

Acquiring A Multicultural Outlook through Bilingual Classes: Momoyama Students on the Front Line

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“In regular English classes one tends to forget one’s own language and culture, but in the TWBP I became more aware of those things because they were necessary in class. Thus I became aware of my own Japanese identity as well as getting a chance to think anew about my country through telling the Canadian students about it.”

“Teaching and learning at the same time ... means you have to try to understand what the other person is saying as well as make them understand what you’re saying yourself: that makes you speak more positively.”

Introduction

Imagine this tale of two Japanese students majoring in English. Michiko and Yasumi, both in their second year at university, each spend five weeks of their summer in an English-As-A-Second-Lang-

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uage (ESL) programme at a Canadian community college. Here, though, the similarities end. Michiko, whose programme is run by the Department of Continuing Studies and held in an area of the campus reserved for such programmes, soon discovers that her contact with the college's regular students is minimal. She speaks English only with her Japanese classmates, and uses the language in class only under the watchful eye of her teacher. She is aware of herself only as a novice — a limited speaker of English. Isolated from Canadian students, she continues to believe that Japan is culturally unique and sits apart from the rest of the world; she has no reason or experience to assume otherwise. She sees students of many races on campus, but assumes that only the white students are Canadian. She observes but does not connect with Canadian multiculturalism. After five weeks, she returns to Japan having had a good time with her Japanese friends but still basically disappointed. A major goal of her trip that she had shared with many of her young compatriots, "to make foreign friends", had been unrealizable: except for her host family, to whom she becomes deeply attached, "foreigners", especially young people like herself, remain remote. She doesn't feel her English has improved much, and she feels that speaking English is still an unnatural and tension-filled act. Her account of her experience in Canada will always be that of a tourist, told with a sense of detachment.

Consider now Yasumi's experience. She participates in a five-week programme built around the concept of integrating her ESL class with a class of Canadian students studying Japanese in a regular credit course. Each group helps the other learn the language they are studying. She is with the Canadian students for several hours daily, including weekends. She soon learns that with even minimal amounts of

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English she can communicate with them, having seen that they can do the same with her with only a minimal facility in Japanese. She loses her fear of making mistakes because she is among friends, and to her surprise she also loses her sense of strangeness at using a “foreign language”. With the other students, she is sometimes an “expert” and sometimes a “novice”, so she is not afraid to take risks. She also concludes that making a distinction between Japan and other countries is not always useful or accurate. A new awareness of her own language and culture develops as she explains it to her Canadian peers in their shared classes and social excursions. She knows that her Canadian peers come from many different ethnic backgrounds. She is an active participant in Canadian multiculturalism. With an almost unnoticeable effort she makes friends, and returns home with a deep sense of accomplishment. Later she remarks that the course she attended had made her feel more satisfied than ever before, that her English ability had improved beyond her expectations, and that she had felt herself growing and developing personally every day. Her later accounts of life in Canada will always reveal a vivid sense of having been a participant rather than an observer.

What are the critical factors accounting for the differences between the experiences of these two young women? In reporting on a rather unusual English-As-A-Second-Language programme in which Momoyama students have been taking part since the early 1990s, this paper will seek to give some answers to that question.

Using participating ESL students’ own voices as the primary source of information, it will seek to explore the extent to which a properly-organized language-study programme can simultaneously provide students with an environment in which they can acquire a multicultural

outlook. In this case, a multicultural outlook is defined as one embodying, on the one hand, both cultural and individual awareness, and on the other, enough personal flexibility to permit self-examination and re-definition when required. This outlook can be thought of as an essential building block for intercultural communication competence, which requires awareness of both one's own and the other's culture. The programme described in this paper, then, is a unique model that was designed to meet the twin goals of teaching linguistic AND cultural competence simultaneously, a primary goal of contemporary language educators.

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Responding to the lucrative market offered by Japan from the 1980s onwards and the eagerness of Japanese institutions to develop programmes abroad, numerous institutions of learning throughout the English-speaking world began offering ESL programmes for Japanese students. However, many such programmes have come to appear stale and unimaginative, failing to respond to demands for more unique and effective content from an increasingly sophisticated clientele. Chief among the failings of these programmes is the isolation of the Japanese learner of English; seldom are Japanese students engaged with their English-speaking peers in any significant way. As a result, both the possibility of their developing international friendships and the opportunity to pursue their developing language skills in an authentic context are frustrated, while their scope for achieving new cultural understandings and attaining intercultural competence is also severely narrowed. Closely related to this problem is the reinforcement of the "novice" status of the learner, since opportunities to share students' own competence as young adults are also denied. This in turn affects the stud-

ents' confidence as conduits for cultural transmission.

Since the summer of 1992, St. Andrew's (Momoyama Gakuin) University (hereafter Momoyama) and Douglas College of New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada (hereafter Douglas) have been operating regular bi-annual Two-Way Bilingual Programmes (TWBP). The programmes are participated in by Momoyama students studying English as a second language (hereafter ESLs), and by Douglas students studying Japanese as a second language (hereafter JSLs). It is the belief of both institutions that such programmes, properly constructed, can not only provide students with an enhanced language-learning environment, but also increase their receptiveness to issues of multiculturalism and thereby develop their intercultural competence. This paper, after putting the programme into its international context, will then seek to pursue its practical effect on participating Japanese students by reporting on the results of a questionnaire carried out in the autumn of 1995. By giving voice to the students themselves, it is hoped that the potential of such bilingual programmes for enriching cultural perceptions will be conveyed most vividly. To appreciate the context in which the TWBP developed, it will be helpful to first review the history of Canada's dedication to multiculturalism and bilingual education.

Multicultural Canada: The Federal Perspective

Crucial to a society in which people of different racial or cultural types live together in harmony and understanding is a mutual appreciation of the varied factors that go together to form the human species. In many cases, governments have been left to form a legal framework in which such appreciation is fostered. Canada's national exercise in

what it calls “multiculturalism” is an example.

What is “multiculturalism”? The word seems to be used, in Canada at least, in two main senses: to refer to a society that is characterized by ethnic or cultural heterogeneity; and to refer to an ideal of equality and mutual respect among a population’s ethnic or cultural groups. In other words, the term formulates not only the *ideal* to which the country is striving, but also the basic *policy* on which the country’s social programmes are based.

Canada is generally recognized as one of the most multicultural nations in the world today. In fact, the very term “multiculturalism” was coined in Canada in the 1960s, and before many years had passed Canadians had begun to integrate a self-perception as members of a multicultural people into their national identity. In 1971, multiculturalism was made the official policy of the Canadian government, and in 1982 the Constitution Act, as part of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, enshrined it within the most fundamental document of Canadian State, the Constitution. In the first two decades of multiculturalism, much was done both provincially and federally to celebrate and preserve Canadian diversity. Heritage festivals, multicultural broadcasting, educational programmes and academic research into ethnicity and multiculturalism were characteristic activities of this first phase of multiculturalism. (Alladin, 1993)

In the last decade, the question of what is the best approach to multiculturalism has been raised anew. The debate has focused on such questions as how much Canadian society ought to change to accommodate diversity, and to what degree the problems of ethnic inequality should be the subject of attention. While the nation’s commitment to multiculturalism rests on an assumption that political

and ethnic differences can be reconciled through a policy on multiculturalism, for example, not all Canadians agree that this assumption alone is enough of a guarantee of equality. In support of their claim, they point to the problems raised by the influx of overwhelmingly non-white immigrants since the mid-1980s. In the last decade, therefore, energies have been directed toward multicultural education, in an effort to foster "cultural pluralism", defined by one scholar as "a process of understanding and compromise characterized by mutual appreciation and respect between two or more ethnic groups." (Alladin, 1993: 135) To this end, most school boards throughout the provinces of Canada have become committed to developing materials for antiracist education. Moreover, the study of culture in schools aims to focus not on seeking the differences between or making judgements on specific beliefs or practices, but on the spirit of finding the truths universal to all human societies. This approach has as its goal the fostering of a truly democratic citizenship, one which bridges all the cultural groups existing side by side in the pluralistic society that is Canada.

Multicultural Canada: The Provincial Perspective

In line with Canada's federal government policies, the country's provincial governments have also developed multicultural policies. That of British Columbia, the province in which the Momoyama/Douglas College programmes take place, adopted its own Multiculturalism Act in 1993. Extensive consultation with community groups led up to the formulation of the Act, which gives the province's multiculturalism policy legislative authority. The Act itself commits the government to "generally, carry on government services and programs in a manner that is sensitive and responsive to the multicultural

reality of British Columbia.” Multiculturalism BC, the provincial government division which monitors the implementation of the Act, describes its mission as being: to support a society free from racism, where individuals are treated with respect and dignity, and where citizens have equal opportunity to participate in their communities. The mission is in turn reflected in its goals: the elimination of racism; promoting a better understanding of multiculturalism; promoting equitable access to services and resources; promoting institutional change to better serve a culturally diverse community; promoting cross-cultural understanding; and promoting community development and responsible citizenship.

Among the many programmes funded by Multiculturalism BC, the heritage language programmes are the most relevant to our subject. Heritage language programmes are designed to assist young British Columbians to understand diverse cultures, to increase self-esteem and personal development, and to enhance “B.C.’s ability to communicate in a global environment.” (Government of British Columbia, 1997: p.14) Accordingly, a fund has been created to assist the provision of language classes and the professional development of teachers and materials oriented towards this end.

Multicultural Canada: The French Immersion Experiment

Canada’s multiculturalism policy grew out of the bilingual/bicultural policies of the 1960s, which had been designed to allay the fears of the country’s French-speaking minority that they would be swamped by Anglophone prejudices. Ironically, the Royal Commission which laid the basis for the bilingual policy in the 1960s also set in motion the movement toward a multicultural focus when it expressed its

concern that, through the solidification of English and French as official languages, “immigrant minorities could be relegated to second-class citizens”. (Alladin, 1993: p.128) The subsequent multiculturalism policy was positioned in the framework of bilingualism, in an attempt to address the anxieties of communities that were neither Francophone nor Anglophone. In this paper we will simply draw attention to the attempts that were made to address the need for bilingual/multilingual human resources through language learning programmes, since they reflect most directly on the development of the TWBP.

In Canada, a model called French Immersion surfaced in the 1970s as the predominant model for bilingual education. In this model, in place of the traditional approach of making French a discrete subject of study, it was used as the language of teaching for classes in other subjects. This sustained exposure to the language resulted in much faster progress in language fluency than with the traditional approach. The following decade thus saw the model being applied to a wider range of languages. Most important, from the point of view of this paper, was the Pacific Rim Initiative, which was born out of official alarm over the absence of a focus on Asia in schools at a time when Canada’s trade ties with Asia were growing so dramatically. In 1986, the year that the World’s Fair, Expo 86, was held in Vancouver, the government set in motion a 5-year project to introduce a Pacific Rim focus in K-12 education, an endeavour which subsequently became known as the Pacific Rim Initiative. Besides introducing modules on aspects of the Pacific Rim cultures ranging from economics to literature, courses in Japanese and Mandarin Chinese were introduced at all levels from elementary to high school. Today there are few urban districts which do not have schools offering those languages at high school

level, and Japanese has long since replaced German as the third most popular second language in British Columbia schools after French and Spanish. Most of these programmes take the immersion approach to language teaching, and it was this development which provided the background to the creation of the TWBP. (In fact, many of the participating JSLs are high-school graduates continuing their Japanese studies at Douglas College.)

However, the TWBP departs from the usual immersion model in several important ways, ways that reflect the pioneering concept of “developmental bilingual education” introduced in the United States in the early 1990s as the basis for programmes to integrate Spanish-speaking students. The key element was that such students should be integrated in content classes with other students so that they could act as resources to one another.

The significance of these programmes may be summed up as follows. First of all, they prize the linguistic skills that all students bring to the classroom as resources to be used and developed. Secondly, by incorporating the use of students’ mother tongue as a language of instruction, they validate it instead of sidelining it as often happens in language education. Next is that students get the benefit of target language input from peers who speak that language as their first language, not only from peers who are also target language learners. Finally, students learn the target language through interaction with age-group peers, not only with a teacher, and thus are able to see the language through the eyes of those peers. It can be readily imagined that, over and above the advantages for language learning, positive attitudes toward people of other cultures and valuable cross-cultural communication skills also develop as a natural result of such programmes.

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When the TWBP was being planned, this model seemed the obvious choice.

Drawing the Threads Together: Multiculturalism in Action

The introductory material above has sketched out the background context within which the TWBP developed. To review, important elements in this background are:

- 1) a Canadian commitment to multiculturalism, and a high regard for the values of cultural pluralism where different cultures meet as equals;
- 2) the lessons of the successful Canadian experience with French Immersion which suggest, first, that language is best learned when the focus is on interesting content, and second, that the classroom can become an “authentic” language learning environment;
- 3) awareness of the additional benefits of the two-way bilingual system, with its shift away from the teacher as the only source of instruction and the recognition of the positive benefits of cross-cultural peer relations; and
- 4) a commitment to internationalizing institutions of higher learning by integrating international students and Canadian students in mutually rewarding educational activities.

The influence of each of these elements can be clearly seen in the design of the TWBP. Before going on to talk in detail about the programme, though, it will be helpful to first sketch out the Japanese context.

True and False Internationalization: The Japanese Context

Beginning in the late 1970s, following the loosening of currency

restrictions on Japanese travelling abroad a decade or so earlier, and in tune with Japan's growing economic prosperity, schools and colleges in Japan began tentative attempts to forge ties with overseas counterparts by sending them groups of students for language and cultural study. It was perhaps the first time in modern Japanese history that large numbers of ordinary Japanese, as opposed to government-supported or independently funded scholars, had been able to make such extended visits abroad.

By the mid to late 1980s, the word "internationalization" (*kokusaika*) had become THE media catchword, and it remained on most people's lips until the bursting of the financial bubble and the ensuing economic downturn in the early 1990s. Interpreted by the public at large as Japan's decision to shed its insular past and demonstrate its oneness with the rest of the world, "internationalization" was the trigger for educational establishments throughout Japan to begin advertising themselves as providing the training needed to become that mysterious entity the "global citizen". It became *de rigueur* for any college or university hoping to survive in the rat-race competition for students to provide them with the opportunity to "study abroad" and broaden their horizons. The concept of "internationalization" originally formulated by the government, however, had been transparently different, perhaps even the very opposite.

Japan's emergence as a player on the world stage during the 1980s had come about principally as a result of its newfound economic prosperity. The self-confidence that this prosperity brought in turn, thanks largely to a particularly conservative administration, fostered the inherent conviction of Japanese uniqueness, leading to a growing insistence that economic success demonstrated not only superior

management ability but also the superiority of the “Japanese Way” itself. Far from implying any internal transformation in the dynamics of Japanese society, it represented above all a sense that it was now possible to assert Japan’s identity forcefully for the first time since the debacle of 1945. It was not by chance that the 1980s, as well as being the era of “internationalization”, also saw a series of conservative developments. These included the legal establishment of the *gengō* system by which years are counted by the name of the reigning emperor instead of consecutively; the declaration that Japan was a monoracial society whose success was due precisely to the fact that it was not a melting pot like America; and the announcement by Prime Minister Nakasone that education should have as its task the inculcation of national pride. Rather than a move towards the rest of the world, that is, “internationalization” was no less than a code word for a new sense of national mission, a demand that the world accept Japan on its own terms.

Now that Japan’s economy is in the doldrums and the impetus of the 1980s dissipated, the word “internationalization” too has lost its former cachet and disappeared almost totally from the media. At the same time, though, a generation of young people brought up during the era of prosperity has been afforded the opportunity to give the word a more practical application. Ironically, they have found that the “Japanese uniqueness” that inspired the original internationalization campaign was in fact highly circumscribed; some have begun to doubt it altogether. These were the many thousands of students who spent time pursuing courses at various overseas institutions of learning, and the young employees of Japanese firms which set up overseas branches while the economic boom was at its height. The concept of

“internationalization” which these young people (especially the former) brought back with them after their period abroad was very different from that envisaged by the cultural mandarins of the Japanese government, for it brought a sense of relativity to their awareness of being Japanese. It included too an understanding that Japan was not nearly as unique as their schooling had urged them to believe, and that those areas where they did feel “apart” from their fellow-students were in fact more hindrance than hubris. All of these points will become apparent when we move on to consider the reactions of the Momoyama students participating in the TWBP.

Another significant aspect of this mass exodus of young Japanese for overseas learning programmes is that a large majority of them have been women, a development that marked a major break in a historical tradition going back some 1500 years. In past eras of massive cultural borrowing, such as the Nara and Meiji periods when Japan absorbed lessons from China and the West, respectively, not only those who carried out the reforms but also those who benefited from them were men. In every case new ways were devised to ensure that women remained in a position of subservience. At the end of the 20th century the spread of universal education, reductions in family size and the corresponding advance of women into the workplace, and the accompanying realignment of gender-oriented self-perceptions have made it much harder to hold women’s expectations down. In fact, there is now evidence that the tables have turned and that women’s expectations are at considerable odds with those of young men. The phenomenon known as the “Narita Divorce”, where the new wife demands a divorce upon their return from the honeymoon trip after her husband has revealed his total lack of competence, is a case in

point. Despite its exaggerated and comic cast, the phenomenon nonetheless points to a significant change in popular culture unimaginable in years past when Japanese men confined their wives to the role of domestic servant. Essentially, it highlights the ascendancy of young women today as the gender more "internationalized" and competent in the larger world beyond Japan's shores.

The implications of this fact for Japan's future are enormous, for a cohort of young women with flexible cultural views is being created even as the once-dominant banks and trading companies retire back into their shells taking their (largely male) employees with them. On the one hand, the combination of language skills and the confidence to deal with unpredictable situations that these young women have acquired is making them a formidable force in the job market. On the other, the fact that child-raising continues to be within Japanese women's sphere of responsibility ensures that their new consciousness of what it means to be a woman in a more dynamic, outwardly-oriented Japan will be passed on to the next generation.

The TWBP illustrated all of these points. Women were not only the overwhelming presence among the students, but were also a majority of respondents to the Questionnaire. Most demonstrated not only a readiness to revise their own preconceptions concerning their "Japaneseness", but also a felt need to pass their acquired understanding on to others. Two recent studies of Japanese students abroad (Whalley, 1995 and Berwick & Whalley, 1998), using interviews and journal entries as source material, back up these findings with further data, and also suggest the nature of the new circumstances that will facilitate this cultural transformation.

Both studies indicate that young Japanese women who have studied

abroad are strongly committed to the relationships made with host families and new friends while abroad, and after marriage set about the process of integrating spouses and children into those relationships. As well as introducing the potential for the reorganization of married life and child-rearing in Japan, experiences abroad also appear from the data to be delaying the age of marriage for women, who are more likely to marry in their late twenties than when they are fresh out of college. This delay too is likely to have a significant effect, the women's additional maturity putting them in a stronger position to negotiate the terms of the marriage contract so that equal benefits accrue to both partners. Another significant finding of the study was that young women who had been abroad for long-term study were much more likely to go on to Graduate Programmes than if they had remained in Japan. Given the strong historical link between education for women and women's emancipation, and the denial of education by oppressive regimes as a means of keeping women in check, this development promises to have far-reaching effects.

In contrast, young Japanese men seem to be far less affected by their experiences while studying abroad, according to the findings of Whalley's 1995 study, based on the journals kept by young Japanese studying in Canada and young Canadians studying in Japan. When asked to explain this, one young Japanese woman cited in the later Berwick & Whalley study commented that she felt young men in Japan to be too locked into a "life track", making the possible negative consequences of too much personal change an unacceptable risk for them. This insight perhaps serves to underscore the tensions that the new consciousness of women will bring to social relations in Japan. We can expect that young women, equipped with more self-confidence

than before, a better education, and concrete experience of alternative ways of living—and, of course, with a stake in changing the traditional male-centred norms of Japanese society, will be in a position of strength to renegotiate the social relations of 21st century Japan.

The Two-Way Bilingual Programme (TWBP)

The ethos of the TWBP is a commitment to peers learning from and with other peers collaboratively. This is the basis for what is in fact a very simple contract underlying the entire programme: namely, “If you help me to learn your language, I will help you to learn mine.” With this focus, the programme is designed to provide maximum opportunities for students to interact with each other, both in structured classroom activities in which they take turns with their respective languages, and in extracurricular activities.

There are two variations of the TWBP: the full Programme offered in the summer, and a limited Programme in the spring in which JSLs spend only a part of their regular Japanese language classroom hours together with the ESLs. The full model and partial model share some but not all features. Core activities include integrated classroom and homework activities, task-based communication activities, and a coordinated series of social and recreational activities. In the full Programme, aside from spending approximately half of their classroom hours together, students are also given structured opportunities to interact informally. These include “Bilingual Lunches”, where task-based activities such as interviews on topics of interest are conducted; “Bilingual Workshops”, where projects such as a Programme Newsletter are carried out; and “Fieldtrips”, where JSLs escort and guide ESLs through local places of interest. A lot of incidental, unplanned

learning takes place during such activities, making the teacher's primary role that of getting students to reflect on this "lived" curriculum as a source of new knowledge.

A vital component of the TWBP is a carefully designed intercultural communication course. The integration of two groups of students means that notions of national culture and behaviour patterns can be examined directly. Moreover, the presence of students of different genders and from different social classes and regions within a country can help ensure that narrow stereotypic views of cultural patterns are avoided. Instead of being reduced to mere cultural simulations, therefore, authentic interactions among students on a human level lead naturally to opportunities for learning and instruction. For example, when students are given a task such as a presentation on a social issue like homelessness, the values, norms and beliefs of both sides are revealed and must be negotiated to complete the task successfully. In this way, being faced with culturally different students on a daily basis, and with the need to interpret one's culture to those students, helps deepen knowledge of one's own culture and the awareness that culture is often socially manipulated rather than natural. This knowledge, that one's culture is a construction and one's notion of common sense not a "natural" phenomenon, is tremendously liberating, freeing us from the tyranny of our unconscious perspectives on the world by revealing their existence to us, and emancipating us to develop new, consciously crafted perspectives. (Mezirow, 1991)

Advantages of the Two-Way Bilingual Programme

The following review of the advantages of the two-way bilingual model will bring to mind the influence of the broad trends related to

multiculturalism, bilingual education and internationalization in Canada. It will also make specific the contrast with teacher-centred ESL programmes, and the extent to which it departs from the version of internationalization sponsored by the Japanese government.

The broad aim of the TWBP is to provide an enhanced, more democratic learning environment in which both inside- and outside-classroom experiences play significant parts. In the classroom, students are expected to play the roles of both language learner and language teacher: learners in their own target language, and teachers in their partners' target language. Outside the classroom, whether in structured or unstructured situations, students act as informal (perhaps unconscious) conduits for cultural information. The advantages over standard classroom-based, ESL-only programmes are obvious: there is authentic motivation to communicate, a shift from a teacher-centered to a learner-centered classroom, and the prospect for incorporating student-produced material suited exactly to the interests of their age group into the instructional resources.

By eliminating the traditional distinction between "learner" and "teacher" in the classroom, the problem of student passivity is overcome. This is a particular problem for Japanese students, but it is not absent among Canadian students. When students have to provide information as well as receive it, they are obliged to remain conscious of their own behaviour and that of their partner; the results are enhanced sensitivity and consequently enhanced receptivity, coupled with a milieu which validates student knowledge. The model also eliminates another common problem with ESL courses, namely their isolation within a programme which is held within the host institution but outside its regular class schedule, by providing ESLs with opportunities to join

with host students and become a part of the college's day-to-day life. One-on-one support tends to be built into such a peer-focused model. Moreover, for JSLs who are learning Japanese within a Canadian environment, the opportunity to acquire relevant cultural information at first hand without leaving Canada is a precious one.

An important effect of this kind of programme is the creation of an authentic cultural and intercultural milieu. As well as interacting with peers from the other culture, students have the opportunity to observe interactions among the peer group when they are not directly engaged. The effect of being face to face with peers is to create a natural intercultural community, a natural learning environment in which initial inhibitions due to cultural differences are outweighed by common generational factors. Finally, for ESLs and JSLs the opportunity to forge close friendships with young people within the other cultural group transforms their experience from a narrow classroom one to a broader socially oriented one, in which pedagogical and cultural lessons become intrinsically linked.

In order to ensure that the Michikos as well as the Yasumis have the opportunity to gain genuine multicultural experience, "learner" students must be able to operate on an equal footing with the peers that they meet on the programme. The gifts that they themselves have to bring, in the form of their "expertise" regarding their native language and culture, must also be given the credit they deserve; they must be seen as assets, not as handicaps to learning another language and culture. Only in this way will English cease to feel to them like an exotic experience, and only then will they be able to escape their exclusive sense of being Japanese. In this sense, the TWBP model is the closest approximation to a "real" community that langu-

age students can expect to have in a programme lasting only five short weeks. It provides students with an authentic milieu where they can experience intercultural exchanges at first hand, and live out their own cultural heritage in a “natural environment”. As the following pages will show, participating students acquired far more than merely a superior command of English language.

Summary of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire distributed to participating ESLs, intended to gauge their subjective and objective reactions to their TWBP experience, covered a wide range of topics, divided into four sections for purposes of analysis: “affective questions”, “linguistic questions”, “culture-oriented questions”, and “self-awareness questions” (as can be imagined, there was some overlap within these categories). Students were invited to rank various propositions on a scale from 1 to 5, and to add comments if they wished. The questions were written in Japanese, and students were invited to use either Japanese or English for their responses.

“Affective” topics included the degree of closeness which students experienced towards the other culture, in this case Canada, and the degree to which they felt part of the host institution, Douglas College. They were also asked to assess the degree to which they felt they had increased their confidence in speaking their target language and in making friends with those from outside their own culture. This was followed by a set of questions probing the degree to which the students’ sense of cultural identity was strengthened or weakened, and the degree to which they came to feel a more “international” person as a result of the TWBP.

“Linguistic” topics covered the degree to which students felt the TWBP (a) provided them with opportunities for learning appropriate language; (b) increased their learning motivation; and (c) accelerated the learning process for them.

“Cultural” topics covered the degree to which students felt they had learned about the target culture; whether or not their prior expectations regarding that culture were fulfilled; and the effect that participation in the programme had had upon their own sense of identity.

Finally, there was a set of “self-awareness” questions that sought answers concerning whether or not the students felt they had increased their knowledge of their own culture and, in corollary to that, whether or not they felt more aware of themselves (as Japanese, as students, as young people, etc.). A separate question queried the degree to which they had been motivated by their JSL partners’ interest to find out more about their own culture.

To round off the questionnaire, we tagged on some general questions concerning the degree to which students felt the TWBP experience would be useful or influential in their lives, and whether or not they would recommend it over other models to their fellow-students. Finally, we invited them to set out their overall impressions and/or recommendations for improvements. All responses were, of course, anonymous. An analysis of the students’ responses follows.

Multicultural Outlook and Intercultural Communication

Competence: Analyzing Student Responses

Our task now is to look more closely at the results of the questionnaire by analyzing student comments across the four areas of inquiry: affective, linguistic, culture, and self-awareness questions. The analysis

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will point specifically to evidence of the development of the multicultural outlook that we have argued is a product of the Japanese student's experience of study with Canadian students in the TWBP. To better understand this aspect of student growth, we may consider this multicultural outlook as part of the development of a broader and more tangible skill—"intercultural communication competence".

Two elements of this intercultural communication competence are important. First, it is something that develops within a specific situational context. Rather than an individual achievement or quality, it is the product of an association between people. Such competence cannot be acquired outside a relationship with someone from another culture, such as in a classroom with no members of the target culture present. What we therefore look for in our data, when seeking to confirm our hypotheses about the potential of the TWBP, is the presence of a rich web of relationships with Canadian students which can establish the grounds for the development of intercultural communication competence among the Japanese students.

Second, intercultural communication competence requires behaviours that are both appropriate and effective: appropriate in the sense of being regarded as proper and suitable in the target culture, and effective in the sense of achieving the desired outcomes. (For details, see Lustig and Koester, 1999.) Examples might range from the completion of relatively simple tasks like doing a language-learning exercise together to the complex tasks of developing friendships, with success in both as the desired outcome. How successful is the TWBP in bringing students to that sphere of competence?

To become interculturally competent, students require an educational context that facilitates the acquisition of certain kinds of knowledge,

develops a suitable motivation, and encourages skillful actions. Competent intercultural communicators must first have knowledge of the people, and of the appropriate norms, values, beliefs and expectations present in various cultural contexts. Secondly, they must have a positive motivation. This is a matter of both feelings and intentions: they must not only be emotionally prepared to embrace another culture, but also have positive intentions when interacting with its representatives. Finally, they must be able to perform appropriately and effectively. All three of these components must be present if students are to develop any degree of intercultural communication competence. We will take these three components one by one, using student responses to the questionnaire as our primary evidence, to gauge how far the TWBP provides a context for effectively nurturing the required skills.

The knowledge base that students developed via the TWBP was related, first of all, to language and culture in Canada. Comments such as, “Because there are different kinds of people in Canada, I realized that there could be different kinds of English too”, and “I learned English that is not in text books” illustrate this new awareness of their target language, English. Also essential to expanding your knowledge base concerning another culture is the process of recognizing and dispelling your own stereotypical view of that culture. Responses like “Realizing that different societies and cultures have different values, I felt that my own world had expanded”, and “I had thought the culture and lifestyle of foreign countries were colder and more standoffish, but I was quite wrong” show the success of the TWBP in helping Japanese students to dispel such stereotypes.

Another important part of the knowledge base for developing intercultural communication competence is self-knowledge. You can't

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hope to understand where another person is coming from unless you first have some idea of where you are coming from yourself, and the TWBP bore this truism out remarkably. Contact with the Canadian students seems to have provoked a new awareness among the ESLs of their own cultural identity, particularly as a reaction to the positive cultural identification shown by many of their counterparts. Examples included: "The non-Japanese were really proud of their country ... that made me aware of how little we Japanese understand our own selves"; "I had a chance to reassess parts of Japanese culture that I had previously just allowed to wash by me"; and "I felt my sense of Japanese identity became stronger when I was communicating with Canadian students". Because the programme allowed them to strike up close relationships with the other students, moreover, this new sense of cultural distinctness was combined with a realization that it did not preclude communication. Some students were able to conclude, as a result of their experience, that drawing lines between cultures was itself a nonsensical exercise, as the following comments reveal: "I realized that Japan is also a 'foreign country', and that it's nonsense to make distinctions between different countries"; "I felt that we were all simply students, regardless of race or country"; "...to make distinctions between Japan and Europe or the USA is a narrow and stupid outlook".

Some specific examples of insights into Japanese culture include an awareness of how much they had unconsciously immersed their individual identities in that of the group. This was clearly revealed in thoughts like, "I found the 'self' I thought was mine was not nearly as clearly defined as I had thought"; and "The serious attitude of the Canadian students made me aware of how immature and frivolous I am despite

being 20 years old. Also, having a chance to put my own ideas across gave me new insights into myself, and made me realize how important it is to have a clear sense of identity.” For other students, part of their new awareness of their own culture was linked to the fresh understanding they gained of the Japanese language as they were required to peer-teach it. “I had a chance to reflect on the language that I use unthinkingly every day, and so became aware of the problematic points in Japanese.”; and “I had taken Japanese for granted and hadn’t thought too deeply about it before ... I realized for the first time after looking at their [the JSLs’] textbooks that Japanese was a foreign language too.” are just two insights that reveal the language-specific elements of cultural self-awareness.

Our questionnaire not only reveals evidence of how the two-way bilingual model laid the foundation for developing the knowledge base for intercultural communication competence, but also provides rich evidence related to the element of motivation. Comments like “I felt I could make friends with anyone if only I was positive enough” indicate students’ perception of how important a positive motivation is for establishing relationships. Other comments like “I got to feel that they were just friends who spoke a different language”, and “I lost the strange feeling of tension I used to have towards foreigners” are more evidence of the positive embrace of people of another culture that is so crucial to intercultural competence. Feelings of admiration towards the other culture, represented by responses like “Japan should learn from Canadian people’s kindness and positive thinking”, are a basic indication of the positive attitudes that foster intercultural competence.

For motivation to take firm root in the hearts of learners, a sense

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of solidarity or oneness must replace the sense of isolation that is so common in the language classroom. This discovery of a common ground where one can simply be oneself is essential to developing intercultural communication competence, and the questionnaire provided ample evidence that the TWBP had created the required conditions. “Because they [the JSLs] were friends, I wasn’t afraid of making mistakes”; “I found that they weren’t so different from us”; “We could relax and talk more easily because we were with people of our own generation” are evidence of this achievement of solidarity. The comments also reveal how this sense of solidarity helps establish a climate of trust, essential in the language-learning context where risks are an inseparable part of the learning process.

The third component of intercultural competence, skillful actions, requires a different kind of data collection from the one employed here in order to develop a rich account of student achievements. Still, we can see evidence of students learning to identify what they need to know and be able to do in order to be interculturally competent, as in the following pair of insights, both of which reveal the beginnings of a clear agenda for competent action. “We could not only learn English, but also get a chance to think more deeply about ...Japanese culture and about ourselves as Japanese; through studying and sharing activities with Canadian students... I realized that just learning English is not enough to make you an international person.”; “Since I got back I’ve wanted to know more about Japanese, so I’m studying it now.”

We can also infer a capacity for skillful actions from evidence of the creation and successful maintenance of relationships with the Canadian students after the conclusion of the TWBP. The friendships

achieved during the TWBP seem to have opened up new vistas for many ESLs, jolting them out of their comfortable assumptions regarding the normality of Japanese life, and encouraging some of them to even consider the possibility of a life lived outside the confines of Japan. Thus: “I think my priorities changed after meeting Canadians”; “I began to imagine a life or future for myself outside Japan”; and “I no longer think of Japan as the only place where I could work”.

Summary

The aims of the organizers of the TWBP were twofold. While seeking to provide students with an optimum environment for acquiring the English-language skills essential to success in the early 21st century, we sought also to facilitate the acquisition of cross-cultural communication skills without which that language ability would be meaningless. The model devised to meet this end, the TWBP, was a hybrid of the immersion model introduced in Canada during the 1970s and the developmental bilingual model that later emerged out of it in the United States.

Homogeneous groups of ESL students, especially Japanese students, tend to have a high degree of “communicative inertia”, and indeed this was the characteristic of almost all the ESLs at the commencement of each programme. On the other hand, there is every sign that the ESLs taking part in the programme found its bilingual approach to language education little short of revolutionary. Bilingual programmes, in which peers rather than a formal teacher act as the students’ primary source of information, provide a stimulus to learn, create more authentic motivation than can be had in a teacher-centred classroom, and encourage students to speak English more readily. Many were

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heard to remark that they had spoken more English during their five weeks on the TWBP than in the whole of the previous seven or eight years that they had spent learning the language in Japan.

Another advantage of bilingual programmes is that they bring learners into regular contact with representatives of the target culture, giving them the chance to experience a more authentic cultural milieu. One of the most striking features of this kind of programming is the amount of incidental or unplanned learning of cultural information, especially non-verbal communication patterns, that occurs. Most of the ESLs could be seen slipping naturally into the mannerisms of their JSL counterparts, including both body and spoken language. The presence of native speakers, moreover, ensures that student-generated classroom activities can be as spontaneous and unpredictable (read, "exciting") as authentic native speech is.

In addition, bilingual programmes, by using students as peer teachers, validate the students' own knowledge. Both groups are experts in their own languages and cultures, and can provide a tremendous range of general knowledge of each. Being able to share their general knowledge of their respective country or culture with others hones their self-awareness while increasing their sense of responsibility as teacher. Finally, the nature of the bilingual programme makes it much easier for the students to develop friendships with one another. Forming friendships with people of other cultures is one aspect of young Japanese people's desire to break free of their perceived cultural constraints, and so it is especially gratifying to see the close friendships that flower during this kind of programme. Being rooted in an awareness of shared purpose, these friendships also encourage interdependence alongside cooperation.

In sum, the TWBP was perceived by most students as a total experience, one that brought both linguistic and socio-cultural enlightenment. As well as solving the commonest problems pointed out by participants in earlier programmes, it provided a completely new outlook on the world, changing many students' cultural perceptions profoundly as well as bringing them unprecedented linguistic confidence. In this sense, it may be said to have been an exercise in creating an environment in which education in its original sense — bringing out the students' essential nature and contributing to their personal growth — could take place.

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In this paper, we have used the model of the Momoyama-Douglas College programme in Japanese and English to illustrate the advantages of the two-way bilingual approach to language learning. A primary advantage of this kind of programme is that it allows young Japanese to develop not only language skills but also a multicultural outlook within the broader skill of intercultural communication competence. Student comments drawn from our questionnaire have allowed us to build a case for this skill development. Now we can return to our starting point and “embody” our fictional Michiko, by allowing her to give voice to another young woman's anonymous comment:

“I'm sure that I don't appear very international in the eyes of the world, but for me it was a wonderful lesson to leave Japan, experience Canada's life and customs, hear about different ways of thinking and points of view, and speak in English. I came to be able to see both Japan and Canada quite differently, much more intimately than before ... I was so happy ... because I felt that I wasn't just a member of a group of Japanese students, but a stud-

ent who was studying in Canada.”

It is this sense of intimacy that two-way bilingual programmes promote, and intercultural communication competence is also ultimately a product of the intimacy that lies at the heart of all successful human interaction, where differences are respectfully suspended and we meet each other on common ground.

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APPENDIX: THE ORIGINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Please rank the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5 according to how strongly you agree with them.

A. Affective Questions

1. I feel that I experienced Canadian college life through joining the TWBP.
2. I feel that I was able to make close friends among Canadian students through joining the TWBP.
3. I feel that I gained confidence in communicating in English with people of my own age group as a result of the close contact with Canadian students afforded by the TWBP.
4. I realized that I could become friends even with non-Japanese as a result of the close contact with Canadian students provided by the TWBP.
5. I feel that my sense of Japanese identity became stronger as a result of joining the TWBP.

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6. I got a sense of satisfaction and confidence through having an opportunity to teach my own language to Canadian students.
7. I feel that I became a more internationally minded person through the contact with Canadian students.

B. Linguistic Questions

1. I feel that I was able to learn more appropriate English, the English used by people of my own age group, as a result of the close contact with Canadian students.
2. I feel that I achieved my main purpose, to learn English, more easily thanks to the TWBP.
3. I feel that I was better able to do that thanks to the contact with Canadian students afforded by the TWBP.
4. I feel that my desire to continue studying English became stronger as a result of the contact with Canadian students on the TWBP.

C. Cultural Questions

1. I feel that the Canadian culture and society that I experienced were more or less what I'd expected before joining the TWBP.
2. I feel that I could learn more about Canadian culture and society as a result of the contact with Canadian students afforded by the TWBP.
3. I feel that my sense of Japanese identity became stronger when I was communicating with Canadian students during the TWBP.

D. Self-Awareness Questions

1. I feel that I gained a deeper knowledge of Japanese culture through having to explain about it to Canadian students during the TWBP.
2. I feel that I gained a deeper knowledge of Japanese language through having to teach and explain about it to Canadian students during the TWBP.
3. I feel that I learned more about myself as a young person as a result of the opportunity for contact with young Canadian students afforded by the TWBP.

4. I feel that I learned more about young Canadians as a result of the contacts made possible by the TWBP.
5. I feel that I came to want to study more about Japanese culture as a result of observing the interest expressed by Canadian students on the TWBP.

E. Miscellaneous

1. I feel that the socio-cultural experience afforded by the contact with Canadian students through the TWBP will be useful to some degree in helping me formulate my own opinions and values.
2. I feel that the socio-cultural experience afforded by the contact with Canadian students through the TWBP will be useful to some degree in my future career.
3. I feel that the contact with Canadian students through the TWBP will be an important memory of my university days.
4. I would like to study in a TWBP-type programme again if I have the opportunity.
5. I would recommend an English-language programme which provides opportunities for constant contact with Canadian (or other English-speaking countries') students over programmes which do not.

F. Comments

If you have anything to add — concerning the TWBP, your own experiences, this questionnaire, etc. — please feel free to do so.

**Acquiring A Multicultural
Outlook through Bilingual Classes:
Momoyama Students on the Front Line**

Philip BILLINGSLEY & Tom WHALLEY

ABSTRACT

In this paper, we use the model of the Momoyama Gakuin University (Osaka, Japan)-Douglas College (New Westminster, Canada) programme in Japanese and English to illustrate the advantages of the two-way bilingual approach to language learning.

The programme, launched in 1992, is based on a simple contract between Japanese learners of English and Canadian learners of Japanese to the effect that: "If you help me learn your language, I'll help you learn mine". By allowing the students to spend sustained periods of time together in both structured and unstructured learning situations, the programme has the advantage of enabling them to develop not only language skills but also a multicultural outlook, within the broader skill of "intercultural communication competence".

Homogeneous groups of ESL students, especially Japanese students, tend to have a high degree of "communicative inertia". Bilingual programmes, in which peers rather than a formal teacher act as the students' primary source of information, provide a stimulus to learn, create more authentic motivation than can be had in a teacher-centred classroom, and encourage students to speak English more readily.

Another advantage of bilingual programmes is that they bring learners into regular contact with representatives of the target culture, giving them the chance to experience a more authentic cultural milieu. In addition, bilingual programmes, by using students as peer teachers, validate the students' own knowledge. Being able to share their general knowledge of their own country or culture with others hones their self-awareness while increasing their sense of responsibility as teacher. Finally, the nature of the bilingual programme makes it much easier for the students to develop friendships with one another.

A questionnaire distributed to participating ESLs revealed that the programme was perceived by almost all of them as a total experience, one that brought both linguistic and socio-cultural enlightenment, changing their cultural perceptions profoundly as well as bringing them unprecedented linguistic confidence. In this sense, it may be said to have been an exercise in creating an environment in which education in its original sense — bringing out the students' essential nature and contributing to their personal growth — could take place.