

# Bilingual Japan

# バイリンガル通信

2023年度春季通信32号1巻  
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Number 1

JALTバイリンガリズム分科会ニューズレター  
The Newsletter of the JALT  
Special Interest Group on Bilingualism



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**Call for volunteers!** Vacancies are always open for editor positions - duties involved liaising with case study contributors, and conducting open peer review/feedback for articles. Volunteers should be JALT members, and ideally B-SIG members. Interested parties, please contact either the Newsletter Editor, Daniel R. Pearce, at [pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp](mailto:pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp), or the B-SIG coordinator, Alexandra Shaitan, at [alexshaitan@yahoo.com](mailto:alexshaitan@yahoo.com).

ボランティア募集中！編集委員を常に募集しています。特に和文投稿のフィードバック・投稿募集ができる方は大歓迎です。B-SIG 会員であることは望ましいが、バイリンガル通信に貢献できると思ったらニュースレター編集者のピアース・ダニエル ([pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp](mailto:pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp)) あるいは、分科会コーディネーターAlex Shaitan ([alexshaitan@yahoo.com](mailto:alexshaitan@yahoo.com)) まで連絡をください。

## Contribute to *Bilingual Japan* ・バイリンガル通信への投稿募集

*Bilingual Japan* is the official newsletter of the Bilingualism Special Interest Group (B-SIG) of the Japan Association for Language Teaching (JALT). The purpose of this publication is to provide B-SIG members with articles and reports about bilingualism research and bilingual life and/or child-raising in Japan. *Bilingual Japan* also provides information about recent B-SIG activities. While submissions are only currently accepted in either English or Japanese, the content of submissions are *not* limited to Japanese-English bilingualism – **all topics related to bilingualism in Japan, regardless of the specified language, are more than welcome.**

「バイリンガル通信」は、全国語学教育学科 (JALT) バイリンガリズム分科会 (B-SIG) の公式ニュースレターです。本誌は、日本におけるバイリンガル研究およびバイリンガルの生活または育児に関する記事やレポートを、B-SIG 会員に提供することを目的としています。また、B-SIG の最近の活動についても紹介しています。投稿言語については、現時点では日本語と英語による投稿しか受け付けていませんが、**内容に関しては日英以外のバイリンガリズムに関する投稿は歓迎です。**

**The content of this newsletter depends on contributions from its readers.** All SIG members and other interested parties are invited to submit articles or reports for inclusion in these pages. Start by writing about your family's experience or something about bilingual parenting that concerns you. Even if you feel that what you have to say is trivial, there is always someone who will be interested. Everyone has a story to tell, and we look forward to hearing yours.

「バイリンガル通信」は、読者の皆様からの投稿に支えられています。どんな立場であろうと、読者から寄稿を常に募集しております。学術雑誌ではないので、ご自身やご家族の体験、バイリンガル育児や教育について、関心のあることや疑問を持つことがあれば、とりあえず書いてみて、気軽に投稿してください！些細なことでも、興味を持ってくれる人は必ずいます。寄稿をお待ちしています。

### *Manuscript Guidelines* ・原稿要領

Please consult the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th edition, as a style guide. Refer to recent issues of the JALT Bilingualism SIG Newsletter for instances of layout and referencing. (Editors and co-editors are here to help with this process – we welcome all voices, so please do not feel intimidated by academic conventions of if you are not used to them).

和文投稿に関して、決まった様式がありません。投稿の問い合わせは、編集者のピアース・ダニエル ([pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp](mailto:pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp)) まで。

*Bilingual Japan* ・バイリンガル通信 invites a wide variety of submissions to columns that are not necessarily included in every newsletter. Columns are listed below, and contributors with ideas for submissions should feel free to consult with the editor(s) about proposals – we welcome any and all voices that contribute to the bilingual community.

投稿コラムについては、毎回出版するわけではなく、投稿がある際に、筆者と編集者の相談の上で載せています。コラム内容については以下をご参照ください。

## Regular Columns ・ レギュラーコラム

(1,000~3,000 words または 1500 字~5000 字程度)

### • Case Studies ・ 事例 (ケーススタディ)

See a detailed description on page 5. (和文詳細が準備中ですが、和文寄稿は歓迎します)。

### • Children's Resources (& Young Adult Book Reviews) ・ 児童 (またはヤングアダルト) 向けリソース紹介/書評等

A column about books, magazines, and other resources for bilingual children in Japan, including: reviews and recommendations, information about where to get the resources, offers of resources to exchange, or give free to a good home (no sales, please) and calls for help from B-SIG members interested in producing their own children's resources. Please send submissions to the column editor, Diane Lamb-Obara at [dianelamb.ohiojapan@gmail.com](mailto:dianelamb.ohiojapan@gmail.com).

日本のバイリンガル児童 (またはヤングアダルト) 向けの本や雑誌、その他のリソースについて、レビュー (書評) やおすすりめ情報を紹介するためのコラムです (ただし、販売はご遠慮ください)。また、リソース制作企画等の協力募集も受け付けます。投稿当は、コラム編集者の Diane Lamb-Obara ([dianelamb.ohiojapan@gmail.com](mailto:dianelamb.ohiojapan@gmail.com)) までお送りください。

### • Resources Column ・ 一般リソース/書評等

Readers are encouraged to submit book reviews and introductions to materials that have relevance to bilingualism. Word count is not prioritized – submissions should include introductions of resources that could be beneficial to the bilingual (and emergent bilingual) community.

バイリンガリズムに関連する書評や資料の紹介の寄稿をも歓迎します。特に投稿基準は設けていませんが、バイリンガルコミュニティにとって有益な資料の紹介の投稿を期待しています。

### • Voices ・ バイリンガルの聲

Readers are encouraged to submit both interviews and first-hand accounts of bilingualism in Japan. *Voices* includes (but is not limited to) experiences of individual bilinguals in Japan, novice researchers, graduate students, educational practitioners, and bilingual professionals. Submissions should have a clear message that should contribute to the community and should be relatively short (around 1,000 words). Frustrations are also voices – articles that reasonably point out the struggles of bilinguals are also welcome! Voices surrounding **Japanese+language-other-than-English are welcome**. Submissions to Daniel R. Pearce: [pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp](mailto:pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp).

日本におけるバイリンガリズムについて、インタビューや生の声をお寄せください。「バイリンガルの聲」には、一般人のバイリンガル体験、大学院生、教育実践者、バイリンガル専門家のつぶやきなどの、幅広い投稿を募集しています。投稿は、バイリンガルコミュニティに貢献する目標の、比較的短いもの (1500~2000 字程度) を想定しています。バイリンガル (あるいはバイリンガル関係者) の葛藤・苦勞等つぶやきも受け付けます。日英だけでなく、日+英語以外の言語の投稿は大歓迎です。投稿は、ピアース・ダニエル ([pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp](mailto:pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp)) まで。

### • Current Research & Interests

A venue to keep readers up-to-date with links, news, and/or new research in bilingualism. Submissions should generally be summaries of relatively new trends in bilingualism, preferably kept

to under 1,000 words, and accessible to general members. Any relevant topics to bilingualism (with particular consideration to the Japanese context) will be considered. Please send submissions to the column editor, Shaitan Alexandra at [alexshaitan@yahoo.com](mailto:alexshaitan@yahoo.com)

バイリンガルに関するリンク、ニュース、研究などの最新情報を読者に提供するためのコラムです。投稿は、バイリンガリズムに関する比較的新しい動向の要約や紹介を、2,000字以内とし、一般会員がアクセスできるものとします。投稿は、コラム編集者のシャイタン・アレキサンドラ ([alexshaitan@yahoo.com](mailto:alexshaitan@yahoo.com)) までお送りください。

### **Feature Articles ・ 論文記事**

These articles are longer and/or deal with topics not covered by the Regular Columns. No specific word limit, but submissions should adhere to a semi-academic standard. Questions regarding submissions should be directed to the newsletter editor.

レギュラーコラムに該当しない準学術論文的な記事の投稿です。字数制限は設けませんが、寄稿に関してはニュースレター編集者まで問い合わせください。

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE: September 15<sup>th</sup>**

次号の投稿期限：9月15日

## **Guidelines for Case Study Articles**・事例（ケーススタディ）の投稿要領

(以下が英文論文の要領。和文投稿に関しては、編集者のピアース・ダニエルが問い合わせを常時受けつけております。和文要領は、今後のニュースレターに詳述を記載する予定)。

The goal of a case study is to show how the process of teaching\* and acquiring a minority language & culture is carried out in individual cases. Writers should clearly explain to the reader the relevant information regarding the main characters of the story, the situation that these characters came from and/or are presently in, and the strategies and methods used to advance toward the stated goal. While a case study is usually written by a parent about that parent's child or children, any contributor who is suitably informed about a particular situation is eligible to submit an article for publication.

Obviously, contributors should keep in mind their audience. Most Bilingualism SIG members (numbering over 200, all of whom receive three online issues annually) have various years of experience in this field. Many joined the SIG when their children were young, hoping to learn how to raise their children to be bilingual, bi-literate, and bicultural. A contributor should strive to contribute to our readers' desire to know and learn, keeping in mind that our members have a wide range of personal backgrounds, current family circumstances, and material and social resources.

\* (Terms such as 'teaching', 'teachers', 'learning', etc. are used broadly in these guidelines and can/do include people, practices, and experiences beyond a traditional school environment.)

### **Submission guidelines:**

It is advisable to check with the editors before writing your article. It is best to propose an idea or an abstract and then proceed upon the editors' feedback. Reading past case studies is advisable.

Deadlines are the middle of January, April, and September. Articles should be 1500-3000 words, though exceeding the upper cap, within reason, can usually be accommodated. In certain circumstances, much longer articles are accepted but may be split into two parts, appearing in successive issues. Check with the editors on this.

### **Editorial guidelines:**

Case studies in this newsletter are generally not academic in nature. Rather, they are a focused narrative on the real experiences of people in specific situations. References to research and theory, if used at all, should be used sparingly. Many case studies are fine without such references. However, meandering narratives will be rejected or sent back for revision. Articles should convey a clear story that reveals the efforts and outcomes towards teaching and learning of the target language and/or culture, whether successful or not.

### **Article structure:**

#### **- Introduction**

This first part of your article should provide the relevant information about the 'teachers' and 'learners' (often the parents and children) – demographics, past and current residencies, education history, language abilities, teaching strategies and methods, lifestyle and social circumstances, etc. Pseudonyms are acceptable but should be acknowledged. A thesis statement of sorts should be included to alert the reader to the direction and scope of the article.

#### **- Body**

This section should clearly deal with the main events of the article. Convey the steps taken to address the problems stated in the (so-called) 'thesis statement' and the results of those steps. This is sometimes the most personal part of an article, and conveying the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of the participants towards successes or failures can be powerful. Be fair, be accurate, and be honest.

Typically, there is a third party involved in a case study -- a teacher, principal, a school, family member, a 'Saturday School' board member' etc. It is beneficial to the reader to explain this party's position and behavior adequately and honestly.

Details matter. Explain the methods you use in enough detail to give the reader a sense of how that method worked in those circumstances. For example, methods might include reading English books at bedtime, Skype sessions with cousins back home, Saturday school projects, daily 'English-only' periods,

or home-school routines. Helpful detail would include any ‘spin-off’ activity *vis a vis* bedtime reading; particulars of Skype sessions, i.e., do the kids just ‘wing it’ or are talking points set up beforehand? What is the proficiency or ‘success’ of the exchanges? What excites kids in Saturday Schools to do mid-week English homework in preparation for the Saturday lesson? What are the social benefits of such an arrangement? For periods where ‘English-only’ is in effect, how does the child respond? Do all siblings, or spouse, participate? To what affect?

#### **- Conclusion**

Wrap up your article by briefly summarizing the wins and losses, what you have learned, and the path forward in the long and winding road ahead.

In the end, as a case study contributor, you are a storyteller. As always, good stories have drama, suspense, protagonists who struggle, antagonists who thwart, success, failure, humor, irony, courage, uncertainty, etc. Most importantly, good stories always connect with the reader. Your reader will be much like you -- having much on the line, such as a precious child who they dearly want to succeed in life. Your story will resonate with them. Tell it well.

#### **Contacts:**

Case study editor:

Ian Downer - [downerian@gmail.com](mailto:downerian@gmail.com)

Newsletter editor (ニュースレター編集者：和文投稿は以下のアドレスまで):

Daniel R. Pearce (ピアース・ダニエル) – [pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp](mailto:pearce@shitennoji.ac.jp)

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**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE: September 15<sup>th</sup>**

次号の投稿期限：9月15日

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## Coordinator's Message • コーディネーターより

Dear **Bilingualism** Special Interest Group Members!

Hope this message finds you well! We were very happy to see some of you at the **PanSIG 2023 Conference** at **Kyoto Sangyo University** (京都産業大学). Thank you very much to everyone who presented their research related to bilingualism at the conference and to all members who stopped by at the BSIG table. It was a great opportunity to meet so many of you in person and discuss numerous issues on potential future events and collaborations. We welcome all members' thoughts and proposals related to the SIG's activities and events. Please *do send* us an email and we would be happy to respond as soon as we can.

We would like to take this opportunity and thank Bilingualism **SIG Officers** (<https://www.bsig.org/officers>), the decision-making team work (DMT), along with **ALL** Bilingualism SIG members, who have been contributing to the SIG's successful activities via a long-term membership, and presenting and sharing their academic research and personal lived experiences, related to bilingualism/multilingualism at the **PanSIG** and **JALT Bilingualism SIG Forums**.

We also thank all members who have been contributing to BSIG publications and/or events related to bi-/multilingualism and bi-/multiculturalism, and submitting articles and book reviews to the SIG's **Newsletter** ( <https://www.bsig.org/newsletter> ) and the **JJMM Journal** (<https://www.bsig.org/jjmm>).

On a different note, we are happy to announce a call for a **Resource Column Editor** for our Newsletter. Interested individuals are welcome to send a letter of interest with a short bio. Our current Column Editor would be happy to provide assistance and support during the transition period. Please send an email to Alexandra Shaitan at: [alexshaitan@yahoo.com](mailto:alexshaitan@yahoo.com).

Finally, please find on the last page a flyer for an upcoming event co-sponsored with Kyoto JALT: *Translation and Translingualism in Language Teaching* – 16 July, 2023 @ 9:00 (Campus Plaza Kyoto).

We thank all the reviewers, contributors and the Newsletter Editor for their time and support, hard work, and dedication in producing this issue.

We thank **YOU all** for your support and look forward to hearing from you! Please e-mail Alexandra Shaitan at [alexshaitan@yahoo.com](mailto:alexshaitan@yahoo.com) if you would like to join the DMT and get involved in the SIG's activities more actively.

Best wishes,  
Bilingualism SIG Coordinator,  
Shaitan Alexandra.

## Case Studies・事例 (ケーススタディ)

Case Study submissions should be directed to [downerian@gmail.com](mailto:downerian@gmail.com)

「事例 (研究)」の投稿は上記のメールアドレスまで。

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### Plurilingual Challenges in Japan: A Younger Sibling's Perspective

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Diana Boiko

Bunkyo Gakuin University

This case study aims to reveal and record struggles that my family has experienced while raising trilingual siblings in Japan, focusing on second child language acquisition.

I am a Russian who has lived in Japan for the past seven years along with my Japanese spouse and our two sons, aged 7 and 3 respectively. I work as an English instructor in several Tokyo universities on a part-time basis and my husband is a sales manager in a Japanese company. My older son has just started at an international primary school and our younger son attends Japanese day care.

In our family we use four languages in very different proportions according to the conversation members. In the beginning, my husband and I spoke Chinese as the main language of communication as we met in Taiwan during our study abroad experiences. Little by little, I managed to switch to Japanese, but still struggle with fluency, especially when writing and reading formal texts.

After our first son was born, I was determined about raising him bilingual (Japanese, Russian) using the one parent one language method. After he turned one, I also added English in a playful manner and an educational approach, developed by Russian scholar Maria Eliseeva, that I had encountered on Instagram (@my\_english\_baby). The method is simple yet profound. There were three

courses (beginner/intermediate/advanced) with lesson plans for every day, comments to read, and short videos to watch. It is targeted at children from age 1 to 8 where the mother acts as a play partner/teacher. The results were amazing, and by three years of age he was demonstrating considerable language skills, including the ability to speak and switch effortlessly between all three languages without hesitation. Russian was still his dominant language, closely followed by English and Japanese.

I personally enjoyed the time we spent together doing English activities, while still using the Russian language as the main method of communication, which he absorbed naturally. Additionally, twice yearly trips to Russia and visits from his Russian grandmother also helped to support his Russian language development. However, the situation started to change after my work hours increased and my son entered Japanese day care on a daily basis. We still enjoyed reading time in both languages (Russian, English) but everyday his Japanese got stronger and stronger. Now, he has just started in a private Japanese elementary school where 70% of classes are taught in English and the rest in Japanese.

With our second son it was obvious for me to use the same strategy we had used with our first child, only the circumstances turned out not to be on my side. Covid and later the Russian-Ukraine conflict made it

almost impossible to gain the advantages of time spent in a Russian language environment. As such, his language development was far behind his older brother's, and my time investment in his plurilingualism was incomparably smaller than my older son. It has been argued by some that even without a community language environment, it is possible to develop and support foreign languages with the help of a variety of materials and approaches. I do not doubt that point of view, only that it takes much more energy and time to create a solid foundation in the language.

Naturally absorbed language was native for my first son, but with the lack of time spent in Russia and fewer Russian friends visiting during the pandemic, we lost that base, and now even though he speaks words in Russian, they have a discernible accent. Also, his lexicon and vocabulary are much narrower/smaller than his brother at the same age. However, I find that it is important to remember that children are different by nature. As a parent, I shouldn't analyze and compare the children too much or place too much blame on myself for pedagogical decisions taken. What matters the most is that children are making measurable progress towards their vocabulary goals and increasing their comprehension levels, while also maintaining a sustainable pace for all involved.

Language development differs between children and each individual's path may not follow a predictable trajectory. My younger son began to speak words much later, did not show any unbelievable leaps in language development, and still confuses the languages in a variety of situations. For instance, he may talk to me in Japanese, answer his dad in Russian, or repeatedly say a word in English to his

daycare teacher. I still never use Japanese with him and will re-ask his question in a target language to confirm and let him hear the version I expect. (It is not easy to stay calm sometimes, but it pays off when you finally hear him using new words you have drilled.) I also try not to mix English and Russian within a single situation (about six sentences) as a basic rule. There are kids who are way ahead in terms of speaking, but I believe it is our own journey and we can only adjust the course we chose to his pace.

The final and probably the biggest factor influencing his language skills is my time investment. The number of hours I spent alone with my younger son is incomparably smaller than that spent with his brother. Increasing hours of work, Japanese day care since he was 9 months old, and taking care of both kids took away precious quality time, especially reading time, with our youngest. However, even spending 70% less time face to face, we manage to continue adding English using the same "My English baby" course found on Instagram. While he is comparably slower than his brother in his progress on this course, lagging one and a half years behind, he still continues to make progress.

The language input he receives is more heavily weighted toward Japanese content than his older brother. In particular, the video content he consumes is primarily Japanese rather than Russian or English and he mostly watches what his older brother likes. Furthermore, the dominance of Japanese in the household means he hears more Japanese at home as dad talks a lot to his older brother and me only in Japanese; his older brother speaks also to him in Japanese mostly. I try my best to find a balance between all three languages, but sometimes I feel like a juggler who has more drops than catches.

Despite these limits in terms of time and language input, certain strategies have helped our youngest continue to make progress in his language development. We have adopted a set of rules related to video content language by day of the week and a rule to talk only in Russian if there are only three of us. Separating the brothers at times also allows me to spend quality time with each of them, keeping in mind our plurilingual purposes.

The development of multilingualism is a non-stop journey requiring a significant effort and guidance from parents. While there is so much that my family and I can still learn from academic research into the topic of second child language acquisition and the experiences of others, we should always remember how important it is to be flexible and adjust our path with our own family situation and individual features of our children in mind.

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## The Challenges of Being Bilingual in Japan: A Call for a More Inclusive Society

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Erika Tavesa  
Temple University

This story came from a conversation with a friend who grew up bilingual in Japan. It explores his inner frustrations, which may stem from overthinking, but nonetheless presents a compelling narrative for society to reflect on. Growing up bilingual can be a complex experience, and this story highlights the challenges that bilingual individuals may face in reconciling their cultural identities, while touching on the topic of pressure in conforming to societal expectations and the resulting emotional toll it can take on an individual. By sharing this story, I hope we can gain a better understanding of the complexities of bilingualism and encourage a more inclusive and supportive society that values cultural diversity, particularly in Japan.

I was engrossed in a conversation with my friend when he suddenly asked, "Can you be bilingual and be fully integrated in a society?" As a TESOL student, I felt confident in answering this question. I began explaining all the advantages of being bilingual, with practical examples such as opportunities for international communication and better job offers, or even how it can strengthen one's cognitive ability. To which, he asked again, "Then why do *Zainichi* Koreans often struggle to find jobs despite their ability to speak both Japanese and Korean?" My friend's response left me speechless.

After my conversation with my friend about the challenges of being bilingual in Japan, I began to think more deeply about the issue. I realized that while there are certainly many benefits to being bilingual, it does not guarantee full integration into a society, especially in a country like Japan. Grosjean (2010) mentions how bilingualism can often engender suspicion and mistrust amongst

monolinguals. Even though he does not mention this specifically happening to Japanese, it is likely exacerbated by the highly monolingual nature of the Japanese majority. In Japan, ideas of cultural and ethnic identity can be deeply ingrained and often tied to (monolingual) language. The reality of this discrimination made me question the idea of bilingualism as a panacea for social and economic integration. While bilingualism is undoubtedly an asset, it is not a guarantee of acceptance and success. A rosy view of bilingualism means a totally accepted individual who can navigate multiple languages and societies and is widely 'accepted' by both, whereas the reality is fraught with much more nuance and difficulty, as is sometimes assumed by those who have not had a bilingual experience. I realized that society has a crucial role to play in ensuring that bilingual individuals are not only accepted but also valued for their unique skills and experiences.

While bilingualism has been greatly esteemed in Japanese society, the focus has mostly been on English-Japanese bilinguals, with little recognition given to other bilinguals such as Portuguese-English, Chinese-English, and Vietnamese-English speakers (Oyama & Pearce, 2019). We often talk about its advantages such as better job prospects, enhanced cognitive abilities, and international communication opportunities. There are several SLA research papers that have also discussed various methods to induce bilingual education, such as fostering bilingualism from an early age, rather than waiting until later in life to learn a second language. There are several approaches to inducing bilingual education, and SLA research has explored the effectiveness of each method. However, we

rarely discuss the social realities of being bilingual. The question we should be asking is, what do individuals who possess bilingual abilities experience in society? Why is there such limited understanding of what bilingualism is?

Bilingualism is not a new concept in Japan. The country has a long history of individuals who can fluently communicate in more than one language. People of mixed heritage, known as *ha-fu* (ハーフ), *kikokushijo* (帰国子女), or returnee children), and *Zainichi* Koreans, who are often Japanese citizens of Korean descent, are just a few of many examples. But what have they received in return for being bilingual in Japan?

Despite recent efforts to expose students to an English curriculum at an earlier age, Japan's education system remains primarily monolingual and does not promote much bilingualism, as there is little emphasis on multilingualism in Japanese schools, with most students treating English as a subject to pass for university admissions rather than a language skill to hone. This lack of attention to bilingualism in education can result in individuals with bilingual abilities being stigmatized by society. Furthermore, they may be pressured to hide their bilingual identities, which can lead to feelings of isolation and identity crises, which has been the case for the *ha-fu*, *kikokushijo*, and *Zainichi* communities for many years.

Moreover, being bilingual can have negative consequences, such as job discrimination, which is often based on ethnic identity rather than ability. *Zainichi* Koreans in Japan, for instance, are a group of people who have long been marginalized and discriminated against despite their ability to speak both Japanese and Korean. Several *Zainichi* Koreans have reported that they have been denied employment opportunities solely based on their ethnicity (Kim, 2011, 2011; Ryang 2014). This unjust treatment highlights deep-rooted social issues in Japan that must be addressed.

In light of these issues, I think that it is

essential that society accepts and celebrates bilingualism no matter the ethnicity or background of these individuals. Multilingualism should not only be encouraged but should also be actively promoted because it can foster a more inclusive and accepting society that values linguistic and cultural diversity. Active promotion of bilingualism creates more opportunities for bilingual individuals in the job market, promotes cultural awareness, and cultivates acceptance of diversity as it provides individuals with the ability to communicate with a wider range of people, in turn strengthening international relations and promoting peaceful coexistence.

Moreover, it is crucial to recognize the importance of cultural identity. While language and culture are distinct concepts, they are often intertwined, and many people's cultural identities are indeed tied to their languages. Language serves as a key aspect of communication and cultural expression, and it can reflect a person's values, beliefs, and customs. Individuals should not be made to feel ashamed or pressured to hide their cultural heritage, and thus, their language abilities. It is important for society to provide more support and resources for individuals who are struggling with their identities as bilinguals.

For instance, establishing cultural centers and language schools to support people of diverse backgrounds can be a valuable way to create a sense of belonging and promote language and cultural exchange. However, such initiatives require considerable manpower, funding, and resources. Cultural centers and language schools must be staffed with individuals who have expertise in the relevant cultures and languages, and they must have the resources to provide effective programming and support. In addition to cultural centers and language schools, there is also a need for a greater focus on bilingualism itself in foreign language education. Foreign language education is compulsory in Japan, and it provides an opportunity to promote bilingualism and cultural exchange from an early age. This can

include not only the teaching of foreign languages but also the incorporation of cultural knowledge and understanding into language education.

Another solution could be to incorporate multilingual education in Japanese schools. This could be achieved through bilingual or multilingual education programs. Such programs can include language immersion, bilingual instruction, or simply promoting a diverse range of languages and cultures. These programs could be aimed at improving students' linguistic skills, promoting cultural awareness, and cultivating acceptance of diversity (Oyama & Pearce, 2019).

Additionally, media representation could play a critical role in promoting the acceptance of bilingualism in society. The media should represent individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and provide positive narratives of bilingualism. This would create more awareness of the challenges faced by bilingual individuals and promote greater appreciation and respect for cultural diversity.

In conclusion, bilingualism is a valuable skill that provides numerous advantages, including better job prospects and enhanced cognitive abilities. However, Japan's lack of emphasis on bilingualism in education and societal acceptance can result in discrimination and social pressure for individuals who are bilingual, just because of their race or

background. Thus, it is essential to recognize the importance of bilingualism and promote its acceptance in society. We can do this by encouraging multilingual education, advocate for increased engagement with cultural centers, while better media representation can create a more inclusive and accepting society that values linguistic and cultural diversity.

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## JALT PanSIG 2023: A Brief Retrospective



From May 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, the annual PanSIG conference was held at Kyoto Sangyo University. It was the second year that the conference returned to a primarily face-to-face format, and it was marked by a sense of optimism. The pandemic seemingly drawing to a close, attendance greatly improved over last year's conference in Nagano, and there was a generally upbeat atmosphere amongst participants. Many were able to rekindle old connections, and for the BSIG decision making members in particular, it was a fantastic experience – for many of us, having worked together throughout the pandemic, this was the first time we were able to meet in person.

At the BSIG table, a great number of ideas were shared between team members – so look forward to exciting updates to the newsletter in coming issues!

Also, we had several presentations either tied directly to BSIG, or by members branching out into other SIG realms. Below are the abstracts of related presentations from PanSIG – presenters are more than welcome to submit their *voices*, *case studies*, or other material to future editions of the newsletter – we also look forward to seeing you all at JALT 2023 – don't miss the BSIG forum (details to be advertised in the next newsletter).

### **Bilingualism SIG Forum: EMPLOYABILITY**

**Diane Obara**

For the 2023 BSIG Forum, we'll be focusing on the theme of EMPLOYABILITY! We're reaching out to families and their children (now adults) who have contributed to our publications throughout the years to see where they are in the world and discuss how knowing two or more languages has shaped their lives in terms of employability. Our anticipated format is to show a series of pre-recorded interviews with people working in a variety of sectors, followed by a Q & A session.

*Sun May 14 / Time: 2.05pm-3.35pm*

### **The English Writing Development of Bilingual Children in Weekend Schools**

**Suzanne Quay, Janice Nakamura**

Japanese-English bilingual children in Japan can acquire English literacy through home literacy



activities and attending English weekend school. However, their English literacy ability has never been measured objectively over time. This paper reports on the longitudinal assessment of English writing in 17 Japanese-English bilingual children (ages 9 to 13 at first assessment) who attended two English weekend schools in Tokyo and Yokohama. The children were tested using a US standardized test in two or three 12-month intervals. The results show that many children maintained their writing scores at an average range corresponding to same-age US peers from the time of their first test despite the weekend schools' online format during the past pandemic years. Some children's writing performance even moved into a higher score range during this challenging period. These results indicate that online weekend school lessons did not negatively impact children's English writing. Factors that help support the children's longitudinal English writing development during the COVID-19 pandemic will be discussed.

*Sat May 13 / Time: 11.25am-11.50am*

### **English as a Resource for Immigrant Students in Japanese Public Schools**

**Ellen Motohashi**

This presentation reports on findings from a two-part narrative inquiry into the schooling experiences of 16 1.5 generation Filipinos in Japan. The data is drawn from a qualitative questionnaire and four focus group interviews on the personal and educational backgrounds of the participants in both the Philippines and Japan. This presentation discusses the intangible resource of their English language skills, which the students brought with them to their new schooling experiences in Japan as an untapped linguistic fund of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). Funds of knowledge are "the historically-accumulated and culturally-developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (Moll et al., 1992, p. 133). The Filipino participants in this study repeatedly spoke about their inability to utilize their English to gain access to knowledge on the workings of the school or to aid them in their studies before developing their Japanese skills. Had this untapped linguistic resource been recognized by their teachers the students might have been able to participate more fully earlier on in their schooling and learning, which was not possible until they mastered Japanese enough to do so.

*Sat May 13 / Time: 3.40pm-4.05pm*

### **Elusive Bilingualism: Why my Children Don't Speak English**

**Mark Rebuck**

It is often assumed that a bilingual child will somehow naturally emerge from a mixed-marriage household. The presenter, a native English speaker married to a Japanese woman, has on many occasions needed to disabuse people of this assumption. His two sons (aged 10 and 16), born and

raised in Japan, speak only rudimentary English. The focus of this presentation is on the possible reasons one father's aspirations of having bilingual children have not been realized. Is the children's lack of English proficiency related to family dynamics, particularly the dysfunctional power relationship between the father (the presenter) and his wife, the belief by the presenter's wife that priority should be given to the L1, or the presenter's proficiency in Japanese? Could the problem lie with the Japanese school system or the influence of online games? As well as exploring these and other reasons, the presenter will frame the discussion by summarizing the various definitions of bilingualism and the principal theories on its development in children. The presenter will also discuss how his own experience of failing to raise bilingual children has influenced his approach to teaching English in the classroom.

*Sun May 14 / Time: 9.00am-9.25am*

### **Language Practices of Brazilian Junior High School Students in Japan**

**Niko Catharine Watanabe Schultz**

As the school-age population in Japan becomes increasingly diverse, it is crucial for teachers and researchers to understand the linguistic backgrounds and day-to-day language practices of language minority students. The complementarity principle posits that multilinguals acquire and use their languages differently in different contexts, and that their language proficiency is thus domain-specific (Grosjean & Li, 2013). This presentation will explain part of the findings from a master's study that examined the cases of two Brazilian junior high school students in Japan. Private English lessons were taught by the researcher to the students one-on-one via Zoom for a period of two months, and one brief structured interview was conducted with each participant during their respective lessons. One student was born and raised in Japan and had never been to Brazil, while the other was born in Brazil and immigrated to Japan at the age of 13. While the two participants were found to be similar in terms of how they used language to interact with their parents, they differed in how they had acquired their languages and how they used language to interact with their siblings, fellow Brazilian students, and the Portuguese-Japanese bilingual math teacher at the tutoring service.

*Sun May 14 / Time: 9.35am-10.00am*

### **The Bilingual Reality of Japanese EFL Classrooms**

**Blake Turnbull**

The widely-held perception of Japan as a monolingual society largely ignores the underlying reality of Japanese EFL language classrooms. That is, the emergent bilingual status of Japanese EFL learners is often overlooked. Not only is this a violation of students' social justice, but it is a missed opportunity for developing holistic speakers of both languages. In this presentation I

question the necessity and plausibility of an English-Only learning environment in Japan and examine the bilingual reality of Japanese EFL classrooms with a particular focus on the tertiary level. I discuss the psycholinguistic reality of language, justify students' status as emergent bilinguals, and examine the way in which students' languages interact to create a multilingual environment in the EFL classroom. The importance of acknowledging this reality is also highlighted, and suggestions for how teachers can capitalise on this fact to promote translanguaging are provided. In short, this presentation works to promote the EFL classroom as a multilingual microenvironment with the potential to positively effect students' overall linguistic competence.

*Sun May 14 / Time: 12.05pm-12.30pm*

### **Translanguaging on Japanese University Students' Oral Presentations**

**Ma Wilma Capati**

Despite the controversial use of L1 in English classes, various studies show how the presence of L1 has been inevitable in EFL classrooms (Bartlett, 2018;). Translanguaging approach may be considered an unfamiliar approach in EFL learning in Japan (Aoyama, 2020). However, the mixed opinions on its effectiveness prove that language teachers are beginning to gain interest in translanguaging. This presentation aims to provide techniques on how the translanguaging approach may help Japanese university students improve their skills in their English presentations. This presentation will introduce translanguaging as an approach, how it compares to the current language education policies in Japan, and the perceptions of teachers and students in Japan. In the next part, the presenter will provide examples of flexible activities related to individual and 115 group presentations that have applied the translanguaging approach. These activities are flexible in terms of student levels and logistically--online, hybrid, or face-to-face classes. The presenter will explore effective translanguaging techniques for giving self-, peer, and teacher feedback on oral presentations. This presentation will conclude with improving the activities involving oral presentations for teachers and students.

*Sun May 14 / Time: 1.30pm-1.55pm*

### **Study Abroad and Students' Expectations, Anxieties and Experiences**

**Masaichi Uchida, Ayami Kato, Lauren Landsberry**

In January 2023, 43 Japanese students returned home following a long-term "study abroad" experience in Australia. Since the establishment of the Global Early Childhood Education department, this was the first 60 group to successfully complete their "study abroad" program without being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and government enforced closures. While in Australia, their goals were to obtain a childcare license, and to improve their English skills Using

the data collected in pre - and post- “study abroad” questionnaires, the students’ expectations, anxieties, and experiences were investigated. This presentation will present the results, discuss how the students’ experience differed from their expectations, what anxieties they experienced, what they learned, and how they felt the experience changed them. It will further examine how, or if, they felt the experience would change their future plans and career paths, and whether would consider studying abroad again. By understanding our students needs and “study abroad” experiences, we can better prepare them for both their “study abroad” experience before they depart Japan, and job hunting when they return.

***SIG: Study Abroad***

***Sat May 13 / Time: 12.00pm-12.25pm***

**Schema and Memes: Making Sense of Language, Culture, and Global Citizenship**

**Daniel R. Pearce**

Global citizenship education has recently been touted as an essential aspect of foreign language education (MEXT, 2022). Consequently, at the secondary level, activities that encourage analysis of global issues through English have increased. Nevertheless, there remains a dearth of activities that promote investigation of the relationship between language and culture. Considering these circumstances, the author implemented a semester-long university course entitled English Expression through Song, centered on Anglo-American music of the cold-war era. The course aimed to foster analytic ability of metaphor through translation, contextualized within cultures and histories, to promote multiperspectivity (Kropman, van Boxtel & Van Drie, 2020) and decentering (Candelier et al., 2012). While the teacher presented the sociohistorical context behind the music, the students worked collaboratively to interpret and translate the lyrics. Through analyses of students' translations and post-lesson reflections, this presentation discusses the importance of exploring culturally and historically informed memes (units of transmissible cultural information, Dawkins, 2006) in foreign language learning for intercultural understanding, how such explorations can help students update their linguistic and cultural schemas (frameworks for perceiving and understanding the world, Imai, 2016), and how the transferable skills fostered through the course might contribute to the development of global citizens with agency.

***SIG: Intercultural Communication in Language Education***

***Sat May 13 / Time: 12.00pm-12.25pm***

**ICLE SIG Forum: Developing Intercultural Awareness in the Language Classroom-  
Practical Tips**

**James Venema, Elizabeth Dow, Stephen Ryan, Maria Gabriela Schmidt**

**James Venema:** *Facilitating Online Intercultural Exchanges:* Advances in video conferencing

software during the COVID-19 pandemic have led to opportunities to connect students from around the world. Limited opportunities to travel and study abroad have also contributed to a latent demand for cross-cultural exchange opportunities. This presentation will outline a series of online cultural exchange programs with students taking credit courses at Aichi University of Education (AUE) and students from universities in Singapore, Indonesia and Taiwan. This presentation will cover the theoretical and pedagogical orientation of the cultural exchanges as well as the practical considerations that needed to be addressed. Thoughts and comments from participating students at AUE will be shared in the form of post-exchange summary assignments. The presentation will conclude with some suggestions for teachers who are interested in incorporating similar cultural exchange programs in courses here in Japan.

**Elizabeth Dow:** *Utilizing Critical Incidents for the Development of Intercultural Communication Competency:* Critical incidents have been widely used in the field of intercultural communication training in the development of cultural awareness and in turn, intercultural communication competency. In the context of the Japanese EFL classroom, how can we as educators best utilize such an approach? To frame student needs, the presenter will first briefly share the outcomes of her study of student-reported critical incidents from summer study abroad programs in 2018. She will then share how she crafts and utilizes critical incidents in the university classroom with the hope that students will not only learn the language embedded in the incident, but also use the “experiential” episode to develop awareness leading to increased cognitive complexity and intercultural communication competency.

**Stephen M. Ryan:**  *Holding a Mirror to Your Culture:* Students investigate a cultural phenomenon (e.g., a Disney theme park, weddings, the higher education system) in another country (e.g., France, Senegal, Peru) and compare it with a similar cultural phenomenon in their own country. Their goal? To learn as much as they can about their own culture. They then present their research to classmates and others in the form of posters displayed at the school festival. Each poster has a “Conclusion” section: What I learned about my own culture. What does this achieve? 1) it discourages students from thinking of foreign lands as weird; 2) it provides them with a model for learning by observing cultural difference; 3) it expands their horizons beyond the usual Japan/US duality. In the presentation. I will tell you what I did and how I did it, and encourage you to think about how to achieve similar goals in your own learning/teaching context.

***SIG: Intercultural Communication in Language Education***

***Sat May 13 / Time: 4.15pm-5.45pm***

**UPCOMING EVENT: Translation and Translingualism in Language Teaching (16 July)**

Kyoto Chapter of JALT presents

JALT京都支部提供

# Translation & Translingualism

in language education



**Takako Ramsden**  
Kyoto University of Foreign Studies



**Daniel Pearce**  
International Buddhist University



**Oana Cusen**  
Kwansei Gakuin University



registration  
schedule & abstracts @ kyotojalt.org  
venue access

16TH JUL 9:00 | CAMPUS PLAZA KYOTO ONLINE OPTION AVAILABLE

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Living in two languages

