Two neoliberal beliefs about English, which posit that English is a universal language for global communication and that it promises both individual and national economic success, compel many expanding circle countries to promote English language teaching (Kubota, 2011; Park, 2011). Together with two other beliefs—that the learning model should be standard English and that the ultimate learning goal is perfect manipulation of the language, these beliefs constitute language ideologies (Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994) or language myths (Watts, 2010). However these language myths are challenged by an analysis of workplace communication experienced by Japanese transnational corporate workers in non-English-dominant Asia—namely, China, South Korea, and Thailand. This presentation will offer a preliminary analysis of the data obtained from ongoing qualitative interviews. Although the workers’ voices resonate with the multilingual turn in applied linguistics (May, 2014), they also pose a conceptual dilemma: While the voices challenge neoliberal language myths, they are simultaneously embedded in neoliberal multiculturalism that these corporations embrace.

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