社会言語科学　第18巻第1号
2015年9月　162-175ページ

The Japanese Journal of Language in Society
Vol. 18, No. 1, September 2015, pp. 162-175

Study Material

The 'Multiform' Linguistic, Sociolinguistic and Sociocultural Practices of Plurilingual Employees in European Multinationals in Japan

Lisa FAIRBROTHER (Sophia University)

Despite the large number of foreign companies operating in Japan, which employ speakers of many different languages, very little research has been conducted on the actual language practices in multilingual workplaces in Japan. Based on semi-structured and interaction interviews with plurilingual employees of European-owned multinationals, this study will show how interactional practices in such workplaces are 'multiform', including a variety of hybrid, pidginized and deliberately adjusted forms. Furthermore, these multiform practices are not limited to merely linguistic elements but also apply to sociolinguistic and sociocultural practices. However, in contrast with earlier studies that stress that multiform practices are undertaken for the purpose of aiding smooth communication, an analysis of the practices in this study, highlights the influence of the hierarchical power structure of the workplace. Multiform practices are not simply a choice but they may also be imposed on employees lower down in the hierarchy, affecting both the use of their own L1 and other lingua francas.

Key words: multinationals, plurilingualism, Language Management Theory, sociolinguistic practices, power

在日ヨーロッパ多国籍企業における複言語話者社員の「多形式」の言語的，社会言語的及び社会文化的な行動

フェアブラザー，リサ（上智大学）

数多くの外資系企業が日本で取引しているのにもかかわらず，日本の多言語職場における言語行動に関する研究は非常に少ない．本研究では，ヨーロッパ多国籍企業に勤務している複言語話者との半構造化及びインターアクション・インタビューをもとに，こうした多言語職場で行われるインターアクション行動はハイブリッド化，ピジン化，及び意図的に調整された形式を含む「多形式」(multiform)であると論じる．さらに，このような多形式の行動は単なる言語行動に限定されず，社会言語学的及び社会文化的な行動にも見られる．しかし，これらの多形式の行動が行われる目的はコミュニケーションをスムーズに行うためであると先行研究で論じられているのに対し，本研究の分析は，力関係の影響を明らかにする．多形式な行動は選択肢としてだけでなく，職場において立場が低い者に強いられる場合があり，それが自らの第一言語使用と他のリングワフランカ使用にも影響を及ぼす．

キーワード：多国籍企業，複言語主義，言語管理理論，社会言語的行動，パワー

1. Introduction

Of the 3,194 foreign companies surveyed by the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI, 2012), almost half of those were European-owned companies. Some of these companies may not claim to be 'multilingual' with regard to their official corporate languages, but because of their diverse language and cultural backgrounds, many of the employees of such companies can be described as "plurilingual" speakers (Council of Europe, 2001), who use resources from their extensive repertoires of language and communicative skills in order to accomplish their

everyday work.

Based on interviews with plurilingual employees of European multinationals based in Japan, this paper will show how many of the everyday interactional practices of plurilinguals in such workplaces are "multiform" (Lüdi, Höchle, & Yanaprasart, 2010), including hybridized, pidginized and deliberately adjusted forms. It will be shown how these multiform elements are not only related to purely linguistic forms, such as vocabulary and grammatical items, but also to what Neustupný (1997) refers to as "sociolinguistic" and "sociocultural" aspects of interaction. Applying Language Management Theory (hereafter: LMT) (Jernudd & Neustupný, 1987), this study will focus on the problems that plurilingual employees report regarding their interactions at work. In contrast to the claims of Lüdi et al. (2010) that multiform language practice is undertaken primarily to facilitate communication, this paper will argue that multiform practices are also influenced by the power structure within the workplace and that they may also become the object of struggle.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Multilingualism and Plurilingualism

There has been a considerable shift in the conceptualization of multilingualism in recent years. Whereas in the past the term multilingualism was used to describe "the knowledge of a number of languages, or the co-existence of different languages in a society" (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 4) often with official recognition, more recent understandings of the use of multiple languages have shifted their focus from the internal knowledge or existence of multiple languages onto the actual language use, or *plurilingualism* (Council of Europe, 2001), of individuals that have access to a range of resources from different sources in their *repertoires*. While it was formerly assumed that multilinguals were the embodiment of two or more monolinguals in one person, it is now more common to view them as "[l]anguage users", who "employ whatever linguistic features are at their disposal to achieve their communicative aims" (Jørgensen, 2008, p. 163).

Research on interactions where English is used as a lingua franca (ELF) between non-native speakers has also had implications for our understanding of plurilingualism. For example, the hybrid nature of the language used by plurilinguals and the presence of elements from other languages or communicative systems has been highlighted (Meierkord, 2002; Seidlhofer, 2011). Indeed, Hülmbauer (2011) describes ELF as a "plurilingual mode in which influences from language resources other than English have an important place" (55). However, these features are not restricted to interactions in English and Jørgensen (2008) describes similar phenomena in the "polylingual languaging" of young Turkish–Danish speakers.

Research on interactions where Japanese is used as a lingua franca between non-L1 speakers has shown similar results. In particular, Fan (1999, 2003) has shown examples of how linguistic resources from other languages will be combined with Japanese, how norms from languages other than Japanese will be applied and how new norms governing the use of Japanese will be formulated.

This focus on actual plurilingual language use has also made us question the very existence of something referred to as "*a* language" (Jørgensen, 2008; Blommaert, 2010). For example, Blommaert criticizes the "artefactualized image of language ... developed in modern linguistics, of language as a bounded, nameable and countable unit" (4), which is often very different from the reality of language use in real contexts, where speakers may draw on elements from various systems. Thus, rather than distinct languages, it is more useful to think of repertoires of resources.

However, our repertoires include a much broader range of skills than just grammar and vocabulary:

> ...repertoires are the real 'language' we have and can deploy in social life: biographically assembled patchworks of functionally distributed communicative resources, constantly exhibiting variation and change. (Blommaert & Backus, 2011, p. 23)

As Blommaert (2010) further argues, these "communicative resources" are "not just 'linguistic'. The bits of language that are globalized are equally bits of culture and society" (pp. 18–19).

This implies that plurilingual speakers do not just draw on linguistic resources in the narrow sense but they also make use of broader social and cultural elements from different communicative systems.

A more refined and systematic conceptualization of what Blommaert refers to as "bits of culture and society" can be seen in Neustupný's (1997, 2004) mapping of "competencies". In Neustupný's classification, in order to interact effectively with others, we need to have not only 1) grammatical competency, including syntactic, lexical and pronunciation, but also 2) communicative competence, incorporating sociolinguistic elements such as contextual, discursive and pragmatic awareness, and finally 3) interactional competence, incorporating sociocultural knowledge about practices, attitudes and beliefs.

2.2 Plurilingual Practices in the Workplace

One context where the practices of plurilingual speakers can be observed is the workplace, particularly in multinational corporations. For example, Marschan-Piekkari, Welch, and Welch (1999) have shown how having the right language skills in the company's "home language", the local language and English, can be a great source of power for employees in multinational corporations. However, not all the languages used in the multilingual workplace will have equal status and depending on the context, the home language of the expatriates (Nekvapil & Sherman, 2009) or the local language (Amelina, 2010) may wield more power.

Furthermore, even if the language of the workplace is officially designated as English, plurilingual employees' *actual* "language practice" may be "multiform and dynamic" (Lüdi et al., 2010, p. 231). Lüdi, Höchle, and Yanaprasart's examples of 'multiform' language practices in a Swiss multinational include switching and mixing resources from different codes and adjusting the form of language depending on the proficiency of the interlocutor. They further argue that workers' use of their "plural linguistic repertoires" is primarily governed by their "concern for efficiency" and their goal is "to understand and be understood in the shortest time possible" (p. 231).

However, research conducted in the Czech Republic (Nekvapil & Sherman, 2009) has shown that communicative practices in multinationals are not just limited to linguistic practices in the narrow sense, but also influence *how* workers *should communicate*. For example, employees were explicitly instructed to make it very clear as soon as they did not understand something, rather than keeping quiet and pretending that they were following the discussion.

Furthermore, Nekvapil and Sherman's (2009) findings make us ask the question, "efficiency" for whom? In the Czech research, it was clear that the local employees were required to learn the languages of the expatriates but not the other way around. In other words, speakers of less powerful languages were often the ones who were made to accommodate to the needs of the more powerful language speakers. Lüdi et al. (2010) do indeed recognize "the impact of superiors on the progress of interactions" (p. 230) but this issue has yet to be explored further.

Despite these important findings, very little research has been conducted on language practices in multinationals outside of Europe, including Japan. One exception is Peltokorpi and Vaara's (2012) study of language policy in the Japanese subsidiaries of multinationals. They found that language practices in the companies they examined were often hybrid and that the implementation of language policies was often influenced by power relations. A detailed examination of employees' everyday language practices, however, was beyond the scope of their study.

Although there are many studies that look at interactions with Japanese businesspeople conducted in English (cf. Tanaka, 2009), there are very few studies that look at workplace interactions between plurilingual speakers when Japanese is one of the codes used for communication. Otsuji and Pennycook's (2011) examination of what they term "metrolingualism" in an Australian workplace shows how, in addition to code switching, one L2 speaker of Japanese used the Japanese code but deliberately did not follow the usual Japanese conventions of using the polite formal register with his Japanese supervisor and also his choice of topics in conversation was very informal.

Another example of plurilingual speakers' workplace interactions in Japanese can be seen in Miyazoe-Wong's (2003) detailed examination of a lunch break interaction in the Hong Kong subsidiary of a Japanese company. She found that certain topics caused friction between Japanese and Chinese workers, and the Japanese employees ended up with negative impressions of one Chinese colleague, who tried to pursue a dispreferred topic. More recently, Chung (2013), examining the interactions of Korean bilinguals in the Japanese workplace, has found that Korean L2 speakers of Japanese are sensitive to communicative differences between Japanese and Korean and may hesitate to vindicate themselves when a problem arises, or refrain from making suggestions to their Japanese superiors that could make their work more efficient. However, despite these interesting findings, the language practices of plurilingual speakers using resources from more than two languages at workplaces in Japan have so far received little attention.

This study will examine the everyday language practices of plurilingual workers employed at the offices of European multinationals in Japan, with a particular focus on their use and adjustment of the Japanese resources in their repertoires. Drawing on Blommaert (2010) and Neustupný's (1997, 2004) work, in this paper the focus of attention will *not* be limited to purely linguistic practices, highlighting syntax and lexis etc., but will also include communicative sociolinguistic practices, including pragmatic and discursive features, and sociocultural practices that will be reflected in different professional practices and beliefs. Although Lüdi et al. (2010) use the term "multiform" to refer only to practices related to the switching, mixing and adjustment of languages in the narrow sense, I will borrow their term because, unlike terms such as 'polylingual', 'plurilingual' and 'metrolingual', it can more readily be used to describe other aspects of interaction that might not be obviously language-related, such as sociocultural and some sociolinguistic practices. Thus, in this paper the term 'multiform' will be used to describe plurilingual speakers' varying use of linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural resources from their total repertoires.

The term 'multiform' is also useful because it can be used to cover the broad range of practices in multilingual interactions, including the hybridization of forms from different systems, the pidginization of rules from one particular system and adjustments of form and difficulty based on judgments of the proficiency of one's interlocutor. However, it will be argued that these multiform practices cannot be considered merely as a means to facilitate communication. Multiform interactional practices in the workplace occur within a very explicit hierarchical structure, so no description of language use can be complete without also considering the issue of power[1].

3. Method

The data used in this study comes from interviews conducted with three plurilingual employees of three separate European-owned multinationals with subsidiaries in Japan; MM, JF and CM. Their profiles, including language abilities can be seen in Table 1. All were fluent in English, Japanese and at least one other language.

Although the number of interviewees is small, they agreed to participate in two types of in-depth interviews, resulting in over seven hours of interview data. The first type of interview used was a general semi-structured interview designed to collect ethnographic information about the participants' backgrounds, their language skills, their companies and general language and communication-related issues in their place of work. However, although important general information can be gleaned from this type of interview technique, it is not very useful when trying to collect detailed examples of actual language behaviour (Neustupný, 2003). In order to get more concrete examples of their actual daily language and interactional practices, interaction interviews (Neustupný, 2003) were also conducted. Rather than focusing on the interviewees' general impressions of workplace interaction, in the interaction interviews the interviewees are asked to focus on the chronological events of the previous 24 hours and describe in detail how they used language, with whom, for what purpose and in what context.

Through this process, the researcher can gain access to language practices that the interviewee

Table 1　Participant profiles

Interviewee	MM	JF	CM
Gender	Male	Female	Male
Age	40's	30's	30's
Nationality	Mexican	Japanese	Chinese
Languages (in order of proficiency)	Spanish, English, Japanese, French	Japanese, English, Swedish, French	Guilin dialect, Mandarin, Japanese, English, German
Position	Section Manager	Business Specialist	Logistics Specialist

The details of the three European multinationals they worked for are included in Table 2.

Table 2　Company profiles

Company	A	B	C
Interviewee	MM	JF	CM
Home Country	Sweden	France	Germany
Official Languages	English	French, English	English
Main Business	Retail	Food Producer	Logistics

might not have initially judged important, and because events from the previous day are more likely to remain in the interviewees' consciousness, the researcher can get access to much more detailed contextual information about those specific events. The participants also responded to follow-up questions via email and JF and CM provided email samples on non-sensitive topics.

The theoretical framework used for the analysis of the data is Language Management Theory (LMT: Jernudd & Neustupný, 1987), a theory connected to language planning, which focuses on how participants in interaction perceive "language problems" and attempt to remove them from discourse. LMT looks at the treatment of language problems as a four-stage process consisting of 1) the noting of deviations from norms or expectations, 2) the evaluation of those deviations, 3) the design of adjustment plans to remove those deviations and finally, 4) the actual implementation of those adjustment plans. LMT is useful when looking qualitatively at language issues in the workplace because it enables us to see language problems as perceived by the individual actors themselves and the norms that underlie their noting behaviour.

The deviations that the interviewees recounted were further classified using Neustupný's (1997, 2004) concept of grammatical (linguistic), communicative (sociolinguistic) and interactional (sociocultural) competencies. This classification, which originated in his attempts to define the elements that learners need to know in order to interact effectively with Japanese L1 users, takes a broad view of interaction, that incorporates not only grammatical features, such as syntax and lexis, but also sociolinguistic and sociocultural elements. His classification of sociolinguistic elements is based on Hymes' (1972) SPEAKING model and incorporates both the contextual, discursive and management aspects that determine the selection of language varieties and forms in actual interaction. These include switch-on rules (when we start to communicate and how much), variation rules (which language, dialect, style is chosen), setting rules (when and where we communicate), participant rules (who communicates and to whom), content rules (what is communicated), frame rules (how elements are ordered and positioned), channel rules (whether the message is conveyed through the spoken, written or nonverbal channel), and management rules (how problems are managed). The final classification, of sociocultural features, incorporates all non-language related aspects of a society and culture that might be made relevant in interaction. This includes knowledge about social and cultural practices relevant to particular domains, values, attitudes and beliefs.

The examples that follow are all examples of noted deviations that the interviewees recounted relating to the multiform linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural practices in their places of work.

4.　Multiform Linguistic, Sociolinguistic and Sociocultural Practices

The interviewees recounted a number of incidents where their linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural practices could be described as multiform. These practices include the combination of

elements from different systems, the oversimplification or pidginization of the rules of a particular system, and deliberate adjustments made to accommodate their interlocutors.

4.1　Multiform Linguistic Practices

Examples from the interviews show how the language produced by plurilingual speakers in the workplace may be non-standard and/or hybridized with elements from other language systems in the speakers' repertoires. These tendencies could be seen when the base language used was either Japanese or English.

4.1.1　Multiform Japanese Linguistic Practices

When Japanese is designated as one of the official languages in the multilingual workplace, there are cases when Japanese L1 speakers will be required to hybridize their L1 with elements from different language systems. Conversely, there are cases, where non-standard production of Japanese by L2 speakers will not be tolerated by L1 speakers.

Firstly, JF, the only Japanese L1 speaker in this study, explains how her French boss, who is fluent in Japanese, requires her to adjust her Japanese when she speaks to him.

(1)　JF : *You know how [in Japanese] we miss out the subject, like in 'I did whatever'.... but you can understand from the context perhaps, so when I speak with my [Japanese] colleagues like this problems never really occur but if I speak to [my French boss] in the same way.... I always have to say who did what, where and when. If I don't, I get really told off, like "Who did?" or "What are you talking about?".... I get really told off. (Translation of Japanese interview)*

JF is expected to use a simplified register in order to make her utterances explicitly clear to her non-native-Japanese-speaking manager. In addition, being required to add the usually abbreviated subject of the verb implies that this foreigner talk style of Japanese is actually a hybridized form of Japanese and French, a language where the subject of the verb usually needs to be made explicit. In accordance with the findings of Lüdi et al. (2010), we could say that in this example Japanese foreigner talk is used as a means "to understand and be understood in the shortest time possible" (p. 231) and indeed from the French manager's perspective this is true. He needs his subordinates to communicate clearly in a way that he can understand.

However, we cannot ignore the influence of power in these language form choices. From JF's use of the expression "I get really told off" (*sugoku iwareru*), we can see that she negatively evaluates this as a deviation from her native norms, giving the impression that she is being *forced* to do so.

Although this type of foreigner talk does make JF's Japanese easier for her French boss to understand, it is not necessarily easy or natural for her to produce and she clearly is not doing it willingly.

This example shows that for Japanese L1 speakers, functioning in the multilingual workplace does not require merely knowledge of English and other languages, but also the ability and willingness to adjust one's own L1 when dealing with non-L1-speaker superiors, something that in this case JF does not seem eager to do. It also makes it difficult to categorize participants as native speakers or non-native speakers because depending on the code selection at any particular moment, the same speaker's role can change from one of a native speaker interacting with a non-native speaker, to a non-native speaker interacting with a native speaker, or to a non-native speaker interacting with another non-native speaker. Furthermore, in these contexts, the speaker's position within the company hierarchy appears to be more influential than the code they select to communicate in. Thus, when the L1 speaker is in a much lower position in the workplace hierarchy, the norms of the L2 speaker may at times be more powerful.

On the other hand, an example from MM, highlights the attitudes of some L1 speakers of Japanese towards non-native production of Japanese. MM describes an incident when he had to deal with a customer who wanted to use their special credit payment system but who, according to the company's stipulations, would not be allowed to do so. Despite his explanation, the customer was very unhappy with this situation and

MM recounts what she said to him next:

(2) MM : *And then she said "Ok. So I'm going to talk with someone who can speak Japanese." .... [implying] I don't want to talk to you. I want to talk to some Japanese person.*

In this example, there was a conflict over the payment system and although MM was simply following his company's guidelines, the Japanese customer retaliated by indirectly insulting MM's Japanese linguistic competency. According to MM, the customer did not ask to speak to his superior but simply "someone who can speak Japanese", implying that MM could *not* speak Japanese. As past research has shown (Kato, 2010; Fairbrother, 2012), when conflict occurs in L1/L2 speaker interactions, some L1 speakers may deliberately belittle the L2 speaker's language skills. Thus, there may be times when speakers of non-native forms of Japanese will be rejected as legitimate interlocutors, particularly in situations where conflict arises.

4.1.2 Multiform English Linguistic Practices

Examples of English use illustrate how plurilingual employees consciously adjust the linguistic form depending on their perception of the proficiency of their interlocutors, and how the negotiation of the 'correct' English form can become the site of struggle.

CM reports that he changes the complexity of his English writing depending on whether his audience is primarily Japanese or international:

(3) CM : *Writing in English, I don't know it depends [on] the person but mostly I just write short, clearly sentences, just to avoid the misunderstanding, don't use so many complicated structures. You can see Japanese email in English, sentences [are] no[t] complicated.*

In this excerpt, CM describes how he uses shorter simple sentences when writing emails in English to his Japanese colleagues as he believes that this will prevent misunderstandings. However, he claims that he tries to use a more linguistically complex style when writing in English to other managers overseas:

(4) CM : *[My Japanese colleague] cannot understand the [Italian] region manager's email, because his email is kind of like, not simple sentences.... like complicated structures, one sentence is like, use some words.... words that make it more complicated, so you can immediately tell. [If] you [write] more close to their, for them, like the native English, it is maybe easier to understand, but for this I think it's bad to write short sentences.... first I try to write as best I can, but also.... try to write more like.... different than the Japanese, more a little bit better.*

To the Italian regional manager, on the other hand, CM tries to imitate his writing style and use more complex English sentences. Thus, in these examples, CM adjusts the level of difficulty of his English utterances depending on his interlocutor. He makes such choices in order to make his English more easily understandable to different interlocutors, again supporting the view of Lüdi et al. (2010) that multiform language forms are used "to understand and be understood in the shortest time possible" (p. 231).

However, not all interactions using English run as smoothly as those reported by CM. One issue that was reported by JF a number of times was the negotiations she has with her French manager over which form of English is correct. One example she gives concerns whether to add 's' to 'yen' in the plural:

(5) JF : *In meetings with my boss, whether it's concerning English or Japanese, he always has the attitude that he is right, so even if I'm right, there are many times when I'll just give in. But when he insisted that I put an 's' on 'Yen', like 'Yens', I said that it doesn't take an 's' and I didn't put the 's' on in the report.* (trans.)

In this example we can see a struggle between JF and her French manager over who has the most accurate knowledge of English. JF's French manager is oversimplifying the English

rule of adding an 's' to currency counters and JF is correct to question this usage. This case, however, presents a tricky situation for JF because, although at this moment a lingua franca is under discussion and neither party is a native authority on English usage, she is under pressure to follow her manager's directives, even when she knows she is right. For JF, negotiation over the correct English form is not a simple language issue but ends up being a power struggle resulting in her having to defy her boss in the final report in this case.

From this example, we can see that multiform linguistic practices in the workplace do not just involve harmoniously accessing the various resources in our repertoires for the sake of promoting smooth communication, but they can also become the site of struggle when the resources of two plurilingual speakers do not match. Of course, differences in power affect interactions in monolingual Japanese workplace interactions as well (Takenoya, 2002) but it appears that when there is no L1 authority to pass the final judgement on which form is the most acceptable, the person with the most power, in this case the French manager, gets to decide. This type of example also calls into question the common portrayal of ELF interactions as egalitarian and harmonious (cf. Fairbrother, 2009), a trend that MacKenzie (2014) refers to as "angelic ELF". JF's example shows that when there is a clear power imbalance, ELF interactions can also be the cause of conflict.

4.2 Multiform Sociolinguistic Practices

As Neustupný (1997) has argued, interacting in another language does not just entail a good knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, but also knowledge of how to communicate according to the context and the type of person you are interacting with. Thus, in addition to their different linguistic resources, plurilingual speakers may also have different types of sociolinguistic resources at their disposal. Examples from the interviews in this study show how sociolinguistic forms from one system may be pidginized and how sociolinguistic resources more commonly associated with one system may be combined with linguistic resources from a completely different system.

The first example comes from a follow-up email from JF, who gives a concrete example of her French manager suggesting she use the Japanese name suffix '-san' in a contextually inappropriate way:

(6) JF : *When my [French manager] told me to add 'san' after his name in one of our company leaflets, I just said "I'll check" and decided not to insist on it at that moment. Because if I argue against him on the spot, I know he won't listen.* (trans.)

JF was asked by her French manager to add the suffix -san to his name, which would be an incorrect use of Japanese honorifics, somewhat like using honorific language to oneself. Even though the French manager would be addressed with -san attached to his name in person by his employees, and by customers of the company in face-to-face interactions, the honorific -san would not be used in company publications where the imagined writer is the company. Therefore, it can be said that JF's manager was oversimplifying, or pidginizing, the Japanese rule.

What is interesting in this case, is the adjustment strategy that JF undertakes to fix the problem. She is caught in another tricky situation of trying to produce an accurate Japanese text whilst following the directives of her French manager. She is sure that her knowledge of Japanese is correct but she also needs to carry out her job in a way that will not be face-threatening to her non-native-speaking superior. In this case, the strategy she uses is a type of avoidance. She merely tells her French manager that she will check it, in order to avoid an on-the-spot confrontation. It can be seen from this example that L1 speakers of Japanese in the multilingual workplace may have to be particularly sensitive to the power dynamics in the workplace and develop strategies to manage language advice from their non-L1-speaker superiors.

Another sociolinguistic feature of communication relates to the sequencing or ordering of linguistic elements, referred to as "frame rules" by Neustupný (1997). In the following example, JF explains how she is required to write business letters in Japanese but following a non-traditional

Japanese style:

(7) JF : *[My French boss] insists that we write things very clearly.... so when we write reports we always have to use the style that starts with the conclusion first.* (trans.)

This "deductive pattern", of ordering text with the main point first, is more commonly associated with business writing in English, not Japanese, which traditionally tends to follow a more "inductive pattern", where the main point comes at the end after a lengthy explanation (Scollon, Scollon, & Jones, 2012). Therefore, in this case, we can see how discursive elements from English are being combined with Japanese linguistic elements. However, JF describes the frustration experienced by one of her colleagues, when she was suddenly told not to use this style.

(8) JF : *But the other day my [Japanese] colleague did write it in this style. But when she wrote an email in the 'conclusion first' style, she was told it was wrong. Our [French] boss always tells us to write the conclusion first, and then explain the background, such as 'this and this'. So even though my colleague was asked to do this, and she wrote a draft to France or Italy, and proposed something like, "Could you give us a spec sheet for such-and-such? Because we have this kind of customer", she was apparently told "This is no good. Don't write the conclusion first, put the explanation in first". And she said "But this is different from what he always said!"* (trans.)

JF's account shows that there is some dissatisfaction with the way that their French superior manages their writing style. Not only are they being asked to use a writing style that differs from the more commonly used 'inductive' style in Japanese, but their superior is not being consistent in his application of this rule. However, behind this noted deviation, we can also see JF's oversimplification of the 'conclusion first' rule. As Scollon et al. (2012) point out, there will be different contexts where the deductive and inductive patterns will be used, and the inductive pattern will often be used, even in English, if the weight of imposition of the message on the other party is high. From JF's explanation, it is clear that this message is requesting a service from an overseas branch, so the French superior may have felt the need to communicate in a less direct way.

JF's example, thus, shows how the repertoires of plurilingual speakers can be incomplete, or "truncated" (Blommaert, 2010, p. 8). Even though plurilingual speakers may add new sociolinguistic resources from other language systems to their repertoires, this does not mean that they will know how to apply them appropriately in every context.

JF noted and negatively evaluated a different type of deviation relating to her company's handling of customer complaints. As can be seen in the excerpt below, when a complaint is addressed, she feels that the pragmatic form of the communication to the customer is very different from what she would usually expect in Japan.

(9) JF : *We don't really apologize in the letters that we write in Japan. [Usually] in Japan, I think we would apologize a lot. .... it feels like here we are doing a French response in the Japanese language.* (trans.)

In this example, JF notes a pragmatic difference between the content of French responses to customer complaints and the responses that would usually be made in Japan. She feels that the tone of her company's complaint responses is not apologetic enough for Japanese customers and to her it feels as if the pragmatic force of the original French message is just being literally translated into Japanese without consideration of the Japanese context. Thus, JF senses that the Japanese linguistic form is being mixed with the pragmatic conventions of French.

Foreign multinationals operating in Japan may need to take this type of pragmatic transfer quite seriously. If their aim is to make money in the Japanese market, then more sensitivity to the pragmatic expectations of Japanese customers, particular regarding the sensitive issue of the handling of customer complaints, may be needed.

The combination of elements from different systems can also be seen as problematic by others in social interactions at work. For example, MM recounts an episode where he was told by another Mexican colleague to behave in a "more Mexican" way in the office cafeteria:

(10) MM : *She said, "Oh, I want to tell you something. Why are you so quiet?" .... and that was really a shock. "You have to enjoy, you have to say, you have to be more Mexican." That's what she said.... So she said I should be more open and then I have to talk more to people and then have to be more.... Mexican.... Because she said "Mexican? You're really this? No, you have to be happy and then you have to, you know, you look tired sometimes.... You have to be friendly and maybe lots of people want to talk to you". So I felt kind of like a sudden stress because she was Mexican tell, telling me how to be a Mexican.*

MM's colleague seems to have noted MM's way of communicating in the company cafeteria as a deviation from her norms of how a Mexican *should* behave. She complains that he is "quiet", and "tired" and her words of advice imply that he is not enjoying himself, that he is not "open" and "friendly", that people do not want to talk to him and, she even goes so far as to doubt that he actually is Mexican. MM is in a much more senior position within the company than his female colleague and he claims that he tries hard to fit into the Japanese and English-speaking environment. This suggests that he has transferred some of the communicative features of Japanese and English when he communicates with others, rather than communicating in a more stereotypical flamboyant 'Mexican' way.

Even though plurilingual speakers by definition have a wide range of linguistic and sociolinguistic resources at their disposal, the people around them may still want to put them in particular identity categories and expect them to behave like stereotypical monolinguals. Being able to combine elements from different systems clearly does not mean that other people will accept such hybridization favourably.

Furthermore, not all communication is transmitted via language and it may be appropriate for some messages to be transmitted through the nonverbal channel (Neustupný, 1997). One such example is the use of the kiss in greetings in France. However, JF recounts how she was reprimanded for getting this "wrong" on her first attempt to greet the French marketing director, who was visiting from Paris.

(11) JF : *I really can't do that. I actually kissed her. They put their cheeks together, right? So I kissed her cheek, the marketing director's. I was told that that was wrong.... They just put their cheeks together don't they? Cheek to cheek. I really can't do that .... And I always think it's really unpleasant. When the marketing director first came in December it was really unpleasant and then I got it wrong too.* (trans.)

JF explains how she mistook the French kiss greeting for actual mouth-to-cheek contact, and so when she kissed the cheek of the visitor from the French headquarters, it was pointed out to her that her mouth should not actually make contact with the skin of the other person. In this case, JF's greeting took a different form from that of the French marketing director because JF had oversimplified the kiss greeting without paying attention to the actual way that it is carried out. As a result, not only was it uncomfortable for her to have to physically undertake this form of greeting in the first place, but she was humiliated when she actually tried to perform this 'unpleasant' greeting and then got it wrong.

4.3 Multiform Sociocultural Practices

In addition to linguistic and sociolinguistic competency, effective interaction also requires sociocultural competency, namely an awareness of non-language related practices, values and beliefs that affect how people interact with one another (Neustupný, 1997, 2004). Indeed, the participants in this study also noted cases where sociocultural elements from different systems seemed to be being mixed together. If we take a more holistic view of multilingual interaction, we can see that it is not just what we say that may be multiform but also the values and worldviews hidden behind the construction of our words that may be influenced by more than one system.

MM provides an interesting example of how his company's international rules regarding overtime and efficiency have been hybridized by some Japanese workers to accommodate their beliefs that they should not go home until their work is finished.

(12) MM : *We are not allowed to do overtime so many of them [workers in another section] what they do, they check out and then go to work.... this new woman who came to [my] team.... she asked me how are we going to do the clicking because she said, because it is atarimae /natural/.... to click out and then do work. If we [in my section] do overtime we have to click out after the overtime .... and then change another day.*

In an attempt to increase workers' efficiency, MM's company strictly prohibits workers from doing overtime and the way this is enforced is by checking that employees have clocked out on their time cards at the correct time. This, however, goes against common Japanese working practices, commonly referred to as 'sābisu zangyō' (lit. service overtime), where it is more common to get the job done at your own pace, no matter how long it takes and regardless of whether you will get paid or not. In this example, there is a conflict between the norms and intentions of the international organization and the working values of the local Japanese staff. This leads to the hybridization of the two systems; namely that some Japanese workers will continue their preferred way of working overtime but they will follow the company's regulations by at least not *officially* working overtime.

On the other hand, there may be cases when Japanese employees *want* either the implementation of foreign business practices or at least a hybrid form. JF provides one example of this in her discussion of paid holidays at her company. In the Tokyo office, local hires only receive ten paid days of holiday per year and if they take more time off than that, as JF sometimes has to do if her preschool child gets sick, then their monthly pay is docked. In contrast, JF's French manager is employed directly by the French headquarters, so he can take around six weeks paid leave per year.

(13) JF : *Our boss says that because his contract is with the French head office, he is different from everyone else.... because it's Japan's [law], they are following the Japanese law. But even if you're following Japanese laws, there's no need to give the absolute minimum [paid holidays]. The law is just stating the bare minimum. It's OK to give us a little more.*

JF is frustrated by the disparity between the working conditions of employees on French and local Japanese contracts. She compared this with her past job working for a German company where everyone got 20 days of annual paid leave. Therefore, despite having a supposedly enviable 'international' job, it is clearly a disappointment to JF, that her company is implementing the strictest form of Japanese business practices with Japanese employees, but not with the managers on French contracts.

5. Concluding Discussion

Despite the limited scale of this study, it can be seen that the linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural practises of plurilingual workers in European multinationals in Japan are often 'multiform'. In many cases, these multiform interactional practices are cases of hybridization, where elements from different linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural systems are combined. In other words, it is not merely the linguistic code that is combined with grammatical and lexical features from other linguistic codes, but also pragmatic and discursive elements, and broader sociocultural values and attitudes usually associated with different systems that may be hybridized.

However, not all 'multiform' practices are hybridized. There are also examples where it appears that speakers are aiming to achieve the production of an item similar to the L1 speakers of that code but they overgeneralise and end up simplifying the rules, displaying their "truncated" repertoires (Blommaert, 2010, p. 8). In addition, there are cases where plurilingual speakers consciously adjust the form and difficulty of their utterances depending on their interlocutor, in order to facilitate communication.

However, the examples in this study show us that efficient communication is not the only reason why linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural practices will be multiform. Separate from the purely communicative function, there are also cases where a form of communication is better described as being 'imposed' on others. In other words, people higher up in the hierarchy have the power to influence the forms of interaction that take place in the workplace, even if those forms could be perceived to be actually hindering effective communication, at least for some employees. Thus, the presence of multiform linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural practices in the workplace does not automatically presuppose that communication will run smoothly. Rather, it can lead to conflict and dissatisfaction, particularly in cases where employees feel that their use of their L1, or lingua franca resources, such as English, is being challenged from above. The hierarchical framework of the workplace can lead employees, particularly those lower down the hierarchy, to feel that someone else's linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural practices are being forced upon them and, because of their subordinate positions, they have little power to challenge the status quo.

Many people imagining the interactional practices in European multinationals in Japan might envision Japanese workers carrying out their duties in English or another foreign language, without considering the Japanese code. However, when Japanese becomes one of the languages used by non-L1 speakers in positions of power, then it is only to be expected that Japanese linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural practices will also be transformed. Japanese features, too, become incorporated into the repertoires of plurilingual speakers and this in turn can lead to the de-stabilization of normative Japanese L1 practices. In a Japanese setting, we might unquestioningly assume that Japanese native speakers would have the upper hand in interactions where the Japanese language is being used, but when the holder of power in the workplace is a non-L1 speaker of Japanese, the status of an L1 speaker as the judge of accurate and appropriate Japanese may be seriously challenged. The examples in this study, thus, clearly illustrate that it is not enough just to develop ones foreign language skills in the multilingual workplace. Employees may also need to know how to produce foreigner talk in their own L1 when dealing with their superiors, how to negotiate multiform linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural practices (including blatant errors and abuses) and how to deal with others' attitudes towards those practices, all within a restrictive hierarchical power structure.

With its theoretical grounding in LMT, this paper has focused primarily on the problems in the workplace; however this focus on problems could be seen as one of the weaknesses of working within this theoretical framework. In fact, most interactions will be not be negatively evaluated and there will of course be many other positive experiences that might be missed by applying LMT. Indeed, the financial and personal rewards of working for a European multinational may be enough to compensate for the odd problem here and there.

However, it is only by looking at the problems perceived by plurilingual speakers that we can attempt to find the causes of and ultimate solutions to those problems. This study has only touched the surface but, if we are to gain a better understanding of the issues involved, clearly much more research needs to be carried out on different types of interactions in Japan.

Notes

1) In this paper 'power' is not conceptualized as a monolithic and static entity. Rather, it is perceived as fluid and negotiable and as Kubota argues (2009, p. 244) "needs to be understood in relation to other elements in a complex web of force relations".

References

Amelina, Maria (2010). Do other languages than English matter?: International career development of highly-qualified professionals. In Meyer, Bernd, &

Apfelbaum, Birgit (Eds.). *Multilingualism at work: From policies to practices in public, medical and business settings,* pp. 235–252. Amsterdam, PA: John Benjamins.

Blommaert, Jan (2010). *The sociolinguistics of globalization.* Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Blommaert, Jan, & Backus, Ad (2011). Repertoires revisited: 'Knowing language' in superdiversity. *Working paper in urban language and literacies,* 67.

Chung, Gyupil (2013). Shokuba deno Nihongo no Inta-akushon: Kankokujin Bijinesukankeisha ga Kanjiru Sutoresu to Sono Keigen Kodo. *Gengokyoiku Kenkyu,* 3, 21–31. Oberlin University.

Council of Europe (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching and assessment.* Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Fairbrother, Lisa (2009). Baikaigengo toshiteno Eigo no Jissaishiyobamen. In Kimura, Goro Christoph, & Watanabe, Katsuyoshi (Eds.), *Baikaigengoron wo Manabu Hito no Tameni,* pp. 151–172. Kyoto: Sekaishisosha.

Fairbrother, Lisa (2012). Unveiling 'invisible' conflict signals in a Japanese-Chinese interaction. *Sophia Linguistica,* 59, 107–127.

Fan, Sau Kuen Clare (1999). Hibogowashadoshi no Nihongokaiwa ni Okeru Gengomondai. *The Japanese Journal of Language in Society,* 2(1), 37–48.

Fan, Sau Kuen Clare (2003). Nihongo no Gairaisei (foreignness): Daisanshagengo Sesshokubamen ni Okeru Sankasha no Nihongokihan Oyobi Kihan no Kanri kara. In Miyazaki, Satoshi, & Marriott, Helen (Eds.), *Sesshokubamen to Nihongokyoiku,* pp. 3–21. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin.

Hülmbauer, Cornelia (2011). English as a lingua franca (ELF): A mode and its implications. In Jørgensen, J. Normann (Ed.), *A toolkit for transnational communication in Europe,* pp. 43–68. Copenhagen: The Faculty of Humanities at the University of Copenhagen.

Hymes, Dell (1972). Models of the interaction of language and social life. In Gumperz, John J., & Hymes, Dell (Eds.), *Directions in sociolinguistics: The ethnography of communication,* pp. 35–71. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Jernudd, Björn H., & Neustupný, Jiří V. (1987). Language planning: For whom? In Laforge, Lorne (Ed.), *Proceedings of the international colloquium on language planning,* pp. 69–84. Quebec: Les Presses de L'Université Laval.

Jørgensen, J. Normann (2008). Polylingual languaging around and among children and adolescents. *International Journal of Multilingualism,* 5, 161–176.

Kato, Yoshitaka (2010). *Ibunkasesshokubamen no Inta-akushon.* Hatano: Tokaidaigaku Shuppankai.

Kubota, Ryoko (2009). Rethinking the superiority of the native speaker: Toward a relational understanding of power. In Doerr, Neriko Musha (Ed.), *The native speaker concept: Ethnographic investigations of native speaker effects,* pp. 233–247. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Lüdi, Georges, Höchle, Katharina, & Yanaprasart, Patchareerat (2010). Plurilingual practices at multilingual workplaces. In Meyer, Bernd, & Apfelbaum, Birgit (Eds.), *Multilingualism at work: From policies to practices in public, medical and business settings,* pp. 211–234. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

MacKenzie, Ian (2014). *English as a lingua franca: Theorizing and teaching English.* London, New York: Routledge.

Marschan-Piekkari, Rebecca, Welch, Denice, & Welch, Lawrence (1999). In the shadow: The impact of language on structure, power and communication in the multinational. *International Business Review,* 8(4), 421–440.

Meierkord, Christiane (2002). 'Language stripped bare' or 'linguistic masala'? Culture in lingua franca communication. In Knapp, Karlfried, & Meierkord, Christiane (Eds.), *Lingua franca communication,* pp. 109–133. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

METI (Japanese Ministry of Economy, Technology and Industry) (2012). *Dai46kai Gaishikeikigyo Dokochosa (2012) no Gaiyo.* <http://www.meti.go.jp/statistics/tyo/gaisikei/result_46.htm> (October 10, 2013)

Miyazoe-Wong, Yuko (2003). Tagengoshokuba no Doryotachi ha Nani wo Tsutaeattaka: Shigotokanrengaiwadai ni Okeru Kaiwajo no Kosho. In Miyazaki, Satoshi, & Marriott, Helen (Eds.), *Sesshokubamen to Nihongokyoiku,* pp. 165–184. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin.

Nekvapil, Jernudd, & Sherman, Tamah (2009). Pre-interaction management in multinational companies in Central Europe. *Current Issues in Language Planning,* 10(2), 181–198.

Neustupný, Jiří V. (1997). Teaching communication or teaching interaction? *Ibunka Komyunikeshon,* 10, 1–13. Kanda University of Foreign Studies.

Neustupný, Jiří V. (2003). Japanese students in Prague. Problems of communication and interaction. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language,* 162, 125–143.

Neustupný, Jiří V. (2004). A theory of contact situations and the study of academic interaction. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication,* 14(1), 3–31.

Otsuji, Emi, & Pennycook, Alastair (2011). Social inclusion and multilingual practices. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism,* 14(4), 413–426.

Peltokorpi, Vesa, & Vaara, Eero (2012). Language policies and practices in wholly owned foreign subsidiaries: A recontextualization perspective. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 43(9), 808–833.

Scollon, Ron, Scollon, Suzanne Wong, & Jones, Rodney H. (2012). *Intercultural communication: A discourse approach.* London: Wiley-Blackwell.

Seidlhofer, Barbara (2011). *Understanding English as a lingua franca.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Takenoya, Miyuki (2002). Analyzing job training sessions as 'unequal encounters'. *Sapporo Gakuin University Journal of the Society of Humananities,* 72, 17–29.

Tanaka, Hiromasa (2009). Japan. In Bargiela-Chiappini, Francesca (Ed.), *The handbook of business discourse,* pp. 332–344. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

(2013年12月10日受付)
(2015年3月18日修正版受付)
(2015年4月16日掲載決定)

Appendix

Interview transcription symbols:
[ ]　additions made by the author
{ }　translations of non-English expressions
....　abbreviations made by the author

社会言語科学
The Japanese Journal of Language in Society

第18巻　第1号　2015年9月
Vol.18 No.1　September 2015

特集「スタイルの生成と選択」
Special Issue: Creation and Choice of Styles in Language Use