A Diachronic Comparative Study of Language Variation in Japan and Other Countries

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (English Studies) in the Graduate School of Foreign Languages, Daito Bunka University

Igor Tarakanov

2023

Supervisor

Professor Dr. Christian W. Spang

Abstract

This dissertation presents research on language variation in Japan and other countries over a period of the last 200 and some years. “Other countries” refers to the Russian Federation and its predecessors, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Russian Empire. This thesis is a work of geolinguistic ethnography, an academic discipline that attempts to study ethnically based languages in the context of a geographic space and a specified historical time frame. The geographical coverage deals with the linguistic affairs of a small number of minority languages in Japan and Russia. The historical time frame goes from the Napoleonic Wars in Europe until the present. An attempt was made throughout the dissertation to take into account a time frame of approximately 200 years and attempts to do so in the context of the viewpoints of those exposed to these languages either through use or contact.

Definitions of key terms were divided into four headings. As for research questions, they all deal with linguistic growth and decay and how these processes manifest themselves in terms of ethnic existence, national identity, political systems, and language law. Thus, the primary research question of this thesis was whether a policy ignoring a language variation (like in the case of Japan) has been more destructive to its existence than a policy of creating ethnically based regions with some degree of autonomy (as in the case of Russia). Other related research questions are 1) whether state policy affects language variation and how, in turn, it is affected by language variation; 2) what the diachronic process of language evolution has been like

in the case of language variants found in Japan; and, 3) what light can a comparison between Japanese and Russian language policies shed on each other with regard to the diachronic process of language variation creation and decline in general.

Another rarely considered yet significant question asked was whether there are any common points between the nations of Japan and Russia in linguistic terms. This led to an analysis of the Ainu languages of Hokkaido, Sakhalin (Karafuto), and the Kurils. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognized the Ryukyu Island languages. The situation is comparable with the various dialects of the Karelian language in Russia. While not dealing with the same language family as the previously mentioned Ainu languages, nevertheless, the Okinawan and Karelian language groupings represent a similar historical situation. These two sets of languages represent formerly politically separate ethnic groups being included within a neighboring empire (the Japanese and Russian, respectively) and, therefore, can be researched side-by-side in order to reach a better understanding of the language situation.

The methodology was applied in the context of geolinguistics and is introduced in some detail in the second chapter. It was an exploratory research methodology, which is more commonly found in business product design and marketing research. This research methodology was chosen because the nature of the subject under consideration, being geolinguistic in nature, demanded the use of a methodology that was designed for research being done on topics where many possible unknown factors might be at play and where previous research has not developed to the point that relevant theory could exist. In this regard, other more common research methodologies were found to be not as adequately applicable, especially as the research so far done on the topic lacked a geolinguistic approach, an approach which, when applied to language policy, focuses on possible solutions to perceived problems encountered with regard to language use.

Moreover, as this dissertation deals with language policy and concludes with proposed guidelines as to language policy, its design as a comparative study was seen as desirable, even though the topic was found to be one where thinking in comparative terms does not automatically come to mind. This dissertation could neither seek nor did it strive to provide absolute answers or final recommendations regarding the results of the research done. As the usefulness of exploratory methodology research results depends on transparency concerning the personal bias of the researcher, great care was taken in this regard.

The research for this dissertation, thus, focused heavily on the written word rather than experimentation. Wherever possible, as in the case of constitutional comparisons, primary sources were used. Online news articles could, in some cases, also be considered primary sources. Academic articles were heavily referred to. Census data, where possible, was obtained. Standard reference works were used. In doing all this, a picture of Japan's approach to language policy was generated and compared with a similarly generated explanation of Russian language policy.

The literature survey then follows. This chapter was designed to explore representative works that were found to be useful when writing this dissertation and to provide a clear idea of their nature and their utility in the context of this research. It should be noted that only those works that provided material conceptual help are covered. Firstly, there is a discussion of a work of seminal importance in providing a theoretical justification for the use of the exploratory research methodology in the social sciences, of which geolinguistics and geolinguistic ethnography, due to their hybrid nature, may be considered. Then the discussion was undertaken of important works to consider when developing a general theory of national language policy studies, even though these works sometimes dealt with other countries than just Japan or Russia.

In chapter 4, language variation in Japan is analyzed, both at present and in the past. The time frame covers the history of Japan since the opening of Japan at the end of the Edo period, approximately 170 years ago.

The first item covered was the position of Standard Japanese in the context of language variant homogeneity. This part of the chapter discusses the development of modern Standard Japanese from the Yamanote dialect of the foothills surrounding downtown Tokyo. It also gives a description of the uses this standard language was put to in creating the image of Japan being a homogenous nation with basically just one language and people.

From this, Taiwan was discussed in terms of it having been an object of applied imperial language policy. In the case of this territory, a trajectory can be seen of an initially light-handed approach that gradually shifted as Japanese rule continued and its imperial rule became endangered in the events leading up to and including World War II.

The third section of Chapter 4 deals with the languages and dialects of the Ryukyu islands. Though the indigenous languages of these islands are incomprehensible to a speaker of Japanese who has had no previous exposure to them, they are considered by many Japanese and native Ryukyu islanders as being dialects of Japanese. A history of language policy with regard to the language situation of the islands is then covered in some detail.

The next topic covered in Chapter 4 is that of the Ainu in Japan and how events affected speaker numbers. However, there are emerging signs of hope for the Ainu, the trajectory of their history until recently has been tragic. It can be seen that, though language revival is now theoretically possible, it is still unlikely.

Also, the origin and development of Japanese Sign Language are discussed. In an effort to present Japanese Sign Language as it is understood by its users, Japanese Sign Language is distinguished from Signed Japanese, which can actually be considered as a separate language. The proposition that Japanese Sign Language can be seen as a proper topic in a work of linguistics may be regarded as another point of originality in this dissertation.

Chapter 4 then brings up the issue of why multilingualism and polyglottery in Japan are relatively uncommon. In this particular section of the dissertation, it is argued that linguistic distance is a primary reason in that it causes the same amount of time to be spent by a Japanese learning one European language well as it would for a native speaker of a European language becoming multilingual with the acquisition of several other European languages.

Lastly, this chapter addresses the geolinguistics of local language policies in present-day Japan. Attitudes of Japanese university students toward dialect use are explored, and a discussion of the local dialect policies in present-day Japan is made.

Chapter 5 deals with language variation in the Russian Federation and its predecessor states. As other countries became independent, both with the disappearance of the Russian Empire and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, discussion on occasion must involve other successor states than simply just the Russian Federation. However, it is the Russian Federation on which by far the greatest attention is placed. As such, Russian and related language variants are the first topic to be considered.

A discussion of Ainu in the Russian Federation is made, covering the history of Sakhalin Ainu and Kuril Island Ainu and the extinction of Ainu languages during the Soviet era. The coverage of the history of Russian Ainu goes into detail, as the two UNESCO-designated languages are now, by all accounts, extinct, though people continuing to identify as Ainu exist.

After this, an overview is given of Karelian. It is unique for the Russian Federation in that, though Karelians are indigenous to this part of Russia and give their name to the Russian republic of that name, the Karelian language remains unrecognized as an official language of the Karelian Republic. A language history of the region is given to explain why.

Chapter 5 then focuses on Yiddish in the Jewish Autonomous Region because it is illustrative of the sometimes seemingly extreme lengths that the Russian Federation will go to preserve the ethnic identity of groups that somehow or other have gained legal footing. Though no longer an official language of the region, Yiddish and its study is still encouraged, and the Jewish aspects of the region's history are emphasized.

This chapter then goes on to cover Chechen. It is an example of a language that has grown significantly in the number of its users in recent years. Nevertheless, it is still classified by UNESCO as being endangered.

The last of the spoken languages covered are Crimean Tatar. It is a constitutionally recognized language of the Crimean Republic. However, those speaking Crimean Tatar are significantly smaller in number than those who identify as being of Crimean Tatar ethnicity yet speak Russian. Nevertheless, an attempt is made to cover the topic accurately, in spite of the difficulty in obtaining information unaffected by bias, either Western or Russian in origin.

The last of the Russian Federation languages covered in this chapter is Russian Sign Language. It illustrates both differences and similarities in development between the history of Sign Language in the Russian Federation and Japan. There is also a short discussion as to the potential future use of computer technology in Sign Language development.

Chapter 5 is then rounded out with a discussion of the law related to language and government policy in the Russian Federation. Language law and policy by the Russian Federation, being fundamentally different from that of Japan, is presented by the dissertation as being important for understanding the differences found in the respective language situations in Japan and Russia. Through this lens, the comparative aspects of the consequences of language law and policy are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 6 examines the findings of the previous two chapters with regard to what can be learned from a comparative diachronic examination of the legal foundations of language policy in Japan and in the Russian Federation and their predecessor states. With the loss of its empire, Japan followed a national policy of homogeneity of language and race. This idea of homogeneity was reflected in the constitutional structure of Japan. In contrast, throughout Russian history, the recognition of linguistic heterogeneity was common. It can be linked to the events such as the acquisition of Finland and Poland at the end of the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815). This continued during the later imperial and Soviet eras and beyond under complex circumstances.

The concluding chapter starts by answering the research questions to the degree allowed by this stage of the research that was done possible. The initial hypothesis of the primary research question of this thesis was shown to be partly supported by the research done and partly unsupported. It can be concluded that officially recognized languages in Russia, specifically in the Soviet period, seem to have had a better chance of survival than in Japan. However, for those ethnic groups who “slipped through the net" in terms of legal provisions, as did the Ainu peoples of Sakhalin and Kuril Islands, the concluding chapter of this dissertation maintains that the approach in Japan of generally ignoring language issues seems to have offered a better chance for more prolonged survival for the Ainu language.

Concerning the subject of how state policy affects language variation and how it is, in turn, affected by language variation, the conclusion of this dissertation supports the idea that Standard Japanese is itself a language created in its modern form as a result of state policies emphasizing the need for stability in the face of a period of great instability as a result of initial contact with Western powers. On the other side of the continent, the absorption of non-Russian speaking European territories as a result of the Napoleonic Wars and also other non-Russian speaking Asian and European territories acquired in later wars forced Russia to come to terms with the fact that it had become a multilingual, multicultural state.

Concerning the diachronic process of language variation creation and decay in the case of language variants found in Japan, what this dissertation indicates is that since the Meiji Restoration until relatively recently, Japan has seen a massive decay in the use of what is now known as local languages. Nevertheless, there is evidence of a shift toward local language preservation in recent years.

The conclusion contains the final remarks on language birth, development, decay, extinction, and revival, as well as the mention of the contribution to research being done in the fields of geolinguistics and geolinguistic ethnography, cultural and political linguistics. It then ends the dissertation with a list of points to be taken into consideration when developing a more complete theory of comparative language policy studies than has yet been contemplated.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Christian W. Spang. When my previous academic advisor took early retirement in 2020, Dr. Spang volunteered to provide his academic guidance to me. Although I have not been the easiest student to deal with, he has consistently kept his good humor and, more importantly, his concern. And it is through his advice that I was able to bring this dissertation to completion. In every sense, his guidance has proven to be invaluable, and for that, I will bear a permanent debt of gratitude.

Secondly, I owe much to Professor Grigory Kazakov, who, when, as a Japanese Ministry of Education and Technology scholarship student studying under the guidance of Professor Hikaru Kitabayashi, first introduced me to Professor Kitabayashi and Daito Bunka University. Over the years, he has continued to take an interest in my progress and be generous in the help he has given me in forging an academic career.

Thirdly, no acknowledgment would be complete without recognizing Professor Kitabayashi's role in guiding me through the process of developing an initial research proposal and in helping me prepare myself intellectually for admission to the Ph.D. program in Cultural Linguistics belonging to the English Division of the Graduate School of Foreign Languages of Daito Bunka University. I also express my gratitude for his becoming my academic advisor and guiding me during the difficult early years of my life in Japan and studying at Daito Bunka University.

Additionally, I must mention Professor Jeffrey Johnson and Associate Professor François Roussel and their many kindnesses over the years at Daito Bunka University.

Likewise, no list would be complete without Dr. Robert Sigley, a former associate professor of Daito Bunka University who always went beyond the call of duty to help master's and doctor's students with their academic writing.

Mention must be made to Professor Ohtsuki Minoru and Professor Suzuki Hironori for creating an atmosphere of hope over the last several years. Although neither is directly responsible for me or what happens to me, their actions played an important role in turning around the sense of despair that engulfed me for a time.

Then last but not least, I must express my gratitude to those professors who were involved in recommending me for a part-time teaching position beginning September 2022 at Daito Bunka University. Though it is impossible for me to know everyone who participated in this complicated process, particularly Professor Yoneyama Kiyoko, Professor Sato Kiriko, Professor Jon Morris, and Professor Tei Hou stand out in my mind. My gratitude goes out to everyone involved, including those who voted in 2022 to accept me to teach a second-year English Department class at Daito Bunka University and, later, an additional three classes as a sudden replacement for another part-time instructor. Without the immense kindness bestowed on me by everyone involved, I would not have had the financial stability I urgently needed to finish writing my dissertation.

Finally, my fellow doctor's program students also deserve mention. When I first came to Japan, the help given to me by Dr. Zhang Yongsheng was crucial. After coming under Professor Spang's academic guidance, I also benefited greatly from Bijaya Thapa and Surendra Pokhrel, doctor’s students who were also supervised by Dr. Spang.

Many others contributed to my development, including friends and family. There are too many people to enumerate. But, whether mentioned here or not, I feel grateful to all who have helped me during my years in Japan so far and, before that, in helping me prepare to come to this country.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

What follows is a work on language variation in Japan and other countries from the beginning of the 19th century onward. “Other countries” refers to the Russian Federation, its predecessors, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Russian Empire, and other successor states that now are not part of the Russian Federation. This thesis is a work of geolinguistic ethnography, an academic discipline that attempts to study ethnically based languages from the context of their speakers and in the context of a geographic space and a specified historical time frame. The geographical coverage deals with the linguistic affairs of a small number of minority languages in Japan and Russia. The historical time frame is from the Napoleonic Wars in Europe until the present.

Geolinguistic ethnography as a field of study has existed as long as geolinguistics itself but was only recently given recognition as a branch of geolinguistics (“Geolinguistics Information,” n.d.). As for geolinguistics, its roots go back to World War II (Kuznetsov, 2007), and ethnography, the study of ethnic groups from their own viewpoint, goes back even further, dating back to the 18th century (Vermeulen, 2013, p. 39). What distinguishes geolinguistic ethnography from ethnography itself is that geolinguistic ethnography seeks not only to offer an understanding of people as they see themselves but shifts the focus to a particular location and a particular time (“Geolinguistics Information,” n.d.). Language creation, use, and deterioration are addressed by examining the language issues in the context of the affected ethnicities.

The subjects of this study are the ethnicities located in Japan and Russia. There was, therefore, a geographic parameter that was respected in the writing of this dissertation. As for temporal parameters, the period of history dealt with goes from the second half of the 19th century to the present in the case of Japan and from the first half of the 19th century to the present in the case of Russia.

Though a geolinguistic ethnographic study of certain minority language-speaking groups in Japan and Russia could be done in the context of the modern history of these two nations, due to the massive number of minority language-speaking groups involved, this research does not aim to be an exhaustive study of all of them. This research, however, has an objective to be broadly representative. In the case of Russia, the position of minority languages, such as Karelian, Chechen, Yiddish, Russian Sign Language, and Ainu, was discussed. In the case of Japan, the main focus of coverage and analysis is on the Hokkaido Ainu and Ryukyuan peoples and languages.

This Hokkaido Ainu was of particular interest because not only does this ethnic minority reside in Japan, but it still possesses the only surviving Ainu language still spoken anywhere. In fact, two closely related languages, Sakhalin Ainu and Kuril Ainu are now extinct within the Russian Federation (Akulov, 2017, p. 230) and, naturally, in Japan as well, as they have never been indigenous to the main islands of this nation. Also discussed were the Japonic languages of the Ryukyu islands, which are still subjected to debate as to whether they are merely dialects of Standard Japanese or are to be categorized as separate languages (Jarosz, 2017, p. 39-68), a position which is taken in this dissertation.

One must first note that it is unusual to compare Japan with the Russian Federation, regardless of the field of study. This is especially true in the case of language history. This is because, in order to do so, people find themselves constantly being forced to compare how changes in ideology, language law, and government policy affect the historical process of language change in these two countries. These issues are addressed over the course of this dissertation.

Based on experience, the Japanese, by and large, describe themselves in terms of homogeneity. However, if a careful search is done, exceptions can be found to exist. Generally speaking, though, they accept an ideology of being a homogeneous people speaking a homogenous language and possessing a homogeneous culture. Nevertheless, apparent exceptions exist, such as notable differences between Kansai and Kanto ways of communicating and cultures, as well as others (Long, 1999, p. 191).

This dissertation, accordingly, takes issue with the concept of Japan's linguistic homogeneity. It shows clearly that the evidence for heterogeneity is not challenging to uncover, even though Standard Japanese has long enjoyed a near monopoly on language promotion within Japan’s national borders. In fact, it will be shown that Japan is, indeed, linguistically much more diverse than a first glance would suggest.

Many language variants, which are more than mere idiolects, can be found in Japan. Apparently, being a country with a big population and at an advanced stage of globalization, it has speakers of all the major languages of the world living on its territory. Research, however, has been limited to the diachronic situation of a select number of native languages found in Japan. For purposes of comparison, several languages pertaining to the Russian Federation have been covered, with special emphasis on the languages of the Ainu, as, historically, they existed both in Japan and Russia.

Historically relevant issues of minority language status in Japan are addressed in this research. These include issues not traditionally considered, such as the status of Japanese Sign Language. For purposes of comparison, similar language groups in Russia are included.

Though various research methodologies exist, it was felt that the exploratory research methodology was the most appropriate for this dissertation. This methodology will be discussed in detail in the methodology chapter. The most important (and so far, only) work dealing with its theoretical underpinnings with regard to the social sciences is discussed in the literature review due to the impact this work had on the development of this dissertation.

The primary purpose was to examine how different language minority groups in Japan have existed and interacted from the period leading up to the Meiji Restoration to the present. Especially, consideration was given to the matter of how state language policy has affected language minority groups. In addition, research was also done on certain languages found in the Russian Federation. This was done with the intention of giving meaningful context to the history of Japanese language policy.

1.1 Dissertation structure

The dissertation begins with an introductory chapter that includes sections on thesis structure, research questions and objectives, and definitions of frequently used terminology. After this, the methodology is discussed in a separate chapter before continuing with the literature survey chapter.

The fourth chapter deals with the language situation of Japan, beginning with Standard Japanese in the context of the concept of homogeneity. It then goes on to discuss Taiwan as an approach to imperial language policy. This is followed by a discussion of the history of language use in the Ryukyu Islands before dealing with the modern history of the Ainu languages. Furthermore, Japanese Sign Language is covered. After this, there follow discussions of multilingualism and polyglottery in Japan, as well as the geolinguistics of local language policies in present-day Japan. Though other language groups, such as those represented by immigrants and foreign workers, could have been discussed, they were not, as it was felt that consideration of such subjects was too much of a distraction from the primary focus of the dissertation.

The fifth chapter focuses on the linguistic situation of the Russian Federation (and its predecessors, the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire). The discussion begins with an introduction of the Red Book as a type of information source that covers ethnic groups of the former Russian Empire in danger of disappearance and, thus, to a large degree, the languages of these peoples to the extent that ethnic groups and languages coincided. The disappearing languages, being too many to cover comprehensively, are discussed in terms of "representativeness" with regard to language law and history.

Special consideration is given to the now-extinct Ainu languages that once existed in the Russian Federation. This is because the special status of Hokkaido Ainu as an ethnic minority group in Japan (Tsunemoto, 2001, p. 119) dictates that the Ainu languages of the Russian Far East must, to whatever extent possible, be given equal consideration. In addition, the state of the Chechen, Tatar, Yiddish, and Karelian languages and peoples in Russia are discussed. Moreover, there is a section on Russian Sign Language where, in addition to other subjects, the implications of Yandex Translate's emoji (絵文字) translation software for communication between the deaf and the hearing is dealt with. The chapter ends with a section on Russian language law and government policy.

The sixth chapter then focuses on a diachronic comparison of Japan and the Russian Federation in terms of language issues. It illustrates that the language history of the two countries tends to indicate that expectations dictated by the surface phenomena of history do not offer an altogether accurate guide to minority language development. That is, the primary research question of whether the Russian approach to language policy or the Japanese approach has been more conducive to minority language preservation was shown to be more nuanced than was originally proposed.

The seventh and last chapter of this thesis ends with the conclusions. This chapter summarizes the points made in the dissertation. It also discusses the limitations of the research done, provides suggestions for further study, and indicates possible contributions to human knowledge made by the dissertation.

1.2 Research bias

As the research done for this dissertation relied on exploratory research methodology, and as the transparency of personal bias is a core feature of this methodology, making a discussion of the bias at play in writing up of the research is necessary. Thus, an outline of what thought processes affected the way research was carried out is presented here.

This dissertation rests on the assumption that all human rights must be valued and that these human rights include language rights. Language rights were seen as essential because, in doing research, it was held as axiomatic that human civilization is defined by and understood through the lens of language. It was also held as self-evident that the very existence of humanity depends on its ability to preserve information across space and time. Language stability was, thus, seen as the most necessary component for creating long-term stability in other spheres of life, too. But, equally, language was also considered to be a tool that can be used to create conflict.

Deriving from these basic assumptions, the lifeblood of all ideologies was viewed as being language. As such, language ideology was accepted as being intimately connected with linguistic research, and this is why language ideology stands at the center of this dissertation. Ideologies, though, are inevitably plural and competitive. Belief in an ideology contains within it the seeds of conflict with other ideologies.

A fundamental belief subscribed to by this author is that of the primacy of human rights. There is, thus, an unavoidable tendency for the dissertation to negatively present ideological positions which do not place importance on human rights and, more specifically, language rights.

In fact, the human right of all people to make free use of the language they most identify with is considered to be the fundamental right of humanity. It can not be ignored without grave risk because the cultural background of the author promotes within him the belief that ethnic identity is more tied up with linguistic identity than even with religious or racial identity.

Language-based conflicts have been found on every continent at all times in human history, and this seems connected with the exercise of state power in order to control human thoughts and actions. Moreover, as will be seen in the literature review, it is all too common for countries to attempt, through linguistic means, the manipulation of their citizens.

Recently, an adherence to ever more radical ideologies seems to be taking hold in modern societies. Language, thus, often can be thought of as serving political agendas and trying to suppress different viewpoints.

The most problematic concern is that language appears to seldom be the actual root cause of human conflict but rather the “tool” that is being used to make it inevitable. The perceived need to assimilate ethnic minorities and their languages can often be convincingly portrayed as a positive policy objective. However, successful assimilation can take an extremely long time. Moreover, less than full assimilation, if handled badly, can also lead to violence.

Because of the assumed more or less cyclical nature of language history and the exploratory research approach taken to this dissertation, a diachronic approach to language was found to be convenient. It made it possible to see language growth, preservation, and extinction in a connected fashion.

It was also accepted as a given that people who are in the process of experiencing history do not generally have a deep understanding of what is happening to them. Moreover, due to a bias toward pessimism, it was felt that, in general, people would never obtain a proper understanding of their group-engendered mistakes nor of what could have been less disruptive courses of group action.

When examining the historical data, it was assumed that the final result of almost any language development trajectory is eventual conflict, followed by destruction, exhaustion, and regrouping in preparation for yet another language development cycle that repeats the basic outline of the previous one. Even so, the problems that manifest themselves, regardless of what stage of whatever cycle, have one thing in common, namely, ultimate linguistic death.

This dissertation accepts it as a given that language can be easily manipulated to create unthinking disdain and hatred for those with diverging viewpoints. Planned as a work of geolinguistics, an important aim in writing this thesis was that it might potentially help convince policymakers to accommodate themselves, if possible, more intelligently to language issues.

Nevertheless, this dissertation does not propose that any language variant always has to be preserved at any cost. The extinction of a language can be accepted if the cause is evolutionary rather than a direct result of outside force. Yet, the preservation of languages that are no longer used is the only way for humankind to preserve the information that adheres to a specific language, even a dead one.

But here, the keyword is "semi-immortality." When undertaking the exploratory research this dissertation is based on, it was assumed that the most important stimulus to language variant development is, with few exceptions, the interplay of conflict and destruction. It was also thought that, in the end, language change would still occur, not so much as a matter of ideology but as a consequence of the exercise of power and also of chance.

One final concern that needs mentioning is language extinction. When looking at language variants, one would always be well advised to treat all local languages under the assumption that, unaided, they will disappear. Nevertheless, with the help of geolinguistic ethnography and modern technology, going extinct for a language does not have to mean being unrecorded. Therefore, the plea being promoted is for creating as complete a record as possible of all the world's languages and dialects, whether verbal or, as in the case of sign languages, non-verbal.

1.3 Research questions and objectives

The primary research question of this thesis is whether a policy of semi-voluntary assimilation within a centralized system of government over the long term favorably influences the preservation of language minorities than a forced division into ethnicity-based political units by a national government with overriding power. This and other subsidiary research questions in this subchapter are meant to help determine the objectives of the dissertation, but objectives can also be important in determining research questions. One objective is to illustrate, by means of a comparison between Japan and Russia, what seems to be a tendency throughout modern history for language variety to be suppressed by governments in favor of “official” or “standard” languages. Such language variety can be seen as a “problem” by officials due to “national unity” being convenient for the efficient rule. The opposite argument, however, can be made, which is that the diminishing of language variation is the true problem. This is because it diminishes the possibilities humanity has for complex modes of analytical self-expression, which can be seen as humanity's most distinguishing characteristic as a species.

Secondary related research questions are:

1. How do state policy and language variation affect each other?

2. What has the diachronic process of language variation creation and decay been like in the case of language variants found in Japan?

3. What light can Japanese and Russian language policies shed on each other with regard to the diachronic process of language variation creation and decay in general?

The originality of the way questions are addressed lies in applying exploratory research methodology to a comparison of the language policy approach of Japan with that of Russia. The originality also can be found in the choice of the sources, many of which were and are rarely used in a non-corpus linguistics research setting but were deemed important for this research. Thus, journalistic sources of information were also considered, as they can provide information lacking elsewhere.

Sign language was included as one of the subjects, though it was not ordinarily something that would come to mind in a study mainly about spoken and written languages. The aim was to fill a gap in academic literature with regard to various aspects of state language policy in Russia and Japan by writing a work containing a comprehensive comparative approach to the language policies of these two countries.

Another rarely considered yet significant idea that was researched was the notion of language common points between the nations of Japan and Russia. In the first instance, this refers to an analysis of the Ainu languages of Hokkaido, Sakhalin, and the Kurils as a common point, having been historically present in both countries.

The UNESCO designated (Jarosz, 2017, p. 40) Ryukyu Islands languages (Amami, Hachijo, Kunigami, Miyako, Okinawan, Yaeyama) and the various dialects of the Karelian language (North Karelian, South Karelian, and Olonets Karelian), while not being linguistically related, did have points in common with regard to their history. They were originally politically separate ethnic groups being included within a neighboring empire (the Japanese and Russian). They, therefore, can be researched side-to-side in order to get a better understanding of the bigger picture (Moseley, 2010).

Finding common points such as these provide more context to research on language minorities in Japan as well as adds to the comparative approach. This was thought to be important because the scope of this research encompasses large territories and time frames, so only that information seen as being most important for this type of research could be provided. However, in doing so, another subject of significance (and all too common) had to be taken into account. Minority languages inevitably have political implications, and this means that whether the contamination of information and data is intentional or unintentional, it should always be assumed to exist in some form or other.

1.4 Definitions and basic lexical item concept sets

Lexical items can be thought of as forming sets representing co-occurring concepts. The concepts defined below are of importance for the discussion that follows later.

1.4.1 Language, dialect, and language variant

In both writing and speech, the term "language" can have various meanings and accordingly, it can be defined in various ways. The most common definition is usually assumed to be referring to the standard language of a nation, as is the Standard Japanese taught in the schools in Japan at present.

On the other hand, if one refers to Karelian, a language found in the Russian Federation, one is referring to something quite different. Here one is faced with a continuum of language variants of varying degrees of mutual intelligibility but with no recognized standard language (Austin, 1992, pp. 16-35). Yet, these numerous language variants are commonly spoken of as if they were a language in the sense that Standard Japanese is spoken of as a language.

One might even use the term "language" in a rather more abstract case, where no language, in particular, is being referred to. Also, the word can be used in a more general sense, where all languages and their variations are referred to.

The American anthropologist and linguist Edward Sapir have said that "language is a specifically human and non-instinctive way of expressing thoughts, feelings, and wishes through a system of voluntarily produced symbols" (Sapir, 1978, p. 7). According to another scientist: "First, then, language is a structure, which suggests regularity and rules of order. Next, this structure is an arbitrary one because its specific units or parts have significance only due to user agreement and convention. And also, language is used for communicative functions by a collective of individuals who constitute the speech or language community" (Edwards, 2009, p. 53).

While there are countless definitions given to “language,” there seems to be, however, a common agreement that for a living language to exist, groups of language users need to exist in direct, mutually understandable communication. Thus, the groups are ordinarily expected to have unique modes of linguistic expression. For this reason, when such modes of expression differ from the modes of linguistic expression used by other groups to the extent that the two groups cannot understand one another, then these two groups are said to speak separate “languages” (Shimoji, 2022, p. 1).

In this dissertation, language will sometimes be referred to in the sense of it being a group linguistic identifier so unique as to prohibit mutual understanding between people from different groups. At other times, it is referred to more generally in the sense of it being a way to organize sound for the purpose of communication.

The distinction between “language” and “dialect” is particularly important. A dialect is usually thought of as a mode of expression that, though recognizably different, is still similar enough to whatever standard language it is associated with to be mutually intelligible with speakers of that standard language (Shimoji, 2022, pp. 1-24). Thus, a dialect is generally understandable to a speaker of the standard language and vice versa. Dialects are also thought of as being plural in number, with each dialect of the group being understandable with all others in the group, as well as with the standard language, which is ordinarily used as a point of reference, even though exceptions exist.

In historical terms, what we now consider a “standard” language is no less of a dialect than all other dialects that people normally consider as belonging to it. Thus, as an example chosen for it being culturally easily understandable to native English speakers and because English is the language this dissertation is written in, it would be just as accurate to describe the King’s English as a dialect of London Cockney as it would be to describe London Cockney as a dialect of the King’s English. Both varieties of English are (more or less) mutually intelligible, but neither is derived from the other. Nevertheless, the King’s English is considered to be representative of British English, whereas London Cockney is not, being commonly thought of as a derivative, corrupted version of the former, despite the contrary opinions on this subject (Matthews, 2015, p. vii).

In fact, dividing sets of closely related language varieties into languages and dialects is subject to political imperatives and does not, even now, have a universally accepted set of criteria for determining how to categorize language varieties. Nor do we yet have an agreed-on manner of classification for when two varieties of language, A and C, are mutually intelligible with language variety B but not with each other. For this reason, a term that can refer equally to languages, as well as dialects, was thought necessary. In this dissertation, the term “language variant” is used to avoid confusion. This term is, thus, used to mean any form of language use in a particular group that differs, whether to a lesser or to a greater extent, from any other mutually intelligible style of speech used by other groups. That is, wherever the systematic use of linguistic differentiation can be discerned in a group of individuals in regular communication with each other, then it can be considered as a language variant, belonging to a “language variant set” which would often elsewhere be less accurately referred to as a standard language and its dialects.

1.4.2 Bilingual, trilingual, multilingual, polyglot, and other terms

Multiple types of language variant speakers exist, as well as multiple conditions for language use. Moreover, language skills may be thought of as being either receptive or productive. Though the commonly used synonyms “passive” and “active” exist due to receptive multilingualism having fairly recently become an independently conceived research topic (Jan and Zeevaert, 2007, p. 1; Braunmüller, 2013, pp. 214-22), it was thought better to use the term “receptive” to refer to passive language use and, by analogy, “productive” when referring to active language use.

Whether one is thinking in receptive or productive terms can be expected to change one’s understanding of the number of languages one might have acquired. If thinking in receptive terms and in terms of language variants rather than traditionally conceived languages or dialects, then likely everyone in the world could be classified as bilingual. Even when bilingual is defined as meaning a person who has a receptive knowledge of two language variants, as the term is defined above, then, even when thinking in productive terms, the number of bilingual people would still be a very large number indeed. Likewise, the understanding of trilingualism, in the sense of someone who has knowledge of three languages, also would change according to whether what was being referred to was someone with receptive knowledge of three language variants clearly perceived to not be mutually intelligible or someone merely with a productive knowledge.

Where three or more language variants are being referred to, “multilingual” is used. Where the idea is simply of someone with a knowledge of many mutually unintelligible language variants, then the term “polyglot” can be used. The greater precision of these terms is useful to minimize possible misunderstanding.

The issue of language use, as opposed to language knowledge, must also be considered. In such a case, the term “productive language use” will normally be used. The term “diglossia” refers to cases where a member of a language variant group uses two significantly different language variants productively and automatically changes according to the social setting. This term was first introduced by Ferguson (2020, p. 33). Its applicability to Japan would be to those areas of Japan in which there are still significant populations who use local language variants in the home but not in other settings. In such cases, younger family members would tend to use the local language variant when speaking to older family members in the home but would not do so in other social settings. When at work, members of these groups would normally use what they assume to be Standard Japanese (Hall, 2013, p.

6). If more than two languages are being referred to, then “polyglossia” can be used as a descriptive term.

In this set of co-occurring concepts, the term “multilingual” needs to be considered specifically in connection with that the term “polyglot.” For the purposes of this dissertation, “multilingual” is hereby defined as, at least, referring to having the ability to use three or more significantly different language variants, either receptively or productively. “Polyglot,” on the other hand, is used for people who have chosen to acquire a productive knowledge of four or more languages. This will follow the connotations that polyglots, themselves, give to these terms (Kazakov, 2016, p. 135). Whether one can be considered a polyglot, even when fully fluent as a speaker in less than four language variants and just functionally fluent in others, does not yet seem to have reached a state of consensus. Unless otherwise noted, functional fluency and full fluency will be considered as being one and the same for the purposes of this dissertation.

In line with a recent discussion at conferences on polyglottery, a polyglot herein will be considered as an individual who has reached an age where mental development no longer requires physical exposure to a language variant in order to learn and, also importantly, has not been required by others to do so (Hyltenstam, 2021, pp. 55-75). Such a person will, thus, be assumed to have made a conscious decision to learn the various language variants which they have acquired. It is not to be expected that a polyglot will know every significantly differing language variant equally well and that there will be varying degrees of productive language variant capability. Thus, with some languages, the ability to write might be rather less than the ability to speak or the ability to speak formally as opposed to informally. However, what distinguishes "polyglot" from other related terms is that, regardless of the degree, productive language capacity will be referred to (Hyltenstam, 2021, pp. 55-75).

To reiterate and by contrast, the terms "bilingual," "trilingual," and "multilingual" can allow for varying degrees of receptive ability. However, the terms "diglossic," "polyglossic," and "polyglot" emphasize productive language skills (especially speaking skills) to a greater extent.

1.4.3 Language law and policy

Language law is used in this dissertation with regard to constitutional and statutory law (legislation passed by a legislative body) on language matters and such customary law (legal practice) as may have been officially recognized to have the force of statutory law. Constitutional provisions are considered a special category of law with a recognized authority over both statutory and customary law. Language law shall also be considered as including those ordinances (authoritative decrees) dealing with issues of language that have been created through the existence of constitutional, statutory, and/or customary law and have been published for purposes of reference and with the expectation of enforcement.

With regard to this thesis, language policy is to be thought of as the expected response of officials working in a government-connected body to the existence of perceived different language variants found in those regions under the said government's control. Language policy must, therefore, have a connection with some form or other of governing authority but does not necessarily have to reflect the language law of the governing authority. Language policy, thus, is an expression of the linguistic goals of those individuals possessing governing authority and may, by nature, be local, national, international, or any mix of the three. To the level that these individuals understand the language of the law that is supposed to govern their actions and to the extent that enforcing such a law matches their intentions, they might be expected to practice it. Whether language law is enforced or not, the actual practice of people with responsibility concerning issues of language variant use will be what is herein referred to as language policy.

For the purposes of this research, the before-mentioned unorthodox definition is being used because practice is what impacts people’s lives most and because this dissertation attempts to emphasize what is done rather than what could be done. Also, while constitutional and statutory law generally has theoretical priority and strength, in practice, the enforcement of written law can often leave much to be desired.

1.4.4 Japonic languages

It should be noted that Standard Japanese and its characteristics are not the main focus of this thesis. Priority has been given to more or less debatable cases of language variation within Japan. Standard Japanese itself has often been referred to as a language isolate (which would suggest that it should not be included in a language family). As is so often the case with matters of national languages, whether this is held true or not depends on one's political and/or intellectual stance. However, according to the stance taken above in the discussion on language and dialect, Standard Japanese will be taken as one of the many dialect language variants constituting a mutually intelligible language variant set, which is also commonly referred to as Japanese. According to definitions given for language and dialect above, these dialects are related to other sets of language variants, which are all more closely related to each other than to that group of dialects that includes Standard Japanese, being the "languages" of the Ryukyu Islands.

It should be noted that in the literature on the Ryukyu Islands languages, "Ryukyu Islands" and "Okinawa" can, on occasion, be used interchangeably. This second branch of Japonic languages, however, are not languages in the commonly understood sense of the word. They refer to the sets of sometimes overlapping language variants to which adhere the dialects found on the Ryukyu Islands, with none having reached the official status. However, these Ryukyu island "languages" are more closely related to each other than to standard

Japanese or to those other local language variants found on the four main islands of Japan and which are mutually intelligible with Standard Japanese (Shimoji, 2022, pp. 1-24). Nevertheless, all are in some way or other related to each other in the same way the West Germanic and North Germanic languages are related to one another. For this reason, the local language variants of the main islands of Japan and the local language variants of the Ryukyu Islands may be considered as constituting two branches of a common language family that in linguistics is now being increasingly denominated as Japonic (Jarosz, 2017, pp. 39-68). As such, the term “Japonic” is, in this dissertation, also understood and used in the same manner when discussing, in particular, the local language variants found in the Ryukyu Islands.

Based on morphological, phonological, and lexical traits, a classification exists that advocates separating Japonic into a Kyushu-Ryukyu branch and an Izumo-Tohoku branch (de Boer and Robbeets, 2020, p. 40). This division might have merit, but the division previously referred to does not greatly differ and has the advantage of being more discussed, and so is what will be used herein.

The Ryukyu Island branch of the Japonic language family that is often collectively is being referred to as “Okinawan” thus, is subdivided into languages with numerous dialects recognized as existing by researchers, with the exact number still being a subject of debate (Jarosz, 2017, p. 57). Significantly, no dialect of any of these languages of the Ryukyu

Islands has yet established itself as a generally accepted Standard language of any of these island languages (Shimoji, 2022, pp. 1-24).

Chapter 2: Methodology

The methodology chosen for this dissertation was exploratory research methodology. Exploratory research, though infrequently mentioned in linguistic publications, is, nevertheless, more than just a fringe research methodology. For instance, according to work published by Cambridge University Press, exploratory research is an endeavor to find something novel and fascinating by working through a study problem. It is further maintained that exploratory studies are divided into two types: those that conduct an initial preliminary examination of a new issue and those that suggest new concepts or build innovative theories on an existing topic (Elman et al., 2020, pp.17-18).

In the case of this dissertation, exploratory research methodology was meant to accomplish both types of the immediately above objectives. Although the theoretical underpinnings of exploratory research methodology in the social sciences will be covered separately in the next chapter, a description of how it works and what it can do is included here. It was chosen because it is a methodology that celebrates flexibility in an attempt to cover the various implications of a research problem, in this case, a diachronic comparison of language policy in Japan and Russia. Though it does not disregard structure where the structure is evident, the exploratory research methodology of this dissertation approaches evidence in an often unstructured manner where the desired structure is not evident.

Concerning the theory of exploratory research looks directly at the causal mechanisms that are responsible for the creation of social phenomena. As long as a researcher keeps clearly in mind their own personal bias, concentrating on causal mechanisms makes possible a learning process based on the reasons and causes for something manifesting itself. It is also seen as crucial that even the most complex constructs of human behavior be seen and evaluated in terms of the actions of the individual. Reiter proposes that "Once we detect a causal mechanism behind the manifest behavior, we can then stipulate and to some degree assess how relevant this causal mechanism is. The statements we can formulate based on this approach will be of the kind: if the causal mechanism x is present, it is very likely that y will follow – all else remaining equal (Reiter, 2017, p. 141)."

According to Reiter, the key to reliability when conducting exploratory research is that it should be carried out in "a transparent, honest and strongly self-reflexive way." Moreover, it should follow guidelines that guarantee reliability. Reiter asserts that "Exploratory research is conducted in this fashion, can achieve great validity and provide new and innovative ways to analyze reality" (Reiter, 2017, p. 131).

A strong point with regard to exploratory research is seen as being found in its recognition that all explanations are, in some way or another, inadequate, thus encouraging the development of competing explanations of whatever perceived reality is being investigated. Success, thus, is to be seen in providing an assessment of the segment of reality under investigation in such a way that it makes sense to the assessor and carries the potentiality of convincing other researchers to also examine things in their own unique ways. The search will not be for absolute truth but for a range of plausible explanations of social phenomena (Reiter, 2017, p. 135).

As a concrete example of the use of exploratory research methodology in use in this dissertation, non-probability sampling in the form of a student survey was applied to this dissertation in order to acquire a better (though not exhaustive) look at Japanese attitudes toward local language variation in Japan. Another was a description of prefectural tourism office visits. It should be noted that when statistics are produced in the course of analysis, they are not generated according to a preconceived design and that this was the case with this dissertation, where the statistics will appear not profuse to those used to more rigorous statistical approaches.

There are several reasons for using exploratory research methods for undertaking research in this dissertation:

(1) There was often a paucity of applicable research available about the research topic,

(2) There was a need to carefully explore a wide variety of information and concepts coming from different directions and lacking in surface unity.

(3) The expected inevitably preliminary nature of the research results meant that the goal of the research had to be not proof of but rather the development of a hypothesis that could be later profitably investigated.

(4) There was a need to seek out possible explanations for different results appearing for comparable groups with regard to minority ethnic languages.

(5) As much as possible, there was a need to present the ethnographic studies being engaged in from the perspective of those being studied.

(6) Potential options were numerous and had to be reduced in order that further studies might be undertaken at a later date.

(7) It was essential to identify potential patterns in human behavior and historical events.

In carrying out the research for this dissertation, the methods ordinarily involved in any type of exploratory research methodology were employed and may be summarized as follows:

(1) specifying a research topic about which there has been relatively little research undertaken,

(2) ascertaining the bias, both of oneself and of others, when identifying those problems that such a research topic carries with it,

(3) framing a possible answer or answers to the just mentioned problem or problems in order to better organize the data one uncovers,

(4) using the data gathered to revise, as necessary, at any stage of one's research, one's initial hypothesis, and

(5) seeking out possible new directions for further research.

Exploratory research methods can employ either quantitative or qualitative research in whatever mix is desirable, although qualitative methods tend to be more commonly used. Quantitative methods can include “pilot or expert surveys and secondary research (published literature, case studies of similar instances, online sources), while qualitative research will be in-depth interviews, focus groups, and observational research” (“Exploratory Research: Definition & How To Conduct This Research,” 2022).

In the course of preparing this dissertation, exploratory research was found to have both advantages and disadvantages. It encouraged flexibility but resulted in the qualitative data that was uncovered, often having to be considered in the light of inherent bias. A major advantage was that living literally on a shoestring; it was not necessary to spend large amounts of money. On the other hand, the sample size of the surveys was too small to confidently project results as being representative of the general population. However, it made it possible to check whether research directions might be feasible or not but provided no guarantee of absolute reliability with regard to the primarily secondary (and tertiary) sources that often had to be relied on, especially those whose publication dates would suggest that they might already be out of date (“Exploratory Research: Definition & How To Conduct This Research,” 2022). Nevertheless, the results were encouraging, and the time spent did not seem futile.

The most common way to start a research project in academia is to pick one subject and scrutinize everything about that topic. Moreover, various recognized research methodologies exist to help with this process. This is what was intended when the research topic for this dissertation was first chosen as a study on Japan and Russia. It was soon discovered to be developing less narrowly than was either expected or desirable. For this reason, the research method quickly developed in the direction of becoming an exploratory research methodology. Certain cases of similar phenomena in Japan and Russia were chosen within the framework of the research topic, and then steps were taken to look for points in common.

Being a comparative study on the language policies of Japan and Russia, which is a topic rarely, if ever, thought of in comparative terms, this thesis does not seek to provide final answers to any of the research questions that were studied or to provide final recommendations with regard to its objectives. While the research for this dissertation focused heavily on published documents, personal communications of information were also considered. Where possible, as in the case of constitutional comparisons, primary sources were used. Census data, where possible, was obtained. Online news and other articles can also, in some cases, be considered primary sources. Standard reference works and secondary sources such as printed books or articles were used as necessary for an analysis of Japan's language policy and a comparison with that of Russia.

In applying the above-mentioned research materials to a comparative process, explanations were sought for how national language policy contributed to minority ethnic group language growth, decline, and disappearance in Japan in comparison with Russia. The local languages of Japan were considered in a manner common to the American school of geolinguistics which commonly applies a census-based approach to language issues in contrast to the European school of geolinguistics, which applies a map-making approach, among others ("The International Society for Dialectology and Geolinguistics," n.d.). Although census data was indeed occasionally considered, what is meant by the word "census-based" or "census-taking" in relation to the term "map-making" is metaphoric. It is merely meant to indicate an emphasis on the concentration of linguistic phenomena rather than their expanse.

It was hoped that a first step toward understanding what the phenomena in Japan involved could be accomplished through a discussion of language variation in Japan as compared with that of the Russian Federation, a nation whose situation with regard to local languages appears on the surface to be as different from that of Japan as it would be possible to imagine. Using the methodological tools outlined above and combining them with the census-taking approach of the American school of geolinguistics and with a strong awareness of the possible interference of personal bias, the emphasis was on observing surface phenomena to find clues for seeking out possible underlying reasons for certain developments and events of language history in both countries (and, eventually, beyond). It goes without saying that, for the purpose of document analysis, skepticism was a basic underlying principle, and accuracy was the goal.

There were two preliminary hypotheses accepted as axiomatic to the research on which this dissertation was based. One hypothesis was that language is not permanent and that there are cycles of language growth and decay. Another hypothesis was that language growth, and decay can be affected by both predictable as well as non-predictable events. Thus, it was thought that a policy of semi-voluntary assimilation within a centralized nation-state might sometimes not have the destructive effect on minority languages that one would expect. Also, a forced division of language-based ethnicities into ethnically-based federal units might not always have the constructive effects one would expect. To do so, the national language policies in Japan and Russia from the 19th century onward were compared in each case with regard to a small subset of languages.

What was of particular interest in framing the research was that the Russian Federation and its predecessor states focused more on local language tolerance, whereas Japan increasingly gave preference to assimilation. Nevertheless, it can be seen that there are language minorities in Japan that have managed to preserve themselves and that there are multiple languages in Russia that have not. A good example of this is the Hokkaido Ainu language, which, to a certain extent, preserved itself in Japan, whereas the Sakhalin Ainu and Kuril Ainu languages have completely disappeared in Russia. In the course of this dissertation, other examples can be given of how both related and not-related languages can be grouped together.

The theoretical framework for this research was based on the idea that state policy could be better understood in a comparative context than as an isolated study on its own. In this way, social, historical, and cultural biases could show themselves more clearly than would be the case where macro-level biases affecting policy might otherwise have escaped notice. As always, the assumption was that any information having political or socioeconomic implications must first be examined according to who might benefit in what way from it.

However, the present research, despite its concern with language law and policy, does not examine to any great depth the influence of language and language policy in terms of political science and tries to avoid direct discussion of political matters to the extent that this is possible in a work of geolinguistic ethnography. It was ultimately felt that discussing politically generated crises, much as they often seemed tempting to touch upon, was not desirable. In spite of the connection on political issues so often found with long-standing language-related problems, it was decided that they would detract, rather than help, in focusing attention on issues more directly concerned with language itself.

It should be noted that, though the present research occasionally employs quantitative elements of research in the form of census data and other forms, it does not often make use of statistics when undertaking analysis, as the sources of information this dissertation was most dependent upon did not always lend themselves easily to statistical analysis. For example, the number of people of Ainu ancestry is difficult to count precisely for reasons explored elsewhere in this thesis. The dissertation being described here, therefore, relies far more heavily on qualitative rather than on quantitative analysis.

To conclude, primary sources, being primarily government generated, are subject to political interference of a greater or lesser degree, and this had to be taken into account when selecting and analyzing such sources. Law and official government policy, though set in stone by the very act of their being recorded, did not necessarily represent the way they were implemented. As a key component of exploratory research methodology, the key question that one had to be constantly asking oneself was who might be benefiting most from government-generated data being produced as it was.

Secondary data sources (defined as data sources that interpret primary sources of information) were partly commentary found on social media. The biases of people making social media postings could normally be fairly easily identified, and corrective measures could generally be taken to provide a more neutral indication of the perceptions and prejudices involved. Many news sources contain a comments section, which can be seen as a type of social media. While analyzing such comments could give some preliminary data on whether other readers considered the information provided valuable, useful, or true, caution was necessary. Due to the growing number of chatbots being deployed, the full scope of computer-generated interference, which is hidden from researchers, is not as clear as one would wish.

Besides the above-mentioned sources of data, there were also tertiary sources (defined here as sources that analyze and compile information in secondary sources) used for reference and to fill in the gaps in data. One should note that with regard to Russia and Japan, both English secondary and tertiary sources, in particular, occasionally are unreliable when it comes to the history and analysis of the current situation of these two non-English speaking countries. In some cases, tertiary sources, such as books that are based on academic articles or monographs and which are written by experts in the field, can sometimes, but not always, correct and identify misunderstandings by researchers relative to the geolinguistic ethnography of these two nations.

Naturally, people's perceptions can be affected by events, including historical ones. In Japan's case, for instance, one needs to be on the lookout for interpretation of events to be clouded by a desire to deny certain events that are generally agreed to have happened during the years leading into World War II when all residents of Japanese territories were strongly pressured to adopt Japanese names and learn the Japanese language. In the case of the Russian Federation, it can be argued that the Russian worldview is still colored by the events during World War II and the Cold War. It, unfortunately, appears inevitable for research dealing with either Japan or Russia, regardless of the topic, to be prone to bias in one form or another. It was necessary to always be on the lookout for this, and wherever bias was identified, emphasizing facts was given priority. Where possible, personal research was employed and included various field trips to a majority of the regions of Japan, which functioned as small-scale ethnographic expeditions (see Appendix, Table 5). The analysis, thus, was normative in the sense that it reflected the analyst's values and preconceptions, something already discussed in detail in this dissertation.

Chapter 3: Literature survey

This chapter focuses primarily on two topics. One is a review of an important work concerning the theoretical justification for the use of the exploratory research method in the social sciences (and, by extension, linguistics) instead of using it just for the fields of business product design and marketing. The reason for this discussion being included in this literature survey chapter instead of the methodology chapter is because here is included not an explanation of how the exploratory research methodology is being applied to this dissertation but an explanation of the theoretical underpinnings of the methodology. Thus, the discussion does not focus on how the methodology is being utilized but rather on the theoretical assumptions that are implied when a decision for utilization is made by academics.

The other topic to be covered is a somewhat detailed summary of several articles that provided models for this dissertation's approach to comparative national language policy studies as an academic discipline. Even though the countries covered by these articles did not include a comparison with Japan, these articles serve as examples of the framework that is necessary for this dissertation. Also, to varying degrees, they attempted the elucidation of comparative national language policy studies theory. Admittedly, to the extent theoretical approaches to comparative language policy studies are discussed, they are still rudimentary.

Nevertheless, they provide something with which to begin, and for that, they deserve attention.

First, mention should be made of what this chapter will not cover. Many academic papers on language policy are actually about the interaction of language policy with language education. This is not a work of language education or teacher education. To the extent that it deals with education, this dissertation does so indirectly as part of a discussion of the legal framework influencing language use in the economic and political life of language groups. Nor is this dissertation a work of historical linguistics, as that term is ordinarily understood. It does, however, concern itself with history in a broader sense, and that will be reflected in the literature to be reviewed.

The core of this dissertation is the research field of the comparative language policy studies of Japan and Russia, as examined by exploratory research methodology in terms of geolinguistic ethnography. Geolinguistic ethnography has been previously discussed in some detail, as has exploratory research methodology and comparative national language research policy studies as a general concept. What is not addressed enough is the theoretical basis of the exploratory research methodology of comparative language policy studies. Recent developments in this field of research are being addressed in this chapter.

A careful search turned up only one easily available academic paper dealing with the theoretical basis of exploratory research methodology in terms of the social sciences. There were many more dealing with the methodology in terms of marketing, business strategy, and product design research where, as a methodology, exploratory research methods are predominant.

Although only one article concerning the application of exploratory research methods to the social sciences was found, it proved to be of seminal importance to the development of this dissertation and greatly influenced the theoretical perspective that infuses this dissertation. As such, its content will be described in detail, as it has great relevance to the question of the justification of the methods by which research for this dissertation was undertaken. It was written by Bernd Reiter, a researcher from the University of South Florida, and published in 2017 under the title of "Theory and Methodology of Exploratory Social Science Research." Reiter justifies his position in his abstract by stating that:

> "Confirmatory, deductive research cannot produce absolute truths, according to Karl Popper [...]. If we accept this premise, then it is worth giving inductive and explorative research another chance. Exploration can produce valid and insightful findings in the social sciences if conducted in a transparent and self-reflexive way" (Reiter, 2017, p. 129).

Reiter goes on to maintain that quantitative methods do not provide a solution to the existence of bias in research, stating that "The only possible way forward is to face the consequences of inevitable bias and partiality and to seek ways to limit, or counterbalance, its impact" (Reiter, 2017, p. 130).

Reiter puts emphasis on seeking "a solid epistemological basis for exploratory research in the social sciences." For him, there must be accepted criteria for determining what is "real" and "factual." For this purpose, he offers certain rules and guidelines after discussing subjects of theoretical interest, with the first issue discussed being that the weak point of confirmatory social science research is that it typically ignores the need to justify where the hypotheses being tested have their origin. Reiter claims that there is "a systematic neglect of appreciating the bias that goes into theory and hypothesis formulation" and that "If we fail to appreciate our potential biases, limitations, and partial views, then we give away any chance to consider, address, let alone mitigate or control for these biases and limitations" (Reiter, 2017, p. 132).

For the social sciences, Reiter sees exploratory and inductive research methods as providing useful alternatives because "They are based on an explicit recognition that all research is provisional; that reality is partly a social construction; that researchers are part of the reality they analyze; and that the words and categories we use to explain reality arise from our own minds and not from reality." Thus, "Our ideologies, knowledge, implicit theories, as well as our already available pool of explanations, are part of our positionality and situatedness and they determine, and limit, what we can understand and perceive as meaningful” (Reiter, 2017, p. 137).

What is important for success is not that a researcher suspends belief in their biases, but that they should make them as clear as possible and integrate them in an obvious manner into the research that is undertaken and being subjected to evaluation. Reiter asserts that “...no social science can be purely objective or achieve neutrality because this is impossible with regard to the researcher themself. What it can do is allow for the analysis of connectivity, networks, and entanglements, situations where conflict arising from access to privilege is unceasing.” Done in a “structured, transparent, and honest” manner, the findings of an exploratory research-based project can, at the very least, serve to raise awareness of social phenomena that might have been previously overlooked. It also allows for painting a more realistic picture of the contradictions inherent in this same social phenomena rather than just seeking out regularity. Moreover, as exploratory research is usually neither complicated nor extensive, it can be widely used, even by those without large research budgets or strong connections that take many years to develop. If exploratory research methodology is to be described in one word, Reiter seems to feel that word should be “emancipatory” (Reiter, 2017, p. 148).

In addition to a search having been made for articles dealing with the theoretical underpinnings of exploratory research methodology, a search was made for academic articles written in English dealing with the comparative study of the history of language policy in Russia and Japan, but to no avail. There were comparative studies of language policy in other countries, including one by the researchers from the Siberian Federal University Veronica Razumovskaya and Yaroslav Sokolovsky, dealing with China and Russia, which will be reviewed due to the light it can shed on recent developments in the field of comparative language policy studies in general. This article was particularly useful in providing a brief yet helpful definition of language policy:

> “As the total sum of the ideological principles and practical measures directed to solve language problems in the society and state frame. In accordance with its goals, the language policy may have two main variants: perspective (language planning or language building in other terms) and retrospective (language and speech culture)” (Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky, 2012, p. 927).

Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky view the basis for language planning in terms of ethnolinguistics (with F. Boas, E. Sapir, B. Whorf being referred to) and linguistic ethnography for which they see I. Gumperz, and D. Hymes as being authorities. As a part of this academic background, they see language planning as being closely connected with language education and educational bodies, as well as mass media. They see language planning and language education as being dependent on each other. They also recognize that language planning can be a result of law as well as of long-standing practice that is not necessarily described in statutory law. The article, as a whole, does not provide a theoretical basis for its structure, nor does it describe a methodology. Judged by the way it is written, whether it is a work of ethnolinguistics or not, its methodology is, with the exception of the important fact that there is no clarification of researcher bias, fairly characteristic of exploratory research methodology (Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky, 2012, p. 927).

As for content, they maintain that language policy in Russia is intimately interrelated with language planning and language education and that this has ideological origins and real-world consequences for economic, technological, and cultural developments. They maintain that, though Russia differs in approach from European countries, the concept of the Language Portfolio has had a measurable impact (European Language Portfolio, 2001; General European Competences, 2003; European Language Portfolio, 2003). Nevertheless, as far as it goes, this would seem to be a persuasive yet ultimately overly narrow interpretation of the potential scope of language policy (Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky, 2012, p. 928).

They further note that any foreign language for multilingual individuals not only involves both spoken and written forms of communication but also provides the primary means for acquiring familiarity with a foreign culture. They also relate this assertion somewhat narrowly to language planning with regard to foreign language education. They further attempt to reinforce their argument by stating that state policy with regard to foreign language acquisition in Russia, as compared with the West, was based more on political considerations than on needs analysis. In particular, political considerations were seen to intrude in favor of Russian in the former “socialist camp.” Furthermore, there were variations in the USSR with regard to its different political units, as the Russian Federation (the largest republic of the former Soviet Union) during both Soviet times as well as now has never been a single homogenous language region. As a result, the authors maintain that the language teaching environment and teaching environment continue to differ greatly according to the territories that make up the Federation. To illustrate this, Ukraine in Soviet times was given as an example where Ukrainian was taught as the native language, Russian as the state language, and various European languages (primarily English) as foreign languages (Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky, 2012, p. 928).

As globalization is recognized as an important factor influencing language policy, Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky recommend specially designed language education programs for ethnic minorities. With regard to English education for ethnic minorities, the example of Yakutia is given where English seems to have had a negative influence on the ethnic minority language, and “globalization” has been a frustrating phenomenon (Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky, 2012, p. 928).

They do not bring up the details of Russian language policy, even with regard to education planning. They make brief mentions of aboriginal languages in Russia without actually describing what this might mean in practice. Likewise, though they indicate a certain sympathy for endangered languages, they do so without offering a description of the process of how these languages became endangered or how this might be rectified (Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky, 2012, p. 931). In their defense, though, when the article was written in 2012, comparative language policy studies weren't common, and, as is evident in this article, the relative lack of academic interest was still such that depth of coverage was not to be expected.

Another article, "Language Policy and Planning in Russia, China, and the USA through the Lens of Mass Media of the 21st Century," was co-authored by researchers Natalia Yudina, Marina Melnichuk, and Oksana Seliverstova and published in 2020.

The study concentrates on identifying the primary components of language planning and policy in Russia, the USA, and China during these first decades of the 21st century. In the case of Russia, corpus linguistic methods were applied to data that was taken from texts in "Arguments and Facts," "Vedomosti," "Izvestia," "Kommersant," and "Rossiyskaya Gazeta" that dated from 2005 to 2020. Besides using corpus linguistics methods, lexical-semantic analysis content analysis was employed together with big data analysis. Internet-based analysis tools such as "Time Traveler" and "Google trends" were used. The resulting analysis aimed at identifying current trends in language planning and policy in Russia in the 21st century. Especially, interest was manifested in the projection of soft power and in the context of globalization, with the aim being to promote globalization through language policy while, at the same time, protecting the seemingly contradictory goal of “self-identity of every country, every language and every culture” (Yudina et al., 2020, p. 242).

As an academic article, it indicates a noticeable improvement in the Russian Federation in research being done in the field of comparative language policy studies as compared with the Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky article of 2012, where, other than providing a good definition of key terms, no serious attempt was made to provide either a theoretical or methodological basis for the findings that were presented. The primary weakness of the Yudina, Melnichuk, and Seliverstova article of 2020 is that the issue of personal bias among the authors was completely ignored. This, however, had a profound effect on the choice of data sources and online tools that were used. It can be easily argued that the range of information resources that were explored was narrow in scope and not representative enough to generate accurate results with regard to the social trends that were being researched. Likewise, the ignoring of personal bias meant that the conclusions often had only a tenuous relationship with the corpus linguistic generated statistics.

Nevertheless, the conclusions are worth going over. Firstly, they identified the impact of immigration on language issues as the source of the most serious language-related problems faced by the Russian Federation. They maintained that this is because mass immigration brings with it difficulties with regard to civil rights, which include language rights, and puts pressure on education systems to, on the one hand, promote linguistic unity and, on the other, cater to diverse language needs. The bias of the authors is toward equal language rights for all and the provision of resources to ensure these rights (Yudina et al., 2020, p. 265). While positive in intent, this is an identifiable bias that exploratory research methodology, had it been followed, would have clearly identified (Reiter, 2017, p. 130).

They advocate state resources being allocated to the soft power goal of promoting national languages globally. Significantly, both cases are seen as requiring state intervention, especially as Yudina et al. maintain that there might be significant advantages in the labor market from having workers with the training needed to possess appropriate levels of language proficiency in whatever the target language might be (Yudina et al., 2020, p. 265).

With regard to language acquisition planning, the authors maintain that a constant consequent rise in language diversity can easily put hard-to-accept pressure on education systems, even though the benefits of being proficient in more than one language are obvious, something which, over the long term, might be expected to be of benefit to the individuals concerned but also to the people of the nations among whom they live. Though they recognize multilingualism to be a national resource, they do not make suggestions as to how pressure on educational systems might be handled. However, they suggest that language promotion is a field of endeavor in which cooperation between nation-states with regard to their national languages might be mutually beneficial. They feel that the language exports of a nation strengthen its soft power while encouraging the development of any multilingual groups that might exist within its borders would serve to increase a nation's cultural competence (Yudina et al., 2020, p. 265).

They state that language policy and planning can assert themselves in a multitude of ways, top-down, bottom-up, overt, and covert. They also recognize that higher-level state language policies do not always reflect actual practice at the local level. Thus, they come to perhaps their most important point with regard to comparative language policy studies, which is that micro-level practice cannot be ignored in favor of an exclusive focus on macro-level policy. They assert that discrepancies will often appear but hold out hope that these discrepancies can be addressed by means of corpus linguistics research, appropriately designed surveys, and skillful observation. Particular value is given by Yudina et al. on the validity of their corpus linguistic approach to social and political elements of soft power. They admit, though, that in the recent past, research on soft power has increasingly focused on how to use it as an alternative to military or other forms of hard power. They deplore the temptations that exist to enter into information wars and block fruitful cooperation. Ultimately, they view this as being self-defeating as, though language spread can increase a language's soft power, language choices are ultimately individual decisions based on perceived individual needs. In other words, people will normally tend to learn the languages of groups more powerful than their own (Yudina et al., 2020, p. 266).

So, even though far greater care with regard to research can be seen in this paper by Yudina et al. than in the paper previewed previously to this, it, too, is not fully satisfying in this regard. Even so, it has elements that can serve as a model when designing future research in the comparative language policy studies of Japan and Russia if combined with a more rigorous approach to exploratory research methodology. Among these are its emphasis on the soft power elements of language policy and its use of corpus linguistics as a means of unearthing comparative language policy-related trends appearing among the populations being studied.

The former Soviet Union was a multilingual, multicultural, multiethnic nation where, toward the end of its existence, native speakers of Russian as a first language represented a bare majority of the population. To cope with this situation, the Soviet Union was forced to implement an elaborately conceived language policy. Thus, with the Soviet Union's collapse as a state, the existence of many newly independent states, each with inherited language policies in need of adaptation to new circumstances, came about.

It is these non-Russian Federation states that were once a part of the Soviet Union that the phrase “other countries” in the title of this dissertation refers to. Moreover, the language policies of these post-USSR era states offer a rare insight into the dynamics of language policy and, having a common origin, can provide clues as to how to go about research in the field of comparative language policy research, even when comparing Russian and Japanese approaches to language policy. For this reason, "Comparison of language policies in the post-Soviet Union countries on the European continent," dating to 2007 and written by Tomas Vasko and Martin Riegl of Charles University in Prague, is of importance even now, many years after its publication, and has proven to be most useful for this thesis.

Riegl and Vasko maintain that during the creation of the newly independent states after the fall of the Soviet Union, language was no longer seen as just a means of communication but became a strongly politicized attribute of national identity and, thus, a source of ethnic conflict. They also state that, as of 2004, despite many documents being produced by international organizations concerning language rights, none, whether locally or internationally accepted, included a definition of a state or official language. As there was no international standard that could provide a generally accepted rule that could be used to make states accept minority languages, no means existed in international law to require a language to be given special status as a means of communication (Riegl and Vasko, 2007, p. 48).

Riegl and Vasko demonstrate that, at least with regard to the former Soviet republics of the 1990s, languages inevitably had not only a communication function but also a political role. A language could act not only as an agent of nation-building but also as an agent threatening the destruction of a nation, as well. As such, it could be put in the services of "ethnic containment" and could become a means of redefining how majority and minority groups interacted with each other. In the European territories of the former Soviet Union, language policy generally became a means of the newly independent states that emerged to deprive former dominant, usually Russian, minorities of their political influence and replace their representatives with the ethnic majority of the republic concerned (Riegl and Vasko, 2007, p. 48).

The Baltic states are presented as a case in point in that their official language policy was crafted in reaction to that of the former Soviet Union, which aimed at what might be called asymmetric bilingualism. In Soviet times, most of the native Russian-speaking inhabitants anywhere in the Soviet Union had no necessity to master other indigenous languages. Thus, the aim of the first language laws of the Baltic states in the late 1980s was to encourage the Russian-speaking population to become bilingual. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Baltic states began an era of state-governed language policies aimed rightly or wrongly at Russian-speaking residents. Even with admission to the European Union and to NATO, this process had still not finished at the time the article was written (Riegl and Vasko, 2007, p. 49).

The next article to be reviewed is significant because it brings up an important point with regard to national language policy studies. Language policy does not always have to be statutory in its origin. It can also be the product of organic development. It is precisely the description given to this fact with regard to 19th century Hungary that lends significance to “Polyglot nationalism. Alternative perspectives on language in 19th century Hungary” by

Professor of Linguistics Susan Gal at the University of Chicago. While this article mainly focuses on Hungary, it is significant to this thesis due to the insights it provides into the possibilities that exist for organic national language policy development.

Gal goes on to assert that the monolingual national language policies took center stage in terms of language ideology for nations around the world around the middle of the 19th century. She further states that only in recent years has multilingualism become valued among European Union policymakers and at the corporate headquarters of international business, as multilingualism is now seen to have value in helping to deal with the problems encountered by bringing Europe into a political and economic union and in promoting the functioning in an era of economic globalization. She notes that there are many multilingual migrants who have trouble getting recognition for their multilingualism, but also notes multilingualism is not a unitary phenomenon. She asserts that this is yet another reason for taking a look at organic, non-mandated, 19th-century multilingualism ideologies, as these ideologies reject the contrast between linguistic authenticity and linguistic universality, which continues to dominate Europe's attitude towards state languages (Gal, 2011, pp. 31-54).

A significant portion of this thesis covers Japan and makes the argument that it historically was, and still is, a multilingual country. Though not extending to the issue of comparative national language policy, “Multiethnic Japan” by Professor of Sociology at the University of California John Lie (2009) portrays Japan as a country with many ethnicities residing in it. “Multiethnic Japan” also covers the anomalous case of the *Burakumin* (部落

民), who are considered to be neither an ethnic or linguistic minority, only a socially designated one (Lie, 2009, p. 47).

For an excellent case study on Japanese imperial policy in Taiwan, “Imperial Gateway” (2022) by the Assistant Professor at The City College of New York Seiji Shirane, was found to be useful for its coverage of Japan’s efforts at naturalizing the Chinese residents of Taiwan as its subjects.

Dealing with the social context of linguistics has become a mature field in terms of methodology and empirical research, and this field was most useful for providing context for this thesis. A Professor Emeritus of Linguistics at Temple University, Philadelphia, Anthony Kroch, in “Toward a Theory of Social Dialect Variation,” emphasized that a new understanding has been gained of long-standing issues such as those concerning the origin and spread of language change, stylistics, and the influence of social class. He also asserts that the achievements of sociolinguistics are most clearly reflected in the study of the relationship between social structure and sound speech patterns. It can be understood from Kroch’s work that the results of many academic works have gone far to build a foundation for theoretical advances in the understanding of what determines the variability of dialects in hierarchically organized groups, at least in terms of sound structure (Kroch, 1978, pp. 17-36).

It appears that dialectical differentiation has probably existed as long as language has existed, as “Bayesian Phylogenetic Analysis Supports an Agricultural Origin of Japonic Languages” by researchers Sean Lee and Toshikazu Hasegawa of The University of Tokyo

(2011, pp. 3662-3669) argues, it can be said that language is comparable to DNA, evolving in step with the process of inheritance and is constantly changing. This amazing similarity between biological evolution and language evolution suggests that phylogenetic methods can be applied to the entire evolutionary history of languages when studying how languages and the people who speak them are related (Lee and Hasegawa, 2011, pp. 3664). This has provided invaluable insight into the development of Japonic languages for the purposes of this research, uncovering the origins of languages.

Language can be understood in terms of its history, both cultural and linguistic, in the context of this thesis. In the case of Japanese, a good introduction to Japanese language history is “A History of the Japanese Language” by a Professor of Japanese Linguistics at Hertford College, Oxford, Bjarke Freilsvig (2010). A comprehensive examination shows how the Japanese language has evolved and adapted, providing much-needed reference material (Frellesvig, 2010) for the context of this thesis.

Tertiary sources can be mentioned, their subjects of investigation being language creation and extinction. In connection with this, cycles are being considered with regard to language emergence, growth, change, and death. In this field of research, “UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger” (hereafter, also abbreviated as “UNESCO Atlas”) is a work of first reference and, though as of 2022, relatively difficult to locate, is available at web.archive.org.

Moreover, it can be said that “Language loss entails an impoverishment of humanity in countless ways. Each language – large or small – captures and organizes reality in a distinctive manner; to lose even one closes off potential discoveries about human cognition and the mind” (Moseley, 2010, p. 4). Furthermore, advancements in neuroscience are likely to uncover the influence of language on thinking.

> “The death of a language inevitably leads to the disappearance of various forms of intangible cultural heritage […] The loss of indigenous languages is also detrimental to biodiversity, as traditional knowledge of nature and the universe […] provide time-tested mechanisms for the sustainable use of natural resources and management of ecosystems” (Moseley, 2010, pp. 4-5).

Not everyone will agree that the connections that the UNESCO Atlas is making are not necessarily self-evident or debatable but are, nevertheless, accepted as part of the theoretical basis of this dissertation.

Concerning endangered ethnic groups and endangered languages in Russia, the main reference used in this thesis is the somewhat misleadingly named online work called “Red Book of the Peoples of the Russian Empire” by Ants Vahtre and Lauri Viikberg (1991). The list of peoples covered, which can be seen to be reflecting a big but not exhaustive picture, is large (Vahtre and Viikberg, 1991). Despite its extensive coverage of endangered ethnic groups, there are those that do not meet its criteria and are not mentioned. However, it can be seen that unmentioned cases are often as important as mentioned ones. For example, Yiddish-speaking Jews of the Far East of Russia are not mentioned. Also, not including the Sakhalin Ainu and Kuril Ainu peoples is evident.

In particular, the article on “The Karelians” in the “Red Book” (Vahtre and Viikberg, 1991) is, in its coverage of the language, an especially important source of information, due to the comprehensiveness with which it has covered the subject in the context of its role as a reference work for historically endangered peoples and languages in the Russian Federation. The picture painted of Karelian as a gradually disappearing language is bleak, which is a development that started in imperial times.

Speaking of another case, Ainu languages are languages that have existed in both Japan (Hokkaido Ainu) and Russia (Sakhalin Ainu and Kuril Ainu), though there are now no known speakers of Sakhalin Ainu or Kuril Ainu. In the case of Japan, works have been written concerning the situation of the Hokkaido Ainu language in modern times and the difficult process of its revival. A work that was found useful in doing research on the topic for this dissertation is an article called “Revitalization of the Ainu Language: Japanese Government Efforts” by Yukio Yotsumoto of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (2020, pp.

1711-1727). It helped in filling gaps in general knowledge and was useful for providing context on Ainu in this thesis.

Another work by the scholar Naohiro Nakamura of The University of the South Pacific (2015, pp. 660-675) called "Being Indigenous in a non-Indigenous Environment" was found to have utility in shedding light on the identities and socioeconomic status of indigenous people in the non-indigenous environment of Japan and in illustrating how the ethnic policies of this country do not fully address this full range of issues concerning the Hokkaido Ainu population of Japan. Additionally, research by Nakamura was also found helpful in discussing Ainu identity politics.

Concerning language variation in Japan, a comparatively old (1967) article, "On Dialect Intelligibility in Japan," by a Professor of Japanese, Joseph Yamagiwa, of the University of Michigan, illustrates the fact that with regard to this thesis, "old," does not necessarily mean "outdated." With regard to the language variants of Japan, which are normally treated as having a dialectical relationship with Standard Japanese, two dialect clades (groups) were identified, defined as Eastern and Western, and were found to be serviceable concepts.

However, whether or not certain language variants Yamagiwa identifies are better considered as being separate languages or not if one takes into account the rule of strict mutual intelligibility is open to debate. What is clear, though, is that the number of identifiable language variants is numerous (Yamagiwa, 1967, pp. 1-17), and, as such, this article is a source of information on language variants in Japan, despite its age, has not lost its relevance in terms of the arguments proposed in this thesis.

Chapter 4: Language variation in Japan

This chapter presents research on language variation in Japan, both at present and over the last 170 years. Here, in addition to Standard Japanese, those language variants mutually intelligible with Standard Japanese are explored first. After this, the discussion moves on to Taiwan as an example of imperial Japanese language policy before discussing the languages and dialects of the Ryukyu islands and the linguistic position of Ainu in Japan. Also, the origin and development of Japanese Sign Language are discussed, followed by a subchapter on multilingualism and polyglottery in Japan presents tables based on data provided by the Foreign Study Institute of the State Department of the United States that allow for an informed guess as to the amount of time it might take for an adult student who is highly motivated to learn various foreign languages. In addition, to mention Japanese university student attitudes toward dialect use, a discussion of the local dialect policies in present-day Japan is included.

Japonic languages are a family of languages with two branches used in the Japanese archipelago. One branch is made up of the standard Japanese language and its related dialects. The other branch consists of six UNESCO-recognized languages that are to be found in the Ryukyu Islands languages with numerous associated dialects. The word “Japonic” was first used by Leon Serafim, an American scholar. This classification is debatable and has not been universally accepted. Yet Standard Japanese and dialects related to it are mutually intelligible. On the other hand, the six UNESCO recognized (see Appendix C, Figure 2) Ryukyuan languages (Moseley, 2010, p. 49) and their associated dialects, though closely resembling each other, do not share mutual intelligibility with each other or with Standard Japanese. The Ryukyuan languages, nevertheless, resemble each other more than they do Standard Japanese in line with the definition of language given in Chapter 1, and despite other ways of categorizing these languages, for the purposes of this dissertation, the Ryukyuan languages are treated as being one branch of the Japonic language family and Standard Japanese (together with its associated dialects) as a second.

Considering the big, "fuzzy," and not necessarily established numbers of existing dialects, it was necessary to set boundaries concerning the number of examples to be used. Only the languages and dialects that have either unusual characteristics or histories that were especially relevant for making a broad but limited-scope case study were chosen for this thesis. To have done otherwise would have overextended and overinflated the thesis.

4.1 Standard Japanese in the context of language variant homogeneity

The term "dialect" will be cautiously used when considering Standard Japanese and the language variants that are mutually intelligible with it, and a variety of methods to evaluate intelligibility exists (Yamagiwa, 1967, p. 1). This is because the word "dialect" is often understood to imply descent from and corruption of a standard language. In fact, most local language variants of Japan do not descend from Standard Japanese. Rather, when considered logically, they all (including Standard Japanese) can be best described as descending from a common ancestor that they share with each other in varying degrees. Viewed in this way in this thesis, the so-called Standard Japanese language is to be considered a development of the Yamanote dialect of Japan, which can be classified as a public “prestige” dialect (Kroch, 1978, p. 17). This dialect had a different language history from the language variant used by the government bodies of the Shogunate and the various language variants from the Kansai region of Japan used by government bodies in earlier eras of Japanese history.

The evolution of Standard Japanese dates to the Meiji era and the movement of the imperial court to Tokyo. This was at a time when, due to the vast number of so-called local languages in existence, an urgency was felt to be necessary for creating not only a standard written language but also a standard spoken language. The urgency was strong because the changes being envisioned for Japan were radical. The promotion of the idea that the Japanese were homogenous, a single people speaking and writing a single language, was considered essential for making these changes toward unity possible (Larsson, 2022, pp. 43-55). Moreover, it appears that the two should be seen as more or less matching one another and that, in order to promote national identity, diglossia or polyglossia should be avoided.

With this information being based on the commonly known history of Japan, the Yamanote dialect was a "choice" for a political elite that had decided to continue operating out of Edo (modern-day Tokyo) instead of Kyoto and other cities (Lee and Hasegawa, 2011, p. 3664). The part of Tokyo in the foothill area surrounding downtown Tokyo, was where the local lords of the feudal domains (into which Japan had previously been divided), by and large, had built their Tokyo residences. Moreover, as the feudal lords were required to visit Tokyo on a regular basis (Hall, 1955, pp. 37-56), this was the Japanese language variant that was the most commonly understood by the elites of Japan at that time.

In the 1870s, at the start of it being promoted, the Yamanote dialect was referred to as "the language of Tokyo." This language was unfamiliar to most Japanese at the time. With the establishment of compulsory education, teachers in all parts of Japan were required to participate in conversation classes, with the purpose being to acquire a better mastery of the language of Tokyo. Unsurprisingly, this was more easily mastered on the main islands of Japan (Sato, 2014, pp. 106-127) than on the Ryukyu Islands, where the process took a full 80 years to complete.

After a relatively short period of years, the Japanese government started referring to the language of Tokyo as the "common language." Most compulsory education teachers on the main islands of Japan quickly got used to this "common language," after which people then began referring to it as the "standard language" (Sato, 2014, pp. 106-127).

Students from outside of Tokyo seeking to obtain more advanced levels of education became diglossic. They began using local language variants with their families but used the "standard language" in more formal situations (Hall, 2013, p. 6). After World War II, as a result of the shock of defeat, and the impact of American English, the standard language underwent further changes in orthography and vocabulary (Sato, 2014, pp. 106-127). This created a language that, though based on the pre-war standard language, has become significantly different. The Japanese language variant, which is now taught as Standard Japanese, is this Meiji era-created standard language as it reflects the post-war change. Being such a new language, there is not much variation in Standard Japanese that can be learned in schools and universities worldwide, whether inside or outside of Japan. Otherwise, it would not be considered Standard.

However, it is a difficult task to count the language variants (what in Japan can also be called "local languages") spoken in Japan, as it is in other parts of the world. The four main islands of Japan are all mountainous. As a result, until quite recently, large portions of Japan remained, to a large degree, comparatively isolated from the outside world, resulting in much language variant development.

Before the Meiji era, travel for the common people within Japan was comparatively difficult due to various restrictions; Japan was a dialect "sanctuary." A classification system proposed in 1953 identified 16 major dialects (Iwaki, n.d.). Ways by which the various mutually intelligible language variants of Japanese can be distinguished are numerous. One small example is by taking notice of the sentence-ending particle. For instance, in the Saga dialect of the Kyushu dialect group, the standard sentence-ending particle “よ” (*yo*) becomes “ばい” (*bai*) or “たい” (Kido, 2015, pp. 173-196). On a different note, unlike in the Meiji era, dialect promotion is no longer discouraged. An example of this can be seen with regard to the aforementioned Saga dialect, which was extensively used in the 2006 film “Gabai bā-chan” (Shimada and Yamamoto, 2006).

The many language variants of Japan have been classified into Eastern, Western, Kyushu Japanese, and Hachijō dialects. From the view of mutual intelligibility, however, it has been suggested by some that Hachijō is a separate Japonic language (Jarosz, 2017, pp. 39-68). Moreover, in Okinawa, there exists a dialect of Standard Japanese that developed after the late 19th-century annexation of Okinawa. This distinctive form of Standard Japanese came to be used by many native Okinawans. However, the use of the term dialect can promote confusion. This is because most people use the term indiscriminately. They do so whether they refer to the Okinawan dialect of Standard Japanese or to any of the six UNESCO-recognized Ryukyu Island languages which might be better thought of as language variant continuums consisting in each case of numerous closely related language groups. Moreover, in no case has an accepted standard language come into existence for any of them. These dialect continuums have been designated as languages by UNESCO, even though none of them possess a standardized writing system for any of the variants that are grouped together with a common language name, nor do they have agreed-upon spoken language systems that can be defined as standard (Heinrich, 2018, p. 455). This, thus, sharply distinguishes them from what was achieved with regard to the Yamanote language variant during the Meiji era, which, with government encouragement, rapidly spread throughout the length and breadth of Japan (Heinrich and Yamashita, 2017, p. 130).

Moreover, Japanese immigrants abroad have their own dialects, with the Japanese community in Brazil illustrating this point. Interestingly, Japanese newly come from Japan often tend to think that their way of speaking is correct and that the speech patterns of the diaspora are not (Adachi, 2015). Thus, dialect users, both at home and abroad, receive even less recognition of their language rights than other language minorities. This part of culture could, in theory, be used to encourage local identity development. Even so, local identity promotion by local governments is something national governments have generally and traditionally disapproved of, denying people the right to self-identity (Yudina et al., 2020, p. 242).

4.2 Taiwan: An approach to applied imperial language policy

During its period of expansion from the Meiji period, the Japanese Empire faced the challenge of integrating new people who spoke various languages and had diverse customs in its provinces and newly captured regions. Due to increased war activity and mobilization, particularly in the 1930s and 1940s, efforts were taken to accelerate this process (Smethurst, 2021, p. 197). Such a process involved formal schooling, specifically elementary education. Taiwan was one example of this approach in Imperial Japan. This chapter focuses on assimilation and the related concerns of ideology and religion in this region. It covers the era from Taiwan's incorporation into the Japanese Empire (in 1895) until Taiwan's departure from the Japanese sphere of influence in 1945.

A typical inclination in prewar Japanese politics was to understand the “good of the country,” primarily in terms of Japan's relative strength in combative rivalry with other nations (Smethurst, 2021, p. 197). This is seen as one of the origins of Japanese militarism, and was one of the examples of an extreme militarist inclination prevalent throughout the world at the time, possibly partially as a result of unsolved difficulties caused by World War One.

Researchers frequently place Japan’s conquest and administration of Taiwan, which ultimately became one of the country's most significant subject provinces, within the backdrop of late-nineteenth-century imperialism (Abramson, 2004, p. 11). Because the major empires of that historical period had militarized, Japan was following in the footsteps of others. Taiwan was adjacent to Japan not only geographically but also culturally because Chinese educational ideas based on Confucianism and Chinese classical education had a significant impact on Japanese schools (Lee, 2002, p. 14). One possibility was that not just

Western imperial tradition but also Chinese imperial models influenced the Japanese government's reasoning while embarking on the path of Empire building.

At the turn of the 20th century, the government of Japan recognized their nation's commonalities with their new citizens, which will be referred to as Taiwanese. Japan stated its determination to guide Taiwan towards modernity while still in the process of its own development during the Meiji period. It was consistent with the European rationale for colonialism, which promoted the notion that more technologically superior countries owed it to others to govern over them (Abramson, 2004, p. 12).

This concept existed that the need to colonize people might be regarded as a pretext for inciting conflict and even starting a war in some circumstances. In any case, while opinions concerning the human impact on the Taiwanese are divided, it can be observed that the Japanese occupation transformed Taiwan from 1895 to 1945, setting the groundwork for economic progress after 1950 (Shiyung, p. 990). There exists an argument that the economic growth observed in Japan's colonial territories was not extraordinary. However, this conclusion is founded on comparisons with the former colonies of France, Great Britain, and the United States of America in Asia (Booth, 2007).

Beginning in the 1630s, when the Dutch drove the Spanish out of Taiwan and arranged for colonists from the Chinese mainland province of Fujian to settle in Taiwan under the control of the Dutch East India Company, Taiwan experienced a time of being a multilingual

European colony in, at least, parts of the island (Andrade, 2008). Somewhat later in the century, a mainland Chinese adventurer set up a short-lived kingdom on the island that drove European occupiers out before the island was absorbed by the Manchurian Ching dynasty of China. As a result, Japanese annexation was not the first time Taiwan was a multilingual colony.

One of the important results of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and the Japanese invasion of Taiwan (1895) was the capture of Taiwan by Japan. Large-scale Japanese military activity against insurgents in Taiwan lasted until 1902. However, minor clashes persisted even after that (Takekoshi, 1907, pp. 99–100). As a result, throughout the period beginning with these military measures, Taiwan may be viewed as a conquered land, the first obtained by Japan on its quest to become an Empire, though the Korean peninsula was soon to become another target.

Military oppression was subsequently followed by a period of cultural integration headed by Shinpei Goto (1857-1929). He had earlier studied medicine in Germany and was then appointed director of the Civil Administration Bureau by Gentaro Kodama (1852-1906), the governor-general of Taiwan ("Portraits of modern Japanese historical figures," n.d.).

Assimilation is a process in which a group of people and their customs are absorbed into another group. During the period of colonial authority, this process entailed changing a subject community's languages and practices until they came to resemble and mix with the people who were occupying their country (Lamley, 1970, p. 496). However, this is not a one-way path, and it is possible that colonizers can also be influenced by the colonized.

Governor Goto Shinpei stated that Japan's colonialism strategy did not require immediate enforcement of assimilation since assimilation would take time. As such, he believed it would be sufficient to let things develop organically. Goto believed that because of the cultural links between the Chinese and the Japanese, most Taiwanese citizens already possessed the necessary pre-conditions for integration even before Japanese forces came (Lamley, 1970, pp. 496-500). Hence Japan did not have to hurry into assimilation in the process of Japan naturalizing Chinese residents of Taiwan as its subjects (Shirane, 2022). This demonstrated officials' confidence at the time and the Japanese government's overall confidence that it had no need to worry about losing newly gained land.

Education was an important aspect of the Japanese administration in its colonies. It played a crucial role in preserving order, improving the economy, and securing the collaboration of indigenous people while attempting to integrate them. The focus was on Japanese language education, but colonial instructors nevertheless showed careful consideration for Chinese themes such as “The Classic of Filial Piety” (Tsurumi, 1984, pp. 283-284), which was historically credited to Confucius' authorship.

From the First World War through the late 1920s, as Japan's engagement in China grew, greater demands were imposed on the Japanese economy as a consequence of the pressure the international situation put on the region, sparking arguments regarding the proper administration of colonial peoples. In contrast to prior aspirations, the colonial administration in Taiwan no longer had the full certainty of possessing the time necessary to achieve long-term assimilation as it became ever more deeply involved in military conflict, beginning in 1931, but with ever faster momentum from particularly the second half of 1936 through the conclusion of World War II in August of 1945.

Faced with this fact, it became vital to devote the colony's personnel and physical assets to Japan's rapid war machine development operation. The colonial administration started implementing the *Kouminka* campaign. *Kouminka undou* (皇民化運動) had as its goal “to make people subjects of the emperor.” This campaign was aimed at swiftly converting subjects into devoted Japanese and becoming the emperor of Japan's loyal subjects (Chou, 1996, p. 45).

Accelerating the operation was not inherently more successful than the “light touch” that had previously characterized Japan’s assimilation project. Nevertheless, it was dictated by wartime necessities.

Basically, the Japanese colonial *Kouminka* project consisted of four distinct policies. The first was not a linguistic strategy by itself but was the “Military Volunteers Movement” of the early twentieth century, which attempted to encourage colonial people to actively engage in war by voluntarily joining Japan’s military. However, enlisting locals into the army had an impact on their linguistic status since service in the army forced them to grasp at least the commands issued to them in Japanese.

At the colony's inception, the second objective, “religious reform,” entailed diminishing local traditional faiths and substituting them with those of the national religion, Shinto. While Buddhism was practiced in Japan, Shinto was the faith that declared the Emperor of Japan to be a living deity. Adopting Shintoism as a new faith necessitated at least a rudimentary knowledge of Japanese. The goal of the third part of this strategy was the “National Language Movement,” which was promoted in order to minimize the relevance of the local language and instead compel individuals to study Japanese (Chou, 1996, p. 45).

The “Name Changing Movement” specified the Japanese names that provincial people were required to use (Chou, 1996, p. 45). Names were and are important to people, and adopting a Japanese name could encourage the person to identify as Japanese. Because of the essential nature of names to cultural identity, this legislation also had an impact on Taiwan's language situation.

The originality of *Kouminka*'s doctrine as a colonial ideology resided in its implementation and integration of the Japanization process. Adherents of this ideology saw the colonized as “incomplete” imperial subjects (Ching, 2006, p. 157), while mainland subjects of Japanese descent, by implication, were viewed as “complete” ones. The pre-colonial history of each region produced distinct modifications in Japanese rules in each territory. Colonial experience taught each colony to regard Japanese control either submissively or obstinately, as the case might be, and the colonial administration responded to these disparities. Despite the fact that some of the policies were nearly the same in goal and terminology, according to the historical and cultural make-up of the colonial people, Japan's attention to each colony differed among political leaders and government bureaucrats in Tokyo (Abramson, 2004, p. 30).

Therefore, what we can observe in Taiwan is more or less comparable to what can be seen elsewhere in terms of the Japanese Empire's colonial venture (Befu, 2007, p. xxii). However, even though the overall historical framework is apparent, research into the historical circumstances of all Japanese colonial regions appears to be warranted with regard to future research in order to obtain a full picture of Japan’s impact on its colonial subjects.

4.3 Languages and dialects of the Ryukyu islands

The Ryukyu Island kingdom was annexed by Japan in 1872. The islands have gone by various names, including Ryukyu, Lewchew, Okinawa (interchangeably used with “Ryukyu” in this thesis), Loochoo, and Luchu in previous centuries. This is an indicator of continuing confusion with regard to the identity of the population of the islands.

For the Japanese, the “Ryukyu” Islands consist only of Okinawa, Miyako, and Yaeyama islands. For English-speaking states, it includes the Amami and Daitō islands. This latter interpretation will be used. The population itself has been viewed by mainland Japanese as being ethnically Japanese but as possessing a unique mentality (Ermak, 2007).

However, in terms of DNA, the islanders preserve more Jomon-era DNA than perhaps any other people in any other region of Japan other than the likely exception of the few remaining remnants of the Hokkaido Ainu population (Saitou and Jinam, 2017, p. 226). Though in and of itself, this might be irrelevant, it does suggest that a close comparative study of the Ryukyu Island and Ainu languages might yield important clues with regard to the prehistory of the Japanese people, which is something that goes beyond the scope of this study.

According to Negishi (2000), Uemura, one of the founders of the Okinawa Institute of Language, stated when talking about certain musical events in 2000 and the present use of dialect, “People use dialects only when they drink or sing. They use Standard Japanese for official use and business.” He also referred to Okinawan dialects as the linguistic “Galapagos” of Japan (Negishi, 2000).

As one can expect, the effect that political convenience can have on language policy can be seen in the matter of whether any of the language variant language groupings of the Ryukyu Islands that are denominated by UNESCO as languages (Moseley, 2010) should be considered as a language or as a dialect. These language variant continuums are all undoubtedly closely related to Japanese, but, without training, none of them are understandable to a speaker of Standard Japanese without previous experience in decoding them for understanding and/or communication. Linguists outside of Japan, therefore, usually see these continuums of closely related language variants that are indigenous to the Ryukyu islands as being Japonic languages and not as being Japanese, a language that they would categorize as belonging to its own separate Japonic language family branch (Jarosz, 2017, pp. 39-68). Some Japanese individuals, at the same time, tend to consider these language variant continuums, which are indigenous to the Ryukyu islands, as being mere dialects of the Standard Japanese language variant that educated individuals to use in all language domains throughout the Japanese archipelago, as can be concluded from the questionnaire conducted in this research (see subchapter 4.6 “Multilingualism and polyglottery in Japan”).

It appears that, even among academics, socio-political dynamics would play a factor in this perception. Nevertheless, this thesis, as it defines the word “language” in terms of the lack of mutual intelligibility, will take the position that these more or less closely related language variant continuums, which are aboriginal to the Ryukyu islands, constitute a separate branch of an overarching language family that may, for the sake of convenience, be called “Japonic.”

The destiny of Ryukyuan languages can be seen as an important case of how Japanese state policy affects language minorities. Being powerless and already in the Japanese sphere of influence, the Ryukyu islands and, in particular, Okinawa could, in the Meiji era, be seen as an assimilation proving ground that was needed for the planned subjugation of peoples, considering that Ryukyu used to be a separate kingdom. As there has been no such need since the imperial times, one can find a certain level of tolerance among government bodies to let individuals study and protect the Ryukyuan languages in whatever way they might wish.

One can observe that despite being endangered, the number of Ryukyuans knowing at least some of their respective mother tongues is said to be still quite large, and almost all the necessary components are in place, including a degree of local government acceptance, to keep the native part of the population bilingual. Moreover, the inclusion of the six identified language variant continuums of the Ryukyu islands as endangered languages in the UNESCO Atlas of endangered languages has proven to be an important stimulus in raising the level of importance attached to all language variants on a local level. This inclusion has also tended to promote a similar awareness of the multicultural roots inherent in Japan's seemingly monolithic culture and language. Scholars, thus, are more willing than before to explore the existence of elements of Ainu linguistic forms being preserved in all Japonic language variants (Janhunen, 1996, p. 213) and which implies a cultural ancestry more complex than what has so far been taught at schools and universities. As for the Ryukyu Islands themselves, the historical record shows influence arriving from several directions, including China and Southeast Asia.

As an indicator of how different Japanese and Ryukyuan are, one can see the fact that Standard Japanese has five vowels (*a, i, u, e, o*), while in Ryukyuan language variants, only *a, u,* and *i* are used (Nakasone, 2002). It should be noted that a universally recognized dialect of the Japanese language in Okinawa also exists. It is called Uchinaa Yamato-guchi (ウチナーヤマトゥグチ) in the languages of the Ryukyu Islands or Okinawa Yamato-guchi (沖縄大和口) in Standard Japanese and which literally can be understood as “Okinawan Japanese.” It is normally comprehensible to the general Japanese population, but the meanings of Japanese borrowings and the pronunciation of English borrowings are sometimes different from the standard language of the main islands (Noguchi and Fotos, 2001, p. 72). The name of this dialect itself, in both cases, makes use of the term “Yamato-guchi,” which is a name for the Japanese language in the Okinawan language, as opposed to the native name for Okinawan itself, which is mentioned earlier.

Examples of the languages included in the category of Japonic languages are the Central Okinawan language variants used in Central Okinawa, southern Okinawa island, and the Aguna islands, Kume-jima, Kerama Islands, Tonaki, and territories east of Okinawa island, all of which can be considered as dialects of each other.

Depending on one's viewpoint, the number of Ryukyuan languages can vary. UNESCO so far identifies only six language variation continuums as being separate languages (Moseley, 2010, p. 50), while those having been observed and named can be as many as nine, being Kikai, Amami, Tokunoshima, Okinoerabu, Yoron, Kunigami, Miyako, Yaeyama and Yonaguni (see Table 6, Table 7, Figure 1 in Appendix). One should remember that the number of speakers in cases such as these languages quickly drops. For example, Ethnologue classifies Central Okinawan as a dying language (Eberhard et al., 2022).

The first period of Ryukyuan language history constitutes that of monolingualism which was typical before 1879 (Heinrich, 2014). Enforcing the ideology of monolingualism was commonly seen as a necessity during this time period (Gal, 2011, p. 32). Estimates of when Japanese and Ryukyuan language variants separated depend on the method of approach. According to the glottochronological method, which assumes that any replacements in the vocabulary of a language happen in constant percentages per time elapsed, it would have been between 500 CE and 996 CE. Applying statistical methods, the estimate is that they separated around the 2nd century BCE (Heinrich, 2014).

The scholar Ifa Fuyu, who is sometimes called “the father of Okinawan studies,” stated that the Ryukyuan languages and people came from southern Kyushu about 36 C.E. when the Amabe people from this island sailed south. The creator deity in Okinawan folklore is named Amamikyu, a name that is likely related to the fact that the Amabe settlers passed through Amami Oshima on their way south (Nakasone, 2002). According to legends, Amamikyu came to Earth together with the god Shinerikyu from Heaven to create the Ryukyu Islands and its people (Shohashi, 2007).

Okinawa has existed as a kingdom, but for most of its history, there was a strong influence from foreign powers, especially Japan and China. The political elite of Okinawa was most of the time satisfied in taking on the role of being dependent. They could rely on the political power of outside forces to make up for the lack of population support, which was heavily taxed (Mescheryakov, 2006, p. 377). Despite that, in the modern era after the Meiji restoration, the Ryukyu Islands lost any semblance of political autonomy.

The second period of Ryukyu language history to be touched upon is when the breakdown of monolingualism occurred (1879-1895). After the Boshin war and the Meiji restoration, Okinawa was turned into another prefecture of the future Empire. The local elite was divided into parties, the Conservative pro-Chinese and Progressive pro-Japanese. In 1880 a training center was created for Okinawan teachers to make them fluent in Japanese, and in 1884, new teachers started coming from other prefectures (Dedaić and Nelson, 2003, pp. 285-286).

In 1890 the Imperial rescript of education was introduced into the school system all over Japan. With regard to Okinawa, the idea was one of shaping a new generation of Okinawans loyal to the central government (Dedaić and Nelson, 2003, p. 286). Even though the new education policy did not have a strong effect right away, it paved the way for bilingualism.

The third era of language history in the Ryukyu Islands to consider is that of bilingualism, dating from the Sino-Japanese war of 1895 to the commencement of World War II (Nakasone, 2002, p. 49), which, for the Japanese, happened in 1937. The Meiji government made a great effort to solidify the society of the Empire under their new rule, but it came at the price of losing an important part of the country's culture, including that which was language-related. Due to the cultural differences exhibited by Okinawans, they were often treated in a manner similar to that of newly subjugated people and were, therefore, considered to be aborigines by the government. From an imperial point of view, aborigines ought to become civilized and, to become civilized, in this case, meant to become as Japanese as possible (Nakasone, 2002, p. 49).

In this period, schools played a not entirely traditional role in an attempt to eradicate native languages and dialect use since 98 percent of students had to get an education in Japanese only. An emphasis was placed on the eradication of dialect use (Dedaić and Nelson, 2003). Students were affected by a punishment system that was implemented, using *Hogen Fuda* (方言札札), also called *Batsu Fuda* (罰札), which consisted of signs that were hung around the necks of dialect speakers, to visually differentiate them from others. The use of Japanese in journalism and the start of Japan’s broadcasting organization NHK in 1924 likewise speeded up the language shift (Dedaić and Nelson, 2003). It can be concluded that being shamed this way at school, Ryukyuan language variants remained mostly as languages for use in the family.

The formation of a social attitude favorable to the promotion of Standard Japanese was even stricter in rural areas than in suburban ones (Maher and Yashiro, 1995, p. 33). The reason may be that in rural areas, there may have been more people who saw it as beneficial for them to learn how to use Standard Japanese in daily life in order to build for themselves a better economic future than had, hitherto, been possible.

January 1900 marks the start of the first Okinawan immigration to other parts of the world when the Ryukyuans arrived in Honolulu to work as contract laborers on Hawaii's sugar plantations (Nakasone, 2002). It can be seen as the first window of opportunity for the islanders to look for a better life overseas. Over time, Okinawans would continue migrating east to the continental United States, to Canada, Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, Mexico, Cuba, Paraguay, New Caledonia, and the islands of Micronesia (Nakasone, 2002). Okinawan immigrants were sometimes perceived by the local population as being completely Japanese and, at other times, as being not entirely Japanese or even as being non-Japanese. This contributed to confusion as to their identity, even more than in their island homeland of Okinawa and Japan (Tsuda, 2000, p. 12).

The fourth era of Okinawan language history was the fateful period of Ryukyu Island language variant shifting that took place during the years 1937-1945. Soon after the war with China, which began in 1937, an Educational council was formed to ensure military-oriented education. Controversial measures were taken. A military decree was issued that declared that the users of indigenous Ryukyu Island language variants would be regarded as spies, and a special label of honor was given exclusively to Japanese-speaking households. This made a quick language use shift possible in a short period (Dedaić and Nelson, 2003).

The fifth era of Okinawan language history witnessed a steady demise in the use of Ryukyu Island language variant continuums. This era lasted from 1945 to 1972 during the post-war American occupation of Okinawa. The San Francisco peace treaty in 1951 placed

Okinawa under the control of USCAR (United States Civil Administration of Ryukyu islands).

The US military assisted in creating a university in Okinawa, but its overall goal was to create differences between Okinawans and Japanese in order to make the occupation more manageable (Dedaić and Nelson, 2003). Instead, Okinawans continued to promote the Japanese as a necessary tool for reunification with Japan, something which was seen as preferable to American occupation. As a result, Okinawan can be seen as remaining stigmatized, this time not because of Japanese government administrative efforts in the islands, but rather in spite of it.

The sixth and current era of Ryukyu Island language variant continuums is an era that includes efforts at the revival of Okinawan language variants. This became possible after 1972 when the administration of the islands was returned to the Japanese government, and it became obvious that Japanese national interests, as seen in Tokyo, were often at odds with the needs of the people living on the Ryukyu Islands. In this era, the destiny of Ryukyuan language variants became an issue (Kim, 1973, p. 1021) and can illustrate how state policy, especially at the local level, affects language minorities.

4.4 Ainu in Japan and how events affected speaker numbers

The Ainu languages consisted of three main language variants: those of Hokkaido, Sakhalin, and the Kuril Islands. Therefore, one can see that Ainu is not a pure language isolate but might profitably be considered as a language family of three separate language variants, which are considered by the UNESCO Atlas (see Appendix, Figure 3) to constitute three separate languages (Moseley, 2010, p. 39), which can be debated. This section of this dissertation will exclusively focus on the Ainu people in Hokkaido and their language in a historical context and will not deal with other past Ainu populations in other areas of northeastern Asia bordering the Okhotsk Sea, as these populations are discussed elsewhere. Although assumed to have once constituted a single language and culture, surviving records indicate that the Ainu language of Hokkaido underwent development in its language variation in comparison to the languages of the Ainu of Sakhalin and those of the Kuril islands (Akulov, 2017, p. 230). Unfortunately, it is now most likely impossible to fully reconstruct either of these latter two languages fully due to the extinction of these two branches of Ainu as languages (but not as people identifying themselves as Ainu) within former Ainu-speaking regions of the Russian Federation. See chapter 5.2 for more information about this.

The Hokkaido Ainu language has been gradually disappearing over the course of many years. However, Ainu people still exist who can speak the language, even though in extremely low numbers (Hudson, 2022, p. 7); and with the promotion of Ainu culture, there is a potential for revitalization of this language. Japan has a share of languages that are considered dead, such as Old Japanese and Middle Japanese (Frellesvig, 2010, p. 3); the desirable objective is to prevent the Ainu language from going extinct.

Ainu language, whether in Hokkaido or other places, is also called アイヌ・イタㇰ (*Aynu itak*) by its speakers or アイヌ語 (*Ainu-go*) in Japanese. It has no generally accepted genealogical relationship to any other language family (Bugaeva, Nichols, and Bickel, 2022, p. 43). This makes the Ainu language of Hokkaido and its culture outstanding in the context of Japan, which is often seen as completely homogenous. As Hokkaido has long been under the control of Japan, it should come as no surprise that the Ainu language is written in a modified version of the Japanese katakana syllabary. Even so, there is also a Latin-based alphabet available for use (Dal Corso, 2022, p. 914).

Hokkaido Ainu can be classified as a moribund language. In the 1980s, in the town of Nibutani (Hokkaido), there were 100 speakers, of whom only fifteen used the language every day. However, currently, only around 10 native speakers on the island of Hokkaido remain. There are also a few elderly semi-fluent speakers remaining (Miyaoka et al., 2007).

The Ainu are considered to be the descendants of the Jomon People from the Japanese Neolithic Age, which is dated from 16,500 years ago to 3,000 years ago. (”Brief History of the Ainu,” 2011). However, the documented history of the Ainu in Japan is a history of internal Japanese colonization. Hokkaido, the Northern island of Japan in which the Ainu settled, is full of natural resources based on rich river systems. The land of the Ainu was of interest to both Japan and Russia. Even before the Russians arrived in Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, the Ainu in all three regions were a target of subjugation by the Japanese for many centuries in an effort to obtain their resource-rich lands (“Brief History of the Ainu,” 2011). With the support of the Japanese shogun in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Mogami Tokunai and, subsequently, Mamiya Rinzo toured parts of Ainu Moshir (the Ainu ancestral home) in Hokkaido and authored widely disseminated accounts of their travels (Winkel, 1999, p. 52). This is mirrored by Russian exploration, also covered in this dissertation. The imperial administration of both countries funded ethnographic research and commissioned descriptions of the population of the large northern lands they claimed (DeChicchis, 1995).

Ainu culture was dwindling by this point due to Japanese and Russian colonization. The Ainu's final instance of armed insurrection against the Japanese occurred in 1789, and Ainu subjection increased fast under Japanese regional and, subsequently, national government leadership. The Japanese eventually came to see Ezo island (modern Hokkaido) as a Japanese territory rather than as Ainu land (DeChicchis, 1995).

While inquiring into the history of the Ainu, one can address indirect signs of the past. It appears to be generally assumed that the Hokkaido Ainu language is a linguistic remnant of the Jomon peoples who inhabited Japan before the advent of the Japonic language-speaking Yayoi culture peoples (Hudson, 2022, p. 7). Genetic evidence points to the Jomon occupation of certain areas of Korea up to 500 A.D. and provides evidence of Jomon DNA ranging from

10 to 95% in the early centuries of this era. There, thus, exists a possibility that some Ainu language variant or other was in use in the Korean peninsula until the 5th century (Hudson, 2022, p. 5). However, it is based on indirect evidence, such as genetics, not on the written historical record.

The last major holdout for a Jomon-descended language and culture is among the Ainu of Hokkaido, where Ainu was widely spoken until well into the late 19th century. Relationships with other Ainu cultures in Honshu, Sakhalin, and the Kuril Islands are not well studied and need further research (Hudson, 2022, p. 15). The reason for the lack of research is the disappearance of Ainu language speakers in these territories.

In any case, for Japan as a whole, ancient DNA sequencing shows that the genetic contribution of the Jomon genome to that of modern Japanese is less than what one might have assumed, considering that Jomon people are usually seen as the ancestors of the Japanese. Currently, other than among Ainu speaking individuals from Hokkaido, the biggest contribution of the Jomon genome is to the native inhabitants of the Ryukyu islands, with lesser amounts for the main islands of Japan and only insignificant amounts for the inhabitants of the Korean peninsula (Hudson, 2022, p. 11), which would seem to indicate the possibility that Jomon people got largely replaced by Yayoi people.

In the Meiji era, the Hokkaido Ainu were subject to much discrimination due to a program of forced assimilation, giving them Japanese names and separating children from the Ainu language and tradition. Medical suppliers robbed over 1660 Ainu graves of their skeletons, and there was great interest among Europeans in the indigenous people of Japan's north. Only in 2008 did the Ainu get official recognition as an indigenous ethnic group in Japan. Promises of the restitution of Ainu skeletons were officially made, and the question of Ainu identity became a topic of discussion (Makino, 2021).

Another injustice, forced labor, played a significant role in Hokkaido’s development, and among those used were the indigenous Hokkaido Ainu (Jolliffe, 2020). The culture of the Hokkaido Ainu was considered barbaric and primitive because of their traditional customs, such as the hunting of bears, the ritualistic killing of animals, and the tattooing of the lips, hands, and arms as an initiation of girls reaching puberty.

Moreover, an ideology of national cultural homogeneity propelled the Japanese to colonize Hokkaido by defining themselves as superior to the Hokkaido Ainu and denying them their cultural and linguistic identity completely (Siddle, 2003, p. 447). As the Japanese saw the Ainu as primitive, the law to convert the Hokkaido Ainu and other Ainu populations into Japanese was passed as part of a new wave of Japanese politics in the late 19th century. The prohibition of traditional customs and the enforcement of Japanese culture brought the Ainu into poverty and isolation and was compounded by a lack of education. Furthermore, they had to undergo harsh discrimination by the new residents of their land (Siddle, 2003, p. 447).

Many of the Hokkaido Ainu tried to hide their identity from society at large, especially since the Meiji period. Intermarriage with the Japanese seemed to be a solution for them to escape from discrimination by producing descendants of mixed ethnicity. The Hokkaido Ainu had to endure exploitation and discrimination until approximately the 1960's when national and international human rights movements stimulated younger individuals identifying as Hokkaido Ainu to claim their rights and to seek increased access to wealth and power. In 1997 a new Ainu law with an emphasis on supporting Ainu culture and traditions was passed (Siddle, 2003, p. 447). It replaced the former Aborigines Protection Act of 1889 (Yotsumoto, 2020, p. 1711). However, this law failed to mention an essential part of the issue, the human rights of the Hokkaido Ainu. The result was that, though the struggle over discrimination mostly ceased, pockets of discrimination continue to exist ("Ainu people - History and Culture," n.d.).

The Hokkaido Ainu have had a generally falling population from the early 1800s onward. Their population fell from a high of 26,256 in 1807 to 23,563 in 1822, then 17,819 in 1854, then 16,272 in 1873, before reaching 17,783 in 1903, before falling to 15,969 in 1931 ("Sejarah Orang Ainu Japan," 2015).

The estimates show a reasonably sharp population decrease from 1822 to 1854. The reasons for this were diseases brought to them through contact with the Japanese. These diseases included, among others, smallpox, tuberculosis, cholera, and measles. According to a survey conducted by the Hokkaido Government in 1984, the Hokkaido Ainu population was then 24,381, though this number must be distinguished from Hokkaido Ainu speakers, which would have been a much lower number ("Ainu Geography," n.d.). In 2017, nearly

13,000 residents in the Hokkaido region indicated living in Ainu communities ("Number of people who live in Ainu communities," 2022).

The pattern of the denial of ethnic identity has long been common among the Ainu in Japan, and few, if any, ethnologists have the ability to use the self-identification method with any success. Legitimate estimates vary according to the researcher's estimate of the denial ratio. On the assumption that roughly half of those who believe themselves to be Hokkaido Ainu are unwilling to disclose this fact to others, researchers have argued that the number of officially registered Hokkaido Ainu (over 24,000) should be at least doubled (DeChicchis, 1995) to reflect a truer figure of 50,000 or 60,000. More optimistic estimates by Ainu representatives range to 300,000 (DeChicchis, 1995) and beyond. The higher estimates are often accompanied by statements noting the loss of genealogical knowledge, and they occasionally presume a counterfactual test whereby the Ainu consist of those who would assert their Ainu ethnicity if only they were aware of the facts of their ancestry (DeChicchis, 1995).

The entire situation, with the people often not admitting that they are descendents of Ainu, can be partly comparable with *Burakumin* (部落民) people. Unlike Ainu, *Burakumin* is not an ethnicity, but an unofficial caste within feudal Japan. Being historically discriminated against, the descendants of *burakumin* are likely to not mention that they are descendants of the people of this caste (Lie, 2009, p. 47).

Language endangerment can indicate the domination of a majority over a minority. Yet, it is unlikely for language revitalization to be attempted just for the sake of language alone, for the sake of simply bringing balance to a community and enriching it (Heinrich, 2014).

Even though Hokkaido Ainu has been classified as a "dying language" since the 1920s, modern society has created a background for language revival. Ainu oral literature has been documented and, beginning in 1987, the Ainu Association of Hokkaido began hosting Ainu language classes and releasing instructional materials on the language, including textbooks (Miyaoka et al., 2007).

Not only printed but also video resources are becoming available to students of this language and can also be looked upon as an indication of attempts at revitalization. One example is a 72 minutes documentary in length called "Ainu Neno An Ainu • アイヌネノアンアイヌ," which is in Japanese and English with English subtitles. It was directed by filmmakers Neo Sora and Laura Liverani, who traveled to Japan to shoot, finishing the film in 2021 (Sora and Liverani, 2021). It was a documentary, a cinematic family photo album of Nibutani, a village in Hokkaido, the place where some Hokkaido Ainu still preserve their culture and language in spite of the long history of Japanese assimilation in Hokkaido. Villagers describe the assimilation that was forced on them and the discrimination which they had to endure. Even so, they continue to carry out the preservation and revitalization of the Ainu language and culture (Sora and Liverani, 2021).

Another documentary was directed in 2019 by filmmaker Nomi Mioguchi. It is called "Ainu: Indigenous People of Japan • アイヌ: ひと." The 61-minutes film is in both Japanese and Ainu with English subtitles (Mizoguchi, 2019). Ainu in the Hokkaido Ainu language means human, and Hokkaido was once called Ainumosir, which means "land of the Ainu (=humans)."

This film was made on the assumption that Ainu traditions and language are in critical condition, as, at the time of the movie's production, there were already less than 20,000 people in Hokkaido who identified themselves as Ainu (Mizoguchi, 2019). The documentary illustrates the many attempts of today's Ainu to reacquire their cultural identity and hand it down to their descendants. It was filmed in Biratori town in Hokkaido, a place where there are still many people of Ainu ancestry. Moreover, it is the hometown of the late Shigeru Kayano, who was the first member of the National Diet of Japan who identified himself as Ainu and who made great contributions to the field of Hokkaido Ainu language and culture studies (Mizoguchi, 2019).

In fact, exceptional efforts were made by Shigeru Kayano, the Ainu native speaker and former Diet member, who was a cultural icon. As a member of the upper house of Japan's national diet, he succeeded in obtaining the abolition of "The Protective Act" for the Ainu in Hokkaido and in enacting the "Act for the Promotion of Ainu Culture" in 1997. This

Act was later abolished and replaced by a new Act in 2019. Only from that point were the Ainu acknowledged as an indigenous people ("Japan: New Ainu Law Becomes Effective," 2019).

The Dogai Ainu socio-economic study conducted by the Japanese government in 2010 revealed economic and social differences between the Dogai (meaning, in this context, that they are living out of Hokkaido) Ainu and the rest of the Japanese people. This study also demonstrated the difficulties of collecting information among the Dogai Ainu since, in a non-indigenous context, many of them concealed their ancestry for fear of prejudice and were reluctant to take part in surveys (Nakamura, 2015, p. 664).

A majority of the Hokkaido Ainu and certain other Ainu are members of the Hokkaido Utari Association. *Utari* (ウタリ) in Ainu means "companion" (Nakamura, 2015, p. 665). This organization was managed by the government in order to accelerate Hokkaido Ainu's incorporation and absorption into the Japanese nation-state, but now it is currently governed exclusively by Hokkaido Ainu and acts autonomously (Schiowitz, 2021).

Other important organizations include the Japanese government-established Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture (FRPAC), which was established following the enactment of the Ainu Culture Law in 1997, as well as the Hokkaido University Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies established in 2007. Museums and cultural centers also were created ("Overview of Ainu Policy in Japan," n.d.). Additionally, people of

Hokkaido Ainu ancestry living in Tokyo have also increasingly developed a sense of political and cultural community (“Ainu Economies,” n.d.).

With regard to the internet, there exists a number of resources promoting the Hokkaido Ainu language and culture. Among these is the website Memrise which contains a course in the Ainu language for beginners and intermediate students. However, it is incomplete and uses Romanized Ainu (Tasticskate). The Arctic Studies Center website contains an interactive guided online museum of Ainu culture (“Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History,” n.d.).

Even though the Hokkaido Ainu language has been gradually disappearing, people with Hokkaido Ainu ancestry do not appear to be insignificant in number, at least in Japan. With the proper promotion of Hokkaido Ainu culture and language, an actively developing community can be rebuilt again. If a dead language like Hebrew could be revived, one cannot help but have hope for a still-living language like Ainu to be used again as long as people continue to show an interest in their roots.

4.5 Japanese Sign Language

Japanese Sign Language represents a special case among language minority groups in Japan. Although having had a long unrecorded history, it has only been in the last two hundred years that the study, standardization, and propagation of sign languages have come to be supported by the government. Although two hundred years is a relatively short period in terms of history, sign languages have already taken on many forms, generating not only many unique national sign languages but also sign language families, consisting of various national sign languages that share common origins and similar, though not identical, sign language lexicons (Reagan, 2021, pp. 427-454). Moreover, it would appear that there are currently multiple cases of new languages in the making. This appears to offer a unique insight into the process of glottogenesis as these languages in the making would be expected, over the due course of time, to become more mature, as they develop and, at the same time, take on ever more stable features.

Japanese Sign Language is called *Nihon Shuwa* (日本手話) in Japanese. *Temane* is the old term. It is classified as a deaf sign language (Osugi, 1999, p. 1). In Japan, the population with hearing disabilities is estimated to be around 350,000. The number of public schools for the deaf is set by law to a minimum of at least one school for each prefecture (Suzuki et al., 2002, pp. 456-459).

Problems regarding the legal and, more importantly, the social status and other social issues of those who communicate using Japanese Sign Language have gotten attention from the imperial family. Kiko, Princess Akishino and wife of the heir apparent to the throne Fumihito, has conducted her studies of sign language in parallel with her official activities. She has mastered Japanese Sign Language and has attended the ceremony of "Praising Mothers Raising Children with Hearing Impairments" every year ("Their Imperial Highnesses Crown Prince and Crown Princess Akishino and their family," n.d.). Her daughters Kako and Mako have also been studying sign language ("Kakosama ga shuwa no zenkoku taikai ni shusseki kōkōsei to kōryū," 2018). Since the Japanese Sign Language is the main means of communication for a significant subset of Japanese citizens, attention to it from the imperial family has been important in raising its profile.

However, in Japan, there have been cases where a deaf population is integrated into society so much so that the hearing people around them also come to know sign language. An example of such societies can be seen in some settlements, in which so-called village sign languages are used. This can be illustrated by the existence of the Amami Oshima Sign Language. Amami Oshima is one of the islands of Okinawa, which also has a unique spoken language different from Standard Japanese (Hammarström et al., 2017).

Generally speaking, Japanese Sign Language draws heavily from its roots in Japanese culture. (Stainbrook, et al., 2016). Many of the *shuwa* for hiragana symbols visually remind one of how these symbols are written on paper, but then again some do not, like を, which looks like the Latin alphabet letter “O.” Some of the signs used, likewise, appear to have their origin in the Chinese characters that are used to write Japanese. However, the grammar, the syntax, and the lexicon are significantly different and rather more efficient as communication tools than spoken Japanese, itself.

The Japanese Federation of the Deaf (JFD) was founded after World War II on May 25, 1947 (“Japanese Federation of the Deaf History”, n.d.). By Japanese law, until the 1970s, deaf people were classified as minors or mentally deficient. As such, they could not obtain a driver's license or sign a contract or make a will (Nakamura, 2006). Progress, though, has been made, with the most recent win for the rights of the deaf being found in the adoption of the “Japanese Sign Language Act” by 100% of Japan's local municipal councils (“Japanese Federation of the Deaf History”, n.d.). In order to build a legal foundation for the belief that “sign language is language”, and pass the Sign Language Law, the Japanese Federation of the Deaf created an organization in 2010 occupied with achieving this goal (“Our Movement for Promoting the Establishment of a Sign Language Law in Japan”, 2020).

It should be noted that not only users of visually based standard sign languages are getting attention and recognition. In the recent past, for example, the tactile language used by the deaf-blind is also receiving recognition. The first ever conference which aims to build a network of persons with deaf-blindness in the Asian region was held in Chiba City with the participation of persons with deaf-blindness from different countries on August 31 to September 3, 2018. Multiple countries were represented with 18 participants from the Asian region. Other than the host country, Japan, countries represented were Korea, Nepal, Malaysia, Singapore, Uzbekistan, and India (“First Asia Deafblind Conference”, n.d.).

Japanese Sign Language is naturally different from spoken Japanese. There is, furthermore, anecdotal evidence that sign language has had a certain success in being promoted and that its status is rising so that in certain cases it can now be seen as a sort of a fad. For example, occasionally even on the wrappings of food, one can see sign language signs being printed in the form of drawings. Books have been published for the self-study of Japanese Sign Language in Japanese and some sources are giving examples in English. Multimedia content is also available (Kanev et al., 2009, p. 224). It would, therefore, seem that though language minority users of sign language had a hard history, in recent times they have been gaining in strength and cultural impact.

Even if the problem of how to create a deaf language literature might have a potential solution, deafness is a condition that makes people affected by it to be treated differently from others, so historically it has caused them to oftentimes have specific culturally-determined occupations. Such examples can be seen in Japan as well. Deaf people appear at all times in Japanese history, even in ancient sources, including an appearance in

Japan's first historical chronicle, *Kojiki*, which relates as a part of Japan's creation myth, and therefore became an important part of Japan's native Shinto religion.

According to a commonly known legend from *Kojiki*, the creator gods Izanami and Izanagi first created the so-called "leech child" who was hearing deficient and then sent him off in a reed boat. After that, they proceeded to create the other gods or kami of the Japanese pantheon. Meanwhile, the "leech child" grew up, went through many difficulties, and became Ebisu (恵比須), the Shinto deity of traders, fishers, and prosperity. He is a member of the Gods of Fortune *Shichifukujin* (七福神) and was the only one of the seven to have originated solely in Japan, apparently without Hindu or Chinese influence (Stainbrook et al., 2016). One can see that despite his problem with hearing, and perhaps because of it, the mythical character Ebisu has been long seen as a hardworking and benevolent *kami*. He persevered and became stronger, thus creating an association of Ebisu with good fortune and good luck and his story can be interpreted as being part of the "way" of the "*kami*." *Kami* can also be read in Japanese as *shin,* and "way" is read as *dou*. Combined, these words produce the word *Shinto* (Picken, 1994, p. xxi). While related to the topic indirectly, this story of the "way" of Ebisu is culturally significant in regard to deafness in Japan as a phenomenon.

Such cultural icons can convey a different perspective about how at least some people in Japan, even in ancient times, saw others with deafness. They can also further promote mutual understanding in the population as a whole and can help decrease possible prejudice, even in modern times.

Another culturally significant mythical creature that can be mentioned is the dragon in the mythology of Japan, with the design of the symbol which is used to write it coming to Japan from China. As the Mandarin Chinese pronunciation for ‘Deaf’ and ‘Dragon’ are the same, when written in Chinese, deaf [聾] came to be composed of two Chinese characters [龍], which mean a dragon and [耳] an ear (Liang and Mason, 2006, pp. 26-31). Therefore, at least in part for this reason, the Chinese perceive the dragon as being deaf (“The Dragons of China,” 2022).

Dragons are said to have lost their hearing when the ears of the dragons fell into the ocean, where they became seahorses. These former ears are represented by the seahorse that appears as the Japanese Federation of the Deaf logo and mascot (“Zennihon rōa renmei no māku kaisetsu,” n.d.).

Addressing the historical side of the topic, there is no evidence of schooling in Japan for the deaf before the Meiji period (1868-1912). Therefore, most deaf people remained uneducated and were limited to manual labor. Exceptions were only a few people who got some education at the small temple schools called *terakoya* (Nakamura, 2006). A fact that worsened the situation was that sign language did not exist on a generalized basis at the time.

In 1862, when the Tokugawa Shogunate sent out the first Japanese embassy to Europe, one of its missions was to understand something more about being deaf by visiting deaf schools in European countries (Shimamoto, 2015, p. 79). Based on their findings, the Japanese educator Tashiro Furukawa. pioneered education for visually handicapped and hearing impaired people. He created Kyoto Moain in 1879, and started the development of Japanese Sign Language, which was at first a pidgin language. The school that he founded is, at present, called Kyoto Prefectural School for the Visually Impaired (Minami, 2016).

Over the Meiji Era, the number of private schools for the blind and the deaf increased. It was not until the Taisho Era, though, that schools for the blind and deaf were separated. Deaf schools stopped the teaching of sign language and switched to lip reading education known as *kouwa* (口話) (Stainbrook et al., 2016). To be specific, lip reading (*kouwa*) is to be distinguished from signing, which makes use of hand signs. On the other hand, lip reading is taught in the hope that it will enable deaf people to directly perceive Japanese as Japanese and to respond with comprehensible spoken Japanese. Which school of deaf people's education is better, lip reading or signing is still being debated, but paying attention to what deaf people, themselves, want can better help to understand the direction future developments should take.

Another point of division is the difference in the philosophy behind the organizations of the deaf created comparatively recently in Japan. In the late 1940s, the Japanese Federation of the Deaf was founded with the professed belief that deaf Japanese were no different from other Japanese people except for their lack of hearing. They also claim that signing is another form of spoken Japanese. D PRO, on the other hand, emerged in the 1980s and they argue that they belong to a “different culture” and have a completely different language than a hearing Japanese person (Stainbrook et al., 2016). D PRO supports its position with modern research that indicates that Japanese people are not strongly influenced by lip movements, when listening to others speak, which is culturally significant (“Japanese People Less Reliant on Lipreading to Understand Speech,” 2017). It is likely that not all the members of these organizations follow the respective philosophies and worldviews of the organizations that they belong to, but differences in approach are nonetheless clear.

The website of the Japanese American Sign Language Signers Society provides a list of deaf-friendly organizations and businesses as well as individuals, such as deaf artists (“Deaf Businesses, Organizations,” n.d.). Though indirect in nature, this is just one piece of evidence that, at least a certain number, if not most deaf persons, distinguish themselves from the hearing majority and, consequently, see themselves as being part of a minority group.

National Tsukuba University of Technology (NTUT) is currently the only higher educational institute for the Deaf in Japan, and also has blind students. The university collaborates with other institutions in pursuit of its deaf education goals (“Primary Goals of the University," n.d.). The situation with regard to deaf education in Japan is therefore improving.

4.6 Multilingualism and polyglottery in Japan

In the research done for this dissertation, the subject of multilingualism and polyglottery in modern Japan was addressed because research into this was likely to shed potential light on underlying Japanese attitudes toward "local language" acquisition and preservation. Also, it was felt that an increase in the number of multilingual people in a country might cause more language variants to be used on its territory. It is to be expected that throughout most of its history, Japan has had comparatively fewer trilingual or multilingual people than in most countries, though this would have changed with the Meiji Restoration and the dramatic post-World War II economic developments of Japan.

Japan existed in a state of self-imposed isolation from 1639 to 1854, a time in which physical isolation meant internal and external peace, possibly the longest period of peace on a national level to that time in human history. This was combined with vibrant cultural development, which was not indicative of true intellectual isolation. Through maintaining limited trade relations with the outside world through a Dutch trading post in Kyushu and through its dominance of the kingdom of the Ryukyu Islands which allowed for an indirect trading relationship with China, Japanese intellectuals and government officials kept up with events in the outside world and with significant scientific and technological developments. Nevertheless, Japan entered the community of nations in 1854 without having a need for any considerable number of its citizens to have even bilingual ability. Though such individuals were not wholly absent, Japan was lacking in human resources of this nature when it found itself suddenly faced with a host of aggressive Western powers. In the 169 years since Japan's opening up to the West, the number of Japanese who have become bilingual for reasons such as professional purposes and, to a lesser extent, for the more general purpose of pure intellectual pleasure has massively increased. However, the number of polyglots does not seem to have shown an equal rise, even though claims have been made that polyglottery and polyglottery studies have the potential to produce many practical benefits for academia and society in general (Kazakov, 2013, pp. 87-88).

The relative lack of popularity of polyglottery would seem to be due to the fact that it is a phenomenon connected with adult foreign language learners who choose to learn foreign languages for intellectual pleasure. Being multilingual, on the other hand, is more of an issue of knowing several language variants. As polyglottery is different from multilingualism and getting a better sense of what the Japanese think was seen as useful, a questionnaire on multilingualism in Japan was carried out as a small survey.

The survey questions were posed to the students of four English Department classes of a private Japanese university on 10 October 2022. The students were exclusively of Japanese nationality. The questionnaire was done within the framework of writing and presenting opinions. 50 students provided answers to the survey, which were collected on a voluntary basis in an anonymous fashion. The findings were used to further confirm the points under consideration presented in the research for this chapter section.

Only the findings that were considered relevant for this research were used, but the whole questionnaire is included here (see simplified version in Appendix, Table 8) due to its usefulness for understanding the attitudes of that part of the Japanese population who could be expected to have favorable attitudes toward foreign languages (and, possibly, Japanese local languages).

The items on the questionnaire were as follows:

1). Qa: “Do you think Japan is a multilingual county?”

Only 6 respondents answered “yes”, 44 “no.”

Qb: “If yes, what languages are spoken in Japan?”

As examples, English and Chinese were mentioned 4 times, Korean twice, and Tagalog once.

Notably, Okinawan languages and Hokkaido Ainu were not mentioned.

2). Qa: "Do you speak any dialect of the Japanese language?"

Nine students answered "yes", 41 "no."

Qb: "If so, what dialect do you speak?"

Kansai, Hakata, Nagano, Hokuriku, Iwate, Tochigi, Hokkaido, Kyoto, and Okinawan were mentioned one time each.

3). Qa: "How many foreign languages do you speak?"

13 respondents answered that they can only speak Japanese, yet were able to answer this questionnaire, written in English. 12 answered that they could speak one foreign language. 23 replied that they could speak two languages. Two answered that they could speak three languages.

Qb: "What are the names of these languages?"

English was mentioned 37 times, French 14 times, Chinese 6 times, German 4 times, and Spanish once.

4). Q: "How many foreign languages do you want to learn in the future?"

One person answered that they do not want to learn any more languages.

21 people wanted to learn one more language.

24 people wanted to learn two more languages.

Six people wanted to learn three languages.

One person wanted to learn four languages.

5). Q: “Do you think it is difficult for a Japanese person to learn a foreign language and, if so, why?”

44 respondents answered that it is difficult.

As reasons were given differences in grammar (namely, sentence structure), lack of opportunity to practice, and difficulties in pronunciation. One notable answer was “because everyone around is speaking only Japanese.”

Six people answered that it was not particularly difficult. For example, one respondent said that any language can be learned now using the internet, and Japan has enough foreign language schools.

6). Q: “What foreign languages do you think Japanese people most often try to learn?”

The absolute majority (48 people) answered that English was the most popular language to learn.

One person also mentioned Chinese along with English, and another one pointed to Korean being popular. Two people could not answer this question.

7). Q: “What do you think about the Ainu language and about Ainu people?”

33 respondents expressed personal opinions about this culture. Among the answers were calls to respect and to protect this traditional culture and language, and for people to have an interest in it. 17 respondents did not express any particular opinion.

8). Q: “What do you think about the local languages of Okinawa and other Ryukyu Islands?”

42 respondents expressed their opinions. Among the opinions, the view that was commonly expressed was that Ryukyuan languages were difficult to understand. Another view was that it was likely a different language. Eight people did not have an opinion.

9). Qa: “Have you studied any local language or a dialect of Japan at school?”

Eleven people wrote that they had learned a local language variant. 39 wrote that they hadn’t.

Qb: If so, what are the names of these language variants?

The Iwate and Osakan dialects, and the Ainu language were named by one person each. Okinawan was mentioned by three people.

10). Q: Have you studied any local language or dialect of Japan outside of school?

Only five respondents have actively studied a local language variant outside of the education system. The Osaka dialect was named by one person.

A notable finding of this survey was that the majority of respondents did not consider Japan to be a multilingual country, and this result was rather expected, based on previous experience in teaching and on a private communication of Dr. Hikaru Kitabayashi, a professor emeritus of Daito Bunka University. Nevertheless, there was evidence of interest among a certain number of English Language Department students with regard to the local languages of Japan, with six out of 50 mentioning having received training in school and five out of 50 mentioning having done so outside of school. This would seem to demonstrate something of a gap between the way Japanese perceive themselves and their country and the actual reality on the ground in Japan.

Though incapable of providing definite answers to language attitudes in Japan, the survey did highlight the concept of homogeneity that especially needs to be considered when discussing how Japanese tend to view language (and, thus, multilingualism and, by extension, polyglottery). Moreover, it can be understood from common knowledge and empirical experience that the Japanese widely describe themselves as being a homogenous nation, both in terms of population ethnicity and in terms of language. And, on the surface, this appears to be largely accurate. It can be said with assurance that a majority of Japanese do not feel comfortable or capable of speaking any other language than Japanese (Kazakov, 2022b, pp. 138-142). However, almost every Japanese person one will come across has been exposed to English as a part of the compulsory education system of Japan and as a part of the Japanese language itself, which has both adopted and adapted many loanwords from Chinese and English and, to a lesser extent, from other languages. But, in fact, those Japanese people who are willing to speak, or at least try to speak a foreign language, ordinarily only speak English. This brings this research to the question of why and also to an examination of the possible factors involved in this commonly appearing linguistic phenomenon among Japanese.

One important reason would most certainly be linguistic “distance” due to the greatness of the degree to which linguistic differences separate Japanese and English. Firstly, it is of enormous importance that every phoneme differs in production to a greater or lesser degree between the two languages, even among those phonemes that are perceived as being similar to each other when listened to by an untrained ear. Moreover, modes of articulation are radically different, with the pitch being characteristic of Japanese and rhythm being of particular importance to English, though neither is pitch utterly foreign to English nor rhythm unheard-of to Japanese. Nevertheless, the sound processing by Japanese, due to the phonological characteristics of their language, is always more polysyllabic than is the case of English speakers, who tend to process language across the board in more monosyllabic terms than the Japanese do. This leads words in both Japanese and English to be perceived by Japanese as being significantly more polysyllabic than they are when listened to by native speakers of English (Taft, 2002, p. 538).

Furthermore, even in the simplest of sentences, word order is almost always different, usually significantly so. Likewise, grammar does not function remotely similarly to Chinese, English, or other major European languages. In turn, this leads to the development of cross-lingual interference. For this reason, not only there are two very different grammatical systems to cope with when a Japanese learns not only English but also most other popular foreign languages in Japan, other than Korean. This can only add to the intellectual effort for language acquisition needed by the average Japanese when attempting to learn English and, it may be presumed, for other foreign languages as well. Despite this difficulty, Japanese who study abroad often acquire language ability more quickly and effectively than those studying in Japan, thus indicating that cross-interference of differing descriptive systems of grammar, to the extent it is a problem, would tend to be more so for Japanese learners of foreign languages inside of Japan rather than for those who are outside the country (Dewey, 2007, p. 245).

Then there is an obstacle to becoming a multilingual or a polyglot that is non-linguistic in nature. There is an ingrained element of Japanese culture in the attitude people take to the mastery of a skill. To be recognized as having mastered a skill of whatever nature, a person is expected to show extreme attention to detail in addition to execution. If either is missing, a person will not be considered as having mastered the said skill. Unlike other skills such as poetry, flower arranging, painting, cooking, and judo, however, the number of details faced in learning English (or any other foreign language) can easily become overwhelming to a conscientiously detail-oriented Japanese with little or no exposure to any other culture than their own. While great diligence might often be shown in learning a single foreign language, the thought of trying to master an equal number of detailed rules and exceptions to rules with regard to yet another language is usually more than enough to stop an ordinary Japanese from even taking the first steps in attempting to learn a second foreign language (Toyama and Yamazaki, 2018, p. 8). And, as is evidenced by the results of the before-mentioned survey where only one out of a total of 50 respondents expressed a desire to learn four foreign languages, for most Japanese, a third or fourth foreign language would, from the beginning, be seen as inconceivable. In traditional Japanese culture, it is more desirable and brings one more respect to be an acknowledged master of a single skill than to be seen as a jack of all skills.

In addition to the preceding obstacles, for the Japanese, there is also an important obstacle imposed by time. If one were to measure achievement of fluency in terms of time, then there are many estimates available, including one by the Cambridge University Press, which gives the impression of underestimating the hours of study that would be needed for those making use of a good textbook and seems to have been written with an eye to encouraging those responsible for choosing classroom textbooks to take a look at the textbooks published by this particular publisher ("Foreign Service Institute: Foreign Language Training," 2022). At any rate, what is available to one is an educated best guess, and that is to extrapolate to Japanese conditions. This best guess is provided by research done by the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) of the Department of State of the United States about the amount of time needed to learn a target foreign language at the FSI for an elite, highly educated, a cohort of individuals employed by the American State Department and other associated agencies of government who, by definition, possess a pressing need for reaching a certain level of mastery, though not necessarily full fluency, in the language they are being paid to study. As the FSI puts it on its official website, its "...language learning timelines reflect 70 years of experience in teaching languages to U.S. diplomats and illustrate the time usually required for a student to reach 'Professional Working Proficiency in the language, or a score of 'Speaking - 3 / Reading - 3' on the Interagency Language Roundtable scale. These timelines are based on what FSI has observed as the average length of time for a student to achieve proficiency, though the actual time can vary based on several factors, including the language learner’s natural ability, prior linguistic experience, and time spent in the classroom” (“Foreign Service Institute: Foreign Language Training,” 2022).

Languages are divided by the FSI into four categories, with those languages taking the least time being Category I and those which take the most time being Category IV. These categories of language will be shown in the tables in the Appendix section of this text under the names of Category I, Category II, Category III, and Category IV languages. The differences are calculated in terms of weeks of classroom time needed, with each week, no matter what category, consisting of 25 hours of classroom time (Kazakov, 2022a, pp. 122-124). As study time outside of the classroom was not included in the FSI figure, when calculating the actual amount of language learning time needed, it was assumed that for every hour of classroom time, one and a half hours of study outside of the classroom would be necessary to achieve FSI objectives. Thus, Category I languages were estimated as taking 24 or 30 weeks of classroom time, so the actual amount of time needed to achieve functional mastery of this category of languages was estimated as either 24 weeks x 25 hours + 24 weeks x 37.5 hours = 1500 hours of language learning time or as 30 weeks x 25 hours + 30 weeks x 37.5 hours = 1850 hours. Category II languages took 36 weeks x 25 hours + 25 weeks x 37.5 hours = 2250 hours of language learning time. Category III languages took 44 weeks x 25 hours + 44 weeks x 37.5 hours = 2750 hours of language learning time. Category

IV languages took a total of 5500 hours of language learning to acquire professional proficiency in them ("Foreign Service Institute: Foreign Language Training," 2022).

It should be reiterated that the above-mentioned estimates are just that, estimates, although there is anecdotal evidence that the hours listed are not necessarily far off the mark for a speaker of a European language (Larsson, 2019, p. 250). Working backward from these estimates to guesstimate Japanese performance times must necessarily add an extra layer of uncertainty to the conclusions given. Nevertheless, the resulting guesstimates for student cohorts in Japan that would have similar needs and abilities to FSI students are, at this time, the best that can be offered and are unlikely to be far off from what a better-designed study would be expected to produce in terms of properly validated estimates. With these caveats in mind, into consideration will be taken the FSI tables in the Appendix for this elite group of native English speakers with a need for the foreign language they study through the various FSI language programs they participate in and as adjusted to reflect the total estimated study time, both inside and outside of class (see Tables 1–4 in the Appendix).

The conclusions from the above-mentioned tables coincide with common sense. Standard English, as it developed in the Oxford-Cambridge-London triangle, originally was, in essence, a West Frisian and Norman French creole with fewer grammatical endings in use than either of its parent languages (Grant, 2009, p. 360). Thus, native speakers of English would be expected to have trouble with processing properly the grammatical endings, word orders, and pronunciation systems of even historically closely related languages such as French and, more so, German as opposed to languages such as Spanish, Italian or Dutch which more closely resemble English in structural terms. One can also see that, whether the language family is Indo-European or not, languages making use of different alphabets pose even more processing problems, while the most difficult are those whose writing systems do not correspond with alphabetic writing as understood by native English speakers, as in the case of Arabic, which though alphabetic, it, in principle, dispenses with the writing of vowels. Korean, on the other hand, uses what is essentially a native Korean alphabet to create syllables that seem to mimic Chinese characters in the way in which the letters of this alphabet are combined. Then there is Chinese, whose writing system is ideographic, with around 5,000 characters in common use. And, finally, there is Japanese, where the writing system is a mix of two native syllabaries and approximately 2,000 Chinese ideographs which are often subject to being read with multiple readings and which, to a large degree, are no longer written in the same way as Chinese was or is. And in addition to all this, there are many "built-in" hindrances to the acquisition of Japanese among not only speakers of English but among speakers of other European languages, as well (Keeley, 2018).

However, looking at language learning from a Japanese perspective, the above-mentioned tables must be interpreted in a different manner, especially concerning purposes of trade and politics, Mandarin Chinese and American English are the two most important languages to learn. Both of these languages, if one would use FSI categories, would be Category IV languages for Japanese, whereas Korean, due to many underlying similarities in word order, grammar, and vocabulary, would probably be Category III for a Japanese. But, for political and economic reasons, Korean, as a language, is of far less importance to Japan. Chinese, for economic reasons, should rank first, but perhaps politics trumps economics and the fact that, in addition to America being a large trade partner, it is also an occupying force with many troops stationed at military bases in Japan, making Japan its most important client state. As long as this situation continues, Japan will have no choice but to put American interests and English language learning first. But Category IV applies not only to English and Chinese; it would also apply to every other language in the above list, with the likely exception of Korean.

Naturally, if one has already learned a foreign language, then learning a second related foreign language is much easier, and this has been confirmed by many polyglots (Knight, 2018). However, a Japanese having learned English well would have to expect that learning French as a second foreign language, for instance, would still take at least as much time as it would for a native speaker of English learning French as a first foreign language. It would only be after having learned the French language if a Japanese person chose to learn a third foreign language that was yet another Romance language, that a significantly shorter learning time could be expected.

Thus, one can assume that the 5500 hours it would take a native speaker of Japanese to learn English to a point where professional proficiency could be expected. Furthermore, if one expects results at this level, then this would be enough to give an advantage in the labor market (Yudina, Melnichuk and Seliverstova, 2020, p. 265), then one could still expect that it would take another 1,875 hours for a Japanese person to learn French. If Spanish were the third language, the time needed for learning it by a Japanese would surely be significantly lower but, due to a greater lack of cultural familiarity, perhaps not to the extent it would be for a native English speaker or a native Russian speaker, for instance, who has the advantage of being able to learn two languages belonging to the same Indo-European language family and having a relatively larger store of a common vocabulary to draw upon.

Thus, if a polyglot is defined as someone who speaks four or more languages, then becoming a polyglot for a native speaker of Japanese learning any combination of FSI languages listed above could quite possibly be a greater effort than it would be for a native speaker of English to become proficient in all of the above listed FSI Category I languages put together. Moreover, though admittedly merely a best guess, becoming fluent in this one language, English, could be expected for a native speaker of Japanese to require roughly the same time and effort a native speaker of English would require to become fluent in French, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese. If one accepted that a fluent speaker who made a conscious decision as an adult to learn the before-mentioned Indo-European languages (English, French, German, and Spanish) as possessing the bare minimum linguistic competence to be considered a polyglot, might one not then consider a Japanese with full competence in English as also being at least an entry-level polyglot, due to the fact that roughly the same amount of linguistic training in terms of time would have been expended in each case?

Falling back on the normal understanding of what polyglot means as a word, there would also be a reluctance not only by a speaker of four or more Indo-European languages to recognize a fluent Japanese speaker of two foreign languages as a polyglot but also by the bilingual speaker of Japanese, himself or herself, to do so. Likewise, there might even be a reluctance to recognize as true polyglots those who are proficient in the bare minimum of four languages, with each belonging to a separate language family and possessing uniquely conceived writing systems (with English, Japanese, Chinese, the Mongolian of Inner Mongolia, and Arabic coming to mind as possible candidates) as being a polyglot. Nevertheless, the time spent in achieving even a trilingual proficiency in any combination of the just mentioned languages might very well be more than that of many European language polyglots speaking the right combination of as many as ten or more closely related languages.

If time were considered as a factor in determining who should be considered a polyglot, then one could potentially bring back into the open discussion what polyglot should mean as a term. Understanding the length of time required to acquire a target foreign language, though, at the very least, can play a significant part in choosing whether or not to make an effort to become a polyglot and will go a long way toward explaining why so few Japanese make an effort.

In any case, Japanese who are bilingual in English would not typically consider themselves as being polyglot nor even multilingual (and it is not implied here that they have to), regardless of how much time they may have spent learning English. Moreover, remembering the difficulty with which they became bilingual, they would generally not want to make an effort to become trilingual unless it were for a business necessity, as is the case of the occasional businessman, who, in addition to English, becomes proficient in Chinese. And there is much anecdotal evidence that even those Japanese who claim to like learning languages only intend to make a minimal effort to skim the surface of language learning with regard to most of the languages they might be interested in and do not usually expect to become fully fluent in even a third language, much less a fourth, probably because so many approach foreign languages with the idea that it will never get easier and so a self-concocted prophecy becomes self-fulfilling. They tend to assume that learning a second and third foreign language would represent just as much difficulty as learning a first foreign language, and this might be right, depending on the language chosen. A superficial examination of Japan might, accordingly, bring one to the conclusion that the self-perception necessary for producing polyglots seems to be lacking in this country, and, interestingly, this seems to be supported by the survey mentioned above.

Suppose one would look beneath the surface, and this is also borne out by the survey. In that case, one might see that the number of individuals in Japan who are more than merely bilingual is rather more than what might first seem to be the case when viewing the situation superficially. This, however, would partly depend on one's political linguistic stance. If one can accept the various indigenous language variants found on the Ryukyu islands that are designated by the UNESCO Atlas as being separate languages rather than merely dialects of Standard Japanese, then perhaps one might consider almost all of the speakers of these Ryukyuan languages as being bilingual in their mother tongues and Japanese because standard Japanese has long been used in the educational system as the only language of education. Furthermore, due to the large concentration of American military installations in Okinawa, which is the main island of the Ryukyu archipelago, and because these installations take up the most significant percentage of land area on the island, a respectable percentage of indigenous Okinawans, as compared with Japanese who have their origin in other parts of Japan, could, through work at and trade with these installations, be expected to be trilingual in one of the indigenous Okinawan language variants, Standard Japanese, and English. However, even trilinguals would not usually be considered polyglots but, at best, merely trilingual or multilingual, particularly for those for whom the extensive use of code-switching and other techniques characteristic of receptive multilingualism will have played a far larger role in their language learning (Larsson, 2019, p. 250). And more importantly, most Japanese would not categorize such individuals as even being trilingual. In fact, since the Japanese having their origin in the four main islands, have been unconsciously influenced by sociopolitical factors in such a way that they would consider the Ryukyuan language as being no more than a dialect of standard Japanese. Whether or not Ryukyuan languages are dialects of Japanese is still being debated, even though classifying them as languages have become prevalent in certain linguistic circles. According to ordinary Japanese thinking, however, the individuals mentioned before would be considered as merely bilingual. Moreover, this is something the above-mentioned survey would suggest is more than merely anecdotal.

From an educational viewpoint, in Japan, opportunities for multilingual education are few and far between, with multilingual education at any level being close to non-existent. Japanese education law, while not prohibiting multilingual education, makes no real provision for it (Rex-Horoi, 2022). And where it exists at the compulsory education level, bilingual and multilingual education tend to exist to meet the needs of the expatriate community, for whom there are a small number of schools catering in large part to the needs of the various nationalities found in communities where sufficient numbers of such people might live and for the children of those Japanese parents who see a potential benefit for their children in acquiring full fluency in such languages. Ordinarily, this would seem to be the pattern of schools whose language of education is a different language than Japanese.

However, there are exceptions, and a deeper look into this matter is necessary. It can be speculated that the schools using Korean and Chinese languages tend to cater to the needs of individuals from families domiciled in Japan, sometimes for several generations, but who wish to preserve a sense of unique ethnic identity. Education for Nepalese children, on the other hand, often focuses on a somewhat lower income market and tends to have three goals, being the teaching of Nepali to maintain a connection with the home country to which many parents hope one day to be able to retire, the teaching of Japanese to make it possible, if the family decides to stay in Japan so that the children might have more opportunities locally than their parents did, and the learning of English to provide for the possibility of future careers in countries other than Nepal or Japan (Yamanaka, 2005, pp. 337-358).

Going back to native Japanese students, at the tertiary education level and in an environment where even bilingual educational programs (almost always English and Japanese) are rarely successful in achieving stated goals, multilingual educational programs are few. There is one program at Daito Bunka University, where a Dual European Language Program exists in the English Language Department of the Faculty of Foreign Languages of that university with the aim of making students trilingual. In this program, in addition to Japanese, students are expected to become comfortable using English plus either German or French. Though the numbers are not great, there is a small number each year who do achieve a reasonable fluency in English as well as German or French. However, not being a goal of the program and with no curriculum designed to promote such an education, no Japanese student entering the dual language European language program has yet graduated from this program with fluency in French and German both, in addition to English. While this program is a major step in the direction of achieving more widespread multilingualism in Japan, it still leaves much to be desired and improved upon in the context of producing potential polyglots.

Even in the case of the teaching staff at Japanese universities, the number of staff who are trilingual is few. Though statistics on this subject would be of interest to have, the data would require a major effort to collect, and the numbers would be so few that further discussion of this would quickly become anecdotal.

All this information and analysis does not go so far as to allow one to be fully conclusive. Rather, it begs for a more thorough investigation as to why there has been a scarcity of trilinguals, multilinguals, and polyglots with knowledge of four or more languages among people living in Japan of Japanese ethnicity. However, not being conclusive does not mean that one cannot make educated guesses that can be used in shaping further investigations. As has already been alluded to, aspects of Japanese culture might be expected to be partially responsible, at least as much as the linguistic issues, which in and of themselves are inherently strong inhibitors of multilingual fluency. Additionally, one might expect that the educational system might be a factor, partly because government policy expects big results from small expenditures of time and effort. Furthermore, language education was traditionally teaching-oriented rather than learning-oriented, and, therefore, the importance of self-motivation and self-study in the acquisition of foreign languages was largely ignored. However, this is precisely where the study of polyglots and polyglottery would seem to have the greatest potential benefit (Kitabayashi, 2021, p. 141) for those trying to understand the Japanese take on foreign language acquisition and use. Furthermore, one can also see from the history of Japan that the promotion of multilingualism among its population has never traditionally been a strong priority of its government, a government that has long chosen to advocate an ideology of homogeneity of race, culture, and language.

Taken together, what all this would seem to indicate is that, before polyglots become more common in Japan, extra funding, as well as fundamental changes in attitude, will perhaps have to be necessary. This leads to the conclusion that, though necessary change is not impossible, it does not seem probable, and a hundred years from now, Japanese multilingual individuals, including polyglots, will probably remain almost as rare as they are today, provided that nothing changes with regard to the education system. However, there is a strong connection between language education, multilingualism and polyglottery, and geolinguistics (Kazakov, 2021a, p. 12). This, in turn, opens the door to the idea that some degree of change is inevitable and that, with the advancement of technology and the rising of new methods in the study of languages, there might be an unexpected shift in the paradigm of foreign language learning in such a way that the numbers of people who are multilingual might rise to a rather higher percentage of the total than now.

4.7 The geolinguistics of local language policies in present-day Japan

This section of the chapter concerns itself with the geolinguistics of law and government policy with regard to what can be referred to as local languages by Japanese bureaucrats who are practicing language planning (Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky, 2012, p. 927). Although the Japanese constitution does not specify an official national language, this is most certainly not a consciously made decision. Rather, the ideology upon which the modern Japanese state has been based for many years is that of unique homogeneity. Thus, the underlying assumption of Japan as a modern state was that, unlike the feudal era, Japan was unique in its oneness, being one State with one people speaking one language. Regarding other languages of Japan, which reflect different cultural traditions than Standard Japanese, the education system was and largely remains oblivious. Support for other indigenous Japanese languages, whether Hokkaido Ainu or any of the six UNESCO-designated Japonic languages of the Ryukyu Island chain, has been close to non-existent (Moseley, 2010, p. 50). In fact, until after World War II, the Japanese state actively discouraged the use of these languages and other local language variants more closely related to Standard Japanese, which is the language the state chose to promote in its educational system. At present, having largely achieved the goal of national homogeneity envisioned by the founders of the modern Japanese state, government bodies, as represented by both politicians and public servants, see no threat in giving language activists room to express themselves freely.

However, the state has not yet gone so far as to commit its financial resources to the support of what are now being referred to as “local languages.” And here, with regard to a term that carries strong political overtones,the progress of a sort is being made, especially in Okinawa where the prefectural government is promoting local languages in ways that do not cost the government mone, but do promote an image of Okinawa as being an exotic tourist destination. Support for Hokkaido Ainu is rather more academic in the form of museums and research institutes but not in the form of Hokkaido Ainu language revival. Nevertheless, citizen-led efforts at language revival are not discouraged,d and that is a significant progress for the Hokkaido Ainu language, after having been the object of a long period of sustained suppression.

Japanese Sign Language is the language that remains the object of the greatest amount of government support and also of academic debate, as people connected with the education of the deaf still have not fully come to a consensus as to the type of language education is desirable. Also, there is debate as to how many languages a deaf person should be taught, whether these languages should include Japanese Sign Language, Signed Japanese, Spoken and Written Japanese, and/or some other type of foreign language, and whether this foreign language should be a foreign sign language or a spoken foreign language. More and more, though, those who use Japanese Sign Language as their primary language are making their desires known and are gaining the attention of policymakers, so the situation here is both more hopeful and fluid at the same time. As for foreign workers, they exist under yet another regulatory system, that of Japanese immigration. For these individuals, visa requirements will determine whether Japanese will have been learned or not and, if so, to what extent.

Foreign language use in Japan, however, is not to be expected merely among non-Japanese individuals. Japanese also learn a foreign language (and, in particular, English in big numbers). In this context, MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan) introduced in 2012 the Foreign Language Course of Study (CoS) in response to discontent with the existing level of English instruction in Japan. Many variables influenced the effective implementation of the CoS principles (Mondejar et al., 2011, p. 160), but Mondejar M. and a group of researchers proposed seven proposals, which were meant as ways to improve the situation.

These proposals were:

“1. Developing competencies of Japanese teachers of English,

2. Revising assistant language teacher standards and hiring practices,

3. Improving communication between educators and administrators,

4. Incorporating a World Englishes perspective,

5. Creating agency and communities of practice among educators and learners,

6. Revising university entrance exams, and

7. Supporting more English-immersion education programs" (Mondejar et al., 2011, p. 154).

It is claimed that the goal of MEXT in establishing its Course of Study was to cultivate a type of Japanese person who will become at least bilingual (Laurier et al., 2011, pp. 12-16). It is also clear that below-the-surface bias was at play when formulating the preceding proposals but was not recognized. As a result, the researchers (Mondejar et al.,

2011) did not include enough information on how their proposals were to be funded or implemented.

In Japan, for well over 100 years, until the end of the 20th century, the ideology was one of gradual assimilation. It was universally accepted, and in the post-World War II years, the language policy in place was seen as something natural with no need for further discussion. Nevertheless, the early 1990s saw Japan's economic bubble burst, leading to many years of economic stagnation. Japan entered an era of less self-confidence with regard to an economic revival but with no fears about language variety.

With the removal of the challenge of having to deal with large groups of people who did not speak Japanese as a native language, Japan, after World War II, began taking a relatively relaxed approach to ethnic language revival for the small numbers of indigenous Japan nationals who did not use Japanese as a first language. In recent years there has been little to no resistance from government officials at either the local or national levels. However, there have been few resources budgeted by the government at any level for local language promotion, which can be partly explained by economic issues (Hashimoto, 2017, p. 25).

In the Ryukyu Islands, the revitalization of what the Japanese call the local languages has been met with government encouragement, even though there are generally no public funds available to help. Unfortunately, this may not be enough. What can be said, though, is that even if language revitalization proves to be successful, it is unlikely to produce social division or ethnic conflicts (which tend to occur elsewhere in the world).

Chapter 5: Language variation in the Russian Federation

Chapter five deals with language variation in the Russian Federation and its predecessor states. Russian and related language variants are first covered. A rather detailed discussion of Ainu in the Russian Federation is then provided, covering in some detail the history of Sakhalin Ainu and Kuril Island Ainu and their extinction as languages during the Soviet era. Similarly, detailed overviews were given of Karelian, Yiddish, Chechen, Crimean Tatar, and Russian Sign Language before discussing language law and government policy in the Russian Federation. The approach taken to language law and policy by the Russian Federation, being fundamentally different from that of Japan, was stressed because of its perceived importance for understanding the differences found in the respective language situations in Japan and Russia. Through this lens, the comparative aspects of the consequences of language law and policy are discussed in the following chapter.

The purpose of the chapter, thus, is to provide examples of language variation in Russia in the hope that it lays the groundwork for comparison with Japan because, without a means of comparison, it will be much more difficult to conclude as to what might or might not be noteworthy regarding Japan's language policies. This is seen as especially important when trying to identify points of policy that are customary and not framed by the government in writing. The Russian Federation, being the successor state to the former Soviet Union, has also inherited many aspects of its language policy, as the Soviet Union inherited aspects of the language policies of the Soviet Union. With regard to the Soviet Union, one policy inherited by the Russian Federation is the continuance of the existence of numerous political units established in Soviet times with the purpose of, at least partly, preserving the languages and cultures of minority peoples. A possibly extreme example might be the efforts in the so-called Jewish Autonomous Region of Siberia (Birobidzhan) to preserve and promote the Yiddish language as a living language for Ashkenazi Jews. Nevertheless, the availability of materials on minority language status in Russia would appear to be less than one would expect, possibly because issues of minority language status are not so problematic in Russia as they would appear to be in other, now independent former soviet republics where Russian exists as an often feared minority language (Quigley, 1996, p. 455). As illustrated by the history of Russia and those territories formerly under its total or partial control, in the 20th century, this country and surrounding regions have seen regular changes in internationally recognized political status, which would lead one to assume changes in government policies, including language policies. Even the capital city was moved from Saint Petersburg (which also underwent various name changes) to Moscow. To avoid confusion, "Russia" will be used as a general term that includes the Russian Empire, the USSR (or the Soviet Union), and the Russian Federation, depending on the period of history. The borders of Russia historically have tended to change significantly, and what territory at what period can be considered a country in this context is often a difficult question to answer. This was the primary reason that the term “other countries” was meant to reflect this situation with regard to the title of this dissertation, as many countries in eastern Europe and central Asia have their origins in the language policies of the former Soviet Union.

The short entries about the different languages in this chapter and their development during their recent histories not only illustrate the language variety of the country but also, on occasion, serve as examples of languages that are being here proposed for inclusion in future iterations of the “Red book” with the hope being that a reference work named “Red Book of the Languages of the Russian Federation” can be produced. Though not always strictly limiting the information it provides to the period of the Russian Empire, the presently existing Red Book, nevertheless, avoids discussing ethnic minority information about specific groups due to it being, in theory, a work concerned with the Russian Empire (Vahtre and Viikberg, 1991). A modern work, considering all ethnic groups and their languages within the Russia of today, would be a desirable goal for future academic research to strive for. Multiple examples of language variation exist in Russia historically, but this chapter is not meant to be merely illustrative, being conceived as providing a comparison for the preceding chapter on Japan. For this reason, the choice of examples is not exhaustive.

5.1 Russian and related language variants

Though the standard Russian language is now virtually the same throughout the Russian Federation, there are many almost fully mutually intelligible regional variants of Russian, though in the south of Russia as one approaches Ukraine and among Ukrainian Russian speakers, the differences become somewhat more marked. Between Russian and Ukrainian, the level of intelligibility in the written language is supposed to be about 85% (Lindsay, 2014), which is often considered to be a borderline for defining a language variant as a separate language rather than a related dialect. However, as a spoken language, Russian and Ukrainian have only approximately 50% mutual intelligibility. Belarusian, on the other hand, in terms of intelligibility, is intermediate between Russian and Ukrainian, though considered closer to Ukrainian than to Russian, the spoken language is supposed to have a 74% rate of mutual intelligibility with Russian (Lindsay, 2014).

Many of the so-called Russian dialects are typical language variants produced by individuals whose mother tongue is not Russian. Much as it is possible for a native speaker of English with a knowledge of other parts of the world to identify a Japanese speaker of English, or a Chinese speaker of English, or a German or a French or an Italian, so is it possible for a Russian to identify speakers of Russian from other parts of the Former Soviet Union or the present Russian Federation. Thus, Chechen speakers of Russian have specific speech characteristics that identify them, as do Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Tajiks, and others

(Gladkova and Cherevko, 2020, p. 25). This was because, right up until the very final years of the Soviet Union, Russian was the native language of a majority of the population.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russian speakers became the great majority in the new Russian Federation. Thus, though there are various ethnically based political divisions in the Russian Federation, in only a handful of cases does the minority ethnicity's mother tongue form a majority of the speakers of these ethnicity-based political units. In fact, though given political blessing and legal protection, mother tongue users, in many cases, tend to be in the minority, even though minority language speakers sometimes appear to be slowly increasing in numbers.

5.2 Ainu in the Russian Federation

In some sources claiming to give a broad picture of the languages of Russia, such as “The Red Book of the Peoples of the Russian Empire” (Vahtre and Viikberg, 1991), the Ainu people and their languages are not included. It has been explained by the fact that the Ainu language is considered to be an extinct language in modern Russia, though this was by no means the case in imperial Russia. The range of peoples and languages covered is impressive and it is to be regretted that Japan doesn’t have a Red Book of its own covering its many linguistic minorities. The chapters covering different languages can be seen as a basis for proposed future entries for a new and more comprehensive future Red Book of the Russian Federation.

Of the three Ainu languages, two are languages that became extinct but are indigenous to territories that were through much of their modern history under Russian control and still remain so. At times, though, a certain number of displaced speakers of these two languages came to live in Japan, especially after the changes in borders regarding Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands at the end of the Russo-Japanese War and World War II. These two Ainu languages are, as one might expect, given geographically based names by the UNESCO Atlas, being called Sakhalin Ainu and Kuril Ainu in English. While the languages are now considered to be extinct, both in Japan and in the Russian Federation (Moseley, 2010, p. 49), the Ainu descendants of these people are not, continuing to live. However, as the origins of these two languages are to be found in territories controlled by the Russian Federation, they will be considered in this section.

When inquiring into the history of the Sakhalin and Kuril Ainu languages, there is only very scant information available and it is difficult to even create a working outline on the basis of this information. What information that does exist concerning these two Ainu language variants suggest that, like Hokkaido Ainu which still survives in Japan, they are a linguistic remnant of the Jomon peoples who inhabited the shores of the various lands and islands bordering the shores of the Okhotsk Sea, where they continued to be culturally and linguistically prominent until deep into the second half of the 19th century. The Ainu of Sakhalin seem, much like the Ryukyu Kingdom, to have accepted the status of being tributary to the Manchu rulers of China from at least sometime in the 18th century. By making use of genetic research on ancient and modern DNA of individuals who might be safely thought to have a family line connection with these two groups and by making comparisons with other ancient DNA research, it might still be possible to determine the ancestors of the Sakhalin and Kuril Island Ainu-speaking peoples on a more scientific basis. However, even this is not available. Be that as it may, the Ainu language speaking peoples of Sakhalin and the Kuril islands, unlike other Jomon era peoples of Korea, Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu, and the Ryukyu islands, did not go extinct or disappear, either as cultures or as languages in Russia, until after World War II. Moreover, the Ainu language of Hokkaido continues to survive, even if just barely (Hudson, 2022, p. 7).

Ainu was widely spoken until well into the late 19th century. Relationships between the cultures of Sakhalin Ainu and the Kuril Island Ainu peoples with the cultures of other indigenous peoples bordering the Sea of Okhotsk (including those of Hokkaido, Kamchatka, and the Amur River basin of the Russian Far East) have been not well enough studied and need further research (Hudson, 2022, p. 15). A contributory factor, is due to the disappearance of Ainu language speakers of any Ainu language in the territories of the Russian Federation, the reluctance of Russian authorities to recognize non-Ainu speaking descendants of Ainu people as a distinct ethnicity, and also due to the sparseness of the population, as can be contemplated.

In the 19th century, Sakhalin Ainu speaking populations lived in close and, apparently, peaceful co-existence with the Nivkh language speaking people occupying settlements in Northern Sakhalin and the Amur River basin both then and now (de Graaf and Shiraishi, 2013, p. 49). Thus, the reason for the extinction of the Sakhalin Ainu language cannot be solely due to the language policy of the Russian state over the period of the 19th and 20th centuries. One must also look at the effect of the policies of the Japanese government in this process, as it occupied Sakhalin, either in whole or in part at various times during these centuries.

Japanese fishery operations existed in small settlements in southern Sakhalin when the first Russian explored the island in 1852 and with other Russians appearing in 1853 and 1854 (Morris-Suzuki, 2020, p. 2). The last of these expeditions built a fort near one of these Japanese fishery operations. This small military force in Sakhalin was instructed to keep peaceful relations with Japanese commercial interests to the greatest extent possible, but to preserve a military presence as a means of strengthening the Russian negotiating position with the Japanese which it did until the demands of the Crimean War (1853-1856) caused the return of this force to Russia (Morris-Suzuki, 2020, p. 3).

One of the events that indirectly affected the history of the Ainu in Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands was Putyatin's diplomatic mission to Japan which led to a chain of events that, over time, profoundly affected the language history of these peoples. Shortly after Matthew Perry started the opening of Japan, the Russian Admiral Yevfimii Vasilyevich Putyatin came to Nagasaki, resulting in negotiations with the Shogunate that were to continue until February 1855, when Russia and Japan signed the Treaty of Shimoda (Morris-Suzuki, 2020, p. 2), The treaty recognized the Kuril islands from Urup to the Kamchatka peninsula as being Russian and those to the south being Japanese. The treaty also established joint control over Sakhalin subject to a future division of territory with the expectation that the south of the island would be Japanese and the north Russian, thus putting the majority of all three Ainu language family populations under effective Japanese occupation. In 1875, a new treaty gave all of Sakhalin to Russia in return for all of the Kuril islands being given to Japan. At this point in history, Japan caused the removal of approximately one third of the Sakhalin Ainu population to Japan and Russia removed the native population of Urup to Kamchatka (March, 1996, p. 90).

It should be noted, that, beginning with the arrival of the first Russian military force on the island in 1854, the Sakhalin Ainu used this occasion to mount a protest against Japanese rule and made a point of letting the nearest Japanese authorities know that they were asking for Russian help. Though producing no immediate effect, it did spur the Shogunate to initiate investigations which resulted in improving the working conditions in the Sakhalin fishery operations and in taking away the control of the Japanese presence on the island from Matsumae feudal domain rule. It also created a tradition among the Sakhalin Ainu of aggressively making their voices heard whenever they thought authorities would listen to them and this tradition continued after the Russian Empire assumed rule over the whole of Sakhalin in 1875. In fact, just before the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, the Polish ethnographer Bronislaw Piłsudski wrote that, whenever they felt they were being unfairly treated by settlers, the Ainu would often deliver protests to Russian authorities, and would occasionally succeed in their objectives. Piłsudski also noted that the Sakhalin Ainu, previous to Russian occupation, had made use of similar protests laid before Japanese authorities with equal success (Morris-Suzuki, 2020, p. 11).

Nevertheless, the Shimoda Treaty of 1854 marked the beginning of the end for what had long been a thriving culture on this island in the southern Okhotsk Sea near the Russian Far East Amur River basin. In coming to an agreement on splitting the island into Japanese and Russian spheres of influence, it came to be in the best interest of both powers to control the freedom of movement of the island between its southern and northern portions.

Moreover, in 1875, when the island was fully ceded to the Russian Empire, 841 Ainu (more than one third of the total Sakhalin Ainu population) were forced to move from the island and were settled at the northernmost point of Hokkaido on Cape Soya. This abrupt change resulted in a cholera outbreak, and as a result, many of those brought to Hokkaido perished from diseases (Jolliffe, 2020).

Most of the remaining half eventually found the means to return to Sakhalin. However, they returned to a different world where the diseases they brought back with them continued to cause death and destruction for the Sakhalin Ainu population that had stayed behind and where Russian policies, though generally benign, were inadequate for the purpose of either language or population preservation (Akulov, 2017, p. 230).

Then, with the reversion of the southern half of Sakhalin to the Japanese Empire in 1905 at the end of the Russo-Japanese War, Japanese policies of full assimilation slowly but surely changed the great majority of those Sakhalin Ainu speaking populations into what the state considered to be good Japanese. With the end of World War II, the remaining Sakhalin Ainu were brought to Japan where they were already largely assimilated. Severed from their roots in Sakhalin, they quickly soon died out as a language group. On the other hand, the originally much smaller Nivkh language speaking population of Sakhalin, having largely lived in the northern part of the island and having never experienced Japanese rule, managed to survive as an ethnic minority group on the island with their mother tongue intact, though with much reduced numbers (de Graaf and Shiraishi, 2013, pp. 49-64).

As for the Kuril Island Ainu language speakers, comparatively little can be pieced together about them or the history of their language (which is relevant for this research), either under Russian or Japanese control. However, it might be significant that they lived under Japanese rule much longer than under Russian rule and that their language became extinct faster (de Graaf and Shiraishi, 2013, pp. 49-64).

Ainu of the Kuril islands were Christianized as a means of spreading Russian influence in the Kuril Islands, and therefore underwent a cultural conversion, too (Osipova, 2012, p. 15). This contributed to the Ainu being divided into two main groups: the northern Kuriles (in Japanese called *Kurirujin*), who were influenced by Russia, and the southern Ainu (in Japanese - *Ezo Ainu*) (Lim, 2020, pp. 148-170).

The Kuril-Kamchatka dialect is supposed to be similar to the dialects of eastern Hokkaido in general (Akulov, 2017, p. 230). However, reconstructing any of these extinct dialects with the scanty material that is still existing in Russian publications is naturally a challenge.

The connection between Kuril Ainu and the Kamchatka peninsula has been a subject of discussion in academia. A theory exists about the name of Kamchatka that the original toponym most likely resembled *Kamcakka* and probably meant "growing bursting landscape" in the Ainu language of its first settlers. This indirectly implies that the same Ainu resided in the Northern and Southern Kuriles, and that the. Kuril and Kamchatka Ainu comprised one group within the Ainu population (Akulov, 2017, p. 230). Nevertheless, one should also note that there are several other theories that exist which attempt to explain the linguistic roots of this toponym.

The most notable materials on the dead Ainu language variant that used to be spoken in the southern part of the Kamchatka peninsula and the Northern Kuril Islands are Dybowski's dictionary (field trip to Kamchatka in 1877–1883) and Krasheninnikov's list of words (his trip was taken during 1737–1741). The word list created by Krasheninnikov has the earliest idiomatic data on Kuril Ainu available to modern researchers. At the same time, the information obtained by Dybowski contains the most recent documentation of the language’s lexicon before it ceased to be in use (Akulov, 2016, p. 34).

These two works are more than merely dictionaries, in that they contain grammatical information in addition to lexical elements. The information presented in these lexicons is not adequate to compile a detailed description of the grammar of the Kuril Ainu language grammar. Still, it is enough to draw judgments about the development of the vocabulary, as well as its closeness to the Hokkaido and Sakhalin Ainu languages (Akulov, 2016, p. 34).

Outside of Japan, about fifteen thousand Ainu cultural items are now stored in museums in various countries on four continents, including in Russia. Japanese Ainu revivalists rely on the collaboration of foreign museums to gain access to this historical legacy (Hudson and Watson, 2013, p. 9). It is to be noted that enough of both the necessary written documents and material culture artifacts are available to start the process of reviving Ainu culture in Russia should a desire arise to ever do so.

5.3 Karelian

Among the most important class of these ethnicity-based political units of the Russian Federation, the Republics, the example of the Finno-Ugric Karelian language is the most extreme, with Karelian not even being included as an official language of the Karelian Republic and with Karelian speakers constituting only a small minority of the population. On the other hand, however, in the other Republics, official languages have a significant political role (Riegl and Vasko, 2007, p. 48).

This subchapter section seeks to, for the most part, look for the answers to the research questions, using Karelia as an example. Karelia is a republic of the Russian Federation, and though Karelian and the closely related Vepsian language (indigenous languages related to Finnish) are recognized by law, the national language of the Republic is presently Russian. In Soviet times it was, for a time, Finnish (Austin, 1992, p. 16). The advent of the internet has led to more or less active movements to make Karelian a second national language of the republic, but an unusually complicated linguistic history creates difficulty. There is also a need for more clarity in gaining a general consensus with regard to Karelian as to what constitutes a language and what constitutes a dialect.

Karelian, itself, is a continuum of numerous dialects, each spoken by small numbers of people. This continuum is often considered by Finnish scholars to be part of the Finnish dialect spectrum and is not always characterized by either Finnish scholars or people as being a completely separate language (Sarhimaa, 2000, pp. 153-180). Nevertheless, speakers of at least some varieties of the Karelian dialect continuum can not, in theory, be mutually understood by speakers of standard Finnish. In fact, as mentioned above, throughout most of the Soviet period, the Soviet Union found it expedient to recognize Finnish, and not Karelian, as a second national language in Karelia alongside Russian. One must assume that it not only reflected the lack of a standard Karelian language but also the expectation that most speakers of any Karelian language variant would understand Finnish. However, this might not be equally true at the present, as for more than 20 years Finnish has had no special legal status in the Republic of Karelia (Austin, 1992, p. 16). All things considered, it is better to think of the Karelian dialect continuum as representing a separate language from Finnish, at least with regard to speakers of this dialect continuum in Russia.

Though the lack of an agreed-on standard language has been a major problem faced by speakers of the various Karelian language variants, this does not mean that there have been no attempts to create one. Even so, it is a fact that history often intervenes in unpredictable ways. In the 19th century, during the time of the Russian Empire, there was a limited range of biblical translations making use of the Cyrillic alphabet that saw publication (Kryuchkova, 2002, pp. 16-20). Other attempts at using the Cyrillic alphabet were made at various times during the Soviet period. These efforts also fizzled out due to what seems to have been Stalin's antipathy to the Karelians.

It would seem that two brutal wars with Finland during World War II, in which Finland managed to occupy large areas of Karelia, left Stalin with a desire to crush Karelian ethnic identity. Paradoxically, this did not extend to Finnish, even though the self-identified Finnish population was never more than a fraction of the Karelian-speaking population, which, in turn, was never a majority of the population in the predominantly Russian speaking autonomous republic of Soviet times. No doubt this was originally meant as a means of frightening Finland with the indirect prospect of future absorption into the Soviet Union should there ever be another war.

After Stalin's death, the favored position of Finnish was maintained, possibly in part because at least some Karelian speakers would have identified more with Finland than with Russia and because Finland cultivated exceptionally good relations with the Soviet Union. In exchange, the Soviet Union supported Finland in a variety of ways. Keeping Finnish as an official language and, by extension, recognizing Karelian language variants as part of the Finnish dialect continuum, despite the fact that the number of Finnish and Karelian speakers did not constitute a significant portion of the population, would have been seen as another way of rewarding Finland for the great care it took during the Cold War to maintain friendly relations. As of 2023, however, this situation is changing rapidly, however, to ever more tense relations with Russia and what this will eventually mean with regard to the future of the Karelian language continuum remains unclear.

With the transformation of the Soviet Union into the Russian Federation, the favored position of Finnish was abandoned in Karelia and the two Finnic language variant groups, Karelian and Vepsian, were granted recognition by law. However, neither is yet an official national language in the Republic alongside Russian. In the case of Karelian, Russian linguists generally recognize two language variant groupings.

The Northern Karelian and Southern Karelian language variant groupings are considered to be Karelian proper. In addition, other language variants are Olonets Karelian (Livvi), Ludic (intermediate between Vepsian and Karelian), and Tver Karelian. It would seem that no dialect has yet emerged to take on the role of an unquestioned standard language, though a recent translation of the New Testament into Northern Karelian and a translation of St. Luke into Olonets Karelian (Livvi) would seem to be steps in that direction ("Karelian - Olonets," n.d.). Moreover, there appears to be a major internet presence for Olonets Karelian, compared with other dialects. This, in turn, might indicate a longer history of attempted standardization than for other dialects and perhaps a larger concentration of speakers living in reasonably close proximity to one another.

The relationship between the internet and language survival would seem to be of particular importance for the Karelian dialect continuum and for the much smaller population of Vepsian speakers. The internet makes it possible for people using language variants being spoken by dispersed populations to easily communicate with each other, something of great importance for a language like Karelian, whose speakers often live in lightly populated regions and who find themselves surrounded by far greater numbers of speakers of the official national language. The internet, by fostering on demand publishing and internet broadcasting, also makes the production of published work and of music and news broadcasts economically viable, even for relatively small language groups. As a result, success in language maintenance depends on personal initiative and no longer on economic power.

Examples of Karelian dialects taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the internet are numerous. For instance, the website having a function to "Karelify your browser" provides instructions on viewing the additional characters used in Karelian texts ("Karjalane lehüt," n.d.).

Basic information on the Karelians and the Karelian language can be collected on pages like "The Karelians" webpage - an entry in the "Red Book of the Peoples of the Russian Empire" (Vahtre and Viikberg, 1991). The criteria for the inclusion of a people or language in this book are that the people or language speakers are not yet extinct, yet their primary area of settlement is in an ex-territory of the Russian Empire, that their numbers are below 30,000, that less than 70 % speak their mother tongue, that they form a minority in their ancient territory, that their settlements are scattered rather than compact, and that they have no schools where the language of education is their vernacular. Moreover, they should have no literature or mass media tools to disseminate their language variants (Vahtre and Viikberg, 1991). On the basis of these criteria, Karelian was included.

Strictly Russian websites providing information about Karelia exist, such as Onego.ru, which contains pages about Karelia and its capital, Petrozavodsk, including pages on art and culture ("Okno v Kareliy," n.d.). Websites can also serve various other functions. For instance, the Ethnodemographic Atlas of the Baltic-Finnic peoples of the Republic of Karelia (Suni et al., 1998) (the Karelians, the Vepsians, and the Finns) is a source presenting demographic information that can be used when working out legislation and programs intended for the specific purpose of the revival and development of the cultural, linguistic heritage of the Finnic peoples. The data is also intended to be read by researchers, teachers, and students, by anybody who is interested in the history of Karelia, its ethnic-demography, and statistics. By making the data easily accessible, one might hope that the data will not only help those engaged in making comparative surveys of ethnic identity but will also promote the placing of similar data sets about other peoples on the internet.

In addition, one can find valuable documents on the Internet, including language samples, publications, and essays, which would not otherwise be easily available. One such case is the Novgorodian birch bark letter 292. It is the oldest known document written in any Finnic language and has been attributed to the beginning of the 13th century. It was found in 1957 by a Soviet group under the leadership of Artemiy Artsikhovsky. The language of the letter is considered to be an early form of Olonets Karelian (Haavio, 1964, pp. 45-66), although other possibilities exist as the various Finnic dialects appear to have been in their early stages of development at this time. Another example is “The Karelians”, an article on Karelian literature in the context of the publication of Finno-Ugric authors. The author was a Chairman of the Board of the Writers’ Union of the Karelian Republic (Mishin, n.d.).

The Kalevala epic, a 19th-century masterpiece of a poem assembled by Elias Lönnrot from Karelian and Finnish verbal mythology and folklore, is a culturally significant work of literature, as it preserves much Karelian folklore, even though it was written in Finnish rather than in any of the Karelian dialects. In 1835, the first edition of The Kalevala (dubbed “The Old Kalevala”) was released. The most widely known version was initially published in 1849 (Asplund and Mettomäki, 2017), and has its lines split into fifty songs.

Alongside rather well-known sources on Karelian culture and language, some of which are mentioned above, there are a number of less known, but still, important, sources, which have been written to preserve and enrich Karelian and to provide information about Finnic minorities in the Republic of Karelia in the Finnish language to anyone interested.

Further research of interest for this dissertation is concerned with the cultural autonomy of the Karelians outside of the Karelian Republic, that of the Tver Karelians. Research by Lallukka (1996, pp. 316-338) and others, provides information on the Karelians of the Tver region, promoting a revival of their language, by the publication of and giving examples of their folklore.

There is also a website ("Lyydiläinen Seura", 2018) about Ludic society, providing information in Finnish about the Ludic dialect of the Karelian language with a bibliography and texts on the Ludic dialect. Online ("Karelika", 2022), one can find a bibliography of literature in the Karelian language. Education and Science themed pages include pages to be found at the Institute of Language, Literature, and History of the Karelian Research Centre of the Russian Academy of Sciences ("Osnovnyye napravleniya issledovaniy," 2017) and the Faculty of Baltic and Finnish Philology and Culture of Petrozavodsk State University. Mass media sites include "Karielan šana", a monthly newspaper of the regional autonomous authority of the Tver Karelians in Karelian and Russian, and materials from the journal Karelia (published in Petrozavodsk) also deal with the Karelian language, as does a web page concerned with Karelian folk arts in the phonogram archive of the Institute of Language, Literature and History of the Karelian Research Centre, which has samples of the folklore of the peoples of Karelia (“Fonogrammarkhiv Instituta yazyka”, 2012), and which is a project that aims to record and preserve the language for future generations. Music-related cultural phenomena includes “Myllärit”, a Karelian folk group that uses Russian, Finnish, and English languages.

The Karelian ASSR's Finnish language history begins with the Treaty of Tartu (1920), which created the new Finnish-Soviet borders. It was further said that the "local commonly used language" in the newly formed Karelian Workers Collective should serve as the "language of government, law, and state schooling" and defined Finnish as that language rather than Karelian. This may appear unusual given that there were only 1,051 Finns in Karelian ASSR in 1923, with approximately 50% of them residing in Petrozavodsk city (Austin, 1992, pp. 16-35).

In the case of Karelian, it can be contemplated that it was the economic crisis of Germany that caused the rise to power of Hitler, which, in turn, exacerbated relations between Finland and the Soviet Union and which, therefore, eventually led to the relocation of many people of Karelia elsewhere, thus further endangering the indigenous, closely related, language variants of the Karelian people. Thus, Karelian dialects known as Border Karelian were used in the region of Karelia north of Ladoga lake from the time when it was part of Finland. Border Karelia was taken by the Soviet Union during the war in 1944 (together with other regions). As a result, its inhabitants were relocated to Finland's remaining territory, mainly in the northern sections of the municipalities of North Karelia and Savo in the Eastern part of Finland. Border Karelian dialects became a vernacular that no longer exists in its native territory as a result of its user's relocation (Koivisto, 2018, p. 59).

Professor D. Bubrikh worked on a design of a Cyrillic-based Karelian alphabet, as well as the rules of a unifying Karelian language variant founded on all the local dialects simultaneously. Karelian was utilized as a medium of instruction in primary education between 1937 and 1940. It did not, however, become widely used (Kryuchkova, 2002, pp. 16-20), which can be partly explained by local Karelians and Finns being more used to Latin script.

A plan was made to create two different Karelian language versions. One was designed for Northern dialect users, while the second was developed for Livvikovsky dialect users. Two different writing systems were built on the base of the Latin script. The Karelian language began to acquire traction after the introduction of the new Karelian writing. It was first introduced in the first through third grades at three Karelian primary schools in 1988 (Kryuchkova, 2002, pp. 16-20).

Karelian language was studied in 11 districts of the republic and two cities during the school year of 2010 and 2011. The municipalities are Kostomuksha and the republic's capital, Petrozavodsk. Karelian has been frequently offered by various organizations as a form of extracurricular instruction. In such organizations in 2011, 48 students learned Karelian proper, and another 43 studied the Olonetsian dialect (Kovaleva and Rodionova, 2013, pp. 285-297).

As a result of the struggle to preserve Karelian language, including work by the professionals and enthusiasts on the internet, a motion to make it a second official language in Karelia has been reported as currently growing stronger (Mishin, n.d.). It is no longer impossible to imagine a situation where Karelia will cease being the only republic of Russia with Russian as the only official language. From this short survey, it can be concluded that the situation for Karelian language survival is still quite difficult, but is rather less hopeless than it was toward the end of the Soviet period and before the internet became commonly available in recent years.

5.4 Yiddish

Yiddish is admittedly a special case in Russia, due to its speakers (predominantly Jewish) being given a region for relocation. At least starting in the 2010s it was more actively promoted than in the 20th century in the Jewish Autonomous Region (also known by the name of its capital, Birobidzhan) of eastern Siberia. It is here that Yiddish has an official status. Depending on one's perspective, Yiddish in this region may be experiencing a recovery or may be on the verge of extinction.

A small number of Jews still live there, trying to continue practicing their national traditions. The region functioned to save many of their forefathers' lives from the Holocaust, though many also fell victims to the Great Purge of Stalin. While not a focus of this chapter, other regions can be mentioned as ones considered for Jewish resettlement. As even the Japanese Empire was once considered as a possibility (Ben-Canaan, 2007, p. 1), this makes it worthy of consideration as a possible point of comparison in the language history of Japan and Russia, though that would need to be a subject for further research. The Japanese finally didn't sponsor a large-scale Jewish resettlement program, but the government of Russia actually did. Moreover, it not only set up an autonomous region, but still continues to support it (Vitale, 2021, pp. 161-184).

In Russia today, there are still many minority ethnic groups that have no designated region. It is, therefore, rather unusual that a relatively small group of Yiddish-speaking Ashkenzai Jews have their own autonomous area.

Since 1917, the Communist state supported the idea of "Yiddishism," which regarded Yiddish as the foundation for the cultural unification of Soviet Jews, echoing the views of Jewish socialists such as Chaim Zhitlovsky (Weinberg, 1996, pp. 35-53). It was a part of a political ideology that combined a Marxist worldview with Jewish territorial aspirations (Srebrnik, 2017, pp. 80-108).

In the early 1920s, the new Soviet government turned its attention to the Crimean Peninsula. Due to its geography, Crimea for centuries was and still is a desirable point on the map for many nations. Yiddish speaking Ashkenazi Jews were no exception, and the region was considered by Jewish leaders to be an ideal location for use in creating an autonomous Jewish region.

By the end of the 1920s, the internal conflict within Moscow's leadership had finished with Stalin's victory, and his opponents, many of whom were Jews, had lost their power. As a consequence, Moscow excluded Crimea as a planned Jewish settlement zone, and Stalin began to investigate the possibility of creating a region for the Jews in the Far East (Goble, 2015). The place that was eventually chosen was Birobidzhan. Birobidzhan was elevated from the rank of District to that Autonomous Region by special order on May 7, 1934 (Gökçek, 2012, p. 61).

Mass relocation took place, and it can be contemplated that it was for the good of the Jewish community that by the beginning of World War II many Soviet Jews already lived in the Far East of the Soviet Union. Birobidzhan still constitutes part of the border in that part of the Russian Far East between the Russian Federation and China. Birobidzhan, with its area of 34,000 square kilometers, is larger than the size of the current State of Israel, which is only 20,770 sq. km (“Israel Maps & Facts”, 2021).

In 1936, the progress of the Autonomous region was hindered due to Stalin starting his purges. However, with the years, the small number of Yiddish speakers who stayed in JAO demonstrates that Birobidzhan had become a genuine home for some of the Jewish individuals willing to suffer the challenges of living in this region, despite the fact that there were other countries with the policies welcoming them, such as Israel.

According to the Russian Census Bureau data from 2010, there were only 97 Yiddish speakers in the Jewish Autonomous Oblast ("Statisticheskiy byulleten", 2013). It was for this reason that, in January 2015, a Russian politician and diplomat who served as Prime Minister of Russia, Yevgeny Primakov, described the Jewish Autonomous Oblast as "a political anachronism" because of the fact that its "titular" nation formed such a small part of the population ("Evgeniy Primakov nazval Evreyskuyu avtonomnuyu oblast anakhronizmom", 2015).

The Jewish community in Birobidzhan, which is called "Freud", is active and is making efforts to revitalize Yiddish, seeing the region as much more than a failed experiment. For example, the newspaper דער ביראָבידזשאַנער שטערן (*Der Birobidzhaner Shtern*; lit: "The Birobidzhan Star") has a Yiddish section (Saraschevskaya, 2010).

It can be seen, therefore, that the answer to the question of the state of current Yiddish preservation depends on one's point of view. The establishment of the JAO was the first occurrence of establishing a legally acknowledged Jewish territory since ancient history and also it took place before the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948. Despite this, it is, for the most part, seen by observers as a failed experiment. Regardless, it is an intriguing case. It is a remarkable instance of territorial relocation (Vitale, 2021, pp. 161-184), which resulted in building a new homeland for a certain number of a particular group of people who were seeking one at the time.

5.5 Chechen

Chechnya is now a republic of the Russian Federation, located in the north Caucasus. It achieved fame in the Western mass media by waging two wars seeking independence from the Russian Federation. As a result of active cooperation by one portion of the Chechen community, internal stability was achieved, and much money on reconstruction was allocated to this particular native Chechen government. After winning a military victory, the Russian decision was to invest in the local economy and create a sense of financial security among the region's inhabitants. It is unique among Russian Federation republics in that the ethnic group the republic is named for constitutes the vast majority of the population, being in 2010 more than 95%. Moreover, the Russian-speaking population of the republic in 2010 was less than 2% (“Chechen”, 2022). A new census of the Russian Federation has been recently taken for which the ethnicity figures are not yet available. One would assume that the overall demographics would not have dramatically changed since 2010.

The Chechen language is of interest not only for its somewhat complicated sound system but also because, for the size of its population, the number of mutually understandable Chechen language variants is enormous, given the relatively small size of the region. Some linguists have assumed that geographic distance is a driving factor in glottogenesis. While this undoubtedly is at least partly true, Chechnya, however, due to its relatively small size, must force one to consider other factors. What most easily comes to mind is the highly mountainous nature of its geography, which, until recent years, was a major hindrance between regions, even over relatively short distances. This, in turn, might indicate that the driving factor in glottogenesis might be difficulty in achieving communication rather than distance per se.

The subject of the Chechen language's preservation and development as well as the legitimacy of the Chechen language's placement in the Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (UNESCO) among Russia's other dying languages has been criticized (Khalidov, 2012, pp. 191-199). In fact, the placement of the Chechen language on UNESCO's list of endangered languages has been questioned on multiple occasions. Although there are still serious problems with the further development of the Chechen language, it is apparent that the ethnographic and ethnolinguistic situation in the Chechen Republic has improved significantly over the past decade. In this context, it can be argued that the inclusion of Chechen in the Atlas was a mistake. The argument being made is that a fairly simple investigation would show that the Chechen language does not meet nine of the criteria used in making a decision to include it in the Atlas (Khalidov, 2014, pp. 78-80), thus indicating possibly politically motivated reasons for doing so at work in the background.

There is also research existing on the issue of the evolution of the Chechen language within the frame of globalization, and methods of extending the language's sociolinguistic roles have also been investigated. In the present Chechen language system, there are two opposing tendencies: a large flow of borrowings from the Russian language as well as from English, and the production of their own terms, employing Chechen word-formation power. (Ilyasova, 2016, pp. 80-83) The Russian language serves as the medium of cross-cultural interaction in Russia and has had a significant impact on the linguistic dynamics of the peoples that live there. Russian language, as the intermediate language, absorbs foreign vocabulary that represents new conditions and occurrences for Russians, and this encourages its widespread use by the other peoples of Russia (Israilova and Israilova, 2017, pp. 44-48).

In today's diverse environment of Chechnya, bilingualism is considered to have become an issue of the utmost importance (Ganieva and Anzurova, 2020, pp. 145-151). The desire is to maintain balanced bilingualism and the fear is being unable to avoid imbalanced bilingualism, a situation where one language replaces another in all spheres of life, causing terminal decline in the undermined language.

One of the important issues is the status of Chechen language in the republic, which has a political role (Riegl and Vasko, 2007, p. 48). The status of a language is one of the sociolinguistic characteristics that affects whether or not information about a language's forms and functions may be present in bilingual and multilingual cultural contexts. It is first and foremost defined by the location of one or more languages in the socio-communicative system. Chechnya can be seen as a predominantly bilingual society (Zherebilo, 2016b, pp. 54-84).

Discussing the issue of bilingualism in Chechnya, questions are being posed about whether bilingualism is a disadvantage, or whether there are benefits to being multilingual, as well as whether bilingualism can be referred to as the “norm” (Ganieva and Anzurova, 2020, pp. 145-151). In this research it can be observed that bilingualism is, in fact, the norm, at least in the republics of present-day Russia, but that this is occasionally seen by government officials as a problem. In the case of Chechnya, not only has the Chechen language seen growth, but also the Chechen press in both Chechnya and neighboring republics, too (Baimuradov and Osmaev, 2020, pp. 92-95).

Another case in which a Chechen language newspaper plays a cultural role is the case of “Daimohk”, the only newspaper that uses the Chechen language exclusively, and which is released in Jordan for the local Chechens, who employ it as a sort of “textbook” to learn proper grammar from (Musaeva, 2022). Despite the period of over 100 years since Chechens first came to Jordan, the Chechen language has been retained on account of social and cultural isolation (Dweik, 2000, pp. 184-195).

This process demonstrates that Chechen language influence is spreading outside the republic. The fact that in Chechnya the regional variant of Russian language is functioning in the context of Chechen-Russian bilingualism, shows that Chechen maintains enough influence to change the standard national language being used there (Zherebilo, 2016a, pp. 3-102).

5.6 Crimean Tatar

Crimean Tatar, a Turkic language, is another language discussed because the Crimean Tatar people underwent so many dramatic changes in circumstances during the 20th century. They were forcibly removed from Crimea to Central Asia by Stalin. Then, after the fall of the Soviet Union, many, though not all, began returning to Crimea to start new lives in their former homeland. By the time Crimea became reincorporated into the Soviet Union, they formed the second-largest language minority in Crimea, with Ukrainian being the largest recognized minority language. Significantly, Russian was a language spoken by a majority of people living in Crimea after the fall of the Soviet Union until the incorporation of Crimea into the Russian Federation in 2014.

In this context, regardless of issues relating to the legality of the status of Crimea, it should be noted that one of the first acts undertaken after Crimea became a federal subject of the Russian Federation was to establish in law the rights of the Crimean Tatars, along with those of the Ukrainians, living in that territory to use their native languages for official purposes and to be educated in those languages. This is enshrined in the constitution of the Republic of Crimea, which was passed on 11 April 2014 ("Crimea Constitution," 2014). Here it is stated that regarding the Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar languages, "The constitution envisages that three languages will have the status of state languages – Russian, Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian." According to Grigory Ioffe, deputy chairman of the State Council and head of the Constitutional Commission, this norm will be preserved, and that all the "legal acts that do not contradict federal laws and the Russian Constitution remain valid" ("Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar languages to retain status of state languages," 2014).

It should be noted that Crimean Tatars have had a dramatic history during the course of the 20th and 21st centuries. When the Russian Empire seized the Crimean peninsula in 1783, the Crimean Tatars, who were the dominant power in Crimea since the 1300s, constituted slightly over 80% of the population. By 1944, several waves of mass migration decreased their population to 19% (218,000). In 1944 during World War II, Stalin ordered the Crimean Tatars to be deported to central Asia. Almost half died in Central Asia during the deportation and the harsh subsequent decades. (Wilson, 2014, p. 418). Though large numbers of people died, those living among speakers of other Turkic languages eventually made new lives for themselves.

The deportation of the Crimean Tatars had the effect of turning Crimea into a Russian-speaking territory, though Ukrainians moved into this region in significant numbers also. Later, in the second half of the 20th century, the Soviet Union government allowed small numbers of Tatars to return to Crimea and, in 1989, gave general permission to return. However, before significant numbers of Crimean Tatars could return to their homeland, the Soviet Union collapsed, and Crimea became a part of an independent Ukraine as an autonomous Russian-speaking republic. During the crisis of 2014, when Ukrainian activists overthrew the elected government of Ukraine, the still predominantly Russian-speaking autonomous republic declared its independence and, being incorporated into the Russian Federation, was included as one of the Russian Federation's constituent republics. By this time, a significant number of Crimean Tatars had returned to the Crimean Peninsula, making them the new republic's third-largest ethnic group after the Russians and Ukrainians.

Since 2014, there have been reports in the western press of the mistreatment of Crimean Tatars in Crimea, but the sources are usually from groups in exile. It should be noted that confirmation of mistreatment by neutral sources is challenging to obtain and that the Russian Federation government has so far not deemed it necessary to respond to the said allegations. One should note that after incorporation into Russia, although those identifying as Russian increased as a percentage of the population and those identifying as Ukrainian diminished significantly during Ukrainian rule, having been at their numerical level in the last year of the Soviet Union. However, with regard to Crimean Tatars, after incorporation into the Russian Federation, the percentage of individuals in the Republic identifying as belonging to that nationality seems to have either stayed the same or to have slightly risen. The only Russian census for which published nationality figures currently exist show essentially no change as a percentage of the population ("Russian Census of Crimea: Nationality Results", 19 March 2015). However, ethnicity identification and language use seldom match on a one to one basis in former Soviet Union regions. It is to be expected that large numbers of ethnic Crimean Tatars as well as ethnic Ukrainian inhabitants of the Crimean peninsula have always used, at least in their lifetimes and possibly those of their parents, Russian as a first language. As with regard to all facts whatsoever concerning Crimea and no matter what the source, a healthy skepticism must always be maintained as there are too many parties involved and the conflict is still ongoing.

By 1944, the language condition among Crimean Tatars was characterized by the existence of major dialects alongside various transitional dialects. Despite the rising incursion of the government into otherwise simply linguistic problems, 20 years of attempts to develop a writing system of Crimean Tatar had been successful. Standardization was achieved using the new Cyrillic alphabet, and it was also in common use for orthography, grammar works, and providing a means for naturalizing foreign terms into the language (Lazzerini, 1985, p. 117).

There is research existing about the interaction of Crimean Tatars with the Crimean government, Ukraine, and Russia. Assumptions have been made that the "neo-Stalinist background" of relevant officials played a significant role in attempting to deny Crimean Tatars' rights to their identity and its protection, both before and after the incorporation of Crimea by Russia. During both the pre- and post-annexation phases, the Crimean Tatars demanded their rights as an "indigenous people" in order to combat the neo-Stalinist ideology that they were being identified with (Aydin and Sahin, 2019, p. 39).

The movement of the Crimean Tatars from Soviet Central Asia to the Crimea began happening even amid the turmoil of the Soviet Union's collapse. Between 1989 and 1994, a quarter-million Crimean Tatars immigrated to the Crimean peninsula from Central Asia, primarily Uzbekistan. This exodus was, in many respects, a success for the Crimean Tatars, who had been ruthlessly exiled from their motherland by Stalin during WWII. These displaced people, totaling little over 500,000, had been prevented from being able to display their cultural identity, speak their native language, or go back to their homeland for over fifty years (Williams, 2002, pp. 323-347).

Even prior to the absorption of Crimea by Russia, the preservation of the Crimean Tatar tongue was at risk. There were merely 18 Tatar schools in Crimea, and just one out of every ten Tatar students could receive schooling in their native tongue (Aydin, 2014, p. 84). The present situation, though in constitutional terms favorable to the Crimean Tatar language situation, is extremely difficult to verify, as data on the local language use details of the 2021 Russian census have not yet been made available.

5.7 Russian Sign Language

Part of the comparative approach to language variety is in finding common points and similarities between countries, especially in cases when similarities are not normally considered. Despite having distinctively different languages being commonly used worldwide, there are cases that stand out and can be grouped, such as sign languages. In this sense, due to the changing nature of languages and ways they replace each other over time, any language can be seen as potentially facing extinction and this would apply to sign languages, too..

The law "On social protection of handicapped individuals in the Russian Federation "governs the official status of the Russian Sign Language in Russia. According to Article 14 of this law, "sign language is recognized as a means of interpersonal communication" ("O sotsialnoy zashchite invalidov v Rossiyskoy Federatsii", 1995).

In 2012 the official status of the Russian sign language was updated in this law, and sign language was given an additional definition as a "language of communication in the presence of hearing and (or) speech impairments, including in the areas of oral use of the state language." In practice, that means that a person who understands sign language has a right to apply to state authorities and ask to enlist the help of a sign language translator ("Utochnen ofitsialnyy status russkogo zhestovogo yazyka", 2012). The additions that were made in law prove that the status of this language is a "work in progress" in Russia, and changes in official status can improve sign language users' circumstances.

Unlike Japanese Sign Language, which belongs to its own unique sign language family, Russian Sign Language belongs to the French Sign Language Family, as does American Sign Language, but not British Sign Language, which also constitutes a separate language family (Reagan, 2021, pp. 427-454). This signifies that it is considerably easier for people using either the American or Russian sign language to learn how to understand each other than for sign language users of either of these two languages to learn how to communicate with a British Sign Language user.

Russian Sign Language is recognized by law but is largely unsupported by government spending or government policy. Additionally, there has been a preference in Russian society to favor signed Russian over Russian Sign Language. Although Russian Sign Language (RSL) is the language of the Russian deaf, a second system has increasingly been utilized in former USSR member states: Signed Russian. Signed Russian, similarly to Signed English, transforms verbal Russian into gestures by matching the grammatical structure of spoken Russian. It is the signed language used in schools, formal translating, and the news programs (Grenoble, 1992, p. 321). It is, therefore, a language variant of spoken Russian used within the system of Russian languages of the deaf.

It should be noted that Russian Sign Language does not replicate Russian vocabulary or grammar but expresses thought natively with a different grammar and a different use of signs that is more efficient than signed Russian and, though ultimately of French origin, has developed natively in Russia for more than 200 hundred years, thus also diverging from the sign language now used in France. Many people have, as a result, reacted by combining elements of signed Russian with Russian Sign Language to present themselves to other sign language users as being educated, and many Russian Sign Language users have become diglossic, using Russian Sign Language with intimates but using signed Russian in more formal situations (Grenoble, 1992, p. 321), much like the Russian nobility of the early 19th century could use Russian at home, but French at formal social gatherings (Marrese, 2010, p. 701).

Significantly, as Russian Sign Language fills a need among the deaf, it is in no danger of going extinct, though without more support for Russian Sign Language, the deaf in Russia will continue to find themselves disadvantaged. Though a policy of not officially disapproving of Russian Sign language but not promoting it either is rather disappointing, especially, one can assume, to the deaf, at least it leaves open the door to gaining more acceptance than it has so far achieved.

It is to be expected that, over time, sign languages are likely to become more commonly used by people both with and without hearing impairment due to new technologies allowing automatic translation of hand signs, by means of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) (Nieto, 2022). AI auto-translation tools can also be adapted into teaching tools (Ashford, 2022). That is likely to become a common point between countries like Japan and Russia due to technology spreading exponentially fast. When entering the development phase, it will be vital to consider the traits of its users while developing a digital sign translation program. The development's final outcome ought to be the implementation of a piece of software that can do instantaneous interpretation both unilaterally and bilaterally (Grif, 2011, p. 221).

In the meantime, people, whether deaf or hearing, have, in various parts of the world, shown an increasing interest in *emoji* (絵文字), which are being used more and more as an international language of communication and, to distinguish the language now developing from the written symbols, when used as a language, will be capitalized. Yandex, the Russian website, has taken an important step in allowing the evolution of Emoji as one of the languages (“Yandex Translate,” n.d.). Now, in theory, emoji can function increasingly as a language that can be used to communicate between spoken languages and sign languages.

It can even be argued that emoji are a written form of sign language that have their origin in Japan, but with important development inputs from America and now Russia. Moreover, they can be shown to have stimulated the creation of a subset of American Sign Language (ASL) emoji for which an app was developed to allow deaf people to text each other in ASL.

To get a glimpse of what might be possible, a certain English phrase was chosen at random and was translated into Emoji and then back from Emoji into various European languages. It is “The black cat then ate the chocolate cake” was translated by Yandex Translate as a sequence of emoji that individually mean “black”, “cat”, “right arrow curving up”, “eating utensils”, “chocolate” and “cake.” The characters, being Unicode, are universally visible on software that uses Unicode character sets, which is now overwhelming in terms of use. It should be noted, though, that other translation software such as Google translate does not provide a translation service for Emoji as a language. If the preceding Emoji sentence is translated by Yandex Translate back into English, Yandex will translate it as “Black cat then eat the chocolate cake.” The French translation of the same emoji will become “Chat noir mange ensuite le gâteau au chocolat.” The German will be “Schwarze Katze isst dann den Schokoladenkuchen.” And the Japanese will be “黒猫はその後、チョコレートケーキを食べま

す。” In no case does Yandex Translate provide a natural translation of the sentence provided from Emoji into any of the other languages (“Yandex Translate,” n.d.) that the translation service handles, but, in every case, an understandable translation is produced in terms of meaning. Obviously, Yandex Translate is at its first stages of development with regard to emoji translation and the translation software is still quite limited in what it can do. At present, it can handle only very simple input, but, if past developments in translation software capability are anything to go by, future refinement would seem to be merely a matter of time, especially if more and more of the world’s deaf sign language users get involved in its development through active use of the service which will, in turn, stimulate the underlying AI neural networks to become increasingly accurate in the translations it is capable of producing. And, what Yandex succeeds in, Google will soon copy with very similar results, as both translation software systems use the same development concepts.

In any case, what the Russian Yandex Translate app shows is another point of linguistic comparison between Japan and Russia. Moreover, the app demonstrates that the potential exists for solving in an efficient manner the problem of providing a language that, potentially, the users of any language of the world, whether a sign language or a spoken language could become organically accustomed to. With its further development as a means for textual communication, a widespread Emoji language literature, improbable as it might seem, is something that is likely to happen, as it goes against human nature not to take new knowledge to its logical conclusion. Moreover, examples of books of this type already exist, such as “Book from the Ground” by Xu, B. (2018).

5.8 Language law and government policy in the Russian Federation

In the Russian Constitution, it is established (12 December 1993), that only the Republics have the power to create their separate constitutions and official languages among the other categories of territories (Art. 66 and 68) (“Constitution of the Russian Federation, 1993”). There is a right by Autonomous Districts to have only limited functions of the official nature for their languages (Zamyatin, 2014, p. 15).

Along with China, Nepal and India, Russia has one of the largest number of official languages in the world, if one includes the minority languages designated as an official in Russian regions, notably in its Republics. A paradox of the nationalities and language policy in Russia is that it is intended simultaneously to promote Russian nation-building as well as to preserve traditionally established linguistic diversity.

In the Constitution of Russia it is proclaimed that “the universally recognized norms of international law and international treaties and agreements of the Russian Federation shall be a component part of its legal system” (Art. 15). Among the international treaties on language protection, Russia is a party to the Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and has signed but not yet ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which are international treaties on language protection ("Report on minimum standards for minorities in the EU", 2018).

In order to make a comparison of certain aspects of the language minority situation in Japan and Russia, one should briefly acknowledge the legal situation regarding minority language use in Russia, as language and culture both have an intimate relationship with the law. Law creates boundaries that can both limit and encourage the developments of language and culture. Law, for instance, often functions to create, define, and otherwise promote the national language of a country, even when an official language is not the language of the majority, as might be seen with regard to Welsh in Wales (Bellin, 1984, p. 460) or Nepalese in Nepal (Yadava, 2014, p. 51).

Among these just mentioned countries, in terms of official language use, Nepal can be seen as exhibiting a level of similarity that one does not see in the case of Japan but does see in Russia. Though like Japan and Russia, it was never colonized, the ethnicities that exist and the numerous languages spoken resembles Russia and not Japan. Unlike Japan and Russia, differences in education levels in different regions of the country can be noted ("National Population and Housing Census", 2011, p. 262), while, as in Russia, the diverse regional characteristics are being officially promoted ("Constitution of Nepal", 2018).

As can be seen in the short digression on Nepal, law also can serve to protect minority languages as may be seen in Japan and in the Russian Federation. Law can also be used to encourage their extinction, as has been the case among former Soviet republics which became independent upon the collapse of the Soviet Union (Romaine, 2017, pp. 217-236). However, as this chapter of this dissertation primarily concerns itself with the Russian Federation, an attempt will be made at illustrating what law is capable of accomplishing with regard to minority languages and also what it has difficulty in achieving.

Russian is the sole official language for use across the whole of the Russian Federation. However, together with Russian, 35 more languages are recognized as official languages in various regions of Russia, and about 100 minority languages are still being used in Russia today.

Russian Empire that existed until 1917, and Russian was its sole official language, although in Poland and in Finland other languages were given a certain legally protected status (Voevoda et al., 2017, pp. 121-129). The attitude regarding the languages of numerous different ethnic groups differed in practice during the Soviet period. The state helped develop alphabets and grammar for various languages across the country that had previously lacked a written form (Crisp, 1990, pp. 23-45). Despite the fact that each of the component republics had its own official language, Russian was given a uniting function and dominant rank.

Russian lost its significance in several of the new countries formed after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. However, the Russian language retained its dominant standing in Russia. Despite the fact that only about 80% of Russians are ethnic Russians, 97% of the pupils in public schools in Russia get their education entirely or mainly in Russian.

There is a significant movement among Russian legislators to undermine the status of minority languages. As a result, it is always possible that Russia's National Parliament might approve new rules at any time further favoring Russian in the framework of how languages are learned in Russia's state schools. In such a case, this would automatically have a significant impact on the non-Russian languages used within the ethnically based republics that are included within the Russian Federation. However, diminishing (even if inadvertently) the use of languages among minorities in Russia can have the consequence of worsening the existing ethnic and social divisions and forcing the minorities to act against the Russian state government (Dzutsev, 2014). Nevertheless, one has the right to fear that, regardless of how the law might change over time, without attitudinal changes, the promotion of Russian at the expense of ethnic minority mother tongues will continue, in one form or another, unabated.

It should be emphasized that Russian remains the language of teaching in schools throughout the Russian Federation and also that ethnic non-Russians are taught Russian as a discipline at school. Most ethnic minority groups in ethnic republics have their original languages taught as a supplemental topic in school, which in no way diminishes the Russian language. Nonetheless, the legislation implies that there are Russian politicians who are aiming to continue unifying schools across the Russian Federation and inadvertently erasing non-Russian aspects from state-funded institutions.

With regard to protecting language rights, republics have legal means of protecting themselves. The district court of Maisky in Kabardino-Balkaria decided on June 23, 2014, that the names of various municipal institutions in the area must be engraved in Kabardin and Balkar languages in addition to Russian. The court decided that by showing only Russian signage on school walls, municipal companies, and other buildings, the district administration had violated the Kabardino-Balkaria Republic's language statute of 1994 (Dzutsev, 2014).

As for the language Law and government policy in the Russian Federation, ethnicities speaking languages other than Russian have fairly full political recognition, which is a type of language planning (Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky, 2012, p. 927). However, practice is such that Russian retains guaranteed supremacy, and this advantage is quietly encouraged so that the edge Russian has over other languages is incrementally increased by organic means.

Chapter 6: A comparison of the language situation in Japan and Russia

While comparisons and points in common can be determined based on the information provided in other chapters, this chapter further extrapolates on those comparisons while being mainly fixed on constitutions. The perceived homogeneity of Japan is common knowledge, while the multinational nature of Russia is self-evident. Nevertheless, numerous similarities can be found. For example, Japan has established the Council on the National Language, a government advisory body addressing policies regarding the Japanese language (Hatori, 2005, p. 51), and Russia in the meantime has a Council on the Russian Language ("Meeting of Council on the Russian Language," 2019).

Attitudes toward minority languages differ in significant ways between Japan and Russia in terms of commonly held ideological beliefs, meaning here mainly the state doctrine, as well as in terms of law and policy. There are also notable similarities. If these similarities and differences are seen in the context of the assumed cyclical nature of history, which both causes and destroys language variety, then comparing these two approaches to language can shed light on other aspects of social organization and potentially also of international affairs that might not be immediately obvious if examining one country only.

This knowledge could be useful in generally promoting better international relations, besides helping people in Japan and the Russian Federation to better understand one another.

It should be noted that both Japan and the Russian Federation are governed within the context of their constitutions and that this was true of their predecessors as well. As all law, in theory, in both countries is based on their constitutions, a diachronic outline of constitutional provisions will be provided below.

Interestingly, there is no mention of a national language made by the first modern constitution of Japan, that of the Meiji era. One can infer, however, the basis for future developments with regard to language in the speech of the emperor promulgating a constitution of Japan on 11 February 1889. In the emperor's statement, one finds the following statement:

> "We doubt not but that Our subjects will be guided by Our views, and will sympathize with all Our endeavors, and that, harmoniously cooperating together, they will share with Us Our hope of making manifest the glory of Our country, both at home and abroad, and of securing forever the stability of the work bequeathed to Us by Our Imperial Ancestors" ("The Constitution of the Empire of Japan", 1889).

The key point here, the word which identifies the purpose of the constitution, are the words “stability” and “harmoniously cooperating together.” By extrapolating, it can be contemplated that having a common language for the whole of Japan, with one nation - one language principle at the core, was seen as beneficial to Meiji Japan's “stable” development. Moreover, in the first paragraph of the preamble of the Meiji constitution, it is stated that its goal is to:

> “...point out to what Our descendants and Our subjects and their descendants are forever to conform” (“The Constitution of the Empire of Japan”, 1889).

The more specific goals set for the constitution are “to promote the welfare of, to give development to the moral and intellectual faculties of Our beloved subjects” and, just as importantly, “to maintain the prosperity of the State, in concert with Our people and with their support” (“The Constitution of the Empire of Japan”, 1889).

Nowhere in the above-mentioned imperial promulgation nor in the constitution is there any mention made of language. Nevertheless, attitudes toward language are implied by recognition of the need to promote stability after having gone through a period of instability during the first years of the Meiji Restoration and by setting a goal of promoting mass education of the people with the aim of creating a homogenous and prosperous state.

It should also be noted that nowhere in these documents are the boundaries of Japan defined, and nowhere is found express mention of the military. However, as the establishment of Meiji Japan was not a peaceful effort but came about through the exercise of military power, the phrase "prosperity of the state" can also be taken as a code for possessing a strong military. The reference to "moral and intellectual faculties" is better understood in the context of producing a populace possessing a common Japanese identity and a common language. It likely was understood by the government of the time, being controlled by individuals who had been through difficult times following the Meiji Restoration in 1868, that the only hope for state survival in a time of predatory European and American imperialism was to have a strong military based upon a sense of linguistic and racial homogeneity being instilled into the population at large. In this regard, it is significant that after building a strong military, the imperial government subsequently used it for the subjugation of surrounding territories and began the process of assimilation of its people.

Before discussing the linguistic implications in more detail, it is good to review the constitution of the Russian Empire and then the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. At the promulgation of the Constitution of Japan in 1889, the Russian Empire did not have an equivalent document. Rather, the Empire was governed by The Fundamental State Laws of the Russian Empire, which dated to 1832. Essentially, the constitution consisted of the first sentence of these laws, which contains the following passage: "The Emperor of all the

Russians is a sovereign with autocratic and unlimited powers. To obey the commands not merely from fear but according to the dictates of one's conscience is ordained by God himself" (Ascher, n.d.).

The Russian Empire of 1832 and, consequently, the same empire in 1889 was not, however, a unitary state. During the Napoleonic Wars, Finland was acquired in 1809 and was ruled as an autonomous Grand Duchy. Moreover, in 1815, Poland was annexed as a constitutional monarchy, at least in theory. As such, from the time of the Napoleonic Wars, the Russian Empire was forced to recognize and deal with the legal existence of languages other than Russian having official status. Dealing with subjects that did not speak Japanese (other than mainly the deaf or mute) is something that was not a common experience of the Japanese government until the acquisition of the Ryukyu Islands (1875), Taiwan (1895), Sakhalin (1905), and Korea (1910) in the Meiji era. But even during the Meiji period, educating the subjects in Japanese was promoted instead of giving official status to local languages.

The recognition of itself as a multilingual empire received a further stimulus in 1906 when, after the loss of the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, Tsar Nicholas II found it impossible to rule without granting the Russian Empire a constitution, though doing so as a revision of the fundamental laws of 1832. The key provisions of these new fundamental laws that had an impact on language and language use are articles 1 to 3 of the introductory chapter. The first article states that the Russian State is one and indivisible. The second article asserts that the Grand Duchy of Finland, while being a part of one united Russian state, is to exercise autonomy under the provisions of special decrees and legislation. Though the kingdom of Poland continued to exist in theory, it had long been completely absorbed into the administrative structure of the empire due to the difficulty Russian rulers found in governing it. As a result, its language rights are only indirectly recognized by article 3 of the fundamental laws of 1906, where the Russian language is designated as the common language of the state, and its use was made compulsory in the Russian armed forces. Russian was also made mandatory for all state and public institutions. However, in an unstated recognition of the multilingual, multiethnic nature of the empire, a provision was added, admitting the use of local languages in state and public institutions as recognized on the basis of special legislation ("Russian Imperial house," n.d.).

A fundamentally different situation in Russia and Japan at the end of the 19th and the early 20th century, therefore, had serious repercussions on the two countries' language policies.

Political instability in the years immediately preceding and following (in the form of the Boshin war) the Meiji Restoration resulted in recognition of the need for a unified response to threats to national existence coming both from inside and outside of Japan. This, in turn, seems to have been the catalyst for Japan's ideological commitment to the concept of uniqueness and homogeneity. At the same time, the Russian Empire was constituted in such a manner that ethnic and linguistic homogeneity was impossible to proclaim, which is a point of difference between the two countries. The similarity, however, lies in the fact that unity had to be sought in the figure of a semi-divine ruler (Emperor of Japan and Tsar of Russia).

Japan's response to language diversity has been summed up by Heinrich, P. (2015), which, while not including Russia as a comparison point, is as follows:

> "The establishment of the Japanese nation required the Japanese language to spread among ethnolinguistic minorities. In order to include them as a part of the Japanese nation, Japanese [language] was thus spread… Since the Japanese nation was imagined on the basis of one historically shared language, Japanese, and because the languages used among these minorities revealed such belief as an invention, all languages other than Japanese became subject to suppression of various sorts. In such constellations, language spread results in language endangerment" (Heinrich, 2015, p. 593).

This quote can be partly applied to the example of Russia as well because the establishment of this country as an empire required the spread of the Russian language, even though the very extent of Russian rule has long caused a certain accommodation with local languages to be practiced as politically expedient.

The establishment of what might be considered the equivalent of Japanese conversation schools was started throughout Japan before the implementation of the 1872 educational system *gakusei* (学制) that aimed at providing teacher training (Heinrich, 2015, p. 595). Significantly, 1872 was the year that the last remnants of opposition to the Meiji Restoration were stamped out. Thus, one is safe in assuming that the military needs of the early Meiji period were what gave birth to the idea of the potential usefulness of a common language, both spoken and written, across the whole empire. There would seem to have been a realization that the numerous dialects and languages of the Japanese archipelago were a hindrance to the development of a modern state capable of protecting itself from Western colonialism.

Meanwhile, the Russian empire was too large and too ethnically diverse to make the ideology of homogeneity a practical concept. Moreover, many of the local languages, both in Europe and Asia, had already undergone centuries of development as written languages or, as Finnish, were actively developing into written languages capable of fully functioning in the modern world. The autocracy can, thus, be seen as an outward manifestation of a state that conceived itself as being one with the person of the emperor and not united by language use or ethnicity. Nevertheless, for the sake of administrative efficiency, it had to also identify the administration of the empire with the language or ethnicity of the people exercising power in that state at that time. As such, in recognition of the state having its origin in Russia and, as the largest ethnic group was Russian, the Russian language was given de facto recognition as the state language before 1906 and de jure recognition afterward.

With the defeat of the Russian Empire in World War I (1917) and in reaction to the attempted break up of the Russian State by the Western powers and Japan, the need to deal with the various ethnic groups and ethnic languages of the Russian state became an urgency. It was due to the communist government's perception that the countries constituting the union would be more likely to rebel against Moscow if their language rights were not protected or at least addressed. The result was the adoption in 1918 of a constitution of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic and in 1922 of a treaty establishing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). There were several subsequent constitutions, but the constitution of 1918 had a lasting influence. Though language is nowhere mentioned in the constitution of 1918, local government and regional government deliberative bodies were recognized as being fundamental to the state. Furthermore, Part 2, Chapter Five, Article 22 of the 1918 constitution states that:

> "The Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, recognizing the equal rights of all citizens, irrespective of their racial or national connections, proclaims all privileges on this ground, as well as oppression of national minorities, to be contrary to the fundamental laws of the Republic" ("R.S.F.S.R. Constitution," 1918).

Additionally, Chapter 3, articles 4 to 6, of this Constitution states:

"4. Expressing its fixed resolve to liberate humanity from the grip of capital and imperialism, which flooded the earth with blood in its present most criminal of all wars, the Third Congress of Soviets fully agrees with the Soviet Government in its policy of abrogating secret treaties, of organizing on a wide scale the fraternization of the workers and peasants of the belligerent armies, and of making all efforts to conclude a general democratic peace without annexations or indemnities, upon the basis of the free determination of peoples.

5. It is also to this end that the Third Congress of Soviets insists upon putting an end to the barbarous policy of the bourgeois civilization which enables the exploiters of a few chosen nations to enslave hundreds of millions of the working population of Asia, of the colonies, and of small countries generally.

6. The Third Congress of Soviets hails the policy of the Council of People's Commissars in proclaiming the full independence of Finland, in withdrawing troops from Persia, and in proclaiming the right of Armenia to self-determination" ("Article I (R.S.F.S.R. Constitution").

The provisions of the Constitution of 1918, thus, shaped the context of future language policy both for the inside of what is now The Russian Federation as well as for the other republics of the former Soviet Union. Inside the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, ethnic minorities are recognized and assigned local government rights. As was stated before, unlike the fundamental law of the Russian Empire, though local languages are not given the spotlight in the 1918 document, language rights can be understood to have been included as part of the recognition given to minorities and local government assemblies under the terms of this constitution. However, there was no provision for ethnic minorities within the Russian Socialist Federated Socialist Republic to establish independent states. With regard to the USSR, however, due to the fact that this political body was established by a treaty among technically independent states in 1922, the assumption remained throughout the Soviet era that secession was a possible legal option, and this was kept in the constitutions of 1924, 1936, and 1977. It is for this reason, incidentally, that Belarus and Ukraine were able to become founding members of the United Nations, along with the Soviet Union itself ("UN Membership: Founding Members," n.d.). In modern Russia, the state language (i.e., the official language) is seen as a unifying societal factor (Romanovskaya, 2016, pp. 38-47).

In the case of Japan, in the meantime, past language policies continued to develop in line with the policy of ethnic and linguistic homogeneity. Moreover, even though unconditional surrender at the end of World War II resulted in fairly massive language changes due to the loss of considerable territories and their population, these changes were national in scope and not local. Like the Meiji Constitution, the present constitution of Japan, which was promulgated in 1946, has no provision describing Japanese as the national language of Japan. The assumption then and, to a large degree, still now was and is that Japan is a notably homogenous nation with one people and one language. Nevertheless, the constitution does have specific provisions which, if local governments were to use them, could as efficiently serve the interests of a heterogeneous population using a variety of languages and dialects concurrently. In particular, the following portions of the constitution might be thought of as applicable should people and local governments make creative use of them:

> "CHAPTER III
>
> RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE PEOPLE
>
> Article 13. All of the people shall be respected as individuals. Their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness shall, to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare, be the supreme consideration in legislation and in other governmental affairs.
>
> Article 14. All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin.

Article 15. The people have the inalienable right to choose their public officials and to dismiss them. All public officials are servants of the whole community and not of any group thereof. Universal adult suffrage is guaranteed with regard to the election of public officials. In all elections, secrecy of the ballot shall not be violated. [...]

Article 19. Freedom of thought and conscience shall not be violated. [...]

Article 21. Freedom of assembly and association as well as speech, press and all other forms of expression are guaranteed. No censorship shall be maintained, nor shall the secrecy of any means of communication be violated.

Article 22. Every person shall have freedom to choose and change his residence and to choose his occupation to the extent that it does not interfere with the public welfare.

Article 23. Academic freedom is guaranteed. [...]

Article 25. All people shall have the right to maintain the minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living. In all spheres of life, the State shall use its endeavors for the promotion and extension of social welfare and security, and of public health.

> Article 26. All people shall have the right to receive an equal education corresponding to their ability, as provided by law. All people shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection receive ordinary education as provided for by law. Such compulsory education shall be free.” (The Constitution of Japan, 1947).

Indeed, the above rights belonging to all Japanese people have been made use of to a limited degree by speakers of the Hokkaido Ainu language and to a somewhat greater extent by speakers of the Japonic languages of the Ryukyu Islands. In carrying out these initiatives, local government sponsorship and local board of education support have been increasingly obtained. Furthermore, the Japanese sign language community has benefitted from significant public funding, though likely due to the commonly held, yet misguided, assumption that this language is merely a signed form of Japanese rather than a completely different language.

The Russian Federation Constitution from 1993 and federal legislation No. 53 from June 1, 2005, both establish the social and legal position of Russian as the official state language of the Russian Federation as a whole. The Russian Federation's constitution guarantees the right of Russia's republics (which previously, until 1991, were the autonomous soviet socialist republics of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic of the Soviet Union era) to designate their native languages as official languages (Article 68, paragraph 2). Nine republics had already passed language legislation statutes by the time the 1993

Constitution was accepted (Krasovskaya, 2016, pp. 41-46). Meanwhile, additional republics in the Russian Federation had incorporated language-related clauses in their constitutions to provide for the official status of the titular languages. Russian was thereafter declared the second official state language of these republics within the Russian Federation (Krasovskaya, 2016, pp. 41-46). Regarding language status, the 1993 Constitution of the Russian Federation proclaims:

> "Article 19 [...]
>
> 2. The state shall guarantee the equality of rights and liberties regardless of [...] language. [...]
>
> Article 26
>
> 1. Everyone shall have the right to determine and state his national identity. No one can be forced to determine and state his national identity.
>
> 2. Everyone shall have the right to use his native language, freely choose the language of communication, education, training and creative work."
>
> "Article 68
>
> 1. The state language of the Russian Federation throughout its territory shall be the Russian language.

> 2. The republics shall have the right to institute their own state languages. They shall be used alongside the state language of the Russian Federation in bodies of state power, bodies of local self-government and Russian Constitution state institutions of the republics.
>
> 3. The Russian Federation shall guarantee all its peoples the right to preserve their native language and to create the conditions for its study and development." ("Constitution of the Russian Federation", 1993).

From the above, it can be summarized that constitutionally speaking, matters of language have taken different trajectories in Japan and those territories that now constitute the Russian Federation. However, one can see that the ultimate reasons for these respective trajectories taking shape lie in social turmoil. Though neither country was fully monoethnic nor monolingual, the ideology of monolingualism was common at the time (Gal, 2011, p. 32).

Though this dissertation is not meant to be read as a work on foreign language education or policy, it seems appropriate to note that language education in Japan and Russia appears to be converging. The Japanese Ministry of Education and Technology issued in 1998 a report stating that: "When the children of foreign residents in Japan receive a Japanese school education, it is important to provide substantial Japanese language education." ("Second Periodic Report by the Government of Japan," n.d.).

Moreover, foreign language education is required for the compulsory education system of Japan. Though it is possible for languages other than English to be taught at the compulsory school level, this does not happen in the public sector school system. Therefore in Japan, officially, students do not have to specifically study English as a foreign language.

Learning foreign languages is compulsory in the Russian Federation, and students must choose from different languages, including English, French, German, and Spanish. Ethnic minority languages are not chosen on a wide-scale basis, and studying them does not replace learning foreign languages. English has so far been the most widely learned foreign language. The Russian education system is divided into three stages, namely primary, basic secondary, and upper secondary education. Preschooling is not compulsory, nor is foreign language learning. However, most parents want their children to begin learning a foreign language even before starting their primary education, and for such purposes, English is the most widely chosen language due to its popularity (Ustinova, 2005, pp. 239-252.).

During their primary school education, children have the right to study in their native language or other languages, including Russian. Besides the language of instruction, students must take a foreign language, of which English is usually chosen. Compulsory school, foreign language education, aims at developing communicative skills. Depending on the school, a foreign language is introduced from the 1st, 2nd, or 5th year of schooling. Like Japan and other countries, each school can choose its textbook, for example, but only from a government-recommended list, which is the case for multiple disciplines (Miller, 2010, pp. 8-34).

Children are expected to achieve the pre-immediate A2 English level during their basic secondary education. Students have three 45-minute English classes per week in their upper secondary education. At the end of this period, they are expected to achieve the intermediate B1 level. At the end of their secondary education, students take the USE (Unified State Examination). English is not a compulsory examination subject. However, students can choose it and, if they wish to enter a university, they find it highly recommended to do so ("English in Russian schools," n.d.).

Even though the Russian constitution recognizes ethnic minority languages, the situation facing these languages is not entirely favorable in cases where they are not being taught, or taught, but not at a high level. There is a tendency to lose out with regard to Russian and English. Especially those who do not belong to an ethnic minority, even if they live where an ethnic minority is present, do not ordinarily learn the minority language that surrounds them. This observation is based on, for example, the experience of studying in Karelia, which is anecdotal evidence.

Much of what has just been written about the foreign language situation of the Russian Federation also applies to Japan. Nevertheless, despite the fact that almost everyone can speak it, there is presently no law in Japan that designates Japanese as the official language. The closest Japan comes to this is with regard to Education Law, whereby Japanese as a school subject is referred to as the "national language," or *Koku-go* (国語). According to this regulation, pupils must "learn the fundamental capacity to correctly grasp and utilize the national language essential for daily life" as part of their compulsory education (Rex-Horoi, 2022).

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Thus, there is a situation where, constitutionally speaking, Japan and the Russian Federation take seemingly opposite positions in some regard. Nevertheless, they can also exhibit certain similarities, especially concerning foreign language education.

One similarity is that at different times in their recent history, Japan and Russia have used language as a means of assimilation of other peoples speaking other languages in order to bring these peoples under their control. For instance, making Japanese one of the official and common languages of Manchukuo and teaching it at schools there in the 1930s and 40s (Han, 2004, pp. 457-478) can be seen as an indication that Japan hoped to incorporate this territory into its empire eventually. Similar things can be said about Japanese language policies in the Korean peninsula, Micronesia, and Taiwan, which were colonized (Befu, 2007, p. xxii). Japanese linguistic assimilation attempts were carried out in these areas until the immediate aftermath of them being conquered by the Soviet Union in northeast Asia and the United States elsewhere in the Pacific during World War II.

Though this thesis is not historical in the sense that it follows all the formalities of history as an academic discipline, it does take the approach that the mission of a historian who approaches history striving for accuracy is to act as a memory for the forgetful society they live in. Thus, as unpalatable as it might seem to many people today living in what was then Manchukuo, historical research would be desirable on the subject of whether a significant portion of the local population saw Japanese control of these territories as relatively benign compared with what had previously existed during the warlord period and perhaps Japanese language policies were not viewed as unduly harsh by the people directly affected. Also, it is desirable to see more historical research on the role of language issues in civil unrest and the resulting relocation of populations that this commonly involves.

Another issue to address is the government's acceptance of "others." For example, in Japan, it is not, historically, a policy to accept large amounts of refugees. Meanwhile, in Russia, this practice of moving many refugees into Russian territory has been used by the government as a political statement and because Russia can be thought of as being underpopulated in comparison with its landmass.

Japan, though not a totalitarian state in its political structure, has promoted something similar to a totalitarian culture that works beneath the surface to promote itself within the confines of the modern Japanese state. It can be argued that the large-scale loss of the users of the six UNESCO-recognized Ryukyu Island languages and the Hokkaido Ainu language was due to the ideology of homogeneity adopted by the Japanese state that gave Japanese culture the ability to partly absorb, digest, and integrate the Okinawan and Ainu culture into Japanese culture. This process, however, did not destroy these cultures or their uniqueness in the process of absorption. As such, in recent years, local languages have come to be seen as having value, as being the primary means by which the local culture can be most faithfully transferred to the next generation. Globally used languages, on the other hand, tend to spread to those domains that are infused with globally-supported ideologies.

On the surface, it appears that ethnic minority languages receive less recognition in Japan than in the Russian Federation. Nevertheless, the enforcement of language law and policy in the Russian Federation tends to favor Russian over other languages. Although there have been occasional disagreements with regard to mother tongue education policies, it has not reached a level where dissatisfaction has become widespread. As in other countries in other eras, ethnic minorities, at least now, by and large, tend to see the acquisition of Russian by their children as desirable, being a possible aid in acquiring a better economic future inside of the Federation. This, in turn, can be further endangering some of the smaller mother tongues, as can be seen in the case of Yiddish in the Jewish Autonomous Region.

Concerning the three UNESCO-recognized Ainu languages (see Appendix, Figure 1) in Russia and Japan, with the Sakhalin and Kuril Islands Ainu languages now extinct and only the Hokkaido Ainu language still surviving (Moseley, 2010, p. 49), preliminary conclusions can be reached. Taking a surface view, one might assume that the policies of the Russian Federation, in spite of its constitutional provisions, are more harmful to minority languages than the policies of Japan. However, until the end of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, Sakhalin Ainu populations living primarily in the southern half of Sakhalin had trading relations with the Paleo-Siberian Nivkh-speaking peoples of the Amur River delta and also in

Northern Sakhalin. Significantly, the Nivkh people, who were never under Japanese control, still survive in Russia, and so does their language.

In fact, until the Russian Empire extended its control over eastern Siberia, these two groups of people appeared to have been the Chinese Empire's tributaries. From 1854 on, Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands changed hands several times, with Japan being in possession of these islands for more extended periods of time. Moreover, when boundaries changed, Japan arranged a forced resettlement in Hokkaido of a large percentage of Sakhalin Ainu-speaking people to Hokkaido. Furthermore, for extended periods of time until the end of World War II, Kuril Ainu language-speaking people were under Japanese control.

Though both the Sakhalin Ainu and Kuril Ainu languages became extinct in the decades immediately after the Second World War, the Nivkh language, even though initially spoken by a much smaller ethnic group in imperial Russia, still survives as a language. The difference is that, having primarily lived in the northern part of Sakhalin and the delta region of the Amur River, the Nivkh people never had to face Japanese occupation and diseases or go through any forced resettlement. As a result, the Nivkh people, as well as the Nivkh language, can still be found both in northern Sakhalin and in adjacent parts of Siberia. By contrast, the Sakhalin and Kuril Ainu language speakers did not pass their language on to their descendants, some of whom claim to still have an Ainu identity.

Thus, what the comparative language policy research done for this dissertation illustrates is that government policy alone is unlikely ever to be the sole deciding factor in language users' numbers changing. This does not mean that government policy has no impact but rather that other factors outside of government control often prove to be of more importance. Nevertheless, government policy can make a difference, primarily through language planning policies (Razumovskaya and Sokolovsky, 2012, p. 927), and a general policy of making it possible for languages to develop organically seems preferable.

Nevertheless, what can be seen in the case of both Japan and the Russian Federation is that national governments subject minority languages to language policies and that these language policies are almost always designed, either by plan or by coincidence, by those who are not speakers of the minority languages for which policy is being made. A minority language policy designed by language minority speakers themselves, without interference from the majority language speakers, is difficult to conceive. Minority language speaker control over policy, though in theory not impossible, is never likely, as the almost universal occurrence of the dominance and interference of the “stronger” over the “weaker” with regard to human society seems impossible to eradicate.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

In this chapter, the research questions are answered to the degree possible. One question was whether a policy of semi-voluntary assimilation within a centralized system of government, such as in the case of Japan, could work better over the long term toward the preservation of language minorities than a forced division into ethnicity-based political units by a national government with overriding power, as was the case of the former Soviet Union. In answer to this, the concluding chapter maintains the likelihood of a mixed result. That is, officially recognized languages in Russia, specifically in the Soviet period, seem to have had a better chance of survival than in Japan. However, for those ethnic groups who "slipped through the net" in terms of legal provisions, this dissertation maintains that Japan's approach seems to offer a better chance for more prolonged survival.

Concerning the subject of how state policy affects language variation and how it is, in turn, affected by language variation, this dissertation takes the position that Standard Japanese is itself a language created in its modern form as a result of state policies emphasizing the need for stability in the face of a period of great instability as a result of initial contact with Western powers. On the other side of the Eurasian continent, the absorption of non-Russian speaking European territories as a result of the Napoleonic Wars, as well as other non-Russian speaking Asian and European territories as a result of later wars, forced Russia to come to terms with the fact that it had become a multilingual, multicultural state.

Concerning the diachronic process of language variation creation and decay in the case of language variants found in Japan, what this dissertation would indicate is that since the Meiji Restoration until relatively recently, Japan has seen a massive decay in the use of what is now known in Japan as local languages. Though any forecast of future preservation is not guaranteed, evidence exists for an increased interest in Ainu and Okinawan cultures. Furthermore, the rise of new technologies is also likely to affect the situation in a positive way.

As for what light Japanese and Russian language policies shed on each other with regard to the aforementioned diachronic process is, in general, somehow a confirmation of the pessimism that pervades the bias that partly lies at the core of this dissertation (Reiter, 2017, p.130). It appears that what we can draw out of a comparison of Japan's and the Russian Federation’s language policies is that, though very different, actual implementation in some instances is converging, yet in neither case are the language policies totally effective.

What this dissertation does succeed in doing is highlighting a bleak state of affairs and suggesting alternative approaches. The significance, thus, is not so much in what this dissertation directly achieves but in what, over time, it might encourage others to achieve by means of hitherto unconsidered approaches to the formulation of language policy. With this in mind, a tentative point of departure for a fuller theory of comparative language policy studies than has so far existed can be proposed by making use of the following precepts:

1. Language policy can be either written in the form of constitutions, statutes, ordinances, or departmental regulations. Likewise, it can be organic, unwritten, and customary.
2. Language policy, whether written or unwritten, is the creation of those who dominate the society in which they live. As such, it usually must be assumed not to be beneficial to those being dominated.
3. Over the long term, no language policy can prevent the extinction of a language. That is the ultimate fate of all languages. What it can do, for a time, if that is in the best interest of those who dominate a particular society, is to prevent overt language oppression.
4. In language policy studies, bias will always intrude and must be managed.
5. Due to humans' universal difficulty in obtaining self-knowledge, language policy studies will always tend to suffer from a general inability to analyze motivations behind language policy.
6. Language policy motivations can be more easily uncovered in comparative language policy studies than in single language studies.

Admittedly, the above attempt at describing the basic assumptions of what might be at the bottom of a fuller future theory of language policy studies can be further improved. Moreover, it is to be expected that language policy studies will make, in theoretical terms, far more significant advances than has hitherto been the case. However, compared with what has so far existed, the points mentioned above represent an advance. Moreover, together with the answers given in the first pages of this chapter to the research questions, it is hoped that this dissertation will be seen as having contributed, in its own small way, to the growth of human knowledge.

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Note: The American Psychological Association (APA, 7th edition) style is used as a basis for the bibliography and citations, with modification. The citations use either the author's name or the title in quotation marks. In the bibliography, the year is stated, or the date in the case of periodicals, to keep entries as uniform as possible. When the year is not provided, (n.d.) is used instead. In the in-text citations, the year with a letter is included in the case of citing several works by the same author.

Because rules of APA 7 are followed, with the said modification, stating the location of a publisher is not mandatory. Instead of adding a publisher's site, only its name is displayed.

In citations, when the author's name is not available, the title of the work referred to is used instead. If there are two publications by the same author in the same year, a letter is also given in the citation together with the year.

Pages that are referred to are included. In cases where the publisher or the author did not provide a page number, it was also not included here. Page numbers are marked by "p." if the source is a page or less long or "pp." in case of multiple pages. Punctuation is kept uniform. The titles of the specific works that are being referenced are italicized for consistency. Instead of the ampersand symbol "&," the word "and" is used, with an exception for titles.

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Appendix

FSI tables as adjusted for out-of-class study

Table 1. FSI category I languages.

Danish (1,500 hours)	Dutch (1,500 hours)	*French (1,875 hours)*
Italian (1,500 hours)	Norwegian (1,500 hours)	Portuguese (1,500 hours)
Romanian (1,500 hours)	Spanish (1,500 hours)	Swedish (1,500 hours)

Table 2. FSI category II languages.

German (2,250 hours)	Haitian Creole (2,250 hours)	Indonesian (2,250 hours)
Malay (2,250 hours)	Swahili (2,250 hours)	

Table 3. FSI category III languages.

Albanian (2,750 hours)	Amharic (2,750 hours)	Armenian (2,750 hours)
Azerbaijani (2,750 hours)	Bengali (2,750 hours)	Bulgarian (2,750 hours)
Burmese (2,750 hours)	Czech (2,750 hours)	Dari (2,750 hours)
Estonian (2,750 hours)	Farsi (2,750 hours)	Finnish (2,750 hours)
Georgian (2,750 hours)	Greek (2,750 hours)	Hebrew (2,750 hours)
Hindi (2,750 hours)	Hungarian (2,750 hours)	Icelandic (2,750 hours)
Kazakh (2,750 hours)	Khmer (2,750 hours)	Kurdish (2,750 hours)
Kyrgyz (2,750 hours)	Lao (2,750 hours)	Latvian (2,750 hours)
Lithuanian (2,750 hours)	Macedonian (2,750 hours)	Mongolian (2,750 hours)
Nepali (2,750 hours)	Polish (2,750 hours)	Russian (2,750 hours)
Serbo-Croatian (2,750 hours)	Sinhala (2,750 hours)	Slovak (2,750 hours)

Slovenian (2,750 hours)	Somali (2,750 hours)	Tagalog (2,750 hours)
Tajik (2,750 hours)	Tamil (2,750 hours)	Telugu (2,750 hours)
Thai (2,750 hours)	Tibetan (2,750 hours)	Turkish (2,750 hours)
Turkmen (2,750 hours)	Ukrainian (2,750 hours)	Urdu (2,750 hours)
Uzbek (2,750 hours)	Vietnamese (2,750 hours)	

Table 4. Category IV languages.

Arabic (5,500 hours)	Cantonese (5,500 hours)	Mandarin (5,500 hours)
Japanese (5,500 hours)	Korean (5,500 hours)	

Based on: *Foreign Service Institute: Foreign Language Training* (2022). US Department of State. https://www.state.gov/foreign-language-training/

Table 5. List of information centers in prefectural capitals of Japan.

Various prefectures of Japan were visited as small-scale geolinguistic ethnographic expeditions, with the general purpose of better understanding each prefecture and its dialects first-hand; in total, 38 out of 47 prefectures have been visited for this purpose. As Japan has a notably helpful chain of tourism information centers, kankou annai jou (観光案内所), and a point was made to visit these institutions since the local languages can be seen as a potential tourism attraction. Part of these centers was visited in person and re-contacted by phone for the purposes of this research by conducting mini-interviews about the prefecture. Another part was only contacted by phone. Due to a universal lack of interest in local languages on the part of tourist office officials, such interviews did not provide solid, undeniable evidence about the prefectures. However, the information collected did prove helpful in understanding the officially perceived situation with regard to the prefectures visited from a geolinguistic standpoint because information centers provide the data in an official capacity and demonstrate the limits of information they possess.

One question always asked was whether any people in the prefecture spoke a dialect. The answer was always a variation of “yes.” However, as was expected, the answer was accompanied by an explanation that it was mainly spoken by older people and rarely was it passed on to members of the younger generation.

Another question was whether the tourism specialists knew about any particular school where the local language could be learned. The answer invariably was “no,” notably even in the case of Hokkaido, where one would expect provision to be made for learning the Hokkaido Ainu language.

The information about local dialects was usually very little. This would indicate that for the tourist officials interviewed, regional dialects were not generally thought of as a local “specialty” that could bring in tourists.

In the table below is a list of tourism information centers with addresses at prefectural capitals contacted during the visits in the period of 2014-2022. All the centers' re-contact date (by phone) was 2022/10/20, which is the date referred to. This approach was chosen because it was expected that the representatives of such information centers, who are answering the phone, would tend to be knowledgeable about local people. It was also expected that they would provide a good picture of the current state of affairs of the prefectures they represented. Therefore, all the information centers were re-contacted to confirm previous findings and gauge the local language situation.

This list specifies the locations of the information centers.

Prefectural center, location of the tourist information center	Prefecture field trip visit status as of 2022/10/28	Tourist information center address
Akita	Akita, visited, 2021	〒010-0001, 7 Chome−1−2 Akita, Nakadori
Aomori	Aomori, visited, 2021	〒030-0801 1 Chome−1−25 Aomori, Shinmachi,
Chiba	Chiba, visited, 2016	〒260-00311 Chome-1-1 Shinchiba, Chuo Ward, Chiba
Fukui	Fukui, not visited	〒910-0006, 1 Chome-2-1 Central, Fukui
Fukuoka	Fukuoka, visited, 2019	〒810-0001 2 Chome−1−1 Fukuoka, Chuo Ward, Tenjin

Fukushima	Fukushima, visited, 2014	〒960-8031 1 Chome−1 Fukushima, Sakaemachi,
Gifu	Gifu, visited, 2019	〒500-8856, 1 Chome-10 Hashimotocho, Gifu,
Hiroshima	Hiroshima, visited, 2014	〒732-0822, 1 Matsubaracho, Minami Ward, Hiroshima
Kagoshima	Kagoshima, not visited	〒890-0053 1 Chome−1−1 Kagoshima, Chuocho,
Kanazawa	Ishikawa, visited, 2019	〒920-0858, 1 Chome 1-1 Kinoshinbomachi, Kanazawa, Ishikawa
Kōbe	Hyōgo, visited, 2018	〒650-0021, 8 Chome Kumoidori, Chuo Ward, Kobe, Hyogo

Kōchi	Kōchi, not visited	〒780-0841, 2 Chome-1-25 Obiyamachi, Kochi
Kōfu	Yamanashi, visited, 2017	〒400-0031, 1 Chome-2-14 Marunouchi, Kofu, Yamanashi
Kumamoto	Kumamoto, visited, 2021	〒860-0047, 3 Chome−15−30 Kumamoto, Nishi Ward, Kasuga,
Kyōto	Kyōto, visited, 2014	〒600-8216, Kyoto, Shimogyo Ward, Higashishiokojicho, Kyoto Station Building
Maebashi	Gunma, visited, 2016	〒371-0024, 2 Chome-29-16 Omotecho, Maebashi, Gunma
Matsue	Shimane, visited, 2019	〒690-0003, 665 Asahimachi, Matsue, Shimane

Matsuyama	Ehime, not visited	〒790-0062, 1 Chome-14-1 Minamiedo, Matsuyama, Ehime
Mito	Ibaraki, visited, 2016	〒310-0015, Ibaraki, Mito, Miyamachi, 1 Chome−1−1
Miyazaki	Miyazaki, not visited	〒880-0811, 1-8 Nishikimachi, Miyazaki
Morioka	Iwate, visited, 2019	〒020-0034, Iwate, Morioka, Moriokaekimaedori
Nagano	Nagano, visited, 2014	〒380-0921, Nagano, Kurita, 1038-4
Nagasaki	Nagasaki, not visited	〒850-0058, 1-60 Onouemachi, Nagasaki
Nagoya	Aichi, visited, 2017	〒450-0002, 1 Chome-1-4

		Meieki, Nakamura Ward, Nagoya, Aichi
Naha	Okinawa, visited, 2021	〒900-0013, Okinawa, Naha, Makishi, 3 Chome−2−10
Nara	Nara, visited, 2015	〒630-8122, Nara, Sanjohonmachi, 1−1082
Niigata	Niigata, visited, 2014	〒 950-0086, 1 Chome-1-1 Hanazono, Chuo Ward, Niigata
Ōita	Ōita, visited, 2019	〒870-0831, 1-1 Kanamemachi, Oita
Okayama	Okayama, visited, 2018	〒700-0024, 1 Ekimotomachi, Kita Ward, Okayama
Ōsaka	Ōsaka, visited, 2014	〒530-0001, Osaka, Kita Ward, Umeda, 3 Chome−1−1

Ōtsu	Shiga, visited, 2019	〒520-0055, Shiga, Otsu, Kasugacho
Saga	Saga, not visited	〒840-0801, Saga, Ekimae Chuo, 1 Chome−11−10
Saitama	Saitama, visited, 2014	〒338-0001, 2 Kamiochiai, Chuo Ward, Saitama,
Sapporo	Hokkaidō, not visited	〒060-0806, Hokkaido, Sapporo, Kita Ward, Kita 6 Jonishi, 4 Chome
Sendai	Miyagi, visited, 2021	〒980-0021, 1 Chome−1−1 Miyagi, Sendai, Aoba Ward, Central
Shinjuku	Tōkyō, visited, 2014	〒160-0022, 3 Chome-37-2 Shinjuku, Shinjuku City, Tokyo

Shizuoka	Shizuoka, visited, 2014	〒420-0851, 4 Chome-9-1 Shizuoka, Aoi Ward, Kuroganecho
Takamatsu	Kagawa, visited, 2021	〒760-0011, 1 Chome-20 Hamanocho, Takamatsu, Kagawa
Tokushima	Tokushima, visited, 2019	〒770-8055, 1 Chome-1 Higashihamahoji, Yamashirocho, Tokushima
Tottori	Tottori, visited, 2021	〒680-0835, 111-1 Higashihonjicho, Tottori
Toyama	Toyama, visited, 2022	〒930-0001, 1 Chome-230, Toyama, Meirincho,
Tsu	Mie, visited, 2021	〒514-0009, Mie, Tsu,

		Hadokorocho, 700
Utsunomiya	Tochigi, visited, 2014	〒321-0965, 1-23 Kawamukocho, Utsunomiya, Tochigi
Wakayama	Wakayama, visited, 2018	〒640-8146, Wakayama, Ichibancho, 3
Yamagata	Yamagata, visited, 2018	〒990-0827, 1 Chome 1-1 Jonanmachi, Yamagata
Yamaguchi	Yamaguchi, not visited	〒753-0042, 2-1 Sodayucho, Yamaguchi
Yokohama	Kanagawa, visited, 2014	〒222-0033 2 Chome Kanagawa, Yokohama, Kohoku Ward, Shinyokohama

Table 6. Languages of Japan

Language	**Status**	**Writing System**
Japanese	Safe	Japanese
Ainu	Critically Endangered	Ainu
Amami	Definitely Endangered	Kana
Hachijo	Definitely Endangered	Kana
Kunigami	Definitely Endangered	Kana
Miyako	Definitely Endangered	Kana

Okinawan	Definitely Endangered	Kana
Yaeyama	Severely Endangered	Kana

Reference: Moseley, C. (Ed.). (2010). *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger.* UNESCO Publishing. p. 50. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000187026

Table 7. Levels of endangerment.

Level of Endangerment	Definition
Safe	All generations speak the language; intergenerational transmission is continuous.
Vulnerable	The language is spoken by the majority of youth, yet it may be limited to select areas (such as home).
Definitely Endangered	Children are no longer taught the language as their mother tongue at home.
Severely Endangered	Grandparents and senior generations speak the language. While parents understand it, they do not speak it to their children and between themselves.

Critically Endangered	The language is only partially and occasionally spoken by the speakers, who are grandparents and older.
Extinct	There are no speakers left.

Reference:

Moseley, C. (Ed.). (2010). *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger.* UNESCO Publishing. pp. 11-12. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000187026

Table 8. Questionnaire.

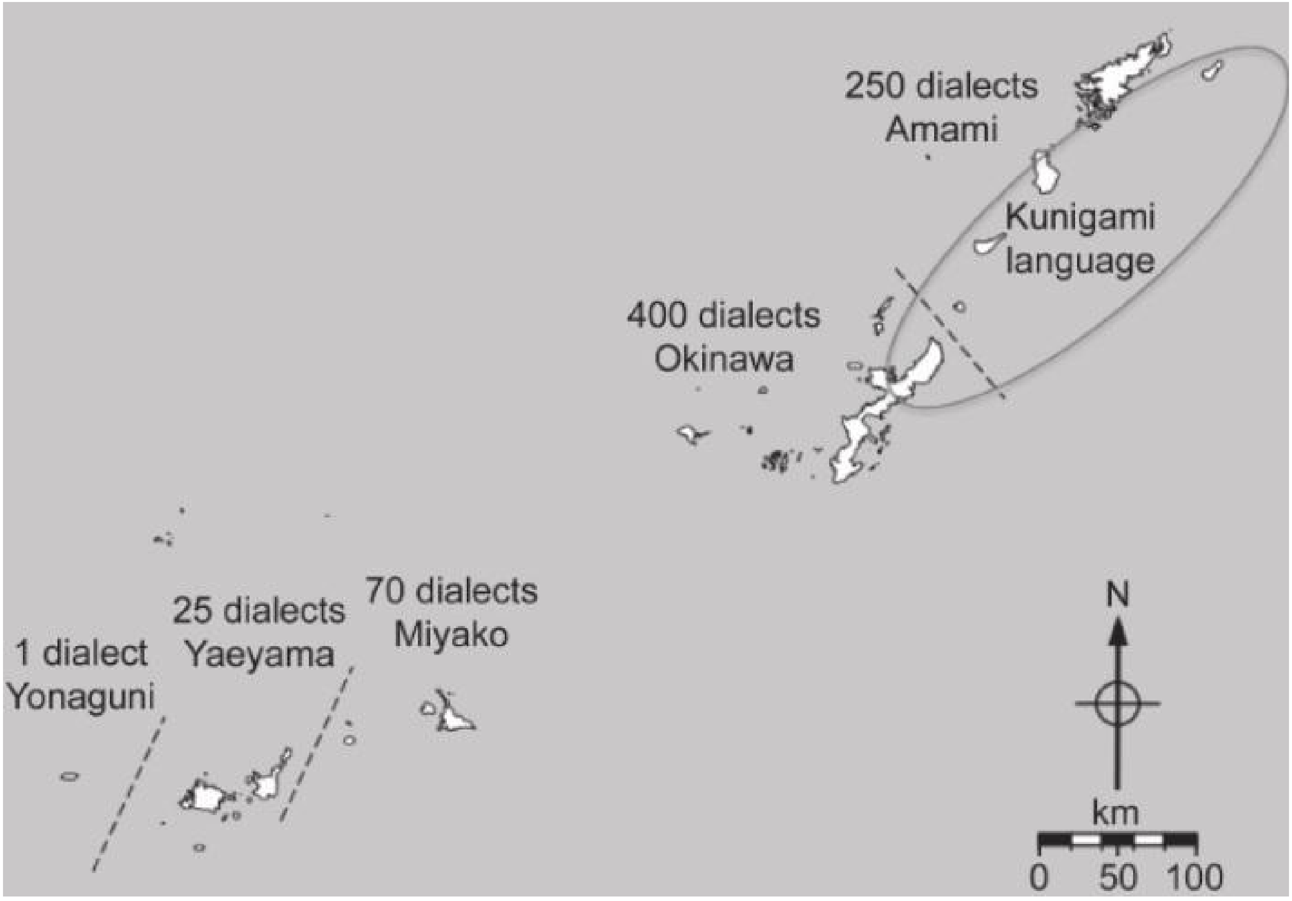
Question	Yes	No
1. Do you think Japan is a multilingual country?	6	44
2. Do you speak any dialect of the Japanese language?	9	41
3. How many foreign languages do you speak?		
-a. None	13	
-b. One	12	
-c. Two	23	

-d. Three	2	
4. How many foreign languages do you want to learn in the future?		
-a. None	1	
-b. One	21	
-c. Two	24	
-d. Three	6	
-e. Four	1	
5. Do you think it is difficult for a Japanese person to learn a foreign language?		
-a. Yes	44	

-b. No	6	
6. What foreign languages do you think Japanese people most often try to learn?		
-a. English	48	
-b. Chinese	1	
-c. Korean	1	
7. What do you think about the Ainu language and Ainu people?		
-a. Positive opinion	33	
-b. No opinion	17	
8. What do you think about the local languages of Okinawa and other Ryukyu		

Islands?		
-a. Difficult to understand	42	
-b. No opinion	8	
9. Have you studied any local language or dialect of Japan at school?	11	39
10. Have you studied any local language or dialect of Japan outside of school?	5	

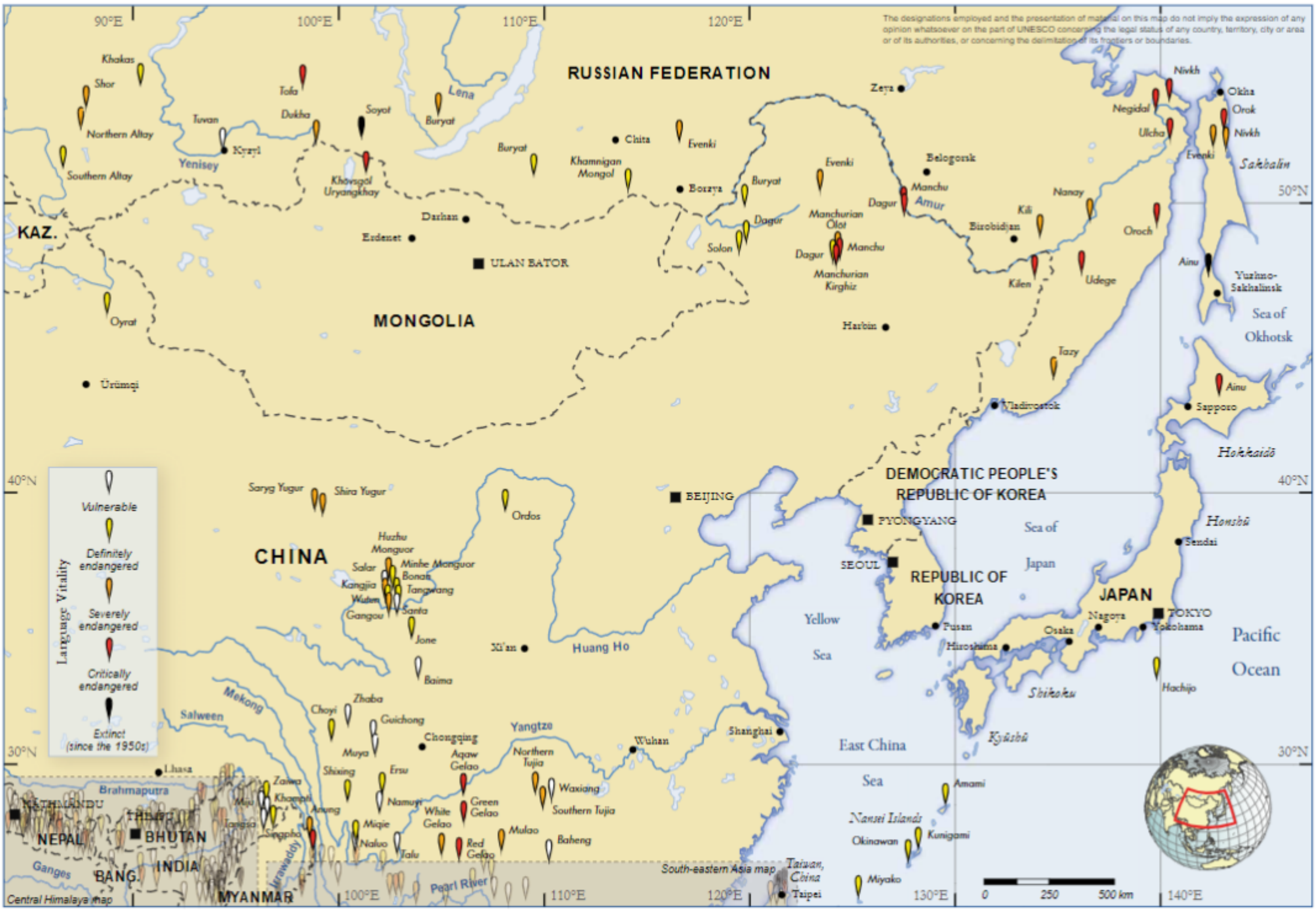
Figure 1. The Ryukyuan languages.



Reference:

Heinrich, P., and Ishihara, M. (2017). *Ryukyuan languages in Japan. Heritage language policies around the world.* Routledge. p. 166.

Figure 2. Eastern Asia.



Reference:

Moseley, C. (Ed.). (2010). *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger.* UNESCO Publishing. p. 50.

https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000187026

Figure 3. North-eastern Asia.

Reference:

Moseley, C. (Ed.). (2010). *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger.* UNESCO Publishing. p. 39.

https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000187026