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The GALE Journal has updated its authorship and editorial policy regarding the usage of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT in relation to the submission of academic work for publication (including but not limited to papers and reviews). The GALE Journal is in agreement with PNAS's following concerns: "In response to user-supplied questions or prompts, ChatGPT can generate a wide range of materials through its use of a massive language model fed by extensive web-scraped data. Use of AI tools for research reports raises questions about authorship and transparency." Although these questions may be answered in the future, at the moment, the usage of generative AI is troubling. PNAS's policy notes that if any web-scraping software has been used, it should be acknowledged upon submission. Nonetheless, the dilemma is that this kind of software cannot be listed as an author in the references "because it does not meet the criteria for authorship and cannot share responsibility for the paper or be held accountable for the integrity of the data reported." In 2023 it was ruled that Hollywood companies cannot claim copyright for AI-generated art. Similarly, academics might find themselves giving away rights to their own research if AI is used.

The GALE Journal does not knowingly accept work that uses generative AI. The responsibility for transparency and originality lies with those submitting work. At the GALE Journal, we ask authors to refrain from using ChatGPT or other generative AI web-scraping software to compose their work, considering a main purpose of the journal is promoting authors' research, writing, and distinct voices.

As this technology continues to develop, the GALE Journal will adjust and publish any changes to its policy when necessary.

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Editorial Foreword

One of the early works of Mithu Sen, a highly successful Bengali Indian multimedia artist, depicts a trope of the Eurocentric art world (McCormack, 2021): a reclining, female nude. Yet in Sen's version, the figure is lying under an expedition tent, stretched across a map of unknown territory (Sen, n.d.). Entitled "Can We Really Look Beyond the Map?," Sen critiques female objectification and colonialism with this painting (Chaterjee, 2016). It was thus decided by art critics thereafter that she must be a "women's artist." While Sen respects the freedoms that "the legacy of feminist struggle" has brought to her (Norman, 2014), she refuses to be labeled as one particular kind of artist (Thomas, 2017). Then, when the Western art world attempted to pigeonhole her as "exotic," "spiritual," so very "Indian," and "Asian," she deconstructed images of Kali or of the Taj Mahal in her works, again defying categorization (Norman, 2014). Moreover, the artist's drawings of male nudes (some on washi paper she handcrafted in Tokushima) (Hosaka, 2008) resulted in her being celebrated as a LGBTQIA+ ally abroad yet censored as outrageous and indecent in her home country (Eisen, 2022). Sen became increasingly frustrated by what, she says, was the art world's attempt to package and commodify her for its own financial gain.

The diversity of her oeuvre does indeed defy attempts at categorization: vivid red and black expressionistic drawings, surprisingly moving and humanistic performance works which interface with AI (Wijekumar, 2023), concept-laden installations, and glitch poetry readings are just some examples of her forms of expression (Sen, n.d.). Later, Sen was invited to present at the Venice Biennale, one of the most prestigious art events in the world. She first created a looped track of Western male art historians pontificating. At the Biennale, she stood in front of her various artworks, and, alongside the track droning on in that distinctive artspeak, proceeded to explain her philosophy in what she calls "gibberish." After years of frustration at her work being misinterpreted by the hegemonic Western, often white and male, art world, Sen succeeded brilliantly at silencing it: The audience was flabbergasted by her "nonsensical" performance, at least for a few minutes (Bhullar, 2020, para 3, DMello, 2019). The name of that artwork? (*Un)*Mansplaining. It must also be noted that Sen's deliberate utilization of "gibberish" is the result of her experience as a child of losing her native Bengali and being forced to function in "elitist" English after a move to New Delhi (Eisen, 2022).

Sen's art gives visual form to a question posed by Japanese feminist Ueno Chizuko: In seeking to succeed on one's own terms within an existing power structure, does one become subsumed by it in the process, in essence destroying oneself? (Yanagi & Ueno, 2004). "Language, identity, cultural

losses, and domination…the crisis of minor languages…" (ACCA, 2023) are all issues evident in Sen's work. "I am trying to redefine everything, with a non-language. It's for the sake of unlearning identity," she has stated (Sukant, 2020, para 13). Perhaps it can be said that Sen seeks to redefine the identity politics of our era by attempting to transcend them with her guttural, visceral, confrontational artworks questioning what we "as human beings" are actually doing (Bose Pacia, 2007).

Indeed, this tension between embracing one's identities or being hemmed in by them due to the stereotypes generated by dominant ideologies exists not only in the art world. Authors in this edition of The GALE Journal attempt to define, then re-define, identities in relation to gender studies in language education in Japan (and beyond). This field may sometimes, to an audience from different disciplines, at the least seem to be outside of certain academic parameters, or at the worst, to be "gibberish." The paper, interview, and book reviews found in Volume 16 of the journal also seek to evaluate qualitative and qualitative research methods and the invaluable data each type provides. In particular, the voices of persons perhaps underrepresented in what can be a rather rarified academic world are heard here. Engagement on one's own terms can be, as is evident in Volume 16, a struggle, but it is possible. In this increasingly globalized world, it is crucial for furthering academic discourse.

Benjamin Neil Smith's perspective paper, *The Study of Language and Gender in the Digital Age*, provides a sweeping historical summary of research regarding male and female language usage in (American) English from Labov (1966) to Lakoff (1975) to Tannen (1990) to Cameron (2005) and into the modern era of digitalized linguistic research. For those of us who are old enough to remember when these works first appeared, the re-visit is refreshing in that it delineates just how concepts related to binary-based gender differences have been evolving over the past 50 years. Smith's recommendation to expand research to contextual-based data collection, i.e. to diverse CoPs encompassing a variety of identifications, orientations, and interactions beyond the "outdated" binary, is thought-provoking.

Many of you will remember the inspirational presentations of Alex Sanchez, GALE's Featured Speaker at JALT 2022. Long-term GALE member Kristie Collins interviewed the successful author. A poignant depiction of society's repeated negations of Sanchez's selfhood is revealed through the conversation. In his youth, he hid his multifaceted ethnic, linguistic, and gendered identities to "pass;" to survive. Sanchez's story of his struggles on the path to becoming an award-winning YA author is a testament to his strength, providing insights on many important aspects of LGBT+ history in the contemporary US, including the importance of representation.

An array of book reviews in this edition illustrates the struggles and triumphs of the ever-evolving fields of gender studies and language education. Elizabeth Hashimura skillfully examines *Language Ideologies and L2 Speaker Legitimacy: Native Speaker Bias in Japan* by Jae DiBello Takeuchi. Hashimura notes that this book will resonate with a certain demographic in Japan: persons from Global North countries who came to Japan on the JET program and have made their lives here. Hashimura discusses Chapters 3, 4, and 5 in which Takeuchi emphasizes "three distinct Japanese speech styles: *keigo* (polite language), gendered language, and dialect" that are used as a means of "linguistic gatekeeping," or Othering, even amongst an L2 person's closest relations. Hashimura is sobered to realize how L2 speakers are "discredited and invalidated" by microaggressions yet is also inspired to question her own wielding of linguistic capital in Japan as a native English speaker, in and out of the classroom.

Sunao Fukunaga thoroughly examines *Exploring Language Teacher Efficacy in Japan* by Gene Thompson. Thompson discusses the various factors influencing severe teacher shortages in Japan, thereby developing a 25-item Japanese Teacher of English Teacher Efficacy Scale (JTE-TES) in the process. Once again, GALE readers, many of whom work within the secondary school system, will find Fukunaga's comprehensive and insightful review to be of great value regarding contemplation of their own effectiveness. Teacher efficacy is determined to be "impacted by factors such as student motivation and school academic strength" rather than levels of L2 proficiency for this particular demographic.

Carolyn De Vishlin examines *Cultivating Professional Development Through Critical Friendship and Reflective Practice: Cases from Japan* by Adrianne Verla Uchida and Jennie Roloff Rothmann (Editors). Contributors from Canada, Malaysia, Ireland, Japan, India, and Hong Kong delve into the significance of critical friendships. The editors clarify three types: intra-, inter-, and extra-institutional friendship, with De Vishlin emphasizing their "potentially transformative impact." A fascinating project would be if the previous author and these authors/editors could collaborate on further research on teacher efficacy and reflective practice for both L1 and L2 instructors here in Japan.

Some reviews in this edition deal more closely with gender studies. Chelanna White assesses the timely and informative *The Japanese LGBTQ+ Community in the World: The COVID-19 Pandemic, Challenges, and the Prospects for the Future* by Masami Tamagawa. Tamagawa describes Japan's "passive systemic homophobia," including family register and marriage issues, as well as how tension was heightened during the pandemic, for example, by fears of being outed and difficult family relationships when quarantining. Various research techniques employed by Tamagawa, such as

questionnaire data from an online survey of Japanese persons, case studies of non-Japanese respondents living in Japan, and a cross-cultural analysis of South Korea and Japan media coverage, are contrasted effectively in White's review.

Antonija Cavcic, with her usual humor and intellectual breadth, reviews *Why Women Have Better Sex Under Socialism: And Other Arguments for Economic Independence* by Kristen R. Ghodsee. Cavic notes the relative freedom women experienced under socialism where "sex was something to be shared rather than sold" (Ghodsee, 2018, p. 120). This review provides needed perspective on the well-documented failures of socialist states in relation to successes which are not generally acknowledged, particularly the far-reaching impacts of relative economic gender equality on women's actual lives.

GALE members will already be aware that Japan has again dropped in the Global Gender Gap Index to a shockingly dismal ranking of 125 out 146 countries (WEF, 2023). *Voices from the Contemporary Japanese Feminist Movement* by Emma Dalton and Caroline Norma is reviewed by Salem Kim Hicks, providing dramatic illustrations of that fact. Hicks begins by noting that on the surface, Japan seems to be an exceptionally peaceful and safe country for women, yet that the harsh economic conditions, lack of legal and political representation, and actual violence are underreported by mainstream media and academia. Six Japanese feminist activists were interviewed for this book, all of whom have been fighting to improve the situation. Nito Yumeno, for example, leads the NPO *Colabo* which goes out on the streets to assist at-risk girls before touts succeed at trapping them into prostitution. Hicks, another long-term GALE member and in fact, one of the founders of this journal, eloquently and passionately examines this book. It is a must-read for anyone concerned with feminist issues in Japan, and in the world.

Returning to intersectional studies, Lily Thukral evaluates *English Linguistic Imperialism from Below: Moral Aspiration and Social Mobility* by Leya Mathew. Thukral makes explicit that microlevel studies are vital to gain understanding of how the domination of English in the world market affects individuals in their daily lives. She explains that Mathew's data reveals a desperation regarding "moral aspirations, social mobility, and English proficiency" among "non-elite" mothers in Kerala, India which exacerbates gender inequalities for this particular demographic: "Mathew demands context-specific analysis in understanding the global spread of English."

Another review by Salem K. Hicks, *Tension-filled English at the multilingual university: A Bakhtinian perspective* by Maria Kuteeva finds the author's deployment of Bahktinian theory to be useful on many levels when evaluating EMI programs. Specifically, Kuteeva included qualitative analysis of a small group of international students at a university in Sweden. Hicks, a policy science specialist

involved in an EMI program at her university in Japan, critiques the study in that the intersectional factor of gender is deliberately excluded from the discussion of dialogism and that the research thus suffers from loss of perspective. Nonetheless, both Kuteeva and Hicks remain mostly positive about EMI at the university level.

With even more universities in Japan and Europe announcing EMI programs and/or becoming fully bilingual, what are the long-term implications? The Thukral and Hicks reviews provide vital context: Mathew focuses on English's impacts through a gendered lens, whereas Kuteeva consciously chooses to exclude it. Mathew investigates the impact of class upon the attainment of English language proficiency, whereas Kuteeva provides dialogistic analysis of successful international students. Once again, collaboration between authors could perhaps result even more comprehensive understanding of the impacts of the global phenomenon that is English as a *lingua franca*.

Moving on to another extremely macro-level topic, Julia Kimura reports on *The Intersectional Environmentalist: How to Dismantle Systems of Oppression to Protect People + Planet* by Leah Thomas. Kimura expresses surprise and disappointment at how intertwined environmental degradation is with degradation of humans along racial, ethnic, gendered, and class divides. Kimura finds herself drawn to the issue of fast fashion, citing one of many tragic examples from the book: child labour in the Global South which underpins the environmentally catastrophic increase of 400% in clothing purchased by consumers in the Global North. Kimura's enthusiastic response to Thomas's call for activism resonates.

From inspiration must spring action. Amy Toms lauds *We are the Leaders We've Been Waiting for: Women and Leadership Development in College* by Julie Owen. Women are encouraged to recognize how the negative effects of gender socialization can create barriers to their leadership efficacy, such as seen in patterns of perfectionism and imposter syndrome. As Toms has summarized skillfully, "A person may have high levels of leadership capacity, but if their beliefs in those capabilities are low, they are unlikely to seek opportunities to lead." Furthermore, since notions of masculine and feminine styles of leadership fail to include transgender, nonbinary and intersex leaders, Owen addresses the issue of regendering or degendering leadership as a necessary re-adjustment.

If the overarching theme of last year's journal was Communities of Practice in the post-pandemic world, this year's seems to be the challenge of how to incorporate all aspects of intersectionality in an increasingly diversifying one. Attempts are being made, yet can race, ethnicity, nationality, language, gender, orientation, caste, class and so forth be addressed adequately and fairly in every

piece of research? It seems to be a monumental task. In fact, does the attempt to do so ultimately ensnare a researcher in stereotypes defined by a dominant ideology, a parallel for which can be seen in the artwork of the previously mentioned Sen? This edition of The GALE Journal explores a wide swathe of research, acknowledging the sometimes contradictory terminology, methods, and conclusions expressed therein. Each paper, interview, and review nonetheless unites themes of our times, and of gender awareness in language education, including technological developments' effects upon research, linguistic imperialism, cultural hegemony, and even the fate of our species on this planet. It is our sincere hope that this exploration proves to be both meaningful and enjoyable for our readers. Engagement *is* transformative.

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The Study of Language and Gender in the Digital Age

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Abstract

This paper explores approaches to research into language and gender in relation to online speech and offers ways in which future research may be conducted. Since the latter half of the 20th century, various approaches to the study of language and gender have developed with a diversity approach currently considered as being the most appropriate. The rise of the Internet and social media platforms have led to researchers analysing masses of online written speech, leading to further insights into language and gender. While this research reveals distinctions between male and female speech, it has failed to incorporate aspects of the diversity framework in a meaningful way. Rather, these studies offer global differentiators and definitions, particularly focusing on male 'informativeness' versus female 'involvement'. However, such differentiators lack nuance, and it is argued that future research should explore 'local' factors and characteristics of gender-linked speech instead.

Keywords: gender-linked speech; online speech; sociolinguistics

概要

本稿では、オンラインでの発言における言語とジェンダーの関連性に関する研究へのアプローチを探り、そして今後の研究のあり方の提案を行う。言語とジェンダーの研究に対する様々なアプローチは、20 世紀後半から発展し続け現在では「多様性」のアプローチが最も適切であると考えられている。インターネットとソーシャルメディア・プラットフォームの台頭により、研究者たちは大量のオンライン上の文章による発話を分析するようになり、言語とジェンダーに関するさらなる洞察がもたらされるようになった。このような研究は、男性と女性の話し方の違いを明らかにする一方で、「多様性」の枠組みの側面を有意義な形で取り入れることに失敗している。これらの研究は「グローバルな」差別化要因や定義を提供し、特に男性の「情報提供」という特質と、女性の「関与」という特質の対比に焦点を当てているが、このような差別化要因はニュアンスに欠けており、今後の研究では、代わりにジェンダーに関連する発話の「ローカルな」要因や特徴を探るべきだと主張する。

キーワード：ジェンダー関連スピーチ、オンライン・スピーチ、社会言語学

Sociolinguistic studies relating to gender are a relatively recent development, and have faced the challenge of an evolving and, in some quarters, still disputed notion of gender. Many scholars may now agree that a binary approach to gender is becoming outdated, although this view might not be shared by all members of the wider public. Moreover, the idea that all members of a particular gender use language equally and identify with their gender in the same way is also considered outdated, and sexuality has become a key consideration in language use.

It is against this backdrop that studies relating to language and gender have developed. It could be argued that earlier studies were constrained by the outdated definitions upon which they were based. The general trajectory of the approach to language and gender studies began with a so-called 'deficit' or 'dominance' approach, arguing for the existence of a 'women's language' distinct from that used by men in that it reflects the lower confidence and social status of women in society (Lakoff, 1975). A 'difference' approach also was developed which rejected the idea that women use language as a reflection of their lower status and sought to compare language use through a different lens (e.g., Labov, 1966; Trudgill, 1972; Tannen, 1990).

However, amongst other issues, both movements view gender as a binary concept: people are simply male or female. Social constructionist views (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Cameron, 2005) on language and gender acknowledge the diversity in gender variation among men and women, and that there is considerable variation in the way in which a single individual speaks. Diversity advocates have argued that too much focus had been placed on comparing male and female language, when what should have been compared was language use, for example, across the spectrum of the same gender. This could be done via ethnographic methods: observing a Community of Practice (CoP) (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992) over time and analysing the interactions of various members.

The age of the internet and social media has also presented a valuable opportunity for sociolinguists. Now, masses of text written by individuals are available for collection and analysis to provide valuable insights into the way we use language. Equally, this can be used to further assess the relationship between language and gender.

This paper reviews the current status of studies relating to online language use and gender and offers recommendations for future research. First, the general approaches to language and gender studies will be outlined, comparing strengths and weaknesses to identify the most appropriate model that future studies should aim to follow. Next, studies relating to online speech and gender will be examined based on how closely they follow the recommended approach. Finally, recommendations for future studies into online language use and gender will be presented.

General perspectives on the study of language and gender

Deficit/dominance

The 'deficit' or 'dominance' view of language and gender was proposed by Lakoff (1975), who refers to "linguistic sexism" (p. 2). She suggests that the use of language shows a division between men and women, where women are pushed towards language that demonstrates their relative weakness and lower social status, which, in turn, prevents them from accessing social power. Features of 'women's language' (WL) include precise naming of colours, showing how women are relegated to making unimportant decisions, and the use of 'soft' expletives (such as "*oh dear*" rather than "*shit*"), showing the inequity in treatment of men and women. Moreover, women have particular adjectives reserved to them, such as "*adorable*", "*lovely*", (Lakoff, 1975, p. 12) which do not apply to concepts of power and influence that dominate the world of men. Overall, there is a strong proclivity towards politeness in WL, for example, using tag questions and a rising inflection to avoid making a direct or strong statement.

However, there are clear problems with this view of language and gender. Firstly, Lakoff drew upon her own speech and that of her acquaintances, along with the media and her intuitions, which may not apply to any broader demographics beyond white, middle-class Americans of the time. She also remarks that the only men to use WL are either academics or homosexuals, drawing attention to a further issue: if men do in fact use this language, there are perhaps more complex factors at play. This detriment can perhaps be attributed to the era during which this research was done. Contemporary ideas regarding sex and gender did not apply: people were seen as being either male or female and differentiation within those categories was limited. However, as Cameron (2005) comments, there is no such thing as the "generic" man or woman (p. 487). Moreover, the notion of women as automatically having lesser social status than men was held at the time, however, it may not be automatically applicable in a modern context. As can be seen in Global Gender Gap Index data (WEF, 2023), although the current state of women's employment rates, conditions, and positions still shows that they remain behind men in these areas, women are nonetheless taking on a variety of social roles and positions of authority formerly associated with men.

Difference

Other approaches simply described and considered the 'differences' between how men and women speak, rather than assuming that WL starts from a position of weakness. Labov (1966, in Trudgill, 1972, p. 180) found that women veer more towards 'standard' or 'prestige' varieties than men and,

further, that they are quicker to adopt innovative variants (Labov, 1990, 2001, both in Cameron, 2006, p.728). Both Trudgill and Labov conclude that women tend to use language to obtain social status, and that their use of language reflects the fact that women are often judged by how they appear. Trudgill (1972), found that female participants would overreport use of standard forms (i.e., indicate and believe that they used them even when actual production deviated). This contrasted with men who appeared to value "covert prestige" leading them to underreport use of standard forms (p. 187). They believed they might be thought foolish if caught speaking 'properly' among family or friends and were more likely to introduce innovations that *deviated* from the standard variety than women. Trudgill attributed this differentiator to the speaker's sex, as it was common amongst male respondents regardless of social class, the other variable under investigation. This research predates Lakoff's, and thus, assuming a trajectory of development, these differences can indeed be seen to indicate the lower status of women in Western countries, even if the authors at the time did not view it as such.

A cultural difference perspective was also proposed by Tannen (1990), who distinguished between 'rapport-talk' and 'report-talk'. The former establishes relationships by expressing understanding, talking about others, and has features such as overlapping speech supportively and empathetically. The latter demonstrates skill and knowledge when speaking in public and includes storytelling and (unsupportive) topic changing. According to Tannen, rapport-talk is primarily used by women, while report-talk is used by men. She observed the behaviour of same-sex pairs in conversation and considered how similar the behaviour was no matter the age. Tannen (1990) concluded that the different upbringing of boys and girls, who largely spend time among the same gender, creates "different worlds" (p. 279) that they inhabit and that the difference in our speech is a result of cultural factors which we are exposed to from early childhood. Once again, since data shows that women's status was in fact inferior at this time, it cannot be discounted that this would influence the outcomes of such socialization.

These approaches display the same issue as the 'deficit' view, in that they are based on a binary definition of gender. Cameron (2005) argues that our identities are not constructed in contrast with the other gender, but with other members of our own gender: for example, middle-class women are more concerned with distinguishing themselves from working-class women than middle-class men. The 'difference' approaches do not consider the ways in which we individually create our identity through language, or ways in which members of the same gender wish to define themselves. Trudgill (1972) found that young working-class women exhibited the same variation as working-class men, suggesting that using language to distinguish themselves from the opposite sex is not the complete picture.

Diversity

The diversity approach to studying language and gender acknowledges contemporary views on gender variation and sexuality. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) and Cameron (2005) argue that gender is constructed locally, depending on the types of CoPs that men/women participate in, as well as the different forms of participation in mixed-gender CoPs. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) believe that we should avoid global terms and understand gender-linked variation by generalizing *from* the local context rather than ignoring it. They observed a much wider range of language variation from women across CoPs than that of men, concluding that women must use linguistic extremes to consolidate their position.

Cameron (2005) argues that the use of WL features amongst various transgender individuals or the constructed personas of telephone sex workers show how individuals are actively styling their identities rather than acting out their "gender template" (p. 492). A bisexual male was able to project an identity of femininity and of various ethnicities to his male callers through speech, and many females created personas of different ethnicities, performing "other's ethnicities more 'successfully' than their own" from the caller's perspective (Hall, 1995, p. 202). This might have been acting submissively demure to appear Asian or dominant to portray an Eastern European background. Cameron also points out variation amongst groups down to the individual, such as the frat boys observed by Kiesling (1997), who are seen at one time objectifying women and acting homophobic, while at other times appearing more sensitive in their language use: speakers low in the hierarchy used hedges and those holding a position of experience among the group used supportive speech. Moreover, sexuality influences how we speak in constructing our identity. Examples can be seen with use of feminine pronouns and adjectives by some persons in the LGBTQ+ community in reference to themselves or another, or the use of language to obtain peer approval within what Eckert refers to as the "heterosexual market" which leads to a *performance* close to the heterosexual model (Eckert, 1994, in Cameron, 2005, p. 495; Eckert, 2011).

This evidence of variation within CoPs, as well as within individual members of a CoP, paints a more vivid picture of how gender is constructed using language. It shows that language is used by individuals to affirm membership within a CoP while also differentiating themselves from other members of their gender – whether based on sexuality or internal views of masculinity/femininity.

The 'diversity' framework also coincides with, and perhaps necessitates, a change in methodology. Where 'difference' researchers collected data through participant observation and/or sociolinguistic interviews, the research studies of Eckert (1994) and Keisling (1997), for example, were done through longitudinal ethnographic approaches. This involves entering and assimilating

with a CoP and observing members' speech and communications over several months, or perhaps years. The benefit of such research is the depth of data that can be obtained – capturing the speech of individuals across social settings and contexts, providing a more comprehensive account of the different ways in which people speak, and the factors that influence them. Although the difficulties with conducting such research are clear (time requirements, potential difficulty of integration within a community, and a relatively narrow scope of the data), the results not only reveal flaws with the short-term nature of prior research, which was confined to its particular context and preferences breadth over depth, but has helped reveal the ways that language is used to construct gender, as well as the complexity of this phenomenon. The more varied, localised evidence obtained, the more researchers will be able to develop generalisable terms and definitions and obtain a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between language and gender. Moreover, this ability and desire to more clearly define facets of this relationship are what make the 'diversity' framework the most compelling to pursue moving forward: although global distinctions paint a broad picture, the dependency of gendered speech on a variety of local factors should not be overlooked.

Studies relating to online speech

Early studies

Having argued that a diversity approach may provide the most appropriate way to analyse language and gender, studies of language and gender in online speech are now explored. An early study of male and female text by Argamon et al. (2003, in Cameron, 2006, p. 732) seemed to corroborate the existence of Tannen's 'report' versus 'rapport' talk: men write with greater use of determiners and quantifiers, whereas women use a higher frequency of personal pronouns, demonstrating that women seem concerned with people and relationships, and men with specific objects. Here the distinction was made between male 'informativeness' and female 'involvement'. These two characteristics of male and female online speech were likewise investigated in subsequent studies (Herring and Paolillo, 2006; Schler et al., 2006, both in Bamman et al., 2014, p. 137) and a further distinction of 'explicit' or 'formal' (male) versus 'deictic' and 'contextual' (female) was made (Heylighen and Dewaele, 2002; Nowson, Oberlander and Gill, 2005, cited in Bamman et al., 2014, p. 137). This was further built on, again, by Argamon et al. (2007), in an analysis of blogs, which enabled highly accurate predictions of the author's gender by the computer software based on text-based analysis, thereby suggesting a clear distinction between male and female speech in this context. The analysis demonstrated a preference for content-related factors amongst males and style-related factors amongst females.

This kind of study has been criticised for ignoring other factors, such as genre, formality, and interactivity, which affect the way in which people write. Cameron (2006) argued that it is better to view these apparently gender-linked variations as markers of "affective/involved" and "referential/informational" orientations, which may be *connected* to gender rather than pointing directly to it (p. 733). These studies also attempt to develop global terms rather than local ones: they do not account for how our habits and membership of CoPs affect our linguistic behaviour, nor do they consider the variation within a gender or factors that lead to a divergence of language. Bamman et al. (2014) refer to the example of "ing"/"in"'. Beyond gender or class, use of "ing" can suggest that the author is educated, formal, articulate, effortful or pretentious, while "in"' may suggest the opposite of these traits (p. 138). Although there are distinctions between male and female language use in written communications, our analysis should not end at that point: to provide a better understanding of language and gender a more in-depth analysis is required.

Large-scale open vocabulary studies

Technological developments have led to an 'open-vocabulary' approach to large-scale analysis of masses of text to distinguish particular linguistic features as gender-linkage, also similar to the above study by Argamon et al. (2007). Schwartz et al. (2013) collected hundreds of thousands of Facebook posts and analysed the results based on personality, gender, and age. The results with respect to gender fall in line with those suggested by prior work: articles, aggression, expletives and object references are predictive of males, while women use more emotion words, e.g. 'excited', and write more about psychological, emotional states or social processes, e.g. 'love you'. Although, men may more frequently refer to their own partner than women, this is because women talk about others' relationships more often. This study, again, falls into the trap of providing global distinctions – the impression is that women do not talk about sports, for example, and minority identities and sexuality are not represented in the data. Had personality type and age been cross-referenced with gender, rather than analysing them discretely, the study may have given more nuanced results.

Similar research of fourteen thousand Twitter posts was conducted by Bamman et al. (2014). With regard to gender-linked linguistic variation, the results echo the findings of Schwarz et al. in that women use more kinship terms (e.g. 'mom', 'sister), abbreviations (e.g. 'lol', 'omg') and expressive vowel lengthening (e.g. 'cooool') among other features, whereas men use more taboo words and/or abbreviations (e.g. 'lmfao') and reference named entities (e.g. sports clubs) more frequently. However, the study identified "clusters of authors", collected by similar word groups, many of which deviate from the results of the two studies above: some male dominated clusters use taboo words significantly less than women, or a cluster made up almost entirely of women used

dictionary-form words significantly more than men. Moreover, no cluster is *only* male or female, showing that language can align closely with the opposite gender. For example, although men may discuss named entities more than women, minority groups of women exist in these clusters who use these features in equal amounts, suggesting the significance of 'topic' as a factor of language use. Furthermore, men are simply communicating regarding their hobbies and careers, which cannot be summarised as a proclivity towards informativity. The conclusion is that researchers should ask how authors' linguistic choices construct their gender identities and that the model of "informational" versus "involvement" is "descriptively inadequate" (p. 153).

This above study demonstrates the flaws of simply collecting speech and separating usage by gender. The "cluster of authors" might be analogous to an online CoP, however, "membership" will likely be on a larger scale, and there may be multiple CoPs within these clusters. Therefore, the recommendation is to analyse "individual micro-interactions" in order to show how "gender is manifested in and constructed by language" (Bamman et al., 2014, p. 153). Although these interactions are undefined in the study, it is likely that the suggested target of future research is on individual responses and conversations within particular clusters of authors in order to investigate the relationships between online speech and gender in various settings and contexts. This appears to support the earlier recommendations of Eckert, advocating a diversity approach to the analysis of online speech. Although Bammen et al do not explicitly do this in detail, the evidence strongly suggests its necessity to provide a more accurate view of language and gender in the digital age, and thereby providing a valuable starting point from which future studies could begin.

Unfortunately, this is largely not the case and most studies of online speech and gender have continued the trend of analysing mass amounts of data in search of global definitions. Park et al. (2016) conducted research into language used on Facebook, finding results comparable to the study by Schwartz et al. (2013). Here the distinction was made between "assertive" and "affiliative" language, finding that women were significantly more affiliative but not less assertive, although men used more highly assertive and cold language (expletives, criticism, and controversial topics). Park et al. (2016) reach a somewhat more nuanced conclusion, as social role (rather than gender) is seen as the predicter for assertiveness: in supervisory roles men and women are equally assertive, however, on Facebook everyone is simply labelled as a 'friend' which acts as a "social equalizer" affecting language use (p. 21).

Hilte et al. (2020) analysed use of language by adolescents based on age, gender and education. Again, the results are slightly more nuanced, observing that older females produce more polarized, subjective messages, concluding that they are more committed to emotional expressiveness. The

language of females also tended to become less typically 'female' as they got older. However, the remaining analysis focuses on familiar patterns, such as greater use of taboo words by males and a focus on social interaction by females. Finally, Koch et al. (2022) looked at language and emoticon/emoji use in instant messages, finding that women use emoji more often and more diversly than men. These observations are consistent with the distinctions made in previous studies (e.g., Argamon et al., 2007; Schwartz et al., 2013; Park et al., 2016).

Overall, there is a clear pattern of analysing large quantities of data to discover potentially broadly applicable linguistic behaviour that distinguishes language as either male or female. Even since the recommendations of Bamman et al. (2014), the focus of language and gender research in online speech has remained entrenched in the 'difference' approach. This makes sense, as the evidence demonstrates that there are clear distinctions between the way women and men speak online, and the ability of technology to analyse vast amounts of text makes searching for broad patterns amongst a large population an attractive proposition. However, the dearth of research into specific "clusters of authors" or "micro-interactions" has left research in this area lacking. Studies tend to be concerned with finding global terms and definitions rather than looking at online language and gender in a more local setting.

Discussion

In this paper, historical approaches to language and gender studies have been discussed, concluding that a 'diversity' perspective is the most appropriate model for researchers to follow. 'Deficit' or 'dominance' approaches may have reflected the entrenched gender biases of their eras but it is the opinion of this author that they are becoming passé in contemporary understandings on the role of women in society. In tandem with 'difference' approaches, the focus on binarism in the definition of gender is also outmoded. Rather than simply identifying the differences in the language used by men and women, studies should focus on how language is used to construct our identity and gender and affirm our membership within various CoPs. This requires in-depth analysis of the language used within a community and how its members interact, as well as the different communities that individuals are a part of and how this affects their use of language. This is perhaps more relevant than ever: women were perceived as "interlopers" within many mixed-gender CoPs (Eckert, 2000, in Cameron, 2005, p. 498). For example, female British MPs tended to conform to the traditional rules governing debates, which "non-interlopers" could more freely depart from without "compromising their credentials". On the other hand, in workplaces where service and interpersonal skills are increasingly in demand (as opposed to physical strength or craft), Cameron (2005) points out that the language and behaviour was becoming increasingly "feminine"

by members of both sexes. However, as social roles continue to evolve, this perception may fade and the use of language within such CoPs will likewise evolve. Thus, local research of language use in various contexts is required, rather than the identification of global terms that try to encapsulate all persons.

This paper has also outlined the current approaches to research regarding online speech and gender. The overall theme is a preference for large-scale studies involving masses of text which are used to distinguish linguistic behaviour as either male or female, with the studies entrenched within the 'difference' approach to the study of language and gender. This has led to language being described using global terms such as either "informational" or "involved". However, in-depth analysis of this data, as conducted by Bamman et al. (2014), reveals the existence of minority identities and presences within what they refer to as "clusters of authors" that do not adhere to the trends implied by such global terms. This evidence strongly suggests that research into online speech and gender should adopt a 'diversity' approach and examine the language used by various online communities to see how gender and identity are constructed through language in online interactions. Unfortunately, this has not been taken up in any meaningful way: although the research appears to be leaning into more nuanced analyses, there is still a preference for collecting data from large numbers of users to extract broadly applicable trends, rather than detailed analysis of language use within individual communities.

Conclusion

Future research could focus on these localized communities in the same way that ethnographic studies focus on CoPs. By collecting and analysing data from a relatively small number of users, it can be seen how digital users utilize language to construct their identities within an online CoP and how this compares with other users and membership across different CoPs. This may be especially insightful when viewing communities typically considered masculine or feminine to determine how members of the minority group also use language to position themselves within those communities.

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A Conversation with Alex Sanchez: GALE's 2022 JALT Conference Featured Speaker

Interview by Kristie Collins
Reitaku University

Alex Sanchez is the critically acclaimed author of ten teen and adult novels including *So Hard to Say* (2004) and 2001's coming of age story, *Rainbow Boys*. He won the LGBTQA Lambda Award in that year, among a number of awards with 2009's *Bait* winning the 2011 Tomas Rivera Mexican American Book Award as well. Alex's graphic novel from DC Comics, *You Brought Me the Ocean* (2020), was illustrated by transgender and non-binary artist, Julie Maroh. His latest book, *The Greatest Superpower*, came out in 2021. Alex currently lives in Rochester, New York, as a faculty member of the Vermont College of Fine Arts and also enjoys teaching Creative Writing for the University of Chicago.

As GALE's Featured Speaker at the JALT 2022 Conference, Alex gave a talk on *Promoting Inclusiveness Through LGBTQ Texts* and a workshop on *Learning From LGBTQ Students to Become Authentic Educators*.

Content warning: This interview contains references to sexual abuse and homophobia which some readers may find distressing.

K: So, what inspired you to write young adult literature for LGBTQ+ readers?

A: Well, when I first got serious about writing, which was in the early nineties, I didn't set out to write YA (Young Adult), you know, I just loved to read books, period—including YA—and books for adults. So, it was actually my agent who said she'd like to take it to the YA publishing house. And I was like, "Well, I love YA, but I don't want my books to be limited to that…" So, when I wrote *Rainbow Boys*, my first novel, I was just writing with my heart, I was not thinking of a particular audience.

K: Right.

A: But she was the one who was like, "Well, that's what I'd like to do, and if you want to sign with me, that would be my plan." Then she was like, "Well, if you want to think about it…" so, I went back to my friends, and they're like, "Well hey, she's this hot shot New York agent," [laughter] "and she's willing to take it on, and she works with big publishers, so go for it!" I also asked, "Are there any opportunities for a crossover?" and she's like, "Well, publishers usually don't do that."

But then my first phone call with the editor, they're like "We want to market this to both adults and teens!"

K: Wow—that's so great! Do you know your readership… like who is reading your books?

A: My biggest audience is straight teenage girls.

K: No way! Wow, that's fascinating!

A: Yeah! And it makes sense that girls were the ones—especially in the early aughts, the late-nineties—they were the ones driving the gay/straight alliances, and they have gay and lesbian friends, and relatives, and parents, and this was a big social justice issue, so it makes sense. In fact, when my publisher took it on—because they saw it as groundbreaking—they were concerned whether there would be enough readership, if they were going to make any money off of it, because LGBT teens, especially back then, would have accounted for a small readership. So, we never accounted for all these straight teenage girls who would be out reading it.

K: That's so great!

A: Yeah, and I got so many emails from them, and when I go to speak at schools, like they're the cheerleaders, in the front rows. They love reading about gay boys!

K: That's so interesting… So, how did your own identity as an LGTQIA+ person—and as an immigrant—influence your identity as you grew up?

A: Yeah, so when I was five years old, we moved from Mexico to Texas—this was back in the sixties—and I definitely got picked on for being Mexican and for not speaking English. So, in terms of my own identity that caused a lot of shame. A lot of shame about being Mexican.

K: Okay.

A: So, what I found was that I was light-skinned enough that I found I could pass as 'white.' And so, I did, I buried that part of my identity, and, you know, when I was around my parents I'd be like, "don't speak Spanish, speak English."

K: Wow.

A: Yeah, you know wanting to 'pass,' not wanting people to know I was Mexican. And, you know, it worked! And so then, later on, it was around middle school that I figured out I was attracted to boys as well as girls, and at the same time, started hearing all that name-calling around queer people. So, it's like, okay, I'll just do the same thing, bury that part of myself, and not allow it to be there. So, in terms of my identity, growing up, there was a lot of shame around who I was. And it wasn't

until after high school that I started coming out, and meeting other queer people, because, again, this was back in the days where there weren't positive role models.

K: Right, yeah.

A: And occasionally where there would be 'an effeminate man' on TV, or on a TV show or whatever, and they were the target of jokes or ridicule or whatever. Yeah. Ha, ha, ha. So, a lot of that shame. And you know, coming out is a life-long process, and you're still—after all these years—you're still having those twinges of shame… Not that self-hatred that I had at one time—but still those twinges of shame and the frustration with, you know, people not accepting, the acceptance of difference. And so, on both those counts, especially in the US, there still seems to be so much anti-immigrant rhetoric, and it's like *sigh* will this never cease?!

K: Yeah. It's amazing to me, like especially observed from over here in Japan, that maybe the anti-immigrant discourse has become even stronger than the anti-LGBT discourse in the States now.

A: Yeah, well it's been breathtaking the turn that has occurred, in terms of attitudes towards queer people. That's really been remarkable, you know, marriage acceptance… It's breathtaking.

K: Yeah!

A: And yet, there's still that backlash, that extreme right-wing that won't give up. For example, the book banning, you know, we can talk about that later…

K: Yeah, I actually have an American speaker coming to my class this week to talk about marriage equality, and Japan is the only country in the G7 that doesn't have legalized same-sex marriage, so it's interesting… like my students, overwhelmingly, are like "why is there a debate still going on?! We have no problem with this!" [chuckles] So hopefully the government is going to catch up with their views… but hey, I remember Ellen DeGeneres coming out on her show, and the backlash with that– and that's when I was in high school– and it's amazing how, twenty, thirty years ago, that was something that was such a hot topic, and now, at least in Canada, now everybody's like "what were we even thinking about with that being a debate?!"

A: And part of what I love about writing, for and about young people, is seeing that attitude in them, where it's not an issue. Yeah, so there's a lot of hope there.

K: Agreed. Thank goodness for our students! So, please tell me about writing the *Rainbow Boys* series—what inspired the characters and the plotlines?

A: Yes! So, this was in the early-nineties, when I was getting serious about writing. And what happened was, you know, when we talk about writer's block, and we think of that blank page, or

blank screen, and all sorts of writing blocks, well my block was not being able to finish things. Like I had all these unfinished stories, and—in retrospect—what I see happening was it was too personal, or too revealing, and I'd get scared. I'd be scared to be that honest.

K: Yeah.

A: And so, I'd go, "Oh, I have a better idea!" and so I'd start a new project, and then, just repeat that pattern… Finally, I realized I would never get anywhere that way, and I reached out to a couple of good friends, one was a songwriter, the other a papier mache artist, and we would encourage each other in our creative projects. So, with their help, I wrote this story about these two teenage boys. It was a little love story, and it was okay, but it didn't really have much conflict, or enough conflict, so I thought "what if I throw a third boy in there, and it creates this triangle?" And you get a lot more conflict. And that's *Rainbow Boys*.

I started writing about the love triangle between these three high school senior boys and it tells the story of these three boys that were on that coming out continuum, or spectrum, where you have Jason is very closeted, and Nelson is very out, and Kyle is in the middle there. And so, it enabled me to look back at high school and—while it's certainly not autobiographical—it has these qualities, you know, of crushes I had on other boys, and the shame that I felt, and the struggle to come out, and touching upon all those feelings.

K: Right.

A: At the same time, when I started writing it was when queer teens started coming out—in numbers—at schools. I would read their stories, like in our local gay paper, and be so inspired by their stories. And so, looking back on my experiences, with some wish fulfillment of what might have been, and taking inspiration from the lives of teens that I know, all around me, that's how that story came about. Then my friends suggested taking a writing workshop, which I did. My instructor loved my writing, and she said, "let me know when you're done with this novel, and I'll recommend you to my agent." So, after five years, my friends said, "Well you've worked on this long enough now. It's time to show this to someone." So, I called my former instructor up, and she sent in her recommendation.

K: Wow!

A: Yeah, and that's how that came about. And then the agent took it to the publishers, and most publishers, they didn't know what to do with it. Historically, there were so very few LGBTQ teens in YA books, and in the few instances where they were, there was this unspoken code that they had to either commit suicide or die tragically. So, they saw my book, and, it's like—wait a minute!—

not only do they not commit suicide or die tragically, they are actually connecting with each other, and they're not these lone characters. And it's an upbeat ending.

K: There was no model that you followed? It was the first? That's so cool!

A: So that's the way in which they saw it as groundbreaking. And I didn't plan it as a series—it was this resolved but unresolved ending. My editor says "'now you know we've got to make a sequel?!" and I was like, "No, I didn't know that!" [laughter] And by that point, I was so sick of having worked on the book that I was like, "Argh!" But my agent was like, "So, they want a sequel? I suggest you do it!"

K: Well yeah! [laughter]

A: And after that, I wrote the third one, and that made the trilogy.

K: Well, the thing is, I want another! I loved the road trip so much, so then it's like, "What happens next?!" Do you think there's any chance of revisiting them, and going back to the *Rainbow Boys*?

A: Nah… no, no. There was a chance at a time, but my editor at that point, he was like, no, this was the young adult imprint and we just take them through high school. If you want, we can refer you to another imprint, but this is it for us. So… [shrugs]

K: Well, I'm sure they're doing well! [laughter] I just loved it! All three characters were so endearing– it was wonderful!

A: Well, thank you. And you're not alone! I get emails all the time about "what happens to them?!" and so I email, "Well, Jason and Kyle, they stay together, and they got married, and Nelson did find love." So, people can sleep at night! [laughter]

K: That's great news. Yay! Okay, let's go in a different direction: Why are your books important for young readers and educators to read?

A: Well, I think because, especially now, young people are growing up at a time when one of the key issues is identity. Because of globalism, democratization, and the internet… It's like, young people get to choose who they want to be and, you know, when I was growing up, so much was not having language and not having words to put to what I was going through. Now young people have that language, they have the words, they have the images– they're just a click away from so much diversity, and it causes them to question who they are and what they want to be, in terms of their expression, in terms of their life choices, in terms of following their hearts and their dreams. Books like mine give them the stories to attach to that. You know, well, if I am queer, what can my life be like? That's what I did not have when I was growing up. Not only did I not have the

role models in terms of people, in terms of images, I did not have the role model in terms of what that story would be.

K: Right.

A: I'm working on a memoir now where going back to, you know, when I was in high school, my Dad was a university professor, and going to his university library, and sneaking over to the psychology section to try to understand what I was feeling, and finding books that told me I had a mental illness. That if I acted on my sexual desires with another man, that was a criminal offense. And I could be imprisoned. So, you know, that was the story that I had, and so for young people now, growing up, to have stories of what their lives could be like… give them both, you know, positive and negative stories that allow them to make choices.

K: Yeah.

A: So, for example, people love Nelson [chuckles], like the character Nelson [from the *Rainbow Boys* series], and he screws up all the time! [laughter] Yes, and he screws up, but that's what we love about him! He screws up, and he learns from it. And young people, that way, can live vicariously through the characters and choose for themselves. You know– what would be our choices? One of my editors taught me that you can have your characters do anything you want, but they have to experience the consequences. And there have to be real consequences. So, on all of those counts, I think that's why those books are so important.

K: Yeah. I totally agree. And you already touched on my next question, by talking about what you encountered at your father's university library, but let me just ask when you were a young LGBT person, what was your experience in the library? Were there any books that you found helpful? Any fiction?

A: Nope.

K: There was nothing?

A: Never.

K: Wow…

A: Not at all. Now, the library at my high school was a real place of refuge for me. That's where I would go and be with, you know, my friends the books! Unfortunately, there were no books that dealt with homophobia, or same sex romantic attraction, but it was a safe place, and same with the public library. I've always loved libraries, and you know there were books, like as a boy, my favorite book was the story of Ferdinand, the bull. You know, he loved to smell the flowers instead of

being in fights! So even though it's not a queer story, it's a story about being true to who you are, and that it's okay to be different. So, there were stories out there that I loved. As young queer people, we're very adept at putting ourselves into the shoes of straight people… now it begs the question as to why it's so hard for straight people—so many straight people—to put themselves in the shoes of queer characters! [chuckles]

K: Right?!

A: That's where the straight teen girls are so great at that. They're like, "We don't care! We're so used to reading about boys anyway, so why not?!"

K: Well, what a gift you're giving these young readers, that now you have populated those shelves and they're able to go in and read YOUR books! And are there many people writing this genre of writing?

A: Oh yeah!

K: Really?

A: Oh yeah! I mean, there are so many stories with straight characters, and then there's the trope of the gay best friend, or the lesbian best friend, and now there's the trans characters, too. Which, you know, for people who are targeting books, in terms of banning, they've got their job cut out for them because even if they take out all the books that are on their lists, now there's all these other books with queer secondary characters and they're not stopping! So, it sort of reveals their agenda of getting all books off the shelves, right?

K: Let's jump into that. Please share your opinion of banning books and the politicization of gender identities in the United States right now. How can allies support authors and gender diverse people right now?

A: Well, I think it's happening now that there's a backlash **to** this backlash, where there's lawsuits now, and people are saying, "No. This is wrong." Libraries are public spaces, and if a parent doesn't like a certain child to be reading a certain book, well, that's up to the parent what to do with their child. I have not heard anyone argue against that, it's when people want to decide what **other** people can read, and what should be on public shelves. It's frustrating that this is happening, and I'd say it's a little scary that they're getting so much attention, but I'm heartened that there are so many people standing up, and be it people on library boards or people in school boards, they're saying "No, no, this is crazy. This is not democracy. And no, we're not going to allow this."

K: Have any of your books been on ban lists?

A: Uh… I think all of them!

K: All of them! Oh my god! [laughter] That's so appalling! Wow. Are people writing letters, or going to protest these book bans? What's happening?

A: So what happens is, from what I understand, there's basically a group of people that made very good use of the internet, and use of groups all around the country, who go to school board meetings and go to speak to principals and school administrators and superintendents, and they have very loud voices, and, well, especially schools, they don't like controversy. So, we need to continue to speak out, chip away at that dialogue, like "Hey, what about all those queer kids out there? What about all those straight kids who have gay or lesbian family or parents or friends?"

K: Mm-hmm.

A: Those kids matter too. And, as I said, they need stories. We all need those stories. You know, what books do, as Rudine Sims Bishop said famously, books serve as mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors, and we need to be providing those to create a healthy and compassionate world.

K: That's beautiful. Okay– let's talk about some other books! What inspired you to write *The God Box* (2007)?

A: So, one of the most rewarding—perhaps the most rewarding—parts of writing for young people is hearing from them. And especially in the age of the internet, I get so many emails from young people saying how much my books mean to them.

K: Right.

A: I started hearing from so many teens who were struggling to reconcile their sexuality and their spirituality, and so even though I was not brought up in a particularly religious household, there was that aspect of it—out there in the culture—of how homosexuality is 'bad' and 'wrong' and 'sinful'. And so, I absorbed some of that guilt when I was in high school and I'd pray "God, take away these feelings. I don't want to be like this." So to hear from these young people, it inspired me to go back to that time, and—like I'd done with the other books—it reminded me of what it was like to grow up and write that story of a boy struggling with that particular conflict, and have another boy who is modern day and 'no, I've resolved this, I'm good with this!' and having them fall in love.

K: Yeah. I thought it was a really warm story, and the girl being supportive—I mean, at first it hurt—but then being supportive of her ex-boyfriend coming out. Out of the books that you've

written so far—I mean, I imagine the *Rainbow Boys* trilogy has a huge following—but of the stand-alone books, are there certain ones that have been particularly embraced?

A: Yeah, *Rainbow Boys*, *So Hard To Say*, and *The God Box*... I guess most of them!

K: Yeah, I can see it! Like I mean there are so many kids out there that have had that conflict, and must be so grateful and relieved to read that book. I also didn't grow up in a religious house, but I have a lot of friends that would have, no doubt, had that very problematic message from every Sunday at the pulpit, so I thought it was a lovely book. But then I loved all of them! All of the characters are so approachable and likable. So how about *Bait* and *You Brought Me the Ocean* and *The Greatest Superpower*—what were the motivations and inspirations for writing those books?

A: So, again, it was going back into my life and experiences that I had with being sexually abused and so with that book (*Bait*) it took a long time to get there to be able to write it. A lot of the time I was writing it, I was crying, and it was very cathartic.

K: Wow.

A: Yeah, but there's still, I mean despite, you know, all the clergy abuse stories in the press, there's still so much shame around talking about male/male sexual abuse.

K: Yeah.

A: The book has done well, and it's certainly got the awards, and yet, I still think there's resistance. Resistance around it. So, that was *Bait*, and then *You Brought Me The Ocean*, that was just so much fun to write!

K: Cool!

A: It was my first graphic novel, and to see an artist bring my creation to life, visually,

K: And so beautifully!

A: So beautifully, yes—every illustration is a painting! Usually graphic, comic book illustrations, they can be so stylized and cartoon-ish, and what the illustrator was able to do was just amazing.

K: Yeah. It's gorgeous.

A: It was gorgeous! And so, it was so much fun to write, and the process with working with Julie (the illustrator), and then the editor, and also just in terms of the story, you know, going back again to my own growing up, and how empowering it would have been to read about a gay superhero. And then to be able to see the metaphor, and to write the story on the two tracks of Jake hiding

and then coming out, accepting himself as gay, at the same time he is recognizing and accepting his superpowers.

K: Right!

A: Just that whole metaphor that growing up queer is such a great superhero metaphor… we have this secret, a secret identity, that we're afraid to share with other people, and so we end up having these double lives, where some people know about us, and other people don't!

K: Exactly.

A: And as soon as the supervillain shows up, you know, homophobia and transphobia, we have to always be facing this huge villain! [chuckles] That whole metaphor was so fun to work with.

K: Absolutely!

A: And then *The Greatest Superpower* was, you know, with my own growing up, questioning around gender, and having so many transgender friends, that inspired that story.

K: I thought it was interesting that you made the parent the trans person in the story. Did you consider having the (teen) protagonist be trans, or was it, right from the beginning, that you decided to make it the parent?

A: Yeah, right from the beginning I thought, yeah, this is going to be the parent.

K: And I LOVED them! And they were so sweet! Like, "of course you are going to have to be proud of your dad!" Yeah, what a brave person… It was nice, too, that it doesn't always have to be the protagonist, but the protagonist's family, their friends, their loved ones– but maybe it's, as allies, how are we supposed to champion them? That was very cool.

A: Thank you!

…

K: Are there some good, queer young adult books or things you recommend we should check out as educators here in Japan?

A: You know, there are literally so many now…

K: Yay!

A: But yeah, I should put together a list. Some of my favorites.

K: Yeah, that would be great. It's so nice to see that it's become its own genre. I think that would be really helpful, particularly speaking as someone who is teaching at the university level. I think that having young adult books, for second language learners, it's at a level and has messages that I think they'd be able to understand. As language learners, having characters and social justice issues that they can grapple with would be particularly good for our Japanese learners here.

A: Yeah, and there are so many now, queer teen stories that are intersectional.

K: Yes, and exploring those intersections is key. That was one of the big takeaways that I had from your JALT talk for GALE that rather than teaching social justice issues directly to our students, we can give them stories where these issues and identity categories come through the characters and their experiences. I think that may be a more effective way for students to learn, and think about and talk about these things.

A: Absolutely.

K: And on that note, please tell us about your experience as a GALE Featured Speaker for the JALT 2022 Conference. What were the highlights for you?!

A: Oh gosh! Well, I enjoyed it and thanks for inviting me! I enjoy speaking, so usually I'm 'on' and then I don't remember what I've said!

K: Do you have any advice, especially for people here in Japan, on ways we can use your books to bring important issues into our classrooms? For educators in GALE, what would you advise us to think about?

A: Well, I think what you said before is to provide those stories. As a way to talk about things that young people want to talk about. And lots of times, they are waiting for us as adults to open the conversation. That's where we as adults can be so helpful. Saying, "Okay, you're seeing these things in the news, and maybe you have friends or family who either are open or you suspect might be LGBT, so why don't we read a book about that and talk about that?"

K: Yeah. It's actually pretty simple, isn't it?! Just providing a safe space for students to think about and talk about these things, with no judgment.

A: Exactly.

K: And giving them characters and giving them stories—even if they DON'T have people like these in their lives, then they DO because they have these characters that they care about!—it just becomes something that, rather than being an issue to be discussed, it's just being there to talk about and support these characters that they become attached to, right?

A: Absolutely! And to always remember that, you know, you all have queer students?! And they may not be out, but they are there. I remember this really shameful experience when I was in college, where it was in a Literature course—it was actually a World Literature course—and one of the books had queer characters. And this was at a time where there just weren't that many queer characters, and the teacher was trying to have a sympathetic conversation about these characters, and no one in class said they knew anyone who was queer. And they were making all these speculations like "What was the author saying here?"' and I felt all this shame about just not being able to speak up and say, "Well, I'm gay." You know, I wasn't that out yet at the time. So, for teachers to remember that you **do** have LGBT students in your classes. And you may not know it, but just because you don't know it, it doesn't mean that they're not there.

K: Exactly!

A: And they matter. And these stories matter to them. And the impact that can have, like as you said, of having a safe space, where students may come up to you afterwards and may come out to you.

K: Yeah! Just yesterday in class—we were talking about Japan and the debate over marriage equality, preparing for this guest speaker who was coming to our class—and one of my students was like "I don't really understand why legalizing same-sex marriage is such a big deal. Like, I'm bi!" And I'm so grateful and privileged that they feel safe to share that with me. I don't think that even ten years ago I would have seen students working in a group discussion feel able to share that in the classroom, and it's a real privilege. It's wonderful.

A: There you go!

K: Thanks so much for your time and your insights, Alex.

A: You're very welcome!

And as a bonus, Alex followed up with a list of recommendations for further reading:

Ten LGBTQ teen books I loved in random order:

All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020)

Black Flamingo by Dean Atta (Hachette UK, 2019)

Flamer by Mike Curato (Henry Holt Books for Young Readers, 2020)

Gender Queer: A Memoir by Maia Kobabe (Oni Press, 2019)

The Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue by Mackenzi Lee (Katherine Tegen Books, 2018)

Heartstopper by Alice Oseman (Graphix, 2020)

King and the Dragonflies by Kacen Callender (Scholastic Press, 2020)

Last Night at the Telegraph Club by Malinda Lo (Dutton Books for Young Readers, 2021)

Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda by Becky Albertalli (Balzer + Bray, 2016)

Two Boys Kissing by David Levithan (Ember, 2015)

For more information on Alex and his wonderful books, visit https://www.alexsanchez.com/

Kristie Collins is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Foreign Studies at Reitaku University. Her research has predominantly focused on media representations and lived experiences of female singleness, and she is currently exploring experiences of foreign female academics in Japanese higher education.

Why Women Have Better Sex Under Socialism: And Other Arguments for Economic Independence. Kristen R. Ghodsee. Nation Books, 2018. 220 pp.

Reviewed by Antonija Cavcic
Toyo University

It is hard to deny that Orwell's original quote "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" (2008, p. 126) still holds true even to this day. Consider the following version: all women are equal, but some women have better sex under socialism. Yes, you read that right, but unfortunately it is not an excerpt from some kind of socialist feminist parody of *Animal Farm* (although that sounds like a great read). Whether we are talking about wealth, power, or sex, the relatively equal distribution of wealth and resources that Marx and Engels envisioned over 175 years ago still smacks of nothing but the utopian fantasy which communism failed to realise. However, how is this failure defined? More often than not, it is defined as the general ineptitude and collapse of former socialist states. This can be associated with statistics on famine, poverty, and democide, but what may be overlooked are the potentially positive social outcomes and lived experiences of those whose voices have traditionally been silenced or ignored. The experiences of women under socialism, and in particular, the nature of their intimate relations with their partners, are no exception. This and much more is covered in ethnographer Kristen R. Ghodsee's *Why women have better sex under socialism: and other arguments for economic independence* (2018).

One might wonder why a book published in 2018 is resurfacing now. One might also recall that 20 years ago, Baumeister and Vohs published their controversial article "Sexual Economics: Sex as Female Resource for Social Exchange in Heterosexual Interactions" (2004) in which they introduced "sexual exchange theory". For anyone unfamiliar with it, it simply likens (and simplifies) courtship between men and women to a market where women sell sex and men buy it with nonsexual resources (such as money, a home, security, etc.). However, and as Ghodsee notes, when women have more opportunities to earn money (for example, in societies with higher levels of gender equality), they are less reliant on "selling sex" and thus more likely to have sex for pleasure (p. 161). So how or why is this reductionist theory relevant now? Please recall the economic hardships many women faced worldwide as a result of the pandemic and other factors. With the economic reverberations of the pandemic still lingering, global inflation and job insecurity are hitting women hard. Although it is partly related to the expansion of user-friendly content creating platforms in recent years, it is no coincidence that OnlyFans creator accounts have skyrocketed since the pandemic. In late-stage capitalism where exploitation and transactional relations reign supreme, "putting out" for a third party (or more) to "pay up" has arguably been normalised. How did it come to this? Was it always like this? Or is it the case that women just

exercise more sexual agency, embrace sex positivity, and enjoy sex more now than ever? These are the kind of questions that come to mind when reading Ghodsee's work. Surely women had it different under socialism. Surely women had more economic independence under socialism. Surely relationships and intimate relations were different, if not better under socialism.

Without falling into the trap of glorifying or romanticising socialism, Ghodsee acknowledges the pitfalls of both "state socialism" and neoliberal governments, and while she refers to theory and literature pertaining to the subject and maintains a critical stance, it is written in a non-academic tone for a mostly non-academic readership. Comprised of six chapters, Ghodsee discusses motherhood, leadership, sex, and citizenship through personal anecdotes, and based on her extensive research on post-socialist societies in the Eastern Bloc since 1989. Because the book avoids getting excessively bogged down in theory and is written in a personal and uncondescending tone, scholars, students, and general interest non-fiction readers can all take something away from it. One of the caveats, perhaps, is that Ghodsee does not draw upon all the rich anecdotal evidence that comes from doing ethnographic research but relies on secondary sources. For readers detached from anything remotely to do with socialism or everyday life in a former socialist state, it might be hard to conjure up an image of what it was like for women to live under such circumstances. Take for instance the claim that state socialism ignored women's desires and the shortage of basic hygiene products was embarrassing. While it is not entirely necessary to go into great detail, some of the evidence to substantiate these claims is often taken from secondary sources. For example, the following citation was a common complaint observed by Croatian journalist Slavena Drakulić during her research in Eastern Europe:

> Look at us—we don't even look like women. There are no deodorants, perfumes, sometimes even no soap or toothpaste. There is no fine underwear, no pantyhose, no nice lingerie. Worst of all, there are no sanitary napkins. What can one say except that it is humiliating? (Drakulić, 1993, p. 31)

More privileged readers can be detached from accounts and experiences such as the above and they are arguably worth expanding on. Considering that Ghodsee spent over 150 hours interviewing Elena Lagadinova (the president of Bulgaria's national women's organisation) alone, more of the insight and personal narratives she gained from that experience and others, if relevant, would have helped contextualise life in the Eastern Bloc much more than the statistics and data regarding employment quotas, maternity leave policies and so on.

In any case, what readers eventually come away with is a clear and sound understanding of the following suggestions. The first is that "women's economic independence [under socialism]

contributed to a culture in which sex was something to be shared rather than sold" (p.120). The other suggestion, and as ideal as it sounds, is that unregulated capitalism is "bad" for women, and if we adopt some ideas from socialism, women will have better lives. If done properly, socialism leads to economic independence, better labour conditions, better work/family balance, and, yes, even better sex" (p.18). In Japan, a country often criticised by Western media outlets for having a culture of "sexless marriages," the worst gender pay gap among all G7 nations, and a low participation of women in executive positions or politics, this book might shed some light on how to address some of these issues. It also might just be the case that one of the outcomes of improving equality in the boardroom is greater satisfaction in the bedroom.

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Cultivating Professional Development Through Critical Friendship and Reflective Practice: Cases from Japan. Adrianne Verla Uchida and Jennie Roloff Rothmann (Editors). Candlin and Mynard, 2023, 344 pp.

Reviewed by Carolyn De Vishlin
Aichi University

In the foreword of *Cultivating Professional Development Through Critical Friendship and Reflective Practice*, Thomas S. C. Farrell, a pioneer in the field of reflective inquiry, provides insight into the potentially transformative impact of critical friendships on reflective inquiry and professional development. This is further pursued by Verla Uchida and Roloff Rothman, who interweave its definition, origin, and transformative potential into their own narrative. Their inclusion of underrepresented scholarly perspectives in the field of reflective inquiry, such as Stenhouse, Hatton & Smith, and Samaras, adds credibility to the book's theme of fostering an inclusive environment in exploring critical friendships within the Japanese educational context. Contributors from Canada, Malaysia, Ireland, Japan, India, and Hong Kong explore the significance of critical friendships in different aspects of English language education, covering teacher development, reflective practice, language learner motivation, curriculum design, and program evaluation.

By dividing the book into three sections, the editors carefully blend contributors' theoretical concepts with personal narratives and practical considerations. This organisational structure sets a clear roadmap for understanding the different types of critical friendship with which readers may reflect and relate their own experiences. The first, *Intra-Institutional Friendships,* provides a platform for educators working within the same institution. The first chapter (Gill & Hooper) explores the impact of past work experience on the (mis)alignments between teaching principles and real-time classroom behaviours, employing a nuanced approach that combines conversational analysis with data-led dialogic reflection. The second examines the integration of personal and professional identities in the context of the challenges faced by educators who are also mothers, employing a comprehensive methodology that encompasses narrative analysis of the literature and subsequent critical self-reflection (Shiraishi & Verla Uchida). Arguably, the main motivating factor of this section is that—while different in terms of critical relationships and research focus—both chapters shine a light on the sheer practicality and immediacy potential of cultivating critical friendships between peers working within the same institution when, all too often, institutionally based professional development initiatives are lacking.

In contrast, the five chapters in *Inter-Institutional Friendships* in the second section contribute to a broader understanding of the transformative impact of critical friendships. Collectively, these chapters adopt a reassuringly structured approach to critical friendships but are nuanced enough

in their methodologies, challenges, and insights for readers to consider them in relation to their own contexts. Chapter 3, penned by the editors, segues between sections 1 and 2 as it compares and examines the evolution of a personal friendship between two colleagues working at the same university in similar roles to a critical one where they are working at separate institutions and inhabit different roles. Indicative of the academic rigour of the entire publication, the most noteworthy aspect of this chapter is the depth of the analyses, where the authors outline a five-step process of their critical friendship, encompassing rounds of discussion, literature review, narrative analysis for emergent themes, dialogic-then-self-reflection practice on personal and professional growth in response to the identification of these themes. Chapter 4 (Ueno & Yoshida) adds contemporary relevancy to the editorial by employing a qualitative narrative methodology, offering a nuanced exploration of educators' critical reflections as they navigate the uncertainties and aftermath of the global pandemic, providing insights into challenges and adaptations in teaching principles, practices, and professional development within this unique context.

Chapter 5 (Lee & Choong), employing duo ethnographic critical evaluation, adds authenticity to the overall narrative by exploring educators' personal background biases and their influence on professional aims. It examines the importance of crafting inspiring lessons and the impact of pivotal life moments on educators' teaching principles and professional identities. Emphasizing the transformative impact of critical friendships on multiple levels, Chapter 6 demonstrates its practicality by encouraging the cultivation of a broader community of regular reflective practitioners across multiple institutions (Bereton & Ellis). Underscoring the structured approach as crucial, this chapter highlights the fostering of deeper connections and a sense of community among educators. Chapter 7 particularly stands out for showcasing the transformative dynamics of critical friendships. Integrating personal reflections, theoretical underpinnings, and practical experiences, it examines the evolution of mentor-mentee relationships. This reciprocal process, where the mentored individual becomes the mentor, illustrates the mutual benefits of critical friendships in navigating the challenges of job hunting within the Japanese higher education sector (Rathore & Donnery).

The final section, *Extra-Institutional Friendships*, really shifts the perspective and context of critical friendships understood thus far. Chapter 8 introduces a collaborative community for educators working at tertiary and secondary levels, showcasing how critical friendships aid professional development across educational levels (Asaoka & Fujii). Over six months, the authors employ qualitative interviews to examine attempts to create a reflective critical community of peers. However, challenges such as time constraints and inherent hierarchies among educators emerge, impacting the development of genuine critical friendships and raising concerns about equity and

sustainability in reflective practices. Moreover, the study prompts inquiry into the influence of cultural norms, like the embedded hierarchy in Japanese culture, on the perceived success of establishing critical friendships. In Chapter 9 (Schaefer & Lowe), the narrative shift continues with the introduction of critical co-presenter-ships in podcasting as an alternative approach to examining critical friendships. Arguably adopting an 'informal-to-be-informative' approach, this chapter emphasizes candid and engaging dialogue, intentionally avoiding contrived conventions in reflective practice in order to foster genuine critical friendships. In addition, it emphasises the role of audience awareness in shaping the podcast's creation, how its public nature likely influences the classroom practice of both presenters and subscribers, and that critical friendships are not limited to traditional forms of academic collaboration.

Chapter 10 extends the narrative shift by examining the significance of authentic leadership within organizational contexts (Lucovich & Malcolm). Employing a phenomenological approach, the authors conduct multiple rounds of asynchronous semi-structured interviews on their experiences in educational leadership. Through reflexive thematic analysis, they identify themes in each other's narratives, shedding light on how these aspects shape their leadership style and identity within organizations. The study's main contribution lies in seamlessly combining theoretical insights with practical applications, exemplifying authentic leadership and the role of critical friendship in organizational contexts.

In sum, spanning academic, broadcasting, and organizational contexts in English language education, this book is an insightful and pragmatic guide for educators seeking to establish their own critical friendships or collaborative communities for informed principles, improved practice and professional development.

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Exploring Language Teacher Efficacy in Japan. **Gene Thompson. Channel View Publications, 2020. 183 pp.**

Reviewed by Sunao Fukunaga
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Teacher efficacy (TE) is a critical concept for general educators, including in- and pre-service teachers, stakeholders, and policymakers in Japan. Education in Japan has recently suffered from severe teacher shortages (Oka, 2023; Shioiri et al., 2023), a long-acknowledged problem in teaching professions. In this book, Thompson conducts a step-by-step mixed-method investigation into teaching self-efficacy beliefs of high school English teachers by developing a scale pertaining to the Japanese educational context. Delving deeply into language teacher efficacy (LTE) in a contextualized manner is timely as it may contribute to a breakthrough in the current situation.

Thompson aims to present each of the 11 chapters as stand-alone, allowing readers to start from any they wish. However, reading the preface and introduction will help with understanding what he means by 'language teacher efficacy' (LTE) and the research context. He defines LTE "as the beliefs that teachers have about their perceived capability to organize and carry out courses of action in order to effectively support the development of student L2 language ability" (p. xvi). The introduction (chapter 1) reviews previous studies in the LTE field and provides contextual features of the Japanese language teaching environment, where communicative language teaching (CLT) and the English-only-instruction policy were implemented through the Course of Study (COS) in 2009 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology). Thompson points out that while previous studies uncovered teachers' lack of confidence and under-preparedness for CLT, they fail to discuss what "confidence" refers to and its influence on teachers' activities. For example, he believes LTE research can identify in which areas teachers have strong or weak self-efficacy and can thus cater to needs of individual teachers through training.

Chapter 2 reviews the theoretical development of TE beliefs concerning Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1986) and shows how TE beliefs have been theorized to better investigate what, why, and how teachers do what they do within contextual and personal constraints. Thompson emphasizes the cyclical interaction between TE beliefs, teachers' actions, and the contexts in which teachers operate (p. 17). His review indicates the influences of institutional and collegial dynamics on TE beliefs and the impact of technological advancements on teacher preparation. Thus, he calls for refining and expanding the concept of TE sources to understand TE development with a more delicate lens.

Chapter 3 elaborates on the development of LTE research, which finds that language teachers' strong L2 proficiency, language pedagogy knowledge, and instructional strategies—dimensions unique to the language teaching profession—tend to be associated with strong LTE. Previous studies employed TE measurement scales from North America or Europe, which failed to adequately address LTE dimensions regarding group-oriented and collective cultural nuances typical of Confucian East Asian countries, including Japan. This shortcoming prompted Thompson to concentrate on the collective efficacy beliefs related to Japanese teachers' "collaborative practice" (p. 33) and the cultural impact on LTE.

Chapter 4 presents two research questions; (1) What are the underlying dimensions of JTE efficacy beliefs? and (2) What factors appear to influence JTE efficacy beliefs? In answer, Thompson cross-referenced research approaches used in previous studies, identified problems, proposed a research design appropriate to the context of Japanese high school English education, and reported on the design of his research instrument. TE sources and beliefs tend to be domain-specific and strongly influenced by the culture in which teachers are situated. Efficacy items in his scale were created from teacher interview results in the first step of a three-step development process. Following this, the items were piloted with a small sample of teachers to identify problems, and online responses from English teachers in 27 prefectures were quantitatively analyzed.

Chapter 5 details Thompson's development of the 25-item Japanese Teacher of English Teacher Efficacy Scale (JTE-TES). He ensured the JTE-TES maintained content, cultural, and linguistic validity for JTEs. This required addressing challenges related to context specificity and conceptual equivalence, particularly in a multilingual research setting. The development process comprised two interview cycles with seven local JTEs, who provided expert insight into the Japanese high school environment during the instrument's design phase.

In chapter 6, eight "underlying dimensions of Japanese high school English teachers' efficacy beliefs" were identified, ranging from "Classroom Management" to "Working with Colleagues" (p. 79). Further, five dimensions of TE: Using English (UE), Communicative Teaching (CT), Teamwork (TW), Student Achievement (SA), and Managing Workload (MW) were extracted for more comprehensive analysis. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of 141 teachers' responses highlighted JTEs' weakest efficacy beliefs in areas such as workload management and motivating students. However, JTEs have positive efficacy in using English to communicate with colleagues and students. They faced specific challenges in CT, SA, and TW, particularly in balancing teaching for communication with university exam preparation and collaborating in Japan's team-focused educational environment.

The relationship between a language teacher's self-efficacy, L2 proficiency, and classroom use is examined in chapter 7. Although L2 knowledge was assumed to influence efficacy, the study found neither proficiency nor efficacy directly predicts L2 classroom usage. Thompson underscores the significance of perceived proficiency in LTE. Generally, L2 proficiency does not directly translate to classroom use. In the Japanese high school context, teachers' L2 use, despite their high self-efficacy, is impacted by factors such as student motivation and school academic strength.

The interview and survey results in chapter 8 reveal school levels and educational goals strongly affect JTEs' L2 teaching efficacy. High-achieving schools prioritize entrance exams over CLT methods, whereas underperforming schools present unique teaching challenges. Meanwhile, JTEs exposed to CLT when learning L2 as students exhibited higher efficacy beliefs. These beliefs can be predicted by both personal and contextual factors, including CLT training and school academic performance, among others.

Chapter 9 delves into LTE in collaborative practices, specifically within the Working with Others and Teamwork dimensions of the JTE-TES. It assesses existing research on collective L2 teacher efficacy and presents findings on the significance of collaborative efficacy for high school JTEs, also discussing potential contextual and personal influences. Chapter 10 explores factors influencing development of LTE beliefs, focusing on four primary sources highlighting the significance of previous experiences with actual teaching practice, and emphasizes the role of social persuasion in the JTEs' efficacy belief development.

Chapter 11 revisits the major findings of the study, and also provides a comprehensive list of areas for LTE research, among which the relationship between LTE beliefs and student outcomes and students' self-efficacy warrants future investigation. Thompson emphasizes that LTE is a multifaceted concept deeply rooted in teachers' perceptions of their abilities, prior experiences, and context. He highlights the collective dimension of L2 teacher efficacy and, while valuing language proficiency enhancement, stresses the importance of context-specific practice and innovation opportunities for teachers.

Each chapter being a stand-alone read results in some repetitiveness across sections which sometimes blurs their distinct focus; I struggled with the organization of the book. Nevertheless, this structure could be advantageous for readers, including researchers, graduate students, or teachers, seeking information based on their immediate interests. Thompson's valuable contribution lies in the comprehensive examination of JTE-TES development and the pivotal findings on JTE self-efficacy beliefs. These insights, rooted in the context of Japanese high school

English education, can guide graduate students and researchers studying LTE in various international or domestic settings.

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Language Ideologies and L2 Speaker Legitimacy: Native Speaker Bias in Japan. Jae DiBello Takeuchi. Multilingual Matters, 2023. 208 pp. (ebook)

Reviewed by Elizabeth Hashimura
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Who has the right to claim a language? Jae DiBello Takeuchi's *Language Ideologies and L2 Speaker Legitimacy: Native Speaker Bias in Japan* (2023) is a compelling ethnographic analysis of the effects of language ownership and native speaker bias on the legitimacy of second language (L2) speakers in Japan. Language ideologies drive how ownership of a language is initially seized and then maintained and thus play a central role in determining the legitimacy of L2 speakers. As Japan struggles to liberalize its immigration policy to alleviate labor shortages, beliefs shaping national and linguistic identities are becoming increasingly contested. Takeuchi's sophisticated and engaging examination of how these ideologies intertwine and ultimately occlude L2 speaker legitimacy is therefore particularly timely.

By foregrounding first-hand accounts from foreign residents of Japan who "live their lives in Japanese" (p.5), Takeuchi's monograph successfully addresses a gap in the literature on L2 speaker legitimacy. The overwhelming majority of research on this topic has centered on L2-English speakers in educational settings. The few studies (e.g., Doerr, 2009; Okubo, 2009) that have examined the legitimacy of L2-Japanese speakers have been similarly confined to instructional contexts, such as overseas or exchange students learning Japanese as a *foreign* language. Takeuchi's research illuminates the challenges L2 speakers face within Japan-specific contexts, offering valuable new insights into how educators, researchers, and policymakers can advocate for greater L2 speaker legitimacy.

Divided into seven chapters, Takeuchi's book opens with an engaging and sophisticated orientation to the various ways in which language ideologies affect L2 speakers in Japan, focusing on how prevailing notions of linguistic capital, speaker legitimacy, native speaker bias, and language ownership are expressed within the Japanese context. She frames Japan-specific manifestations of language ownership and native speakerism as a linguistic reification of *nihonjinron* (theories of Japanese uniqueness) that enables the "bifurcation between Japanese and the Other" (Fairbrother, 2020, as cited in Takeuchi, 2023, p. 51).

To better understand this phenomenon of linguistic "othering," Takeuchi analyzed interview excerpts, participant observation notes, and questionnaires from her study participants, who are introduced in Chapter 2. These participants were a cohort of 27 L2-Japanese speakers and 27 of

their L1-Japanese-speaking friends, coworkers, and significant others (pp. 24-25). Notably, all but two L2 participants were L1-English speakers from inner-circle nations (Kachru, 1985) who originally came to Japan via the JET Program.

In Chapters 3, 4, and 5, Takeuchi examines the challenges that L2 speakers encounter when navigating three distinct Japanese speech styles: *keigo* (polite language), gendered language, and dialect. She contends that only through such speech styles can the full scope of one's identity as a Japanese speaker (p. 65-66) be expressed. A sophisticated command of *keigo,* for instance, can signify that the speaker is an adult who is a fully accepted member of society (p. 42). Takeuchi argues that a nuanced use of gendered forms can facilitate in-group access for L2 speakers and help them construct a valid L2 identity (Brown & Cheek, 2017). Proficiency in dialect, meanwhile, can be a way to avoid being seen as a "perpetual foreigner" (p. 124). Despite receiving divergent and conflicting messages from their L1 interlocutors regarding these speech styles, the restrictions ultimately applied to L2 speakers were limiting; the most expressive features of the Japanese language are reserved exclusively for those who are ethnically Japanese. For example, one of the L2 study participants, Louis, recounts being "laughed at by his L1-Japanese significant other when he tried to use formal or honorific speech" (p. 46).

The damaging effects of this linguistic gatekeeping resonate most fully in Chapter 6, where Takeuchi analyzes how native speaker bias shapes L1 speakers' conceptions of L2 speakers' linguistic competence. The degree to which this book forced me as a reader to confront the many ways in which my own use of Japanese has been discredited and invalidated, both by individuals in my personal and professional orbits and by myself, was unexpected and thought-provoking. Japanese learners and foreign residents of Japan will find themselves nodding along (often in wry recognition) with the deftly observed examples of how true ownership of the Japanese language is rendered unreachable for those not ethnically Japanese. An interview excerpt from Kazuki, the L1-Japanese-speaking partner of Peter, reveals that Kazuki "…speaks most naturally when he is with 'only Japanese' people" (p. 145). As a reader, the dawning realization that it is often our most intimate L1 partners who—knowingly or unknowingly—hinder our access to the full potential and emotional interiority of Japanese cut uncomfortably close to the bone.

One limitation of this study is that it did not investigate how the L2 participants' broader identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, and class) intersected to propel or repel their acceptance as Japanese speakers. This limitation is significant, as such identities shape and alter the power dynamics and inequities experienced by L2 speakers. The interview excerpts are illuminating, and Takeuchi's analysis is thorough and insightful. Ultimately, however, the author

frames the L2 participants as a monolith that native speaker bias happens *to*. To never account for how their identities might afford them more or less agency as L2 speakers feels like a clear oversight. Does a cishet white man from an inner-circle country, for example, have more access to legitimacy than a queer Black woman from the same country? Norton's (2013) work on identity, for instance, posits that "a fully developed theory of identity highlights the multiple positions from which language learners can speak" (p. 2), could have been integrated far more explicitly here. Omitting how the L2-speakers' multiple identities affected their legitimacy is a curious omission in an otherwise meticulously observed piece.

Considering discursive constructions of identity more broadly, while Takeuchi acknowledges the limited generalizability of her study, it is reasonable to suggest that individuals in the JET Program—the majority of whom hail from the Global North—may experience the strictures of linguistic gatekeeping less keenly than other demographic groups migrating to Japan. As of 2021, out of the 2.5 million foreign residents in Japan, China accounted for 27.8%, followed by Korea with 15.6%, and Vietnam with 13.4% (Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, n.d.). A study encompassing a broader range of participants under the intersectionality umbrella and centering of L2-Japanese speakers who are not native speakers of English could more accurately reflect the wider L2-Japanese learner experience and amplify the voices of those disproportionately affected by language ownership and native speaker bias.

Ultimately, these critiques do not greatly diminish what is a significant contribution to our understanding of how language ideologies and native speaker bias undermine L2 speaker legitimacy. Takeuchi's innovative perspective on a well-trodden topic provides a powerful tool for researchers, educators, and policymakers who advocate for the legitimacy of L2 speakers in Japan and beyond.

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Voices from the Contemporary Japanese Feminist Movement. Emma Dalton & Caroline Norma. Palgrave Macmillan Studies on Human Rights in Asia, 2022, 137 pp.

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Feminists, both in and outside of Japan, may believe that the situation for women in Japan is fairly equitable, perhaps because of the seemingly gentle culture, or the appearance of order and affluence. Then, however, they are reminded of conditions that contribute to Japan consistently being ranked low on gender equality scales. Comparing Japanese women to women who are worse off in other countries deflects from the fact that Japanese women, *relative* to Japanese men, are indeed much worse off, especially in terms of employment, political representation, and victimization through violence. This erratic yoyoing of delight and frustration with the gendered status quo in Japan can be partly mitigated by acquiring a more nuanced understanding of how Japanese residents, whether nationals or foreign, experience and create this non-monolithic country. Dalton and Norma's concise, yet informative, book succeeds at deepening such understanding by capturing the lived experiences of women who are navigating and challenging the male-dominated, often misogynistic, landscape in Japan.

The Australia-based authors, who have lived in Japan as both academics and activists, present interviews with six Tokyo-based feminist activists, building on the tradition of using women's own voices (Buckley, 1997) to illuminate meaning making regarding the layers of change over institutionalized rigidities (Krook, 2011). While publications written in Japanese have covered the accomplishments and herstories of some of these women, this book addresses the lacuna of academic books written in English about Japanese feminist activists.

Several key institutional rigidities that require amelioration continuously resurface throughout the book: the lack of laws to guarantee women's equality, the dearth of political representation, the difficulties many women have in gaining economic security, and the ubiquitous gender segregation enforced by social norms that sometimes include different forms of violence against women, violence that is often obscured. The authors and the feminist activists, like feminists in Japan and worldwide, turn to the United Nations Convention of the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) for guidance on attaining gender equality. CEDAW is envisioned to be a guideline to eradicate *cultural* practices that enshrine discrimination against women. Japan has ratified CEDAW, but international laws can only be enforced through domestic institutions, therefore, maintaining the existing gendered status quo and upholding the social

harmony that reinforces male domination and the accompanying misogyny are counter to CEDAW.

As Mitsui Mariko elucidates in Chapter 6, there is no discrimination recognized in Japan—at least not illegal discrimination—since laws in Japan on sex discrimination are non-existent (p. 61). One of the activists, Tsunoda Yukiko (Ch. 5), a feminist lawyer who was involved in Japan's first sexual harassment case in 1992 (p. 59), argues that sexual violence (harassment) is unfortunately dealt with in the civil code using tort law, which is "not suited" to addressing sexual exploitation as it does not deal with sex discrimination (p. 63), sex inequality (p. 64), nor the long-term "physical and mental incapacity" (p.63)—the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)—that survivors experience. She states that Japanese law does not reflect "international standards of human rights" (p. 65).

In her activist work with young women, Nito Yumeno (Ch 4, p. 50) found there is a dearth of legal mechanisms to support vulnerable women (p. 61). For example, she describes the recent public outrage over a judge's *not guilty* ruling of the rape of a 12-year-old girl by her father, even though the court acknowledged there was serial rape (p. 23). Is a child responsible for indicating she is not consenting to incest rape? Despite public outrage over legal cases of men not being charged with sexually assaulting unconscious women (unconscious from being drugged or force-fed alcohol), the law requires victims prove they did not consent (p. 23); being unconscious is not considered to be a sufficient legal argument (p. 23). Nito notes that men are generally silently complicit with exploiters, commenting that "bystander men turn a blind eye and don't say anything" (p. 50). Several of the activists in the book, such as Tsunoda Yukiko, are working to overturn the narrow legal definition of rape (p. 61) despite resistance from lawyers, most of whom come from often male dominated university law faculties. Yamamoto Jun (Ch. 3), who has worked with the Japanese Diet (the government, whose members are also mostly male) on changing sexual violence laws (p. 30), argues, "inequality is at the root of sexual violence … (and) most sex crime victims are women" (p. 34-35).

The book also deals with constraints in mobilizing public activism. One piece of the puzzle as to why public mobilization is generally ineffective is the lack of media coverage of gender equality struggles. This is primarily due to tight control over mainstream media by corporations and those with political influence, such as the powerful, right-wing Nihon Kaigi (Japan Conference), as well as the institutional structures that limit information accessibility (Ito, 2021; McLaren, 2019). Tsunoda Yukiko (Ch. 5) argues that male journalists do not report on women's issues due to the topic's perceived insignificance, although she writes that this pervasive attitude is now being counteracted through the increase in female journalists who do (p. 67). While public outrage

generally does not lead to ongoing widespread protests, one example of success described by Kitahara Minori in Chapter 2 is the Flower Demo that supported women survivors of violence. Inspiringly and shockingly, activists such as Mitsui Mariko (Ch. 6) describe their own struggles with harsh, sometimes violent backlash, including rape threats (p. 78), job loss, and various forms of harassment, due to their feminist actions.

The authors argue in the introduction and in their conclusions that there is a critical need for the international feminist community to gain awareness of and give support to Japan's women's movement (p. 6). However, this sentiment is not without complications given the political narrative of anti-feminism, anti-western sentiment, and conservatism that Japanese feminists such as Fujimura-Fanselow Kumiko (2011), Osawa Kimiko (2019), and Ueno Chizuko (as interviewed by Buckley, 1997) have previously documented.

The featured activists acknowledge that international influences have informed their practice, citing diverse sources including French law, Norwegian quota systems, a Canadian training program, and American academics like Catherine MacKinnon. Of note, activist Yang Ching-Ja (Ch. 7) writes about connecting with the South Korean feminist movements. Networking with feminists in South Korea is perhaps a lesser-known international link likely to be of interest to readers. Yang articulated how as a Japanese resident she experienced exclusion in Japan more as a Korean than as a woman (p. 96). This is a welcome explanation on some intersectional insights. Feminist activists working with foreigners is barely mentioned in the interviews, and this may reflect the scant attention generally given to non-dominant groups in a country that still sees itself as predominantly homogeneous.

This book can be used effectively in either language or content-based classes as the chapters are short, each one featuring a specific activist. The interviews cover an array of major issues, as well as lesser-known struggles such as Kitahara Minori's success in providing women's sexual health products and the backlash this garnered (Ch. 2). Surprisingly, the chapters are unusually formatted with an abstract and key words preceding the content, which is more in keeping with academic articles versus book chapters. This somewhat initially interferes with an expected organizational flow but does not detract from the chapters' contents.

Despite the breadth of issues covered by these Japanese activists, the book is not comprehensive, nor does it claim to be. Dalton and Norma offer the reader the voices of long-term feminist activists; women who have been practicing feminist philosophies and at times reject the femininity requirement to not challenge or disrupt harmony, as they search for ways to be effective, evoking

Sara Ahmed's *Feministkilljoys* (2013). The book captures the lived experiences, challenges, failures, and successes of change through social action.

An economically wealthy country such as Japan has the resources to ameliorate women's inferior situation *relative to* men. The rigid institutions that enshrine gendered cultural practices and bolster the male-dominated society require customized strategies towards that end. There have been many changes in the lives of women in Japan, including conceptual changes in the links between sex and reproduction that have shifted across East Asia (Iida, 2014; Jackson, 2019). However, the worldwide system of neoliberalism creates a multitude of common issues for women in capitalist economies, least of all the push and pull between family structures and work. It is these commonalities that have created the existing links with international feminisms and continue to validate the need for strengthening such connections.

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Tension-filled English at the multilingual university: A Bakhtinian perspective. Maria Kuteeva. Channel View Publications, 2023, pp. 218.

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> A continuous increase in the use of English – not least in university settings – is accompanied by stretching and being stretched, e.g. through bending and redefining norms. (p. 14)

This book starts off asking a question that was certainly on my mind, "Why write about English again?" Indeed, there is an abundance of research, both theoretical and empirical, regarding English as a global language, as well as its contentious landscape. However, the more recent move by non-anglophone countries like Japan to engage in what has been termed 'linguistic entrepreneurship' (De Costa et al., 2016), through universities offering English-medium instruction (EMI) programs, necessitates more nuanced analysis and research. This book progresses from a macro to a micro examination of the potential restrictions and liberations of the standardization of English as a *lingua franca* in global education and research dissemination in the non-anglophone context. Kuteeva, having written extensively in the field of English in university settings, starts from the premise that "English at the multilingual university is filled with and surrounded by tensions" (p. 14). The author draws on her extensive body of empirical work and utilizes the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin's (1895-1975) (some would argue) radical philosophy of language and sociolinguistic insights to present "a theoretical argument accounting for the tensions" (p. 27).

The author's use of Bakhtin's work is refreshingly novel as his ideas are usually employed in literary criticism. Using a Bakhtian perspective has allowed Kuteeva to examine from the "macro-level of language policies and stakeholders' perceptions to the more fine-grained details of individual lived experiences of language [gaining] further insights into the creative potential of such tensions" (p. 30). In Chapter 2, Kuteeva gives a deft explanation of Bakhtin's theoretical concepts that she employs in her analysis including: dialogism, which emphasizes that all ways of talking and communicating are social, value laden, and consequently ideological; heteroglossia, or different social dialects and language strata in the way we speak; and Bakhtin's idea that language struggles between a "centripetal trend driving towards unification and language standardization and a centrifugal one pulling towards diversity and change" (p. 21).

To illuminate the tensions of English at the multilingual university, the author presents interview data that was part of a larger case study focusing on an EMI program in business studies at a Swedish university. Interview excerpts from the five participants highlight several tensions regarding their perceptions of English as a standardized language, as a foreign language, and as part of translingual practices. The data is interesting as it shows on a micro level how Bakhtin's idea of dialogism is practiced in the multilingual setting through exchanges that often operate in the translingual mode, generating layers of meaning and redefining norms. Interview excerpts also raise interesting examples of Bakhtin's concept of double-voicedness whereby a speaker mingles not only their words but the words of others, layering different languages and meanings.

The book is organized into eight chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the main theoretical concepts of the book. Chapter 2 sets up the context of multilingual universities and uses Bakhtin's theory of language to discuss the three conceptualizations of English—as a standard language, a lingua franca, and as translingual practices. Chapter 3 explores language policies in universities and sets up Chapter 4, which discusses the reasons why disciplines respond differently to the standardization of English, and Chapter 5, which highlights ongoing debates about the preeminence of English in academic writing and research publications and how that influences knowledge construction and diversity in worldviews. Chapter 6 analyzes the qualitative empirical data and discusses how the interview participants experienced language production and usage at their multilingual university. In Chapter 7, more empirical data is presented focusing on two creative writing students who shared their experiences creating text in English. Numerous interview excerpts are provided making the book a rich account of the participants' lived experiences. In Chapter 8, the author provides a very clear conclusion, skillfully tying her arguments together and offering some suggestions for future research.

For GALE readers, it will be disappointing that the author does not utilize a gender lens in her interpretations and analyses. Bakhtin's omission of gender as a relevant dimension in his theories is not inconsequential (Booth, 1982; Halasek, 1992) and could be argued to limit his contributions and his impact. Indeed, few feminists have taken up the chore of integrating a gender lens into Bakhtin's theories, notwithstanding feminist scholar Dale Bauer (1988, 1992), and feminist literary theorist Julia Kristeva's use of Bakhtin's "dialogism" to develop her concept of "intertextuality" starting in the 1960s. Despite current research practices of including at least a nod to an intersectional approach, the author seems comfortable using Bakhtin's gender-neutral sociolinguistic theories without question. She uses the word gender a total of only five times in the book and one of those times is to clarify that her analysis "does not focus on gender issues" (p. 131). The author's analytic framework would have benefited from integrating some of the

wealth of research examining the highly gendered aspects of language and communication, as well as of global English language education, especially since the aim in her book was to take a critical stance.

Relatedly, one small but puzzling aspect presented in the book that could easily be missed by readers, but stands out with a gendered read is the author's description of how she anonymizes the five interview participants:

> Both genders were included, three males and two females. For reasons of anonymity, the year of data collection is not provided, and the students are given unisex pseudonyms. Also, for anonymity purposes, the proportion of genders is swapped in the presentation of the findings (three females, two males) and assigned randomly to individual participants. My analysis does not focus on gender issues, and this swap was made solely for the sake of clarity in the presentation of results and in order to avoid referring to all participants using the same pronoun. (p.131)

Her binary reference to "both genders" is concerning enough, but the "swapping" after giving pseudonyms seems oddly unconventional and unnecessarily complex. It is difficult to find a precedence for this or the need for such a swap. This seems like an inconsequential point to raise; however, combined with her omission of any gender or intersectional analyses, in a study critiquing standardization, it suggests the author falls "victim to the ideology of [her] language" (Halasek, p. 66).

Despite the author's intentional gender-blind approach, and the reader having to read through intersectional "correctives", a point which feminist Kay Halasek (1982) wrote about specifically in relation to her experience with Bakhtin's omission of a gender perspective, this book contributes to important debates on the continued expansion of English as a standardized lingua franca in university settings and the knockoff sociopolitical and economic effects. It offers an abundance of interesting viewpoints for those interested in the use of English in non-Anglophone contexts. It is relevant to all academics who instruct, write, or publish in English and would be particularly informative for anyone working or studying in an English as a foreign language (EFL) or English-medium instruction (EMI) program.

For those of us working in education in Japan, the "tensions" regarding English language and its relationship with internationalization and globalization are often salient. The increased interest and awareness can be seen in recent publications such as Konakahara and Tsuchiya's (2020) edited volume entitled *English as a Lingua Franca in Japan: Towards Multilingual Practices,* as well as in

Japanese government education and research policy shifts. To point, last March, the Japanese government raised the target number of foreign students to 400,000 a year by 2030 aiming to attract more doctoral and master's students who can "help enhance Japan's international competitiveness" (Kakuchi, 2023). This expansion of EMI programs and the nudging of researchers to expand their publications and collaborations in English to help increase international rankings has both positive and negative effects on knowledge production, as Kuteeva reminds us. Bakhtin believed a move to monolingualism was unethical, but Kuteeva has found glimmers of evidence, at least at the micro interactional level, suggesting a more hopeful outlook; while English continues to expand as the global lingua franca, "fascination with English-medium education does not seem to erase multilingualism and does not impede the learning of the local national language" (p. 125). This doesn't sound unduly optimistic after reading her comprehensive discussion and analysis of this complex phenomenon in the book. It perhaps reflects the common adage "a rose can grow from concrete" and that the "tensions" lie in the cracks.

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Most modern feminists, other allies, and members of gender and sexual minorities are undoubtedly familiar with intersectionality. I had been using the term to refer "to the interaction of multiple identities and experiences of exclusion and subordination" (Davis, 2008). However, in *The Intersectional Environmentalist: How to Dismantle Systems of Oppression to Protect People + Planet*, Thomas cites the Merriam-Webster dictionary definition to describe "the complex ways in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as of racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups" (p. 26). Though the concept has existed since the 19th century (Collins & Bilge, 2020), the term was first coined and subsequently popularized by Crenshaw (1989) to draw attention to the fact that even though American politicians had already passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, employers continued to discriminate against Black women. Because intersectionality is such a versatile theory, many other aspects of identity in addition to what Monture (2007), as reflected in the Merriam-Webster definition, has labelled the so-called trinity of race, class, and gender can also be considered. As the title of her book implies, Thomas helps the reader to contemplate environmentalism from an intersectional perspective.

The book has five short and accessible chapters. Chapter 1 provides background information on intersectional theory and feminism and illustrates how we can apply an intersectional approach to environmentalism. Similarly, in Chapter 2, Thomas extrapolates from social justice to environmental justice. She states, "Social injustice and environmental injustice are fueled by the same flame: the undervaluing, commodification, and exploitation of all forms of life and natural resources, from the smallest blade of grass to those living in poverty and oppressed people worldwide" (Thomas, 2022, p. 5). In Chapter 3, Thomas addresses that uncomfortable elephant in the room: privilege. In Chapter 4, she shows how Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) are disproportionately adversely affected by environmental problems than Whites. For example, one statistic that Thomas cites is the fact that 71% of African Americans live in counties that do not have clean enough air, by federal government standards. Over half of Latinx people in the United States live in similarly poor circumstances. Similarly, Latinx workers, who are overrepresented in the agriculture industry, are three times more likely than Whites to die from heat exhaustion on the job. Lastly, in Chapter 5, Thomas covers three relevant contemporary issues and how they relate to intersectional environmentalism: fashion, green energy, and veganism.

Thomas draws attention to the disparity between the wealthy Global North and the less affluent Global South with numerous examples. First, the fashion industry has an enormous negative impact on the environment, and fast fashion, in particular, has exacerbated the problem. Compared to 1995, in 2015 consumers purchased 400% more clothing. Furthermore, the fashion industry is one of the largest polluters in the world, exploiting not only the earth's natural resources, but also labour. As trends keep changing, consumers will keep buying, causing this vicious cycle to continue. A related issue that is close to my heart is that government agencies have uncovered evidence of forced child labour and slavery in the industry. Exacerbating this disparity is the fact that most fashion manufacturing occurs in the Global South, and increasing consumption in the Global North is driving demand. Corporations exploiting child labor and disregarding safety standards further widen the gap. For the sake of a sustainable environment, these problems must be addressed. One more glaring difference between the Global North and the Global South that Thomas highlights is the fact that 70% of the world's lithium is found within indigenous lands in South America. In 2015, China alone drove 50% of the global demand (Hao et al., 2017).

The book was also easy to read because of highlighted definitions as well as the helpful Q&As interspersed in the book. Definitions of terms such as misogynoir and, of course, intersectionality, increased accessibility. The Q&As in each chapter would benefit not only individuals reading the book independently but also book club members because they serve as discussion questions. Still, even when reading independently, readers can consider what they have learned and apply it to what they already know and experience. For example, in Chapter 2, Thomas invites the reader to consider racial segregation and environmental injustices in their own community. In Chapter 4, she invites the reader to consider why climate justice activists need to focus not only on the Global North, but also the Global South.

I enjoyed the book for several reasons. As I mentioned above, I liked the fact that it was accessible. One does not even need to be conversant in intersectional theory to see how to apply it to various contexts. Thomas illustrated numerous problems, such as the wage gap, education, and criminal justice, as they apply to BIPOC. Thomas is not promoting competition in the 'Oppression Olympics,' but she reminds us that Black workers earn less than Whites, Black women earn less than Black men, and Black LGBTQ+ workers earn even less.

I also enjoyed the book because Thomas showed me a way to consider the issues in a new light. Thomas discusses and suggests pledges of support for various aspects of the environmental justice movement for her readers to take. I felt motivated to make some of them, including the pledge in Chapter 2 to work to dismantle systems of oppression in the environmental justice movement and

the one in Chapter 3, to use my privilege to advocate for and amplify the messages of BIPOC activists. Other additional gems were Thomas's recommended reading, viewing, and listening lists in the tool kit, which included reports, videos, and podcasts, as well as the list of additional resources towards the end of the book.

Though *The Intersectional Environmentalist* is easy to read, informative, and inspirational, I do have some minor complaints about the book. First, though the tool kit and resources sections are helpful, an index would have made it easier for the reader to navigate through the book. Including such an index would make searching for concepts by topic, and perhaps even authors, easier. Furthermore, though the author has criticized the environmental movement for focusing excessively on the northern hemisphere, a disproportionate number of her own examples of environmental problems and policy are drawn from the United States context. Despite these minor reservations, I still encourage readers to draw inspiration from this book to get straight to work not only on smashing the patriarchal systems which perpetuate social inequalities, but also on smashing predatory capitalistic systems which exacerbate environmental inequalities and wreak ecological destruction.

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English Linguistic Imperialism from Below: Moral Aspiration and Social Mobility. Leya Mathew. Multilingual Matters, 2022, 191 pp.

Reviewed by Lily Thukral
Shirayuri University

As a working scholar merging academic research and teaching with real-world professional activities, my research interests center around how the English language acts as a practical tool in global communication and can be leveraged for career readiness and mobility. However, it was not until I read Leya Mathew's book, *English Linguistic Imperialism from Below* (2022), that I confronted the linguistic imperialism and cultural hegemony in my work. Mathew's exploration of linguistic imperialism (the dominance of one language over another) and cultural hegemony (the dominance of one culture over another) in the context of English language dominance in India offers insights into understanding their presence in English language education. Through a framework that can be transferable to diverse sociolinguistic contexts, Mathew explores how English became dominant in India and its profound impact on non-elites, social mobility, and language hierarchies. In the process of the study, connections between moral aspirations, social mobility, and English proficiency among non-elites attending low-fee private schools reveal how English language dominance perpetuates inequalities.

English Linguistic Imperialism from Below's theoretical framework challenges the idea that linguistic imperialism is solely a top-down process. Mathew's analysis is based on ethnographic research conducted in Kerala, India, drawing on various sources, including interviews with teachers, students, parents, policy documents, and textbooks. It argues that English's prevalence in post-market reform India is not just due to Western powers or elites but also because of the aspirations and desires of non-elites (individuals who are not part of the elite class, and often marginalized and excluded from the upward social mobility that comes with an English language education). The book stresses the role of morality and ethics in shaping English dominance, examining the complex relationships and desires that maintain it through consideration of specific political, economic, and social contexts.

Chapter 1, "Moral Aspiration," and Chapter 2, "Development and its Afterlives," relay the historical context in developing an education system that emphasizes the pursuit of progress and dignity. The chapters trace the impact of the Communist Party's education and land reforms in Kerala alongside the government's efforts to promote Malayalam-medium education and demonstrates how a social and linguistic hierarchy formed via socio-religious agents who facilitated a perception of an English language educational status by establishing schools for different castes.

Chapter 3, "Temporal Migrations," investigates the economic implications of the English-Malayalam divide in India and the perception of English-medium education as a conduit to social mobility. It looks at parents' aspirations for their children's English-medium education and challenges they face, such as private school costs, and explores the social and cultural contexts surrounding English schooling and development in Kerala. Chapter 4, "Social Lives of Rote," and Chapter 5, "Scripted Lives of Communication," challenge negative perceptions of rote pedagogy in English classrooms in non-elite settings. Mathew advocates for reevaluating rote learning's role in English language education due to socioeconomic factors that positions it as a significant method for mothers as it is a method often relied upon by them in educating their children (p. 66). The chapters examine the impact of rote learning, coaching culture, and the challenges in implementing multilingual language policies in English medium education, taking in account the significant role mothers often play as key instigators and regulators of their children's educations in non-elite situations. Chapter 6, "Obsessive Hope," substantiates the significance of non-elite mothers educating their children by highlighting how the state has exploited this gendered responsibility in marginalized groups who have obsessively hoped for their children's academic success. Chapter 7, "Mandated Resistance", and Chapter 8, "Rote to Interaction," present implemented reforms in Kerala to protect English classrooms from rote pedagogies. Explained is the emphasis on oracy over literacy learning and the chapters highlight pedagogies of shame that have emerged, affecting teachers and students. Mathew asserts that disparity widened for learners and parents when forced by a community of activist-educators to transition from proficiency-focused English education to oracy-based methods. Chapter 9 concludes by restating how the role of aspirations and ethical-moral actions in shaping English education, as well as the convergence of activism and transnationalization in altering norms of English proficiency, have perpetuated existing inequalities.

While the primary focus of *English Linguistic Imperialism from Below* is India, its theoretical framework and critical analysis are helpful for language educators in Japan. By critically reflecting on their language teaching methods and the complexities of linguistic imperialism, instructors in Japan can strive for more inclusive and empowering language education that aligns with their students' and their families' aspirations and values, particularly concerning gender and social mobility. Gender and non-elites' role in the spread of English is a familiar situation in Japan. For instance, the phenomenon of linguistic imperialism seen in the book is observable in Japan's language teaching industry with major language teaching companies in Japan taking advantage of females as affordable labourers, requiring minimal English proficiency from applicants interested in teaching English to children (Kobayashi, 2019). Additionally cultural hegemony is evident in teaching

approaches influenced by western-centric, educational standards (Zeng et al., 2023) Ultimately, the book's critique of the neoliberal market-driven approach to English language teaching, influenced by economic globalization, historical connections, and socio-political relations, prompts instructors in Japan to consider alternative pedagogical approaches that empower and promote social justice.

However, the book's limitation lies in its theoretical complexity. It draws on postcolonial theory, critical applied linguistics, and feminist theory, and thus requires an accessible writing style to explain complex ideas to many readers. Mathew assumes prior knowledge of theories; as a result, she sometimes uses repetitive and esoteric language that alienates readers unfamiliar with the specialized expressions, making the text challenging to decipher. Nonetheless, for those willing to unravel these concepts, it offers an opportunity to deepen and expand understanding of the development and consequences of English as a lingua franca.

By focusing a critical lens on the moral and affective aspects of English language learning and its impact on social mobility, Leya Mathew's *English Linguistic Imperialism from Below* (2022) encourages educators to reflect on the complexities of linguistic imperialism and its implications for language teaching practices. Unlike conventional perspectives that emphasize the economic and political advantages of language acquisition, Mathew's emphasis on the agency of non-elites redirects attention to often neglected gender-related challenges in education and social consequences. Equally important, Mathew demands context-specific analysis in understanding the global spread of English. By recognizing the influence of linguistic imperialism and cultural hegemony in the Japanese language education system, educators can use this book as a resource to promote inclusive and equitable language teaching practices that empower learners and identify the diverse linguistic realities of English language education in Japan. Furthermore, the book's examination of gender dynamics and societal opportunities in English language learning can provide insights for addressing gender-related challenges in language education and promoting a more inclusive and empowering educational environment for educators, learners, and their families in Japan.

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We are the leaders we've been waiting for: Women and leadership development in college. Julie Owen. Stylus Publishing, 2020. 236 pp.

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Leadership is not my specific area of expertise, but I work at a women's university with a leadership programme, and a colleague recommended *We are the Leaders We've Been Waiting for*. As an instructor who is passionate about women's education and empowering students to succeed professionally, I was interested in this topic. I did not expect the book to be so relatable to my own experiences of professional development as a cisgender woman, nor to guide me on a reflective journey to examine my own beliefs about gender and leadership. Owen presents theory, data and research on the topic, addressing intersectional, gender nonconforming and transgender identities, and discussing gender inequality from college to the workplace. She invites the reader to examine their own beliefs about and experiences of leadership through activities facilitating reflection and addresses the controversial topics of regendering or degendering leadership. Each chapter includes students' narratives which embody the themes of the book through accounts of their lived experiences.

In chapter one, Owen gives the reader an overview of the ideas explored in the book and clarifies that she is referring to leadership as "a process between and among people who seek to make a positive influence in the world" (p. 4), not only the occupation of positions at the top of an organization. The next two chapters summarise previous literature, discuss how gender and leadership are socially constructed, and explore the role of identity in leadership development. Dugan's 2017 research is cited to illustrate the importance of leadership efficacy. A person may have high levels of leadership capacity, but if their beliefs in those capabilities are low, they are unlikely to seek opportunities to lead. Owen uses critical theory to invite the reader to consider how their "identities, subjectivities, and assumptions within dominant social, political, economic, and cultural systems" (pp. 26-27) influence their approach to leadership and offers Preskill and Brookfield's (2009) *Nine Learning Tasks of Leadership* as a lens for critical reflection. She stresses the importance of self-awareness in leadership development and explains how identity and intersectionality shape our own journeys.

Owen describes the negative effects of gender socialization, introduces the concept of feminist leadership, and discusses women's representation across different employment sectors in chapters four to six. The section on the effects of gender socialization in schools is both concerning and thought-provoking for teachers. Owen views perfectionism and imposter syndrome as negative effects of gender socialization which she previously identified as barriers to women's leadership

efficacy. She goes on to discuss women's experiences of internalized oppression and the "double bind," which refers to a conflict between the expectation of women to be warm and friendly with the expectation that leaders should be direct and assertive. Owen proposes adopting Shea and Renn's (2017) feminist leadership style which is positioned as one that persons of any gender identity or expression can utilize. Feminist leadership involves overturning systems of power, addressing difference and intersectionality, and engaging in social change. This model is proposed because when people talk about masculine or "feminine leadership styles, they are reinforcing essentialist and heteronormative ways of being" (pp. 103-104), something which Owen wishes to avoid.

Chapter seven examines the metaphors used to describe women in leadership, explores barriers to advancement, and offers personal and organizational strategies for gender equity. In the next chapter, Owen cites literature on the additional challenges for female leaders with intersectional identities, such as burnout or the pressure of being the first or only leader with their set of identities. The notion of degendering leadership is discussed because gendered approaches "typically ignore transgender, nonbinary and intersex leaders" (p.167) and may also lead to a "stereotype threat" where negative attitudes towards women's capacity to lead are internalized. However, it is argued that this concept could lead to overlooking or denying the effects of gender as an aspect of identity upon leadership. Owen concludes that regardless of whether you believe leadership needs to be degendered or not, "it is important to question the role gender plays in leadership" (p. 167). The final chapter includes different strategies for creating change and practical tips on dealing with non-feminists. This chapter would benefit from increasing tangible and practical suggestions for avoiding activist burnout and maintaining hope, given the call for action at the end of the book.

Owen has encapsulated a plethora of theory and literature on women and leadership to create a book that highlights the way that leadership has become gendered and the negative consequences on female leadership journeys from education through to employment. Although Owen often cites American history, laws, and data, the broader themes she discusses are relatable to women outside of the USA and her suggestions, such as how to support healthy gender socialization or develop leadership self-efficacy, are applicable to Japan. This book would be a valuable asset for GALE readers teaching gender or leadership in college settings. Equally, it provides a thought-provoking read for anyone interested in engaging with this topic in a more inclusive way through critical reflection. In June 2023, Japan fell to 125th out of 146 countries in the WEF gender gap report, in part due to the low score for women's participation in politics and economy (Kaneko, 2023). Furthermore, the 2023 Global Gender Gap report (WEF) concluded that no country to date had

achieved complete gender equality. Owen's book reminds us of the profound consequences of gender inequality and proposes strategies for making change at the individual and organizational level. "We can wait for others … to advocate for more gender inclusive leadership and organizations, or we can roll up our sleeves and get to work. After all, we are the leaders we've been waiting for" (p. 186).

Further reading

Leadership theory: Cultivating critical perspectives by John P. Dugan, (2017), Jossey-Bass.

Learning as a way of leading: Lessons from the struggle for social justice by Stephen Preskill & Stephen D. Brookfield, (2009), Jossey-Bass.

Gender and Leadership: A call to action by Heather D. Shea & Kristen A. Renn. In D. Tillapaugh & P. Haber-Curran (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on gender and student leadership* (New Directions for Student Leadership, No. 154, (pp. 83-94), (2017), Jossey-Bass.

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The Japanese LGBTQ+ Community in the World: The COVID-19 Pandemic, Challenges, and the Prospects for the Future. Masami Tamagawa. Routledge, 2023. 292 pp.

Reviewed by Chelanna White
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In this book, Tamagawa offers a comprehensive exploration into the LGBTQ+ experience of COVID-19 in Japan, through both thoroughly analyzed quantitative data and case study narratives. Despite Japan's reputation as an LGBTQ+-friendly country, it is characterized by "relentless heteronormativity" (p. 59) and a troubling lack of comprehension of both human rights and the difficulties faced by gender and sexual minorities by Japanese society at large. Tamagawa argues that rather than overt hostility to queer individuals, Japan is marked by "passive systemic homophobia" (p. 159). The experiences detailed in this book underscore the urgent need for equal recognition and rights for LGBTQ+ people in Japan.

The first two chapters paint a broad picture of the state of LGBTQ+ affairs in the world and Japan today, setting the stage for the subsequent examination of the experience of the pandemic and the media response to a COVID-19 outbreak in South Korea. Tamagawa first identifies some of the main concerns of the LGBTQ+ community in Japan, including privacy concerns and fear of being outed, tension in family relationships while quarantining, loss of jobs, and loss of social support networks outside of the home. Then, Tamagawa describes the state of LGBTQ+ rights globally, noting that even if a state has protective measures, in practice LGBTQ+ people are often susceptible to violence and discrimination.

Japanese LGBTQ+ people may not often be subjected to overt violence, but discrimination is prevalent, and same-sex marriage is not yet legally recognized despite growing support for it. Many Japanese people struggle to come out to their families, and while some find community in places such as Tokyo's Ni-chōme neighborhood, Tamagawa notes that these places can be unwelcoming to people who do not fit certain aesthetic stereotypes, increasing feelings of rejection and isolation.

Tamagawa collected 358 responses to an online survey conducted between May and June 2021. Respondents represent a variety of LGBTQ+ people who experienced the pandemic in Japan. The vast majority were Japanese nationals living in Japan, followed by non-Japanese nationals also living in Japan. However, some responses also came from Japanese nationals living overseas and non-Japanese nationals living overseas who had experienced some of the pandemic in Japan. Just under half of the participants identified as gay men, with lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, transgender, and other queer identities also represented. Chapters three and four detail the

responses to Tamagawa's qualitative survey through an intersectional lens, focusing on sociodemographic characteristics. Participants were asked about their experiences of COVID-19 in terms of health (including mental health) and financial impact; life disruption; the threat of COVID-19 to self, family, the local community, the elderly, and members of the LGBTQ+ community; the effects of social distancing; their connection to the LGBTQ+ community and their experience of home life during the pandemic. Although many reported difficulties using the healthcare system, overall, about half of respondents said they are happy being LGBTQ+ and many feel connected to the LGBTQ+ community in Japan, despite discrimination by and ignorance from the wider Japanese society.

In chapter 5, Tamagawa presents 12 case studies of non-Japanese respondents. Their narratives are a refreshing break from the vast amounts of quantitative data of the previous two chapters, and these stories give even greater insight to the complex and diverse experiences of the Japanese LGBTQ+ community, which includes non-Japanese (and non-Japanese speaking) residents. Insights into how strict gender norms are perpetuated in schools, for example, may be missed as they fall outside the scope of the original survey. But when given the opportunity to explain their experiences in more depth, non-Japanese residents are able to share their unique perspectives.

Chapters six and seven detail the media coverage of a COVID-19 outbreak that began at a gay club in Itaewon, South Korea. Chapter six presents a cross-cultural analysis of the event, comparing South Korean, Japanese, and Western media reporting. While South Korean media often noted that the outbreak was centered around a gay club, Japanese media by and large avoided any reference to sexuality. Tamagawa argues that this is not out of respect for the privacy of the patrons of such establishments, but an indication that the Japanese media finds mention of sexual minorities unfit for publishing, perpetuating their minoritized status. Generally, South Korean media referenced the club as a gay club, or a club for sexual minorities. Tamagawa takes issue with the latter and insists the club was a gay club, but this erases men who have sex with other men and do not identify as gay, such as bisexual men, who might visit such clubs. This highlights the need for specific yet inclusive language when reporting LGBTQ+ issues. Chapter seven focuses specifically on the diversity of responses found on Japanese social media which illuminate rampant anti-Korean racism and homophobia in Japan.

The book concludes in chapter eight with a summary of the two studies and offers recommendations for activists and policymakers in Japan. Tamagawa emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach to human rights in Japan that includes LGBTQ+ people. This approach includes redefining terminology to fit the Japanese context, addressing discrimination from the

family register system to online interactions, and enacting legal protections to ensure that LGBTQ+ people have equal rights.

Teachers of gender and sexuality studies may find many of the chapters useful, whereas media studies educators might find chapters six and seven to be the most relevant for their fields of work. As an LGBTQ+, non-Japanese national who arrived in Japan before the pandemic began and stayed throughout, I found the case studies in chapter five to be particularly interesting, at times mirroring my experience and others reminding me that my experience was not the only one. Advanced-level university students may also enjoy these narratives as authentic reading material that may challenge their perceptions of how others view and experience Japan.

The book is organized well, with subsections helpfully labelled and numbered. However, there are numerous distracting grammatical errors that should have been caught in editing. The errors are relatively minor, and the intent is often clear, but it is especially frustrating given the importance of the subject matter. Despite these errors, this book is an important contribution to many fields of research, and hopefully the errors will be resolved in future editions.

In conclusion, "The Japanese LGBTQ+ Community in the World: The COVID-19 Pandemic, Challenges, and the Prospects for the Future" offers an insightful exploration of LGBTQ+ life in Japan during the pandemic. Combining thorough analysis of quantitative data with compelling qualitative narratives and case studies, Tamagawa makes a case for increased visibility and protection for Japan's LGBTQ+ community. This book is a resource for educators, students, academics, and activists alike, and challenges all to consider the broader implications of heteronormativity and passive systemic homophobia in Japan today.

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