Afterword

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As guest editor, alongside Shirley Ando and Collette Grant, of *JALT Journal*'s first special issue on a topic of such timely importance to our organization and to English language teaching (ELT) in Japan more broadly, I humbly felt the weight of expectations for this publication to address with full impact and import the breadth of all issues pertaining to race and native speakerism in ELT. This special issue pushed against such expectations, however, because it was rather motivated by a desire to spur greater discussion within *JALT Journal* on this topic, and so it should be seen not as a capstone but as a basis for further research, critique, and action. To that end, in this Afterword[1] I would like to address some outstanding issues raised by the related articles and books reviewed in this special issue in order to bring together the ideas raised, as well as to pose questions and propose directions for further examination with the hopes that future authors and editors will take these ideas and go beyond them, alongside the limitations and tensions in doing so.

On Resilience of the 'Native Speaker'

In the article "An Introduction to Race and Native-Speakerism," Ryuko Kubota provides a valuable account of the history of race and native-speakerism research around the globe. To understand how this strand of research has evolved in Japan, however, we need to look back to the pioneering work of Stephanie Ann Houghton at Saga University. Houghton's (2002) protest article questioned existing Japanese and international labor laws which, although prohibiting discrimination based on a broad range of identity markers, have yet to make explicit references to language-based ideologies including the categorization of people based on the 'native speaker' criterion. This gesture brought Houghton's own contractual status

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at her university under question. Fortunately, her voice was not drowned out by conservative forces, eventually leading her to be elected as the first non-Japanese labor union chair in Japan. Houghton's argument then gained national magnitude and helped lead to the disappearance in 2005 of the *gaikokujin kyoushi* (foreign lecturer) category, as well as the elimination—though still incomplete—of the 'native-speaker' category in job postings in Japan. In collaboration with other activists and researchers both within and outside Japan including Evan Heimlich, Arudou Debito, Damian Rivers, Kayoko Hashimoto, and many more over the years, including notably a collaboration with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Racism (Dième, 2006), Houghton's involvement facilitated discussion with a broad range of conceptual and empirical questions regarding the resilience and dismantlement of native-speakerism in Japan (see Houghton & Bouchard, 2020). In the context of multiple national and international symposia on the subject, a growing body of work has now emerged, which increasingly makes it clear that a critical analysis of racism and native-speakerism in language education is more than a matter of raising questions about identity and ideology. Racism and native-speakerism are first and foremost systems of oppression (i.e., antecedent and enduring) imposing considerable discursive and material constraints upon workers in the language teaching industry and beyond. This growing body of work has also led to more sophisticated understandings of the debilitating impacts of racism and native-speakerism on both 'non-native' and 'native speakers' alike. This critical improvement is crucial, for it not only aligns with long-standing conceptualizations of ideologies as "double-edged swords," but it also pushes the conversation further towards the ultimate goal of social emancipation. At the same time, however, even as we combat the ill effect of racism and native-speakerism on 'native speakers' themselves, they/we should not be the focus because this may end up recentering whiteness by marginalizing the importance of race (Hammond, 2006). Indeed, as special issue author J. P. B. Gerald argues elsewhere (2020), it is essential that TESOL professionals take the risk to actively de-center whiteness in our research and teaching. This is particularly in light of the fact that while the reduction of (white) 'native-speakers' to "saleable attributes" (Holliday, 2015, p. 15) is no doubt dehumanizing, it is not nearly as detrimental to their professional, personal, and material standing as the injustices experienced by their/our colleagues. This special issue will hopefully encourage scholarship from all researchers, and particularly scholars considered 'non-native speakers' from outside Japan who work here, that takes these raciolinguistic barriers to account.

A further site of enduring resilience is within the framing by Japanese teachers of English of 'native speakers' as the final arbiter of what is *correct* English, a topic examined by Robet J. Lowe. Given the persistence of 'native speaker' norms worldwide (Lowe, this issue) and the resilience of 'native speaker' master frames despite active academic interrogation among Lowe's participants, it is not entirely surprising that universities in the Kansai region, for example, would still be advertising "native English" as a selling point of their schools even in 2022 or that colleagues may still ask for a "native check" of an English text. At the same time, it is necessary to acknowledge and appreciate work done by Japanese scholars in Japan against this "native speaker worship" (Sato, 2022, p. 70) and towards the grounding of English norms on a broadly Global Englishes/English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) basis (e.g., Konakahara & Tsuchiya, 2020) and as advanced institutionally in places such as the Center for English as a Lingua Franca at Tamagawa University. We look forward to more Japanese researchers in these fields advancing this research in *JALT Journal.*

Intersectionality: A Path Not Yet Taken Far Enough

This special issue is the start of a needed dialogue on the crucial topics of race and native-speakerism in ELT in Japan and beyond, and as such, it is by no means complete or definitive. Despite the fact that two of the three special issue editors, the author of the introductory article, and our book review contributors are female, the special issue editors nevertheless keenly felt the lack of female-authored research contributions in the final publication. Given the exigencies of publishing, however, we felt its absence was better than silence. The special issue editors therefore call on authors working with the intersections of gender, race, sexual identity, ability, and speakerhood to submit to *JALT Journal* and hope that this special issue will demonstrate *JALT Journal*'s commitment to this particular area of critical applied linguistics. One recent example of such scholarship is Owens (2017), which examines what she terms the "traveling yellow peril" represented by Filipina English teachers, such as those interviewed in Stewart (2020), and their threat to the white hetero-masculinity of some U.S. men working as English teachers in Japan. Another is Lawrence and Nagashima (2020), which examines via duoethnography the multiple means through which nationality and sexuality intersect in the authors' identities as ELT professionals. By highlighting the conjunctions between race, gender, and sexuality under professional neoliberal flexibility and privilege, such as noted in Park (2017), it is hoped that this special issue will not only raise issues related to the problematic

influence of neoliberalism on contemporary critical applied linguistics but that it will also enable more frank and necessary conversations among scholars and language practitioners aimed at developing effective emancipatory strategies for language learners and users everywhere (see Block et al., 2012).

What Is to Be Done?

For those who may still question the relevance of such issues to language teaching, we would like to reiterate Bouchard (2022) who argues that the notion that critical issues are somehow extraneous to language teaching research ignores the situation of our work within multiple layers of power and domination. These social structures act as powerful conditioning forces upon decisions regarding who can speak in our field, what is considered important research, and how it is—or is not—supported by funding, tenured positions, and other forms of material institutional recognition. It also overlooks the inherently critical nature of the humanistic scholarship in which we are engaged. With this in mind, the following is a brief examination of the constraints and promises of what changes language teaching professionals should make.

In *Global English and Political Economy* (2021), John O'Regan details through a Marxist analysis of the political economy of the spread of English since the inception of capitalism in the 17th Century how English has functioned to smoothen the circuits of capital and aided its accumulation. In Chapter 7, on "superdiverse translingualism," O'Regan (pp. 184–185) makes the uncomfortable yet cogent observation that the detractors of native-speakerism (present company included) are ourselves complacent in the perpetuation of 'native speaker' norms of speech and, more importantly, of academic writing. That this should be so is no surprise, however, because as discussed in Bourdieu (1988), scholars are overdetermined by their relation to and place within an academic marketplace in which capital is, as O'Regan puts it, "the real foundation" (p. 184). O'Regan, following Blommaert (2010), suggests viewing this in terms of orders of indexicality that determine whether and to what extent more normative forms of English will be used given the social value and concomitant registers attached to articles in an academic journal such as this, for instance. The resilience of native-speakerism and the racist and imperialist roots of the ELT enterprise, as described by our special issue authors, contribute to a double-bind in which our silence and inaction in the face of injustice are damning, but yet so is our action in writing critically against inequities in our field. Furthermore,

criticality—as necessary as it is—is definitely a profitable trend in all aspects of academia, thus further reinforcing the real foundations upon which we work.

Yet, we must act, for the sake of our students, our colleagues, and ourselves. Gerald (this issue) for instance suggests that when using videos in class, teachers use captions "for *all* speakers so as not to stigmatize those with less familiar accents or languaging, and to increase accessibility," and that researchers relentlessly question their/our assumptions about Japanese English, as well as the faces of those whose research we draw upon (see also Kubota, 2019). Lowe (this issue) suggests that we help our students adopt a Freirean "attitude of constant re-evaluation" and that by "confronting tensions, contradictions, and crises between their beliefs and their experiences, it is likely that they will begin, autonomously, to present counter-framings which in turn represent ideological ruptures." Beyond these changes to our teaching and research are the more concrete steps of eliminating discriminatory hiring practices against 'non-native' non-Japanese teachers of English from outside the "inner circle" countries in particular since, according to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2018), Japan still has insufficient legal prohibitions against racial discerimination. Although these steps may on their own be insufficient in dismantling native-speakerism or its raciolinguistic basis, they will help marginalized groups of teachers, such as those interviewed in Stewart (2020), accomplish the recognition and professional security they deserve for their contributions to the ELT field. Most importantly, they will be one small but necessary move towards building solidarity in our profession based upon shared humanity.

Note

1. The author would like to acknowledge the useful feedback and constructive input from Jeremie Bouchard in the writing of this afterword, especially for his help with the crafting of the list For Further Reading.

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For Further Reading

For more detailed insight into race and native-speakerism research in Japan and beyond, we invite readers to consult the following titles:

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