to the Japanese listener than its original meaning. "New" as used in Japanese commercials crystallizes the prestige functions of English like a symbol of modernity. The element "new" appears separated from Japanese commercial texts as well as in close linkage with such texts. Thus, the element "new" features both in spoken and written texts, in English spelling as well as in katakana writing. The latter use, however, is not frequent and can be observed in some magazine advertisements only. There is a variety of different functions in which "new" is regularly applied in commercials.

"New" is associated with the presentation of new products. There is practically no restriction in the product ranges. This means that "new" may be related to a car model, a stereo set, and kitchen equipment as well as to cosmetic articles, fashion or other products. The element "new" in this function is not restricted to English names of Japanese products but can also be applied to names in other languages (see Table 2). As English is the main source for product names in Japan, the association of "new" with English names is naturally most frequent. Since the attribute "new" is applied so frequently and to such a wide range of products, it also appears as an integrated component of product names themselves. Whereas in a formation like