Language Reform during the Meiji Period and Nationalism in Ueda Kazutoshi's Kokugo no tame

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LANGUAGE REFORM DURING THE MEIJI PERIOD AND NATIONALISM IN UEDA KAZUTOSHI'S *KOKUGO NO TAME*

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MASTER THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A DEGREE IN

MA ASIAN STUDIES
EAST ASIAN STUDIES TRACK

UNIVERSITEIT LEIDEN

SUBMITTED TO

Prof. dr. I. B. Smits

1st of July, 2022

Acknowledgement

Like many others on this world currently, the pandemic of COVID-19 threw a wrench in my entire academic plans. Instead of studying abroad in Japan for a year, I ended up staying in a kind of limbo here in the Netherlands, with hope and eventual disappointment every half year on whether I would be able to go or not. The eventual outcome was that I would not go to Japan, and finish my thesis in the Netherlands. This was not optimal, and I struggled with the setback, but I had wonderful support from many around me, and thus I wish to thank them.

I wish to thank my family, who offered to find ways for me to still be able to go to Japan even though it eventually still did not come to fruition, and for allowing me to stay with them during the pandemic, taking care of my well-being and giving me places where I could study and relax.

I wish to thank the two thesis supervisors I have had over the course of two years, Dr Ethan Mark and Prof. dr. Ivo Smits. While eventually the topic that I wished to research did not line up with Dr Mark's field of expertise, I am still thankful for the guidance and pointers that he gave me during our meetings, as well as for recommending to write this thesis under the supervision of Prof. dr. Smits instead, who has also helped me along vastly. With his recommendations on certain literature in the topics that I was interested in, I managed to settle on a topic which I find interesting and also had connections with my past studies during my bachelor's. Both supervisors gave their best guidance, and this thesis would not have become what it is without both of their inputs and commentaries.

Finally, I wish to thank my beloved friends, who have all or were also experiencing the struggle of writing a thesis, and provided many a distraction to the writing process. These distractions from the constant pressure and their continuous supportive words and jokes kept my mind balanced, and helped avoid letting me become too stressed and eventually burning out. For that, I shall be forever grateful.

Without these wonderful people and their support, this thesis would not be here. Once again, for everything, thank you to everyone.

Vanessa Huang

Abstract

With the drastic shift started by the Meiji Revolution in 1868 and the opening of Japan's borders also came a need to create a national Japanese identity, and one of several ways to achieve this was to create a standardised national language. Ueda Kazutoshi stood at the forefront of this movement, advocating for the conceptualisation of *kokugo*, the national language, and in turn educational reforms which would implement this national language for the improvement and modernisation of the Japanese empire. In the book, *Kokugo no tame*, he goes into further detail on how to achieve this. This thesis looks at how idealistic and influenced by nationalism Ueda's *Kokugo no tame* is by reading, interpreting and finally reflecting on his writings found in the book, as there is discourse on its abstract nature and its achievability. This thesis finds that Ueda's writings were heavily influenced by the new social context of Meiji Japan and its recent victory in the First Sino-Japanese War, and that with the limitations that nationalism and racialisation bring, it also put limits on the feasibility of Ueda's envisioned *kokugo*. While achievable in some ways with concrete ideas on how to implement *kokugo*, and indeed Ueda's writings did set up the foundation of language standardisation, it is also the caveats made by Ueda on how *kokugo* should be educated under nationalist terms which made it more difficult to bring it to fruition according to Ueda's ways.

Key words: Ueda Kazutoshi, *kokugo*, nationalism, language

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1. Introduction

1.1 Topic introduction

The nation-state, and with it the rise of nationalism and the search for self-identity in the current world, is an idea or perhaps even an ideal which is at the forefront of many cultures, communities and countries, and is a part of many historical narratives. For Japan, it has its fair share of imperialist and nationalist history set during the late 1800s and the first half of the 20th century. Scholars have argued that Japanese imperialism started with the annexation of either the Ryukyu Islands (now named Okinawa Prefecture) in 1879 or the island of Formosa (currently Taiwan) in 1895. Paired with the ideals of "Pan-Asianism", wherein Japan saw itself as the leader of the oppressed Asia and thus also its liberator, Japan set out to unite Asia under itself to fight back against the West, leading up to a rise in nationalism in particular during the Showa period and World War II. This ideology was eventually deformed under the nationalist strive for dominance and expansion.[1] However, to unite also meant to reconstruct the national identity, and herein language plays a significant role, and for imperial Japan during the Meiji Period it started the search for the *kokugo*.[2]

The concept of *kokugo* (国語, transl. "national language") has been discussed at length by several scholars, most prominently among whom are Nanette Twine and, more recently, Atsuko Ueda, and on whom this thesis shall put its base upon. Building upon those works, this thesis shall also put a focus on a specific scholar and linguist who was prolific and a key figure during the search and creation of *kokugo*, namely Ueda Kazutoshi, also known as Ueda Mannen (上田　万年, 1867-1937).[3] It was Ueda in particular who vouched for the ideal *kokugo*, with which Japan could both unify itself under and create the singular national

[1] Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire*, 205-207.
[2] Twine, "Standardizing Written Japanese", 432.
[3] Ibid., 446.

identity, while also posit itself as a contender in the new world order against the West.[4] It is also in this idea where the natures of nationalism and patriotism for the Japanese nation and identity comes into play, reflected not merely in the way differing dialects are handled during the *kokugo* discourse, but also in the way nationalism and in turn racialisation and polarisation are internalised in scholarship as well as literature and education.[5]

Firstly, this thesis shall lay out a theoretical background and foundation on the studies of nationalism, in particular in relation to language and its defined role in creating communities and identities, followed by a look at the existing secondary literature and studies on the concept of *kokugo* and its uses in imperial Japan. Then, it shall move on to the main figure, Ueda Kazutoshi, and provide more background information before looking at one of his works specifically, namely his book *Kokugo no tame* (国語のため, transl. "On national language"), written in 1897, through which this thesis shall interpret its contents and reflect on how these ideas by Ueda influenced the *kokugo* movement in imperial Japan. Finally, taking these interpretations as well as the studies that have already been conducted by other scholars, the thesis shall make a conclusion on the research questions, which will be posed in the following section.

1.2 Research questions

The first overarching research question in regards to the *kokugo* scholarship and discourse and its foremost advocate Ueda Kazutoshi is how did nationalism reflect in Ueda's writings and advocacy for the ideal *kokugo* which would become the imperial language and represent the Japanese national identity? Touching upon how Ueda vilified dialects and stated that they stood in the way of *kokugo*, it is also a reflection of the desire to have a language to unify the

[4] Ueda, *Language, Nation, Race,* 90; ibid., 100-101.
[5] Ibid., 103; Shimoda, "The Making of a "National Language", 718.

Japanese people under not just for the sake of identity, but also for communication, universal education and modernity or civilisation.[6] Considering how language plays a role in nationalism and creating communities, it would be wise to examine the relationship between nationalist tendencies and Ueda's own writings and advocacies concerning the creation of a unifying national language for Japan.

There is also the problem of idealist nature of Ueda's envisioned *kokugo*, wherein he juxtaposed the ideal *kokugo* against dialects while *kokugo* itself was still non-existent in truth.[7] While indeed posited as such by most scholarship, some such as by Martin Yates Triche have also stated that Ueda's efforts gave the people something concrete to work and strive for, rather than something which was perhaps doomed to be never truly attainable from the start.[8] As such, in light of this duality of the ideal, non-existent concept of *kokugo* and the concrete, another question which springs to mind is in how far was Ueda's *kokugo* truly a form of idealism and fuelled by the need for a national identity, and did he focus on rhetoric rather than providing a concrete base to his advocacy?

These are the two foremost questions which I shall base this thesis on. The focus will lie mostly on Ueda Kazutoshi and his thoughts and advocacy on *kokugo*, which are then supported by secondary literature and studies to reach a conclusion on these research questions.

1.3 Methodology

For the main research and foundation of the thesis, I shall be mainly looking at secondary sources, such as those by Nanette Twine and Atsuko Ueda for the discourse on *kokugo*, but also authors on nationalism and the role language plays in it, most importantly Benedict

[6] Ibid., 724.
[7] Ibid., 726.
[8] Triche, "Kokugo and the 'Nation'", 71-73.

Anderson's *Imagined Communities* as well as Eric Hobsbawm's writings. As for primary sources to focus on in the research, this thesis shall specifically look into Ueda's book *Kokugo no tame*, which does not account for all of Ueda's writings on *kokugo* in itself, but will provide major insight into his thoughts. Furthermore, it is unlikely that all of the chapters in this book can be discussed at length. As such, by picking out the chapters which have a main focus on the concept of *kokugo* and its implementations in the Japanese empire and national education, I hope to maintain the focus on Ueda and his writings and thoughts on *kokugo*.

Adding on to this, it is also of note that this will be a research based mainly on text, writing and use of language, but it should also be considered that speech and the views on dialects will inevitably play a part in the research as well. However, I shall not be looking directly at speech in itself, as that is not the main focus of the research nor was it truly that of Ueda Kazutoshi's, aside from his gripes against regional dialects.

2. Literature Review: Nationalism and *Kokugo*

In the following chapter, I shall be outlining some of the most important literature and studies that have been conducted on two separate fields, though they are also inevitably tied together and thus should also be considered simultaneously, in particular when looking at the studies on *kokugo* and its underlying goals and purposes within the Japanese empire.

2.1 Theories on nationalism and the role of "language"

Firstly, to understand the backbone behind the need to create a unifying language for the nation, one must look at the ideology which effectively started it, namely the ideology of nationalism. Many a study has been conducted on the phenomenon on nationalism, but nationalism cannot be studied without mentioning Benedict Anderson and his book *Imagined Communities*, which laid out a foundation for the rest of nationalism studies, as well as Eric Hobsbawm, notable for his works *The Age of Revolution* and *The Invention of Tradition*. Both scholars put into perspective the manifestations of nationalism, even before it became more widespread in the Western world, and identified that which made nationalism possible in the first place by pinpointing common denominators for the formation of communities and collective national identities. As they were also active and published their works during the same period, it is also not out of the question to find them referencing each other's works, as will become evident in a moment.

Nationalism as a whole has many aspects which must be taken into account, but for the sake of this thesis, I shall focus mainly on the linguistic aspect of nationalism and the need to create a universal language in such communities. Language, in particular such unifying languages which is then spoken and written within the boundaries of a community as the main means of communication, helped drive further the formation of identities and

reinforced the sense of collectiveness, for example through the creation of national institutions based on said unifying language such as national education.[9] Language helps create a representation of the people, adding onto other forms of representation within the community and aids the spread of such forms, whether through word-of-mouth or through literature and other media of writing.[10]

Concerning Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, one chapter of his book will be of most importance for this thesis: "Old Languages, New World". Language gained a new status in the Western world as the West started to "discover" the rest of the world around them, and inevitably came into contact with other cultures and languages, while also re-evaluating the importance of the ancient languages such as Latin and Hebrew. Anderson notes that the comparative study of language only started to gain tract in the late eighteenth century, out which came the field of philology. It is also herein where Anderson mentions Hobsbawm, quoting him, "as Hobsbawm rightly observes, here was 'the first science which regarded evolution as its very core'".[11]

With the printing press becoming more widespread during this period, so did the rise of vast dictionaries come with it, whether they be monolingual or bilingual, and within those pages they had a common status regardless of the outside political statuses. Universities, and by extension education, became the main source for them, and once again Anderson quotes Hobsbawm here: "Hobsbawm's dictum that 'the progress of schools and universities measures that of nationalism, just as schools and especially universities became its most conscious champions,' is certainly correct for nineteenth century Europe, if not for other times and place".[12] Language here plays its role of communication and spreading information through institutions, in this particular case through education and vast libraries of print-

[9] Hall, "The Question of Cultural Identity", 612.
[10] Ibid., 613.
[11] Anderson, 'Old Languages, New World', 70.
[12] Ibid., 71.

language, that is the language of the people rather than the language-of-state, which were often one of the ancient languages at the time. While such ancient languages could be language-of-state, but in the common practice it was more often than not the vernacular language, the language of the community.[13]

As mentioned before, Hobsbawm is known for his works *The Age of Revolution* and *The Invention of Tradition*, but this thesis shall turn to his works in *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, as well as his article "Language, Culture, and National Identity". Hobsbawm in his article writes primarily on the situation of language in cultures, and multilingualism and multiculturalism, which arose due to a combination of factors, namely an aspiration to universal literacy, the political mobilisation of the people and a form of linguistic nationalism.[14] In particular, the increasing importance of the general populace in government affairs and thus became a necessary aspect of the state should be highlighted when taking into consideration the need for a standard language, for the general populace needed the ability to participate in such affairs while being able to understand everything that was said and written.[15] Hobsbawm also mentions how universal literacy is also difficult to achieve, especially when the written language has no relation to the spoken vernacular. He also states that any language which changes from purely oral to a written form, and here he puts an emphasis on educational language, also changes its character due to standardisations in for example grammar, vocabulary and even pronunciations.[16] To note, Hobsbawm focuses much of his writings in this article on Europe, as in both West- and East-Europe, but also on Hebrew and the South-Asian regions.

For Hobsbawm's *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, the chapter "The transformation of nationalism: 1870-1917" is of particular note as that is also the period during which Ueda

[13] Ibid., 78.
[14] Hobsbawm, "Language, Culture, and National Identity", 1066-1068.
[15] Ibid., 1069.
[16] Ibid., 1072.

Kazutoshi was most prolific in his writings and advocacy, as well as the period during which he went to study in Europe under orders from Tokyo Imperial University Katō Hiroyuki.[17] As such, it is important to understand where the focus of nationalism lied in this period of time, as that is also what Ueda most likely came into contact with during his stay in Europe. Hobsbawm states at the beginning of this chapter that one of the main shifts in nationalism of this period lied in the centring of ethnicity and language, increasingly becoming one of, if not the main factor and criteria of nationhood.[18] As a result, racism and nationalism also became tied together according to Hobsbawm, particularly when there came a need to "purify" the national language, which Hobsbawm likens to the analogy by racists of the necessity of ethnic purity.[19] Furthermore, Hobsbawm once again highlights the politico-ideological element of linguistic nationalism, stating that it "requires control of a state or at least the winning of official recognition of the language", through actions such as the "correction" and standardisation of already existent literature and dialects to invent essentially new languages which fit within the cadre of the needs of linguistic nationalism.[20] He also emphasis that the issue lies not in the language spoken or written in private spheres, but the language chosen explicitly for the purpose of institutional affairs such as government or education, and as such attitudes towards the different purposes of language will and should also differ.[21]

Another point that Hobsbawm raises with this insight into linguistic nationalism, is that the reception of linguistic nationalism was mild on two extremes of a spectrum within the populace. The elite, such as aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, had no need for the linguistic movement as they had already been educated in the "correct" and elitist form of the language. Meanwhile, the working class had no explicit need for it either. Instead, it was the middle

[17] Triche, "Kokugo and the 'Nation'", 69.
[18] Hobsbawm, "Transformation of nationalism", 102.
[19] Ibid., 108.
[20] Ibid., 110-111.
[21] Ibid., 113.

class which required schooling, and at the forefront were people such as local journalists and schoolteachers.[22]

It is important to note here that both scholars focused much of their work on the West and the Middle-Eastern and Indo spheres. The perspectives are rooted in the West, and while they might not make explicit mention of the East, there is still a divide between them, furthering the dichotomy between the West and the East, and as such one should also proceed with caution when applying the views and ideas put forward. However, that does not make the studies and points made by Anderson and Hobsbawm invalid, particularly when taking into consideration that with the start of the Meiji period and the opening of Japan within that same timeframe brought with it many Western academic influences to Japan.

2.2 Studies on language policies and the formation of *kokugo* in imperial Japan

In the following section, this thesis shall move away from looking at nationalism as a general concept and instead focus on the studies conducted on how language was implemented in imperial Japan and eventually underwent a reform under the *kokugo* movement in an effort to search for the unifying Japanese national language which could be then spread across the empire and standardised.

Firstly, it is important to understand how language and linguistic policies were set up in imperial Japan. To aid with this, the following part shall be looking at several sources on literature written during the Meiji period of imperial Japan, as well as policies set by Imperial Japan to cultivate an inherently imbalanced hierarchy, particularly in the then-annexed Korean peninsula, addressed as Chosun in the article specifically written by Seok Wong Song on cultural imperialism in that region in that period.

[22] Ibid., 116-117.

The article written by Seok Wong Song can be divided into two different parts within the overarching topic of imperial Japan's "Amalgamation of Japan and Chosun", otherwise named "Japan-Chosun are One Policy".[23] The first part is on the education policies set in Chosun, followed by sections on sports activities, with a further link between the two topics through school sports events. Through promoting "civilisation" and "modernisation" as it were in a "backwards and outdated" region and then furthering tensions between the people through "selective assimilation into Japanese culture and a derogatory interpretation [of] the identity of Chosun", imperial Japan created an imbalanced hierarchy, as written by Song.[24]

In education policies, this goal is reflected in how the Japanese language was designated as the national language, thereby assimilating the population of Chosun into the empire and Japanese ethnicity. While at first the language itself was merely promoted or recommended at schools, a change in the law and education policy enforced the learning of Japanese.[25] The influence of imperial Japan also reached into sports and gave them power over the physical body of the Chosun people, to cultivate national mind, body and spirit, but in reality it was also a way to cultivate military potential.[26] Imperial Japan essentially systematically destroyed the Chosun culture and identity, by dissimilating and then reconstructing and conditioning it to fit into the imperial Japanese ethnicity, and military purpose and domination.

The article "Blowing Up a Double Portrait in Black and White: The Concept of Asia in the Writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi and Okakura Tenshin" by Urs Matthias Zachmann looks at two figures who stood at the forefront of Japanese imperialism and its ideals. Focusing on and simultaneously deconstructing the duality between Fukuzawa Yukichi and Okakura Tenshin during the early stages of Japanese imperialism, Zachmann aimes to

[23] Song, "Japanese Imperial Mentality", 310.
[24] Ibid., 311-312.
[25] Ibid., 315.
[26] Ibid., 318-319.

recontextualise the "Asia" which Fukuzawa and Okakura mention in their writings, specifically in "Datsua ron" ("On Leaving Asia Behind",1885) by Fukuzawa and *The Ideals of the East with Special References to the Art of Japan* by Okakura respectively.[27] For Fukuzawa, the "Asia" which Japan had to dissociate itself from was neither political nor geographical, but the concept of Asia as represented through Orientalism. Japan should achieve through a shift in power relations with this break from 'Asia'. This consequently meant war with China, as advocated by Fukuzawa.[28] Similarly, Okakura conceded with Fukuzawa, in that the Sino-Japanese war was a form of self-expression.[29] While taking the Western binary between East and West, Okakura attempts to reach Japan's self, with Japan as a stationary centre and the binary shifting and subverted constantly to fit the context.[30] In the end, according to Zachmann, Okakura conceptualised "Asia" as an idealised utopia, and the West was an anti-idealist, pragmatic and dissatisfying present to him.[31] "Asia" becomes a strategic device for both authors to create an independent subject out of Japan and establish itself in the world order.[32]

Racialisation, imperial Japan's goal of finding and establishing itself as a power to be reckoned with in an already skewed world order, and to further place itself in a superior hierarchy in relation to Asia, in particular China and Korea, were achieved through various means and expressed on different fronts of literature and policies. The act of Othering manifested itself in language, but also through racialisation not just aimed at the dichotomy between Japan and the West, but also internally at differences and as such superiority and inferiority within its own population. A theme of past and present, and a wish to escape either

[27] Zachmann, "The Concept of Asia", 349.
[28] Ibid., 351-354.
[29] Ibid., 357.
[30] Ibid., 359.
[31] Ibid., 360.
[32] Ibid., 361.

of these is prominent in the literature and as such employed differently according to the ideologies of the authors.

The idea of creating a hierarchy and an Other to reflect on is also visible in the book by Atsuko Ueda, titled *Language, Nation, Race: Linguistic Reform in Meiji Japan (1868-1912)*, specifically in chapters 4 and 5 on the writings of Ueda Kazutoshi and Natsume Sōseki in the Meiji period. Ueda Kazutoshi posited the Japanese language as an imperial language, referred to as *kokugo*, and should be spoken by anyone in the Japanese empire, as it embodied progress and civilisation, in turn disavowing and distancing itself from the "yellowness" attributed to Asia as whole by Western powers.[33] By positing it as an imperial language spoken by everyone in the empire, it in turn created "inauthentic" speakers and "authentic and proper" speakers, with the group of inauthentic speakers increasing the more Japanese is taught to that group. The more "less civilised" minorities were created, the more "white" the Japanese empire at the centre could become.[34]

On the other hand, while not as straightforward as Ueda in his notions, elements of racialisation are evident in Sōseki's literary works, despite what Sōseki scholarship posits, as Atsuko Ueda argues.[35] Racialisation is exemplified in Ueda's chapter through the novel *Sanshirō*, with one passage describing how in the train from Kyushu to Tokyo, the main character Sanshirō sees the women becoming "whiter and whiter", while he himself was "a black man from Kyushu".[36] Sōseki's racialisation, however, was not merely directed at a difference between Westerners and the Japanese, but also internally between Japanese people, such as the duality between the countryside, the *inaka*, of Kyushu and the modern and progressive Tokyo in *Sanshirō*. It comes back to a notion of authenticity, as seen with Ueda

[33] Ueda, *Language, Nation, Race*, 90; ibid., 100-101.
[34] Ibid., 95-97; ibid., 114.
[35] Ibid., 103.
[36] Ibid., 105-106.

Kazutoshi before, with the progressive national centre as Tokyo compared to the rest of Japan.[37]

Another note of interest in regards to Sōseki is the censorship in English translations, as put forward by Ueda near the end of the chapter. While perhaps initially seen as artistic interpretation to make the writings flow better in the translated language, according to Ueda this should also be seen as a type of erasure on the translator's part, brought about by Cold War politics and an enforced view on Japan as a newly-reformed, "domesticated" ally to the United States. In turn, whether actively or unconsciously, the racial tensions were hidden from the readership.[38]

Taking into account how language was used in imperial Japan, it is now imperative to examine the different movements in script and speech reform of the Japanese language under the overarching concept of *kokugo*, a national language which was imperative to cultivating a national identity for a reforming Japan during the Meiji Restoration.[39]

The works by Nanette Twine discussed are two particular articles, "Standardizing Written Japanese: A Factor in Modernization" and "Toward Simplicity: Script Reform Movements in the Meiji Period". First, let us consider "Standardizing Written Japanese". This article in particular is focused on the driving forces – the motivations – behind the need to find a *kokugo*, as well as the roadblocks the scholars and government faced when in an attempt to find this singular language, specifically which dialect or colloquial language they were supposed to use as a basis to move towards the national standard language, the *hyōjungo* (標準語, transl. "standard language"). However, while dialects manifest mainly in speech, Twine's discussion is mainly based on the written form, as she mentions in the introduction

[37] Ibid., 107-109.
[38] Ibid., 118-119.
[39] Twine, "Standardizing Written Japanese", 432.

as well as inherently visible in the title of the article.[40] Still, the matter of differing regional speech also formed a basis in turn in regards to what shape the written form should take.

Twine sets the stage and context for the written language in the early Meiji period: written language was a symbol of erudition, while dialects and colloquial writings were part of popular literature and script. As such, Twine posits, there were two needs in Japan at the time: one was to replace the archaic style of writing with a modern colloquial style, and the second was to choose which variant of spoken Japanese would become the basis to this style.[41] This was not only to foster the urge for a collective national identity, but also to improve communications between institutions as well as the individuals of the empire.[42]

What was to be expected of the national language? Twine mentions the term *hyōjungo*, the standard language, which by itself also carries a standard of excellence and aspiration. It is also through this term that fuelled the need and movement towards eradication of other dialects apart from this ideal standard language. However, once the realisation hit that this ideal standard language would never truly come to exist, scholars of the Meiji period moved towards the use of the term *kyōtsūgo*, the common language.[43] The air and need for a certain excellence is also found in the search of the basis for the written language. There existed a rivalry in particular between *Kyōtogo* and *Edogo*, later termed *Tōkyōgo*. With the shift of the governmental capital from Kyoto to Edo, now Tokyo, during the Tokugawa period, so did the shift in the most commonly used and educated language arise. As such, once the search for the standard language started, *Tōkyōgo* had already started establishing itself as a language used most frequently by the educated.[44]

[40] Ibid., 430.
[41] Ibid., 431-432.
[42] Ibid., 433.
[43] Ibid., 435.
[44] Ibid., 438-439.

Twine continues in this article to line up the differing early viewpoints on how the colloquialisation were to be reflected in the written language. First were the conservative approaches, in which they advocated for a mix between the old and the new, therefore taking "a blend of the best linguistic aspects of Japan's history".[45] Another stance posited that standardisation would pave the way to colloquialisation, though this would also take up time which Japan did not have at the time if it wished to compete with the West.[46] Finally, taking the favouritism at the time towards *Tōkyōgo* into account, it was decided that it would form the basis towards colloquialisation.[47]

Twine then moves to the role of nationalism and national identity in these developments and mentions Ueda Kazutoshi, the key figure in this movement and as such will also eventually be the focus of this thesis. Ueda Kazutoshi asserted that the universal education of imperial Japan depended on the formation of a standard national language which also his primary concern, and that dialects had to be rooted out of the standard language, a point which was also vocalised by Okakura Yoshisaburō.[48] Emphasis on the education of students in a new colloquial writing style also surfaces later on in a petition, wherein it was stated that it was imperative to implement the colloquial style for the benefits of students and the future generation, so students could also gain the time to attain knowledge in other fields aside from their own language.[49] This nationalism and urge for national pride and identity aided the spread of the standard writing form, though all aspects during these developments should be assigned equal value according to Twine.[50]

While largely written in a similar context, the second article by Twine "Toward Simplicity" focuses on the practicality of the written language itself and the different stances

[45] Ibid., 440.
[46] Ibid., 441-442.
[47] Ibid., 444; ibid., 453.
[48] Ibid., 446.
[49] Ibid., 450.
[50] Ibid., 454.

on how to reform it. As the written language at the time was a show of erudition, movements were made to eradicate, or at the very least lessen, the number of *kanji* used in writing, as they were deemed unwieldy and archaic, and would only bar the way in contemporary education.[51] There were two prominent movements: the *Kana* movement and the *Rōmaji* movement, within which there were also differing opinions on how to implement their respective systems. Two early advocates of the use of *kana* were Maejima Hisoka and Shimizu Usaburō. According to Twine, both heavily emphasised the role of education and advocated for similar reforms, while also being both of the belief that by replacing *kanji* with *kana* Japan would be freed from its past, fuelled by patriotic sentiments.[52]

As for *rōmaji*, one advocate was Nishi Amane, who assessed that it would be in Japan's interest to adopt the Latin alphabet and thus introduce the *rōmaji* system.[53] Other advocates and supporters were trademarked by having studied in Western countries and as such were already familiarised with the Latin alphabet, which led to their fervent support for it to be implemented as they saw advantages in such a system.[54] However, as nationalist sentiment rose during the Meiji period, the enthusiasm diminished for implementations of Western instruments and systems and as such support for the *rōmaji* system declined and faded.[55]

While there were also other movements outside that of the *Kana* and *Rōmaji*, most seemed to agree on the need for the reduction of *kanji*. The theory posited by Twine as the most practical was that of Yano Fumio, who stated that *kanji* in moderation was not necessarily detrimental and that commonly used *kanji* in combination with *kana* would make

[51] Twine, "Toward Simplicity", 117.
[52] Ibid., 120.
[53] Ibid., 124.
[54] Ibid., 125.
[55] Ibid., 128.

for a familiar, but also reformed system for communication and writing which could then be implemented into education.[56]

Moving away from scholarly discourse, Hansen's article "Practicing *Kokugo*: Teachers in Hokkaido and Okinawa Classrooms, 1895-1904" takes into consideration the viewpoints of educators and school legislators. Hansen writes that as *kokugo* was in itself an idea and not yet something concrete, for educators it was important to receive this concreteness through government action to establish the standard language which would be used for education.[57] Hansen also puts emphasis on the hierarchy and feelings of superiority/inferiority depending on the level of language education, which is where the annexations and assimilations of the people of Hokkaido and Okinawa plays a large role, as they had to be included into the sphere of national influence.[58]

With the implementation of national school education, educators also became the interpreters of the nation, and the classroom became an open space to exchange ideas and share experiences.[59] One grievance which educators had with the laws and policies was that they were created by government officials, people who in their eyes had no practical classroom experience, and as such educational policies should be made by educators instead. According to a report, government recommendations taught students to be passive, while educators would rather have students be active and involved. It showed the rift in realities and ideals set by teachers and government officials, which prompted further debate and allowed teachers to gain a voice in the discourse.[60]

Language, then, had a purpose other than merely conveying a national identity and unity. It was supposed to be a tool to further communication and to allow students to convey

[56] Ibid., 129-130; ibid., 132.
[57] Hansen, "Practicing *Kokugo*", 331.
[58] Ibid., 335-337.
[59] Ibid., 339.
[60] Ibid., 341-342.

their ideas and convictions in clarity and simplicity, which brought with it three different components which educators felt were the most important: speech, script and composition, but also comprehension of text instead of merely reading and reproducing.[61] To be able to focus on these components, the way of language education also had to be reformed. The proposed approach by educators themselves was first to allow students to posit their ideas in a spoken form on paper, and only then to follow up with smoothening out the language use and composition through the set rules.[62]

Still, language education did not mean equalisation in terms of identity within the empire. Hansen uses Hokkaido and Okinawa as examples of this, though also mentions other territories such as Formosa and the Korean peninsula. Dialects and the flow of the language stamped them as distinctly outside of the privileged and standard sphere of language, and as such the education in these areas were also deemed inferior or at the least insufficient for them to become a truly Japanese national citizen, as the standard of excellence was also key to national identity.[63]

This sense of hierarchy is especially prominent in dialects and was at a height when the movement to root out dialects completely started, as evident in the article by Hiraku Shimoda, titled "Tongues-Tied: The Making of a "National Language" and the Discovery of Dialects in Meiji Japan". Herein, Shimoda posits that historical and nationalist context created the new hierarchy between dialects and the national standard language. He names it an anxiety in the sudden change in the race to modernisation and identity cultivation, leading to a demonisation of regional differences and plurality in the form of dialects, which stood in the way of national unity.[64] Before, during the Tokugawa period, in contrast to Twine's observation of the rivalry between *Kyōtogo* and *Edogo*, Shimoda also writes that plurality in

[61] Ibid., 343-345.
[62] Ibid., 347.
[63] Ibid., 347-349.
[64] Shimoda, "The Making of a 'National Language'", 718.

dialects and speech were validated and seen as something that was "authentically Japanese" by scholars of that time. There was no drive yet for national unity and universality, which only came about when Japan started developing itself as a modern nation-state on par with Western powers, after which diversity became an obstacle in the way to the modern standard and was seen as something vestigial from bygone days.[65] As Shimoda writes, "Dialects became a daily reminder of an embarrassing past that Japan would have to overcome if it wanted to become respectable in a world dominated by relatively mature nation-states".[66]

Diversity became a hindrance in the pursuit for better communications between not just the institutions, but also the individuals. The hope that dialects would fade away into obscurity once a standard language was established did not come into fruition, as the newfound modernity only further emphasised the awkwardness of dialects.[67] Again, Ueda Kazutoshi is brought up as one of the foremost advocates for the eradication of dialects, along with his pupil Hoshina Kōichi.[68] However, by positing dialects as the opposite of the ideal *kokugo*, Shimoda argues that by doing so the two could only be explained as exactly just that: oppositions of each other, with no concrete form of themselves, and thus the ideal which Ueda and Hoshina strived for were in essence immaterial and an unattainable idealistic view.[69]

Shimoda turns, just as Hansen, to educators' standpoints, in which they argued that dialects are like wild grass which grows in the pasture of national language; dialects grow naturally and while the pasture should be tended to, why should there be a need to eradicate that which grows naturally. In turn, however, educators were also expected of themselves to "tend" to this pasture by using the national standard, and reverting to their own dialects

[65] Ibid., 710; ibid., 722.
[66] Ibid., 723.
[67] Ibid., 724.
[68] Ibid., 724-725.
[69] Ibid., 726.

would be seen as shameful or lead to displeasure of government officials who would audit the classrooms and classes.[70] Shimoda thus concludes that what scholars and government officials suffered from was a fear or anxiety towards speech diversity and the fragility at the time of Japanese nationhood and its national identity, as signified by the push for unity and disdain for plurality and seeing dialects as inferior. However, eventually there came the acceptance of this plurality, even by Ueda Kazutoshi in his elderly years.[71]

The dissertation "Kokugo and the 'Nation' in Meiji-era Japan: Language Standardization, Ideology, and National Identity" by Martin Yates Triche is a culmination of the discourses provided above, with further explanations on the framework of nationalism and language set by most importantly Benedict Anderson and Joshua Fishman, on which another author he mentions had built upon, namely Naoki Sakai.[72] Further scholarship by Conrad Totman and Kevin Doak also provided insight into nationalism and identity in modern Japan, which discuss the different sub-types and groups in modern Japan, with Triche paying particular attention to the research surrounding the shift between the Tokugawa and Meiji periods.[73] Still, Triche is also careful in how to posit the frameworks of nationalism and nation-state, as he argues that they are also naturally Eurocentric, and thus research should be careful in how to determine in how far something is "modernisation" as such and what is "Westernisation". As such, he writes, "To summarize the subsequent efforts in Japan as guided solely by pursuit of a Western ideal, however, would represent a failure to properly distinguish between factors of form and function".[74]

On *kokugo*, Triche provides similar insight as the authors already mentioned above, with special mention to Nanette Twine, about whom he writes: "Twine's writings on script

[70] Ibid., 726-728.
[71] Ibid., 729-731.
[72] Triche, "Kokugo and the 'Nation'", 3.
[73] Ibid., 6-7.
[74] Ibid., 12-13.

reform and kokugo—along with those by Lee, Yasuda, Osa, and Shimoda—are worth noting in particular for their integrative approach, as they manage to raise questions about the political motivations and explicit symbolism behind "national language" education while also identifying the practical concerns and modern demands that have influenced language use over the last century-plus".[75] He then outlines the historical context and systems, starting with the Tokugawa period, and establishes that these systems as well as the local spheres and communities were mainly the reason why there was no connection at first to a supra-regional sphere or development, and thus no collective national identity at the time.[76] With the advent of a national government determined to create this identity came the need for the coveted status of nation-state and its accompanying national identity and culture, though language was not at the forefront of the issues the act of becoming a nation-state posed.[77]

The search for the national language opened the floor to debate from different social spheres. While government officials looked towards a global scale and sent delegations to foreign countries, it also in turn shaped the debate into how to reform the language into a language with which Japan could take in Western ideas in a more comfortable manner.[78] With the *genbun itchi* movement, the movement towards a standard national language, the push went into the direction of creating a unifying language of both speech and writing, though it also meant having to convince the elite of abandoning archaic ways.[79] This antiquity was both a heritage and antiquity to the scholars, according to Triche.[80] He brings up Tsubouchi Shōyō and Futabatei Shimei, who would also help bring about the shift towards progressive and modern colloquial-style writings, thereby also engaging with the general public.[81]

[75] Ibid., 19.
[76] Ibid., 26-27.
[77] Ibid., 29-31.
[78] Ibid., 40-43.
[79] Ibid., 44-46.
[80] Ibid., 49.
[81] Ibid., 50-53; ibid., 55.

Triche concludes that while the different movements during this period were varying and oftentimes opposites of each other, they nevertheless were part of the progressing movement towards the formation of the national language.[82] Looking at Ueda Kazutoshi, however, rather than arguing that Ueda's idea of *kokugo* was something unattainable and essentially doomed from the start, Triche instead sees Ueda's efforts as something more concrete compared to the stylistic discourse without a real course.[83] By giving it a more concrete shape and idea, it gave people a chance to recognise the responsibilities of the nation-state and its identity and further provided structure to the way towards that status.[84] Thus, Triche concludes, the formation of *kokugo* and the nation-state of Japan in general was not a singular narrative, but consistently built upon by developments from spheres also outside of the bureaucratic and scholarly ones.[85]

The important points to take away from the above discourse should be that the concept and formation of *kokugo* were driven by a need to form a national identity for imperial Japan, which found itself in a new world order once it opened its borders once more to the international world of the late 19th and early 20th century. However, the search for this new status quo also brought with it different tensions and acts of othering, such as between the national standard language and the dialects of Japan at the time, or concerning the "authenticity" of the Japanese spoken by those in the empire, which noted the difference between the mainland and the annexed regions. This created hierarchies where there were previously none.

The search for the national standard language also encompassed not just the scholarly and governmental. Ueda Kazutoshi himself advocated for many educational changes which naturally impacted the educational institutions, and teachers and other educators themselves

[82] Ibid., 67.
[83] Ibid., 71.
[84] Ibid., 73.
[85] Ibid., 76.

stood at the forefront of the task of bringing this unified language into fruition as seen in the article by Hansen, while also having to conform themselves to the newly implemented standards imposed on them by the national government. As such, this search spread across the empire and impacted many people of different social standings.

3. Ueda Kazutoshi, *Kokugo* and *Kokugo no tame*

In this chapter, I shall be delving further into Ueda Kazutoshi, who was one of the most prolific advocates of *kokugo* as has been made clear in the previous chapter on the conceptualisations and context surrounding *kokugo* itself. First, it is of importance to consider what kind of educations Ueda followed as well as his study tours in Europe, as that will also be reflected in his writings and ideas on how *kokugo* should take shape in Japan in comparison to European countries, most notably France and Germany where Ueda spent a few years abroad to study Western linguistics.

3.1 Background on Ueda Kazutoshi

Ueda was born to a samurai family in 1867 in the city of Edo, which is the current Tokyo, and thus one year before the Meiji Revolution and the start of the Meiji period and industrialisation and modernisation of imperial Japan.[86] Paul Clark outlines in his dissertation titled "The *Kokugo* Revolution: Ueda Kazutoshi, Language Reform and Language Education In Meiji Japan (1868-1912)" how this particular situation and results from political reform shaped Ueda's early education: he had the opportunity to enjoy a newly-instated national education curriculum which took a developmental approach rather than focusing on Confucian texts, and as Ueda and his family lived in Tokyo, that also meant that they had access to more modernised institutions which were not yet available to those in the more rural areas of Japan.[87] With these points in mind, it is then also clear that Ueda lived a relatively privileged life and had more resources available to him while in his learning stages.[88]

[86] Clark, "The *Kokugo* Revolution", 113.
[87] Ibid., 114.
[88] Ibid., 115.

He proceeded to become an undergraduate at the Tokyo Imperial University and studied linguistics under English linguist Basil Hall Chamberlain, who was proficient in multiple languages and held an interest in colloquial Japanese, including Ainu and Ryukyuan.[89] Chamberlain also advocated for a systemic study and complete reform of the Japanese language, much like Ueda, though Chamberlain was part of the *Rōmaji* movement. Nevertheless, Ueda was greatly influenced by his years of studying under Chamberlain.[90] Chamberlain and Ueda held respect for each other, with Chamberlain leaving Ueda a considerable amount of his collections, while Ueda showed a devotion to Chamberlain when mentioning him in his writings, as Lee Yeounsuk writes in his chapters on Ueda.[91]

Still, Ueda eventually finished his studies in the Department of Classical Japanese Literature under the tutelage of Toyama Masakazu, who is described by Clark as having had "extensive international experience and a wide variety of intellectual interests".[92] Toyama also became Minister of Education later on and used this position of power to press for language reform, leading up to him using his influence to have Ueda be appointed as Director of Educational Affairs in the Ministry of Education, providing key support for Ueda's career.[93]

In 1890, Ueda received a government-sponsored study abroad to Europe by Katō as mentioned in the previous chapter, in order to study Western linguistics. Ueda proceeded to spend three years studying comparative linguistics in Germany, where he came into contact with the Neogrammarian school, as well as the most recent theories concerning linguistics and philology which had emerged as a discipline in Europe prior to Ueda's arrival in Europe.[94] During this, Ueda notably learned of the importance of how language could either

[89] Shimoda, "The Making of a 'National Language'", 723; Triche, "Kokugo and the 'Nation'", 68.
[90] Clark, "The *Kokugo* Revolution", 119.
[91] Ibid.; Lee, "The Early Period of Ueda Kazutoshi", 74.
[92] Clark, "The *Kokugo* Revolution", 120.
[93] Ibid., 121; Triche, "Kokugo and the 'Nation'", 69.
[94] Ibid.; Clark, "The *Kokugo* Revolution", 128.

be a divisive or unifying force, in particular through the example of the unification of Germany under Bismarck, and when he returned from his study abroad in 1894 he became one of the most prominent advocates for language reform in imperial Japan.[95]

The year of Ueda's return also bears significance, as in that year the Sino-Japanese war started, with Japan emerging as the victor in the following year of 1895. Triche outlines the context of Ueda's return as follows: "Ueda's return thus coincided with a notable shift in public sentiment regarding the value and orientation of Japanese culture, language, and politics—the latent (or manufactured) seeds of common national identity sprouted into at least one form of nationalism, pride was voiced for Japan's cultural history while support for progressive government policies grew, and the contours of the modern state grew increasingly clear as comparisons to its Asian neighbors were made with some frequency".[96] Ueda saw language reform as a way for Japan to unify and progress according to these new social expectations and values born from the rise in national pride after this significant shift in Japan's position of power on the international level.[97]

Thus, taking into consideration Ueda's own privileged upbringing, having enjoyed a more modernised form of education through the Meiji education reforms and having had the support and tutelage from important and powerful figures such as Chamberlain and Toyama, this also meant that Ueda had the opportunity to come into contact with foreign exchanges of ideas and academics, as exemplified by his study abroad in Germany and France. He gained a position of power as Director of Educational Affairs, and had the resourced to spearhead the *kokugo* movement and the reforms which Ueda had planned for Japan. So, it is with this context – his educated background and the influences which he received from abroad – that this thesis shall now move into looking at Ueda's book, *Kokugo no tame*.

[95] Ibid., 132-133.
[96] Triche, "Kokugo and the 'Nation'", 70.
[97] Clark, "The *Kokugo* Revolution", 133.

3.2 Ueda's *Kokugo no tame*

3.2.1 Nationalism in *Kokugo no tame*

As seen above, Ueda has seen and felt the growing need for a unifying Japanese identity and the benefits of having a unifying language in turn, through both his studies as well as the social context at the time. To say that Ueda has nationalist sentiments and thoughts would also not be unrealistic, though it is then the matter of to what extent nationalism influenced his ideas and envisioning of *kokugo*. The question is then as follows, in accordance with the research questions posed in the introduction of this thesis: how is nationalism reflected in his writings on *kokugo* and how it should become the ideal unifying language of Japan and its people?

Ueda was highly driven by the notion of the "nation", and with it identity and the national language which defines this identity, drawing upon the longevity and prosperity it would be able to bring the Japanese empire. To start with, especially considering the influences which Ueda received abroad, it is of importance to look at what was the driving forces behind his writings in *Kokugo no tame*. In the book's first chapter, which is his essay *Kokugo to kokka to* (国語と国家と, transl. "National language and the nation"), it becomes clear to the reader from the start that the "nation", the *kokka*, is of significant importance to Ueda in its connection with *kokugo*, including outlining the four aspects of a nation according to Ueda: in 1) a fixed geographical region, there exists 2) a collective singular ethnic group, in which 3) everyone lives and conforms to each other in their daily lives, and obeys a set of fixed laws which enforces this conformity, signifying a type of 4) law enforcement.[98] Ueda also lists language as one of the factors which ties together the population, followed by an

[98] Ueda, *Kokugo no tame*, 11-13.

emphasis on education which aids in the tying of the national people as well as the future of unification.[99]

As discussed before, language and education reformations are two points which Ueda put heavy emphasis on, so it is only natural that alongside the four initial factors he would also mention these two elements which hold an important role for him in the formation of the Japanese national identity and the modernisation of imperial Japan. The Japanese language should as such be the "spiritual blood" (精神的血液), which flows through the Japanese nation and its people and binds everyone together, so it can continue to live long and prosperously, according to Ueda.[100] This idea of longevity and prosperity is also reflected in his goals for education reforms, stating that by unifying imperial Japan under a standard language would also show the outside world – almost certainly referencing the Western powers in this period of time – that Japan holds power and respect.[101] From these sentiments and statements, Ueda insists on the sense of pride for the nation and development of said pride, so it can elevate the nation's status both within the country itself as well as when it stands on the world stage with the other international powers.

The words "for the sake of the empire, for the sake of the empire's education" (帝国のため、帝国の教育のため) exemplifies further the underlying sentiment of Ueda in his essay addressed to the scholars and the *genbun itchi* movement.[102] His concerns were aimed at the future of the empire and for the future generations, and through these language reforms the empire would be able to move towards the better future. "For the national language, for education and for the nation, this should be implemented as soon as possible" (国語のため、教育のため、国家のため、一日も早く実際にすることを務めねばなりませぬ), he

[99] Ibid., 14.
[100] Ibid., 17.
[101] Ibid., 53-55.
[102] Ibid., 59.

writes, indicating the *genbun itchi* movement and the standardisation of the written language. With this, Ueda creates a sense of urgency in implementing these new reforms, which he posits as for the better of the nation and national education, which would have a positive effect on the empire in turn.[103] Both "as soon as possible" and "for the sake of the empire/education" are phrases which Ueda uses frequently throughout the chapters and essays which *Kokugo no tame* encompasses, which shows the need by Ueda to have these reforms implemented, as well as almost the sense of duty for the empire which he feels towards imperial Japan and its state at the time.[104]

Alongside the standardisation of language, Ueda also advocates for teaching the nation's own unique features on a linguistic level, which would also increase the "self-awareness of the [Japanese] people" (国民の自覚).[105] This is in line with the formation of the imagined communities as described by Benedict Anderson. By forming a standardised language, through which one can also preach about the nation's features to the people, it creates the sense of unity and the factors with which the people can become "aware" of the community of which they are part of.

With the ideology of nationalism and the search for the national identity also comes the acts of othering and what can be constituted as racism and the racialisation of institutions and reforms, which was also what Ueda Atsuko focused on in her chapter on Ueda Kazutoshi.[106] However, as discussed in the reflections on nationalism and its foundations, Hobsbawm also states that both racism and nationalism are linked, and as such when thinking of the question how nationalism is reflected in Ueda's writings, it is thus also necessary to take into account the acts of othering and comparisons between Japan and its neighbours made by Ueda as part of the nationalist sentiments of Ueda.

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[103] Ibid.; ibid., 176.
[104] Ibid., 134; Ibid., 141.
[105] Ibid., 164.
[106] Ueda, *Language, Nation, Race*, 87-88.

In terms of Ueda and his concerns on how the foreign powers will look upon Japan, he quotes Martin Opitz, a German poet: "Wir verachten uns selbst und warden verachtet" (transl. "we despise ourselves and are despised by others"). Ueda relates this quote to the state of affairs regarding Japan and the national language: should the people not respect their own national language, then it will only lead to the "foreigners" (外国人) despising and disrespecting that language.[107] This section shows that Ueda was concerned with how the foreign powers – most importantly the Western powers – would look upon imperial Japan, should there not be language reforms or any self-awareness and respect for the national language.

Ueda posits that should the Japanese people be careless in respecting their own national language, then the "predominant foreign languages" (優勢なる外国語) such as English, French, German and Russian, will become more prevalent and eventually take over as the lingua franca, pushing Japanese down to a lower level of social acceptance. He addresses these sentiments to the "patriots" (憂国の諸君), which generates a feeling of being spoken to directly, as a reader who belongs to the envisioned community of the Japanese people by Ueda. This aligns with the acts of comparisons between the self and the Other, and as such reflect the feelings of nationalism and the sense of duty Ueda feels towards his empire and its people.[108]

There is a fine line that Ueda puts between allowing in foreign languages and loan words and ensuring that the Japanese language will not be influenced too heavily by said foreign languages, or even outright "killed", as is the case with regards to the influence of Chinese on Japanese through the presence of *kanji*.[109] He even names it a failure that formerly in Japanese linguistics, the scholars put too much emphasis on the foreign and thus

[107] Ueda, *Kokugo no tame*, 208.
[108] Ibid., 212.
[109] Ibid., 214.

allowed foreign languages to become too prominent in this field.[110] However, there also seems to be a distinction between Chinese (支那語) and the foreign languages which he had deemed predominant earlier on. He alludes to the domination of the Chinese empire by the foreign powers of Germany, Russia, France and Great Britain – notably the "predominant" countries – and states that this domination is the destiny of the Chinese empire, and should not become that of the Japanese empire.[111]

It is a subtle distinction, but still a significant one nonetheless. It shows that to Ueda, the Qing dynasty's state and the empire's fate to become dominated by the foreign powers is something that the Japanese empire should avoid. Again, it is by reflecting off the situations and international status quo in which Ueda makes a clear position on where Japan and its future should head, namely that it should shift towards better relations with the Western powers, and even "rejoice in the beaching of the Great Qing Dynasty" (大清国の沿岸は皆我国民を歓迎すべく).[112] Further on in the book, Ueda posits that for the sake of the national language, Japan should prepare itself to move away and remove itself entirely from its bond with *kango* (漢語, transl. "Han language"), which is the language used in old scriptures and derived from the Chinese language, and replace it with colloquial language.[113] While the Chinese continue to use *kanji* exclusively, it is unfeasible for Japan to do so as well, as Japan has the "splendid system of *kana*" (立派な仮名のある日本).[114] Thus, by juxtaposing the outdatedness of using a system with only *kanji* as they do in China with the brilliance of the *kana* system in Japan, Ueda puts Japan above China and essentially strives for Japan to be seen as progressive and modern.

[110] Ibid., 216.
[111] Ibid., 217.
[112] Ibid., 218.
[113] Ibid., 290.
[114] Ibid., 292.

The dates of the chapters also indicate a shift in tone from Ueda. The first chapter, *Kokugo to kokka to*, was written in 1895, the year in which Japan became victorious in the First Sino-Japanese War.[115] As discussed by Triche, this was thus also the period in which Japanese nationalism and pride for the nation started gaining tract, as imperial Japan had just defeated the other great power in its region. Once the book reaches its final chapters and essays, they were written around 1905. Spanning over a decade, Ueda's nationalist sentiments had grown more prominent, as can be read with his paragraph addressing the nation's patriots to gain more self-confidence, as it were, in the Japanese nation and its values.

Thus, in terms of how nationalism is conveyed through Ueda's writings, it is clear that Ueda holds the concept of "nation" and the formation of the Japanese identity in high regard, not only to bring pride and honour onto the empire itself, but also so that it might stand tall on the world stage that it has found itself on in the Meiji period and after the First Sino-Japanese War. By vying for a unifying language with unique characteristics which will also set it apart from the now-outdated *kango* and by proxy the Chinese, Ueda sets out for civilisation for Japan so it can keep itself in high regard, and so it can also allow the Western powers to hold some measure of respect for Japan, as language will be able to set apart the civilised from the savage.[116]

3.2.2 The idealism of Ueda's envisioned reformations

While undoubtedly Ueda's calls for reformation were indispensable for starting the *kokugo* movement and the standardisation of the Japanese language, it is also imperative to consider in how far his ideas for reformation were idealistic or realistic, as it has been argued that it is

[115] Ibid., 25.
[116] Ibid., 325.

either one or the other. This thesis argues that while the reformations which Ueda advocates for are realistic, rationally argued and implementable to an extent, it is also the manner in which Ueda partially puts the responsibility of bringing these reformations into fruition on the Japanese people alongside the grandiose scale of his ideas that seems idealistic. It is precisely because it was a quest for the national identity that Ueda put this responsibility on the people, and as such even though the reformations are supported through rational ideas, the idea that it should also rely on the readiness of the Japanese people and national identity which brings down the realistic outcomes of his advocacy.

In particular, there is a great sense of responsibility on behalf of the educators, with Ueda stating firmly that it should primarily be through proper education that *hyōjungo* should be used and taught.[117] With *hyōjungo* Ueda points specifically towards the Tokyo dialect, which he believes holds the values and characteristics to become the standardised language, though even Ueda himself realises that for it to become the standardised language, it will require time to polish.[118] As such, Ueda aims specifically at reformations starting from elementary school, bringing up the example of how one could reform the books used in children's education to become more standardised, but eventually part of the standardisation's responsibility lies with the teachers, who have to reform from using their own local dialects to teach, to teaching in the standardised form of *hyōjungo*, which would bring greater benefits once these teachers have also risen to this standard.[119]

Ueda relies on generations of teachers to standardise the language, as well as having these teachers understand the standards of the language that they are teaching to the next generation.[120] This is one of the signs indicating the scale of Ueda's advocacy; while it is reasonable to expect the teachers under this language standardisation to be well-versed in

[117] Ibid., 43.
[118] Ibid., 44.
[119] Ibid., 50-53.
[120] Ibid., 54.

what they are teaching, the scenario of teachers and apprentices helping the standardisation move forward becomes a grand imagination.

Another point of contention in terms of realism and feasibility is that Ueda calls for each respective language which is taught in Japan to be taught by a native of that language. This seems in part driven by nationalistic pride and racialisation that Ueda had internalised at this point in time, and thus Ueda looks down upon teachers of foreign languages who speak in a "suspicious dialect" (あやしき方言) and thus do not speak the "standardised" form of the language.[121] This, in turn, also extends to who should be able to become teachers of the Japanese language, and Ueda advocates for holding examinations in regards to how well-qualified these teachers truly are, amongst both foreigners and the Japanese.[122] Here, Ueda's distaste for dialects and accents which was discussed by Shimoda and Triche also comes into play. Dialects and accents of any form are inferior to the standardised language spoken by those who are native speakers of said language. However, by positing this as a factor and limitation to those who can teach the language, whether it be foreign or the Japanese language, Ueda also attempts to fit his strategy for reformations within a tight box which is outlined by his need to teach the standardised language in its "purest" form through native speakers rather than a foreign speaker which is almost of lower quality in his eyes.

Still, even with the above controversial limitations and points laid out, that is not to say that Ueda does not bring up more reliable and concrete examples and ways of teaching the standardised language. In relation to essays and the written language, Ueda proposes that for younger children, who might have been taught initially in dialect, should also write out their texts in that dialect, and afterwards a qualified language teacher would then correct this text so it will fit into the standards of the national language.[123] To further this, Ueda also calls

[121] Ibid., 221.
[122] Ibid.,
[123] Ibid., 57.

for reforming the current schoolbooks to contain more words than mere pictures, explicitly stating that it is not the goal of education to foster interest, but rather to prepare the students for later, for the real society and adult life.[124] Herein, Ueda also manages to tie the reformations back to nationalism, advocating for the schoolbooks to also contain references to the nation and the national ideology, or at least have content which has direct connections to the national community, thereby also creating the opportunity for the children to connect to the community of the Japanese, which can be achieved through language and *kokugo* education.[125]

Thus, in terms of whether Ueda's idea of reformations and new manners of education are idealistic or not, it is not a matter of feasibility mostly, but rather it is the grandiosity as well as certain limiting terms of Ueda's ideas that it will seem idealistic. The nationalistic nature and the need for a sense of purity in the teachings of languages also severely limits the reach of said strategy and reformations, as it would lead to less plurality and perhaps even development of the standardised language. It would also significantly decrease the potential pool of suitable, well-qualified teachers, merely due to their use of dialects or that they are not native speakers of the language which they are attempting to teach.

[124] Ibid., 270.
[125] Ibid., 268.

4. Conclusion

As has become clear over the course of this thesis and research into Ueda Kazutoshi and his envisioned reforms in language and language education, the influences of newfound nationalism, racialisation and the act of othering during this period cannot be ignored. It forms a basis to the question of why Ueda wished to implement the standardised language as soon as possible. The phrase "for the sake of the empire" and its variations further exemplify this nationalist pride Ueda has along with the need to provide a long and prosperous future for his nation. This also meant having to compare the state of Japan at the time with the other foreign powers in Japan's vicinity, meaning the Western powers as well as the Chinese Qing dynasty. Ueda regarded the Western powers as more dominant in the world order, and as he studied for three years in both Germany and France, he has also experienced how unification of language brought benefits to those countries, putting them on a sort of pedestal as examples to follow for Japan. Yet, he deliberately cautions against too much outside influence, otherwise Japan would become just like the Qing dynasty and be dominated by said Western powers. This puts China as another example, but instead of an example to follow, it shows a failure which Japan has to avoid.

This racialisation is inevitably part of the nationalist sentiments which Ueda lets through in his writings. It is thus important to consider both racialisation and nationalism as part of each other in the wider historical context of where Japan found itself at the time. Japan had just moved up onto the world stage to start comparing itself to other imperial, Western powers, after defeating its historical rival, the Chinese empire. Thus, Ueda putting the West as an example to follow and China as an example to avoid, for the better of the Japanese people and its modernisation and civilisation, it is all a part of how nationalism is reflected in his writings.

Concluding on whether Ueda's ideas for *kokugo* and language reforms were idealistic and unachievable needs nuance, much like Ueda's own envisions. While Ueda does provide ways and recommendations on how to start with reformations, whether through education or the academic study of *kokugo* and language, it is of a grand scale. While that is not immediately to say that this is inherently unachievable by itself, it does show that while Ueda did take the steps towards where he wanted to lead his intentions and reforms, it was still a beginning and not yet narrowed to a slighter scope of the situation. Book reforms, examinations to determine the worth of teachers, as well as the limitations on who could become language teachers to begin with, to spread these reforms through the nation would take many resources and plenty of time. Ueda shows he also understood this, with his comments on how teachers and their apprentices would propagate the standardisation of language, this also in turn leads to the conclusion that the reformation will take many years to come and cannot be achieved within just several years.

As such, Ueda provides both a foundation and the eventual challenge which language reformation would bring with it, while setting further limitations in his own envisioning of these reformations due to his nationalist sentiments regarding what essentially amounts to the purity of the language being taught. It is thus perhaps incorrect to label Ueda's writings and ideas as idealistic; perhaps "ambitious" would fit better within the context in which he considered these ideas. Eventually, Ueda still laid out a foundation and framework for how to begin with language reformations, to allow the Japanese language to become what it is today.

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