

## 日本LDS教会における「リンガフランカ」としての英語の事例研究\*

フレイク・リー\*\*

Case Study on English as the *Lingua Franca* in the Japan LDS Church

Lee FLAKE\*\*

**Keywords** : language, imperialism, English, Mormon, LDS church

### 1. Author Introduction

The author was born into a family of devout members of the Mormon religion, also known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS church) and was indoctrinated and socialized into its doctrine from an early age. The author is the sixth generation to be born into the covenant of the church; however, has since removed himself from the church and no longer identifies himself as a member. The author, having served as a missionary for the LDS church between 1994 and 1996 in the Sapporo Japan mission, and holding callings and leadership positions for the faith for almost half of his life, first began to be critical of his faith through his family history research. The more the author learned about the history of the church, the less appealing it became. Nevertheless, the author has maintained an innate interest in world culture and religion since his early youth. Having now served as both an advocate and a skeptic of religious belief, the author has resigned himself to religious studies only to supplement his studies on cultural anthropology. The author would like to introduce this topic of potential linguistic imperialism in the Japan LDS church to supplement and provide an example to further his previous article titled *Challenging English Language as the 'Lingua Franca' of Globalization* published in the Bulletin of the Faculty of Contemporary Social Studies Nagasaki Wesleyan University (Vol. 17-1, Pages 7-18) in February of 2019.

### 2. Overview of the Japan LDS Church and Thoughts on the Church's Name

The author, as a representative for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was called to continue a legacy of missionary work in Asia which began in the summer of 1901 when a few Mormon missionaries under the leadership of Heber T. Grant came to Yokohama. The church in Asia was first established in Japan, so when other Asian missions such as Taiwan, Hong Kong and Korea were opened to the gospel, those churches adapted everything as established in Japan including the church name 末日聖徒イエス・キリスト教会 *Matsu-jitsu Seito Ieasu Kirisuto Kyokai*. However, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been officially been retranslated and renamed *Jesus Christ* 後期聖徒教会 in Asian countries using the Chinese ideogram *kanji* characters 後期 *kou-ki* instead of 末日 *matsu-jitsu* for the English translation of "latter-day". In 2005, the LDS church in Korea followed the Chinese ideogram characters and matched phonetically to the Hangul or Korean language by changing the name from 말일성도 예수 그리스도 교회 to the new translation 예수 그리스도 후기 성도 교회 also reflecting the change of 말일 *mal-il*, which is the Korean translation 末日 *matsu-jitsu*, to 후기 *ho-gi*, which is the Korean translation of 後期 *kou-ki*. The name of the church changed throughout Asia—with the exception of Japan. The reason for the name change is due to the negative connotations surrounding the word 末日 *matsu-jitsu*. The author, after spending almost three decades in Asia as an expatriate and studying culture and language extensively, supports 後

\* Received September 30, 2019

\*\* 長崎ウエスレヤン大学 現代社会学部 外国語学科

Nagasaki Wesleyan University, Faculty of Contemporary Social Studies, Department of Foreign Languages

期 *kou-ki* as a more appropriate translation of “latter-day” for having less of a cult-like connotation. It is difficult for one to avoid viewing or coming to the conclusion that the LDS church as a cult when the church has the 末日 *matsu-jitsu* cult-like expression is used in its very name. 後期 *kou-ki* is not only viewed as the more appropriate translation, but by using the イエス・キリスト後期聖徒教会 as the translation, Jesus Christ mentioned first in the title of the church would affirm that it is a Christian faith.

During the author’s mission, he was told by investigators of the church that the name 末日聖徒イエス・キリスト教会 is suspicious or 怪しい *ayashii*—an adjective one would use to describe an offender or a criminal. Even after hearing this from investigators and church members, the author did not consider this deeply until residing and studying in Korea and traveling to Taiwan and learning about the church from its various members. Cross-cultural knowledge further confirmed that the same suspicious connotation for the translation of “latter-day” through the same 末日 *matsu-jitsu* kanji character existed in Korean and Chinese—this fueled the change for the name of the church in Taiwan and Korea.

Cross-cultural knowledge has many merits for uncovering and confirming truth and information.

As an example, the names of the apostles Peter, James and John from English Bible are only exposed as being incorrect when studying Bibles that were not translated from English. The Japanese Bible was translated from the Jesuit missionaries from Latin where the names Peter ペトロ, Jacob ヤコブ, and John ヨハネ were preserved. The name “Jacob” was changed to “James” by the early scribes and translators to pay tribute to and impress the English monarch King James VI who was ultimately sponsoring the translation project between 1604 and 1611.

Retranslation is a common practice in Asian LDS churches. The Book of Mormon has been retranslated multiple times. The Japanese Book of Mormon originally translated in 1909 by Alma Tayler was known as the モルモン経 *Morumon-kei*, had its name changed to モルモン書 *Morumon-sho* after it was retranslated in 1996 and then again changes were made in 2009. To demonstrate the changes in translation, please refer to the following Tables for the translation of 3 Nephi chapter 11 verses 9 through 14 from the Book of Mormon. The English translation from Table 1 is based on the current English Book of Mormon translation. Table 2 is the Japanese モルモン経 *Morumon-kei* version as translated by Alma O. Taylor and completed on June 10, 1909. Table 3 is the more recent モルモン書 *Morumon-sho* translation from 1996.

Table 1. English version of 3 Nephi 11:9-14

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9 And it came to pass that he stretched forth his hand and spake unto the people, saying:  
 10 Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.  
 11 And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.  
 12 And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words the whole multitude fell to the earth; for they remembered that it had been prophesied among them that Christ should show himself unto them after his ascension into heaven.  
 13 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto them saying:  
 14 Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.

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[Source: LDS Scriptures Online retrieved from LDS.org at <https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/11?lang=eng>]

Table 2. Japanese 1909 モルモン経 *Morumon-kei* version of 3 Nephi 11: 9-14

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- 9 時にそのお方は手を差し群衆に話しかけて仰せになった。
- 10 「見よ、われはイエス・キリストでなり。予言者らがこの世来ると証をしたなるその者なり。
- 11 われは世の光にしてまた世の命なり。われは、御父がわれに授けたまいしかの苦き杯をすでに飲み、世の人の罪をわが身に引き受けて御父の栄光を示したり。世の人の罪をわが身に引き受くることに於いて、われは最初よりすべて御父のみこころに従えり」と。
- 12 イエスがこの言葉を言いたもうと群がっていた一切の者は、キリストが昇天してから自分らに現われたもうと言う予言が自分たちの間に伝えられていたことを思い出して地にひれ伏した。
- 13 その時主は群衆に向かって言いたもうた。
- 14 「汝らわが肋にその手をさし入れ、わが手足にある釘あとに触れて、われがイスラエルの神にして全世界の神なること、またわれが世の人の罪を負うて一度殺されたるを知るために落ちてわれに近づけ」と。
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[Source: Japanese 1909 モルモン経 *Morumon-kei* as published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints]

Table 3. Japanese 1996 モルモン書 *Morumon-sho* version of 3 Nephi 11:9-14

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- 9 そこでこの御方は、片手を差し伸べて人々にいわれた。
- 10 「見よ、わたしはイエス・キリストであり、世に来ると予言者たちが証した者である。
- 11 見よ、わたしは世の光であり命である。わたしは、父がわたしに下さったあの苦い杯から飲み、世の罪を自分に負うことによって父に栄光をささげた。わたしは世の罪を負うことによって、初めから、すべてのことについて父の御心に従ってきた。」
- 12 さて、イエスがこれらの御言葉を語り終えられると、群衆は全員地に伏した。彼らは、キリストが天に昇られた後、自分たちに御自身を現されることが予言されていたのを思い出したからである。
- 13 そこで、主は我らに言われた。
- 14 「立ってわたしのもとに来て、あなたがたの手をわたしのわきに差し入れ、またわたしの両手と両足の釘の跡に触れて、わたしがイスラエルの神であり、全治の神であること、そして世の罪のために殺されたことを知りなさい。」
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[Source: Japanese 1996 モルモン書 *Morumon-sho* retrieved online from LDS.org Japan site at <https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bofm/3-ne/11?lang=jpn>]

There are many alterations between the two translations. This passage of scripture was selected for being commonly used by LDS missionaries when sharing the Mormon gospel; however, translation changes in ordinances including the sacrament prayer are even more pronounced. Such translation examples are discussed at length by Van Gessel in his 2005 research on the Japanese translation of LDS scriptures.

Among the changes between translations, the use of *あなた anata* for “you” in verse 14 is the more modern pronoun over the dated *汝*

*nanji* kanji character for “you”. Plural form of *あなた anata* in modern Japanese is *あなたたち anatatachi*, however the 1996 translation uses *あなたがた anatagata* for the plural while *汝ら nanjira* is the plural version of “you” in the 1909 translation. When considering that the 16<sup>th</sup> century English terms *thee, thy, thou* for “you” have a Bible/Shakespearean sound that appeals to many churchgoers for being respectful and authentic, those who support the traditional translation argue that *汝 nanji* is closer to the classic *thee, thy, thou* English. While changes between translations is easily observable, a

more comprehensive look at the changes in translation has merit for further research.

The 1965 Chinese edition of the Book of Mormon was retranslated in 2007 and the name changed name from 摩門經 to 摩爾門經. This author begs the question that if the Book of Mormon can be retranslated so readily in Japan, why can't more scrutiny be given to the name of the church? The name of the church is the most visible and quickly judged.

This author is surprised by how little is communicated between Asian LDS missions. The fact that the church has changed its name is not immediately known by members or church authorities in the United States or Japan. Area authorities do not share nor openly discuss changes between missions. When the author mentions the name change of the church to mission presidents in Japan, rarely does one ever express knowledge of the change nor express any interest to investigate the changes in neighboring Asian missions. Perhaps this is evidence of an even greater problem—the lack of transparency. John Dehlin, in his 2014 study on why many LDS members are leaving the church mentions a direct correlation to the church's lack of transparency and censorship of its own history and policies. Lack of transparency is a source for cognitive dissonance within the church membership. Names are important for institutes. The reasons for the name change in Korea and Taiwan is even more relevant to the Japanese. Even with the re-translation of the Japanese Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants in an effort for the church to be more understood, no effort has been given to the title of the church.

### 3. Linguistic Imperialism in the Japan LDS Church

English language proficiency is institutionally promoted and supported in Japan. Internet companies such as 楽天 *rakuten* and major industries such as Honda cars have endorsed an “all English” approach in their businesses. This author has also researched Christian churches in Japan and found the imposed use

of English a polarizing force in religious groups. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS church) in Japan readily endorses English into its church vocabulary. Moreover, Japanese clergy in the church are rewarded leadership positions based on English language proficiency. English permeates throughout the church meetings in Japan. The LDS church in Japan maintains English for terms such as baptism バプテスマ *baputesuma* or endowment エンダオメント *endaomento* even though these words exist in the Japanese language and are endorsed by other more dominant Christian churches. As an example, *baptism* is 洗礼 *senrei* in the Japanese language. 洗礼 *senrei* is readily recognized by most all society members in Japan and knowledge of this vocabulary is not limited to those of the Christian faith.

In the Japan LDS church, the names and titles of positions have been changed from Japanese to English. Instead of 監督 *kantoku* “bishop” is currently used. This imposing of English vocabulary into the church is neither universal nor official policy of the church. In Korea and China, English is actively avoided, which debatably promotes a feeling that members embrace the gospel of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as their own instead of subjecting the gospel terms to English making the church a foreign *thing* or よそのもの *yoso no mono*—something that belongs to someone else.

Without an official explanation by the church, the policy change on English imposed on LDS churches in Japan began with the following article in the October 2006 Japanese edition Church News. In this article, the new English-based expressions for ordinances, titles, and callings are explained to the Japanese members:



日本語の重要な教会用語を変更 ~「監督」を「ビショップ」に~

地域教会長会は2006年9月5日付けの手紙で、大管長会と十二使徒定員会の正式な承認の下日本語における重要な教会の用語を変更すると発表した。「この変更により、教会で使用される用語は、教義と聖約など、回復の聖文にあるとおりの啓示された教義や用語と調和するようになります。」(地域教会長会の手紙より、以下引用も同様)

地域教会長会は、時代の遠近にかかわらずこれまで教会の翻訳に携わってきた翻訳者に感謝を表した後、画期的となる変更を伝えた。主要な変更点は英語のBishop, President, Counselorという3つの単語にかかわるものである。

これまで「監督/監督会」と訳されていたものは「ビショップ/ビショップリック」に変更された。「監督」という言葉は、管理する人という役割が強調されるため、「教会員を教え、導き、教会員に仕える」「教会員を愛する」「教会員を養う」という、監督のさらに重要な役割に対する印象が薄れてしまわず、

またPresidentの訳語を「会長」に統一し、

これまで副会長「副監督」などとされていた Counselor(相談相手、助言者、協議する人、を意味する)の訳語を「顧問」に統一した。「聖文の中の「カウンセラー」という言葉には、「副」すなわち代理をする人という概念はあ

りません。」

主要な変更例は以下の表に記されたとおりである。9月の聖餐会においてこの手紙が読み上げられるや各地で早速、呼称の変更が行われた。◆

用語 (英語をカタカナで表記したもの)	従来の訳語	承認された訳語	用語 (英語をカタカナで表記したもの)	従来の訳語	承認された訳語
プレジデント (ステーク)	会長	会長	プレジデンシー (地方部)	部長会	会長会
プレジデント (伝道部)	部長	会長	プレジデンシー (神殿)	長会	会長会
プレジデント (地方部)	部長	会長	カウンセラー (大管長会)	副管長	顧問
プレジデント (神殿)	神殿長	会長	カウンセラー (ステーク会長会)	副会長	顧問
プレジデント (支部)	部長	会長	カウンセラー (伝道部会長会)	副伝道部長	顧問
ビショップ (ワード)	監督	ビショップ	カウンセラー (地方部会長会)	副地方部長	顧問
ビショップリック (ワード)	監督会	ビショップリック	カウンセラー (神殿会長会)	副神殿長	顧問
プレジデンシー (ステーク)	会長会	会長会	カウンセラー (ビショップリック)	副監督	顧問
プレジデンシー (伝道部)	部長会	会長会	カウンセラー (長老定員会)	副会長	顧問

●大管長会の第一顧問であるモンソン管長

●伝道部会長会の第一顧問である○○会長 (ステーク地方部・神殿の会長会の顧問も同様に○○会長)

●○○会長 (支部会長会の会長)

●長老定員会の○○会長

●ビショップリックの第一顧問である○○兄弟

●扶助協会会長会の第一顧問である○○姉妹 (支部会長会・神権定員会会長会の顧問も同様に○○兄弟)

●初等協会会長の○○姉妹、日曜学校会長の○○兄弟 (補助組織の会長を呼称するときは一般に○○兄弟/姉妹)

Figure 1. October 2006 edition of Church News for 末日聖徒イエス・キリスト教会 p.26. Tokyo: Japan.

Further translation revisions occurred in the year 2013. Many long-term members, including this author, urge the church to reconsider the reason for the retranslations and title changes in the Japan LDS church having to reflect the English language. Words like “bishop” are foreign in concept to the Japanese—especially if English is used. The policy of changing the Japanese word 監督 *kantoku* to English counters the LDS church’s own doctrine that “all people will hear the complete Gospel in one’s own tongue”. All people are not required to hear the gospel in the English language—it is counterintuitive to insist on English when giving vocabulary to church positions, ordinances, or titles. English words for titles and position such as ビショップリック *bisshopurikku* derived from *bishopric* furthering the confusion of Japanese LDS church members. The author feels that the English “bishop” unnatural sounding in Japanese and has no place in Japanese language or LDS

society in Japan. The word 監督 *kantoku* is familiar to all Japanese society members and Japan LDS church members since it has been used by early Christian missionaries. Since the Meiji Period in Japan, it has been recognized in both the Japanese Bible and previous LDS church translations. The word 監督 *kantoku* is closer to the original Greek meaning that a “Bishop” refers to a “person of supervision” or “a beholder from the top” as in ἐπισκοπός *episkopos*. The English term “bishop” is ἐπισκοπος in Greek or written as エピスコポス *episkopusu* to show phonetics in katakana. Bishop is Old English, and it refers to an overseer (*epi*=upon, over + *skopos*=watcher), and *episkopos* is converted to “biscop” in Latin following phonetic and spelling changes to make “bishop” in English. The Japanese retranslation of 監督 *kantoku* as ビショップ *bisshoppu* is extremely unnatural when written in katakana. Katakana is reserved for loan words, or words that are separated from the Japanese language

phonetically or conceptually foreign with no equivalent in Japanese.

This author's argument is that the vocabulary 監督 *kantoku* correlates directly to "bishop" in the Japanese language; moreover, 監督 *kantoku* is how the word and concept for the church position title are recognized in the Japanese language. Changing 監督 *kantoku* to ビショップ *bisshoppu* is debatably an action of cultural and linguistic imperialism. Imposing English is wrong on multiple levels. A simple cross-cultural study between Japanese, Chinese and Korean furthers the question as to why English is only being imposed in Japan. 監督 *kantoku* is rendered as 主教 *zhǔjiào* in Chinese and 감독 *kamdok* in Korean. The Korean 감독 *kamdok* is based on the Chinese ideogram reading of the characters 監督 *kantoku*.

A look into the past provides perspective on how assumption and bias have affected change. Social acceptance of foreign ideologies and religion has been a well-research topic among social anthropologists. Quantitative and qualitative research on cross-cultural ideologies is published in various journals. This author believes that the Japan LDS church would benefit through the study of research articles published by scholars such as Mark Mullins renowned for his groundbreaking work titled "Christianity Made in Japan: A Study of Indigenous Movements" (1998). Mullins states that all vocabulary and the point of usage, must root in social culture on the acceptance side before being considered or imported to the minds of the people. Foreign religion is accepted widely due to the removal of foreign characteristic. Jesuit missionaries were successful in the early years of Christianity in Japan by making the vocabulary of the church conform to in be rooted in the Japanese culture. As Mullens (1998) stated in メイド・イン・ジャパンのキリスト教:

「外来の特徴を手放さないでいるかぎり、輸入した宗教は周縁的な人々の気をひくくらいが関の山だろう。輸入した宗教が広く受け入れられるためには、異質な現象だとか逸脱した現象だとみられなくなるまでに、受け入れ側の社会

の文化に根付かなければならない...」 (p.9)

The theological significance of translations cannot be overstated. For example, of the various Japanese translations for "God" 神 or "kami" has come to be known as standard while the transformation of 神 *kami* to mean the Christian God in the contemporary Japanese understanding of the word goes against the traditional view of 神 *kami* as a polytheistic entity. The traditional polytheistic view is from the Japanese Shinto faith which includes natural objects and certain animals to represent deities. According to Dr. Won-bok Rhie (2002), the acceptance of monotheism through Shamanism in Korea versus the idea of multiple gods in Japanese Shinto played an important role on the social acceptance of the Christian faith in Korea.

The importance of cultural acceptance is also evident in how Buddhism, though doctrinally different that the traditional shaman religion of Korea and the traditional Shinto religion of Japan, was readily accepted as a foreign religion by both the Japanese and Korean. Traditional Shinto beliefs blended with Buddhism as it spread from India to China and to Japan through the Korean peninsula. Hinayana and Mahayana sects and how the doctrine mixed with traditional fold beliefs, Confucianism and shamanism was key for the survival of Buddhism as it has since died out in the land of its origins. Hinduism now has a root in India; whereas, Buddhism exists only outside of the country of its origins.

#### 4. Conclusive Thoughts

The LDS church dictated the policy change on the church in Japan through local management headquarters (PBO) on September 5, 2006. Although somehow approved, the decision did not include the input of local members or informed leaders nor does the decision reflect careful research through comparative analysis between standards of other LDS missions in Asia. Further linguistic imperialism can be seen in how those who speak English proficiently are awarded with

high positions in the church. General conference meetings for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, where only highly ranked members may speak, are conducted entirely in the English language.

Intercultural competence includes knowledge not only about other cultures, but one's own culture as well. Although we tend to see the world from the lens of our own culture, it is by seeing through the lens of another culture and being inclusive to another culture that we expand our knowledge and gain perspective.

A major part of developing intercultural competence is re-evaluating and expanding knowledge without imposing one's own culture onto another. This applies at the level of national culture, as well as regional culture and other relevant domains. Intercultural competence is much more than simply being knowledgeable of a foreign language. It is a combination of skills and attitudes of acceptance.

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