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Language Education and Standardization in the Formation of the Modern State : A Comparison of Italy and Japan

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Language Education and Standardization in the Formation of the Modern State: A Comparison of Italy and Japan

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1. POINTS IN COMMON

Both the Meiji Restoration and the unification of Italy occurred in the 1860s; from that time Japan and Italy began to build modern states. In both countries, which might be called "late comers," economic development between regions was strikingly uneven. Of course, each nation had its own characteristics. Despite chance similarities, their histories were different. Geography also played a role in determining how historical processes played themselves out in Europe, on the one hand, and East Asia, on the other. Account needs to be taken also of such superstructural categories as "national consciousness" and "civic consciousness." All things considered, Japan and Italy are highly disparate cultures. Yet both were made up of small kingdoms or regions divided into fiefs that suddenly united, and they did share certain points in common: political reforms were carried out simultaneously in each, and both felt the necessity to close the gap with the other advanced nations quickly. They had to grapple with the problems of how to form a nation and how to cultivate civic consciousness at roughly the same time.

One of these problems demanded a prompt solution: how to create a national language, the one indispensable defining element of a nation. The idea enunciated by German romanticists from Humboldt onward—that citizens of a nation speak the same language—became an accepted concept in 19th-century Europe [VOSSLER 1925: 144; ENTWISTLE 1955: 27–28; DE MAURO 1970: 1–9]. It also became part of public opinion in Japan after about 1888 due to the close attention the Japanese paid to Western Europe. What both Japan and Italy needed was a language comprehensible in all regions that could serve as the vehicle for mass education.

2. EDUCATION IN THE "NATIONAL LANGUAGE"

Let us take a brief look at the actual state of the two countries' languages at the time. In Japan, besides dialects of the principal Kantō, Kansai, Kyūshū types, there was a wide range of linguistic variation from the Ryūkyū dialects to Ainu. In Italy, besides the northern, Tuscan, and central-southern dialects, there was the Ladin spoken in the Friugli district near Austria and the languages of Sardinia (both of which are Romance). But there were also provincial languages such as Franco-Provençal, German, Slovenian, Serbo-Croatian, Catalanian, Albanian, and Greek. From a sociolinguistic point of view, the situation was extremely complex. Yet, after unification, the ministers in charge of the Department of Education, rather than trying to preserve the various regional dialects and languages, instead ignored them and made efforts to lay down a unified Italian standard.

The unification of Italy was not solely a domestic matter; it was partly a liberation from foreign influence and a struggle for independence. Hence the popularization of a language that most intellectuals could accept as a standard for the nation became important. This was an inevitable consequence of contemporary nationalistic thought. In Japan, by contrast, little attention was paid to the Ainu language. Research had been done on Ryūkyū dialects, and after 1880, compilation of bilingual dictionaries and bilingual Japanese-language textbooks began [OKINAWA KENCHŌ 1880; NAKAMOTO 1895]. This sort of activity was, however, not aimed at the preservation of minority languages; it was rather part of an attempt to eradicate dialects including the "dialect placard" system, in which a child at school heard speaking local dialect was made to wear a placard as punishment. Unlike the Ainu, the people of the Ryūkyū Islands had had a *de facto* standard language for centuries, about which they were quite self-conscious; it therefore took quite an effort to enforce the Japanese-language standardization policy there.

2.1 Japan's International Education

Indeed, from the beginning, "national language education" (the term itself had not yet been coined) caused much grief for Italian and Japanese educators and politicians. The education system in Japan was established in 1872 and, although it contained no major innovations (one could say that reading, writing and abacus were taken over "as is" from the earlier *terakoya*), it is perhaps worth noting that, in teaching Chinese characters, printed style came first.¹⁾ Even more important, following the American-style elementary school curriculum, time was set aside for "conversation" (language usage). In other words, unlike education up to that time in which learning language meant simply memorizing Chinese characters, reciting the so-called Four Books and Five Classics, following the copybook, and writing letters in the prescribed manner, Japanese children were now to become proficient in

1) This is also a problem related to basic facilities. Until 1875, 40 percent of the buildings where schools were located were in temples, and 30 percent were rented from individuals [MONBUSHŌ 1980: 49].

the constructive techniques of making conversation. Learning language became regarded as a way for students to describe the reality around them.

Since citizens had freedom of movement within Japan after the Meiji Restoration, those who went away from home to find work or left home to participate in political movements became separated from their places of origin and had opportunity to become exposed to dialects different from what they spoke themselves. This led, in 1874, to calls for the necessity of putting conversation into the elementary school curriculum. If one looks at a conversation textbooks used at this time, however, it seems that theory and practice were quite far apart.²⁾ For instance, because Ota Zuiken's *Kaiwa-hen* 'Compendium of Conversation' (Tōkyō, 1871) used an American text as its model, its Japanese is unnatural, with sentence structures similar to those of European languages. In order make any sense out of it, it's virtually necessary to translate it into English first. The Japanese verb *motsu*, for instance, is treated as if it were the English 'have'; thus, *ware wa fude o motsu* 'I have a pen', *nanji wa kami o motsu* 'you have paper', *kare wa sumi o motsu* 'he has ink'. One can see many other sentences that appear to be direct translations from English, using *motsu* or *eru* in places where they would not be used in Japanese, such as *ware wa zutsū o motsu* 'I have a headache', *warera wa fūu o eru de arō* 'we'll probably have rain'. In other passages, the inflectional forms of verbs and adjectives are those of literary Japanese; in view of the absence even of punctuation marks, this ostensibly conversational style was merely an attempt to illustrate the fundamentals of grammar under the guise of dialogue.

In 1872, after the elementary school rules were laid down, the Ministry of Education began developing instructional materials. Materials for reading and writing practice were published by Sakakibara Yoshino, Tanaka Yoshikado, and faculty of the Tōkyō Teachers College [MONBUSHŌ 1873, 1874, 1875; TANAKA 1873; TŌKYŌ SHIHAN GAKKŌ 1875].

Language education, particularly from the applied perspective, was not given much attention. Grammar followed simple literary style and it seems that, contrary to what one might expect, the editors focused their efforts on discarding irregular *kana* and distinguishing between homophonic Chinese characters. Just by looking at textbooks of this kind, we can see that the Ministry of Education and the educators of the day had not yet begun to think seriously about national language education. They had no idea of how it should be or of how to standardize the language.

2.2 Italy's Standardization Problems

By contrast, standardization was the subject of a lively debate in Italy from the very beginning. Even before the transfer of Rome from Papal control (1870) and

2) "We provide conversation because, even though language and composition are taught, the tone of conversation varies depending on the environment and the words differ depending on usage. If one does not study these variations, one's language will not be intelligible in the least." See *Monbushō Zasshi*, no. 1 (January), 1874.

the Proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy (1861), the problem had been a subject of debate among intellectuals who were trying to create the basis of a standardized language primarily from Florentine dialect. The battle between the celebrated author A. Manzoni and the linguist G. I. Ascoli was part of this debate. Although Manzoni was from Lombardy, he preferred the more neutral Florentine, which since the 14th century had come to be regarded as the language of education; hardly any of the middle- and upper-class Italians who spoke Florentine thought of their speech as a local dialect. Using trial and error, Manzoni wrote his great work *The Betrothed*, perfecting in it a model language for intellectuals and school instructors throughout Italy. Ascoli, taking a different tack, studied the history of the English language and concluded, with a linguist's logic, that a common language is not created through deliberate actions of individuals but takes shape naturally, provided there is a homogeneous society to support it. Thus Ascoli neither tried to influence language policy nor did he see any necessity to do so.

Among the educated classes, Florentine was often used as a written language from the 14th century onward, long before the unification of Italy. New technical words were added to it on the basis of Latin. Over several centuries, Florentine thus came to fulfill the role of a common language of sort—in this sense, Manzoni's judgment was correct. Nevertheless, it was not a living language, but one full of conventions like the long-used literary language of Japan. It could not meet the demands of the modern state, yet because it had significant cultural weight, it became the linguistic prototype of 19th-century Italian textbooks and readers.

2.3 Unifying Communication

Both Japanese and Italians were well aware of how pressing the problem of unifying communication was to the modern state. In Italy, Florentine, which had already been recognized as a common language (at least, as a model), became the language taught in the schools. In Japan, on the other hand, *miyako kotoba*, the language of the capital, had already lost much of its former prestige and, as dialect collections dating back to *Butsurui Shōko* of the latter 18th century show, had largely been replaced by the language of Edo as the main language of communication among holders of political power.³⁾ Consequently, from the Restoration until the second edition of national textbooks, the problem of choosing between Tōkyō and Kyōto-Ōsaka (also called Kinki or *kamigata*) speech as the basis of a national standard lingered on.⁴⁾ In Italy, the already predominant Florentine continued to fulfill

3) From *Butsurui Shōko* (1775 edition) to *Okuni Tsūji* (1790), *Naniwa Kikigaki* (about 1819), *Hōgen Tatsuyō Shō* (1827), *Shinsen Ōsakakotoba Taizen* (1841), *Tsukushikotoba* (1845), the target language became the Edo language.

4) According to the research of Furuta Tōsaku, one element of the Kantō/Kansai language opposition was that of *nakatta* vs. *nanda*. In the *First Official Textbook*, there are 13 of the former and 10 of the latter, whereas in the *Second Official Textbook* only the former is left, indicating a trend toward the standardization of the national language. See Furuta [1982: 748].

the role of common language and language of education even after unification; in Japan, the power of the *kamigata* dialect, upon which classical literary style had been based, gradually waned.

Yet in the early part of the Meiji, *kamigata* language was used in classroom textbooks, mixed in with the language of Tōkyō, which had become the seat of central administration. Around the time of the Meiji Restoration, however, the social perspective on language in particular showed a noteworthy change. Although the *kamigata* dialect and influence of literary style persisted for some time, the history of the national language became a tale of two cities: constant movement away from Kyōto and toward Tōkyō.

Similarly in Italy, from the time Rome became the official capital, Roman dialect gained much power. In particular, it supplied many essential elements of the lexical system of the national language. From the standpoint of grammar, however, the roots of Italian, as already remarked, are in Tuscany. Roman speech originated from a southern dialect, but from the 16th century onwards, the number of immigrants to the city increased. From 1513 to 1523, its population grew from 40,000 to 60,000, and although it slumped to 33,000 after the sack of the German mercenaries in 1527, it climbed to 109,729 by 1600 [DE MAURO 1970: 24-25]. Due to the special social and political position of Rome as capital of the Papal States, the people it attracted developed their own unique form of Italian, different from the speech of other regions. The Vatican was actually a pan-Italian capital where people from all over the peninsula gathered; they refrained from using their native dialects and made an effort to speak a common language.

In Japan, the language of Edo was also made up of several dialects, for after Ieyasu entered Edo in 1590, the town suddenly expanded. Immigration surged and Edo became the so-called "home of many tongues." Tōkyō dialect originated in Edo speech but reflects it only imperfectly. Indeed, while the language spoken in the new capital of Tōkyō, naturally inherited many elements of the language of the previous period, it was refined by the elements from *kamigata* language (including grammar related to *keigo*). Genuine Edo dialect gradually waned. The loss of most of the distinctive features of Edo dialect may also be ascribed to the influence of the *sankin kōtai* system imposed by the shogunate and to the influence of classical literature.

In summary, the foundations of national language in both Italy and Japan was laid long before political unification. Particularly interesting is the fact that in Rome in 1853 and in Edo in 1854, 26.1 percent and 24.1 percent of the respective populations hailed from other parts of the country. The influence that the speech of these migrants had on grammar, vocabulary, and honorific expressions must have been substantial.

Nevertheless, it is important not to forget that, in Japan, the *kamigata* language, which was thought of as superior before the Restoration, did not become the basis for the "national" or "standard" language. Instead, this fell to the language of the long-disdained "military types" of Edo. By contrast, in Italy, the superiority

of Florentine continued to be recognized as it had been prior to unification and it formed the nucleus of Italian. Even though there was some influence from the dialects of Rome and Milan, no "linguistic revolution" of a sort that occurred in Japanese took place. Despite the cultural importance of Rome and Milan, the common language was in essence Florentine, and although one can see some slight changes in vocabulary and grammar, it is impossible not to recognize the mark of this heritage in the development of the Italian.

The period from 1868 to 1888 in Japan was one of political and sociolinguistic transition. Particularly in the period 1878–1888, there was a change in attitudes toward Tōkyō speech and its social role, marked by B. H. Chamberlain's second edition of *A Handbook of Colloquial Japanese* [1889]. He demonstrated the importance and universality of Tōkyō dialect. While there are gaps in Chamberlain's depiction of the Japanese language, his work does stand as testimony to the prevalent thinking of the intelligentsia of the day. According to Chamberlain, "The Tōkyō dialect is understood everywhere by all but the farmers, and in most provinces even by the peasantry."⁵⁾

Classroom textbooks of the day show a good deal of vacillation between capital and *kamigata* dialects, with verb conjugations at times following the literary style, at other times those of Tōkyō. Consider, for example, the *Jinjō Shōgaku Tokuhon* 'Textbook for Ordinary Elementary Schools' published in 1888 by the Ministry of Education. In this book, when the /te/ and /ta/ forms of consonant-stem verbs are introduced, places where the so-called *onbin* changes occur are underscored; thus, while old *kana* spellings were retained (e.g. *machite*, *utaute*, and *toshitorita*), variations in pronunciation were noted. There were two reasons for doing things this way. First, no matter how much talk there was about reforming the national language, changing the orthography abruptly was not something that could be easily accomplished. Second, since the main point of this text was to have students read sentences written in literary Japanese, students needed to become accustomed to its written forms even if they read them in the vernacular. Texts of this kind persisted some time and can even be seen in the *Teikoku Tokuhon* 'Imperial Reader' published in 1892 by the Gakkai Shishinsha.

To cite a specific example, consider the forms *no-te* and *ka-ute* that appear in this book. In the former, the hyphen-like line signifies the /Q/ whereas, in the latter, it merely indicates an *onbin* change without making clear its exact nature: the same hyphen serves in one instance to indicate the phoneme now written with "small" *tsu* but in the other to indicate either that phoneme or simply a change in the pronunciation of the vowel sequences (i.e., /kaute/ > /katte/ or /koote/ de-

5) "The dialect of Tōkyō ... has on its side an ever-increasing importance and preponderance as the general medium of polite intercourse throughout the country." "If they speak it well, they will be generally understood as a man who speaks standard English in England, that is to say that they will be understood everywhere by all by the peasantry, and in most provinces even by the peasantry." See B. H. Chamberlain [1889].

pending on dialect). Neither the Ministry of Education nor the educators who lavished so much effort on problems of orthography came up with a truly accurate notation. Latent in their compromise approach was a an avoidance of selecting Tōkyō or Kyōto dialect as a standard language. The notational device they adopted sidestepped the issue.

The problem of orthography, ever-present in the modern history of the Japanese language, also existed in post-unification Italy. In his paper *On Spelling Reforms in Europe* of 1895, the famous Ueda Kazutoshi remarked that Italy had already solved this problem [UEDA 1895a; KUSAKABE 1933: 241-242] but the fact is that orthography was still being debated in Italy even after the turn of the century. Proposals were made for replacing the letter <s> when it stands for voiced /z/, the letter <z> when it stands for voiceless /ts/, the letters <g> and <c> when they stand for affricates rather than stops, and the addition of new letters to the alphabet to distinguish long from short vowels.⁶⁾ Of course, how one rationalizes orthography depends on language-specific factors, and we neither can nor need to compare orthography reform in Italian and Japanese. The point to note is that, in the case of both nations, reforming the orthography was seen as an important part of the process of standardizing the language. In order to chart out the course of standardization, certain "objective" and scientific steps had to be taken, and changes in orthography in both countries clearly reflect attempts in this direction. In Japan, examples include proposals to abolish historical *kana* spellings, use a dash-like line (*bō*) to indicate long vowels, and write the particle /wa/ with the *kana* <wa>. In Italy, as we have already seen, similar proposals were in the air: orthography reform focused on language unification and "one nation, one language."

Orthography reform had to struggle against history, tradition, and inflexible custom. Reformers had to take into consideration the opinions of conservative intellectuals who, while placing importance on education for the masses still wished to regulate literary culture. This was true especially of the Confucianists in the Japanese Ministry of Education. Even if they had managed to develop a more rational orthography, the end result would necessarily have been a compromise. Yet, rather than looking upon this episode as a failure on the part of linguists and educators, we would do better to see it in terms of the sociolinguistic reality of both nations at that time. If language is a "product" of history, then modest progress in solving the "national script problem" might be ascribed to the fact that the little accomplished was adequate to the needs of readers and writers of the day, and did reflect the opinions of the majority of intellectuals.

6) See *Di alcune forme dell'ortografia italiana*, Milano 1876. Goidanich and Luciani drew up a more comprehensive plan for orthography in 1910 but since their plan was too complicated and used an alphabet which was not used for other European languages, it was never implemented. See P. G. Goidanich, *Sul perfezionamento dell'ortografia nazionale*, Modena 1910; L. Luciani, *Per la riforma ortografica*, Atti della Società Italiana per il Progresso delle Scienze, Napoli 1910.

Let us take a closer look at how Italy and Japan dealt with orthography. In Italy, the typical pattern was for this or that scholar to come up with a new scheme for rational spelling and the general public (authors, journalists, educators, etc.) to adopt or ignore it. By contrast, in Japan, the power and influence of the bureau charged with the orthography problem was extraordinary, thanks to the state textbook authorization system. In Japan as well as in Italy, textbook publication had become a profitable enterprise. Publishers in Tōkyō did very well, especially after the compulsory education was established. Soon thereafter, the Ministry of Education began textbook authorization, checking content and style, and permitting only those texts that had received Ministry authorization to be used in schools. Later, using a bribery incident as an pretext, the Ministry of Education put into effect the state textbook authorization system in 1903, allowing only textbooks edited at the Ministry to be used.

In Italy, the High Committee of the Ministry of Education '*Consiglio Superiore della Pubblica Istruzione*' was, in principle, supposed to inspect all published textbooks and judge their quality, but in practice, because of the difficult political and social changes of the time, it could not accomplish its mission. In Turin, the capital of the Kingdom of Savoy, on the border with France, many French lexical items appeared in textbooks and, depending on the inspector, French words might often be heard in the classroom. In Florence, the home of Dante, textbooks employed much of the local language. In the south, especially in books authored by Neapolitans, one finds a purist trend: classical Italian frequently appears. This inconsistency in the language used in the textbooks was due less to the laziness of the High Committee than to the strength of local cultural traditions. At base, Italy's Ministry of Education wanted to encourage the use of textbooks, for there were many teachers who read aloud from notes, made students read whatever they deemed appropriate, and never used anything that might properly be called a textbook at all.⁷⁾ The Ministry strove mightily to bring unity to this inconsistent system but, in the end, met resistance from local publishers who feared loss of profits. Moreover, the Ministry could hardly criticize the textbooks edited by famous intellectuals who had been culturally prominent from before unification in their respective regions. It was thus unable to convince teachers to discontinue their accustomed practices.

In Japan, the Ministry of Education had a hand in Tsubouchi Shōyō's *Kokugo Tokuhon* 'Japanese Language Reader' of 1900. It compelled this famous author to tailor his manuscript to their standards. In the Kingdom of Italy, which had been established on the principle of pluralism, not a single politician had the temerity to call for the unification of textbooks; the school system itself remained under the control of local leaders and intellectuals. Thus, in quite different ways, textbooks and

7) Since most teachers did not use texts, the Ministry of Education had no idea what sort of classes were being taught or to what extent its curriculum was being followed, so to the Ministry of Education, the assignment of textbooks was a serious issue. See Raicich [1966].

their language were stabilized for a long time in both countries.⁸⁾

3. LITERACY AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

As already mentioned, the publication of the *Dainiji Kokutei Kyōkasho* 'Second State Textbook' in 1910 was a watershed for Japan: it signaled a major step in the standardization of the language. The problem of a standard language, which had been argued extensively up to this point, was decisively resolved by recognizing the Tōkyō as the model, which it was in this textbook at least as far as morphology is concerned. In conjunction with the compilation of the *Second State Textbook*, the Ministry of Education issued a booklet entitled *Hensan Shuisho* 'The Editor's Purpose'. Within it they presented selected examples to serve as models of standard language.

We have increased the amount of vernacular in writing and selected vocabulary chiefly from the forms used by the middle classes of Tōkyō, and in this way illustrated the standard of the national language and striven to delineate its unified structure. At the same time, we have, as much as possible, taken terms from children's daily language and showed how they are to be used and written appropriately [FURUTA 1971: 255].

With the expression "middle classes of Tōkyō," the Ministry defined the standard in terms of geography and society, going so far as to clearly illustrate this deliberate choice! To the best of my knowledge, the Italian Ministry of Education did not put much energy into its elementary school national language textbooks, and did not establish any clearly defined policy of this sort.

In Italy, a new school system was put in place but without strong direction from above; indeed, a monolithic school reform would not have been appropriate given the diversity of Italian culture. This was due partly to politics and the influence of pluralism and partly, as already noted, to the fact that proposals for orthographic reform and standardization of the language had been aired well before unification. Not until the appearance of the Fascists did the Ministry of Education provide strong leadership; at that time, slogans were invoked such as "Eradicate Dialects," "The War against Dialects," "Dialects are the Elements of Anti-Nationalism," and even "Dialects Stamp Out Patriotism." Since the Fascist period has no direct relationship to the one under consideration, I will not treat it further here.

The problem of school attendance is inextricably linked with that of education in the standard language. No matter how many textbooks one publishes or how

8) In 1867 Michele Coppino, the Minister of Education, came out with a new school curriculum. At this time, when he brought up the problem of classroom textbooks, he said: "I ought to have the courage to dictate classroom textbooks, but ..." Nonetheless, even Coppino, a believer in centralized administration, did not touch the issue of government mandating of classroom texts [RAICICH 1966: 387].

many well-designed curricula one devises, there is no hope of popularizing the standard language if the attendance rate is low. (Even with a high rate of school attendance, the popularization of the standard language does not necessarily grow in direct proportion to the number of students. Other factors include the social environment of the students and whether or not they find it necessary to use the standard language in their everyday lives.) In the era before mass media such as radio and television, the first and only place where one could become familiar with the standard language was at school. Italian compulsory education was put into effect under the School Law of 1859 (the Casati Law), but in 1861 only 50 percent of school-age children were in compliance, and ten years later, in 1871, no more than 60 percent were attending school. And these figures are conservative. A survey done in 1951 found that in 1870 a full 62 percent were not attending school. Moreover, according to the thorough investigation of Corradini, 47 of 100 school-aged children were not attending school as late as 1906. After that, thanks to the policies of the Giolitti Cabinet (1903–1911), the ratio dropped to 25 percent [DE MAURO 1970: 90].

The extremely high rate of school attendance in Meiji Japan appears to have been essential for an understanding Japan's "miracle" of modernization. According to Ministry of Education statistics at the end of the Meiji period, school attendance for compulsory education reached near the 100 percent mark. From this we can understand why it was comparatively easy for Japanese to build a modern state. Unlike Italy, the notion of "mass education" existed in Japan prior to the Meiji Restoration; the *terakoya* and country schools of the Edo period hastened the formation of the modern school system. Yet, according to scholars who have done research on Japan's educational history, the country's educational system had to overcome many hurdles in the course of its development; transforming the old system was no easy task. There is, moreover, some doubt as to the accuracy of Ministry of Education statistics. We should therefore pause to reconsider the process of standard language education in the Meiji period.

In the *Taishō Jūyonen Sōtei Kyōiku Seiseki Chōsa* '1925 Youth Educational Achievement Survey', for example, those "not graduating from common elementary schools" comprised 10.23 percent of the total enrollment. The survey report notes that this is an "unexpected phenomenon"; indeed, according to the Ministry of Education report of 1917 (the year that the youths in the survey just cited graduated from elementary school), the graduation rate for boys was 99.05 percent, *i.e.*, about 10 percent higher than that found by the *Survey* [KUBO 1974: 4]. According to the 1899 *Sōtei Futsū Kyōiku Teido Kensa* 'Youth General Education Test' [MONBUSHŌ SHAKAIKYŌIKU-KYOKU 1974], 23.39 percent "did not know how to read or do arithmetic." Another 25.99 percent could "do a little reading and arithmetic," and looking at the survey results one sees clearly that this level was quite low. Those who had graduated from common elementary school and those who were "recognized as holding equivalent scholarship" amounted to 38.29 percent. That is, a full 58.25 percent had not graduated from elementary school—clearly a

different story than that told by the optimistic statistics of the Ministry of Education for the same period [KUBO 1974: 2].

It was after the turn of the 20th century that attending school became customary in Japan. Although the movement to unite the written word with the vernacular had become popular in the 1870s, textbooks and Japanese language materials, with their ponderous written style, were hardly handbooks for the living language. For a time, preoccupation with writing prevented the cultivation of the spoken word, and what was taught in *kokugo* classes at school did little in any direct way to further education in the standard language. The *Daiichiji Kokutei Kyōkasho* 'First Official National Textbook' (1903) marked a change of course to some extent by fostering correct pronunciation based on the dialect survey of the National Language Survey Committee. The text avoided presentation of regional usages and made an effort to identify easily confused phonemes. The first volume, for example, listed minimal word pairs distinguished only by the difference between the moras /i/ and /e/, /su/ and /ʃi/, /ji/ and /çi/, /zu/ and /dʒi/, and /tsu/ and /tʃi/. These contrasts were given because in the Tōhoku and Kinki regions, there are dialects where /e/ tends to raise to /i/ (contrary to the tendency in most of the Ryūkyū dialects). Likewise, in the northern parts of Fukushima and Niigata, the north of the Tōhoku region, and the coastal region of Hokkaidō, /i/ backs to /u/. Even the local dialect of Tōkyō itself was not spared—there /çi/ merges with /ʃi/ in word-initial position so that *hito* and *hisashi* sound like /ʃito/ and /ʃisafi/. It is also worth noting that, in this textbook, *desu* and *-masu* are used consistently; in addition, one finds punctuation marks indicating the rhythm of speech, quotation marks, and other reading aids.

4. LANGUAGE AND THE MAKING OF THE MODERN STATE

In sum, there were deep connections between the making of the modern state and the problem of establishing a national language in both Japan and Italy quite apart from the many superficial points in common these countries shared. The most striking difference to be found is perhaps the respective positions of the government agencies charged with language standardization and education. In Japan, the government elite reasoned that a language reform reached to the very roots of national consciousness and tried to extend its influence down to the lowest stratum of society. In Italy, on the other hand, the problem of a national language was not necessarily seen as the exclusive prerogative of the establishment intelligentsia; many, perhaps most, proposals for reform came from "below." This complicated the standardization of the Italian language at least in regard to education; to the two-way conflict between Kantō and Kansai then underway in Japan, 19th-century Italy answered with a multi-sided contest among several rival model languages. Japan's Ministry of Education evidently did not meet the kind of resistance Italy's did, for even in Kyōto schools there was no articulate opposition to textbooks that used Tōkyō-based standard language. This difference between Japan

and Italy calls out for more research, particularly the collection of documentary evidence, but even at this early stage, the following tentative explanation seems likely.

In Japan, in the heyday of the slogan "follow the great powers and overtake them," there was no room to worry about local concerns. The object was to strengthen the state, as suggested by aphorisms such as "the national language will be a bulwark of the Imperial Household" and "the national language will become the dear mother of the people," in which the national language (*kokugo*) was both a means to cultivate civic consciousness and a "bulwark" against the outside [UEDA 1895b]. For better or for worse, Japan's Ministry of Education became actively involved in the national language issue and assumed an uncompromising position, establishing a textbook publishing bureau and carrying out language surveys, for which there was a recognized need. As in other aspects of modernization, the Japanese government played a major role and exerted immense influence.

This does not, of course, mean that the spread of the standard language was due solely to the government's efforts. Account must also be taken of such things as newspapers and magazines, which affect the language of adults. Newspapers in Italy, as early as the last century, commonly used language close to the vernacular but literary-style language was still evident in Japan even during the beginning of the 20th century. Another factor was military conscription. In Italy, conscription advanced the process of the standardization of Italian because soldiers were lodged away from their birthplaces and had to share some form of verbal communication with the local people where they were stationed. In Japan, the rule was for soldiers to spend their period of duty in the prefecture of their birth; thus, conscription had little effect on the spread of a standard language.

In short, when we examine the problem of national language in the context of modernization, we must look at how language changed on its own in addition to studying systematic reforms, and also be careful not to neglect the attitudes of the populace and the differences in language change among different social classes. Attention to all these aspects is, I feel, the most pressing need for future research.

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