

## BOOK REVIEWS

***Japanese/English Codeswitching: Syntax and Pragmatics.* By Miwa Nishimura. New York: Peter Lang, 1998. 176 pp.**

It is a pleasure to review the work of a pioneer researcher in the field of Japanese/English codeswitching (CS). Dr. Nishimura's 1985 Ph.D. dissertation was one of the first investigations in the area, and her publications and presentations on CS in Canadian Nisei (second-generation Japanese-Canadians) communities have greatly added to our understanding of the role of CS in maintaining group identity and have demonstrated that the direction of the sentence head is a major constraint on the Japanese/English switching process. This book represents a significant extension of Nishimura's work since it combines functional analysis of the switch with syntactic analysis of switching constraints in an examination of three varieties of Japanese/English CS: when the base language is Japanese, when the base language is English, and mixed CS, when no base language is identifiable.

The first chapter presents a comprehensive overview of the state of the field, discussing five typologies of CS and the research supporting each model, surveying studies of children's CS, and examining the results of syntactic research on switching constraints. Regarding the scope of this treatment, Nishimura notes that CS has been traditionally approached either in terms of its function or in terms of its grammar, but rarely in terms of both by the same author. Her present work, she suggests, is useful since it combines the two approaches to give new insights, thereby presenting a more complete account of the CS phenomenon in her target community.

The second chapter introduces this community -- a group of Canadian Nisei living in Toronto. She traces the immigration history of the group, their employment structure, and their experiences during and after World War II. Nishimura discusses her own involvement with the subjects of the study, both as a participant researcher and as a relative of one subject. She describes her data collection procedures during five taped group discussions, introduces her four primary subjects and others who were recorded, and discusses the collection of a second set of data using two Japanese-American women living in San Francisco.

Chapter Three presents the three Japanese/English speech varieties existing in the Canadian-Nisei community: basically Japanese, basically English and mixed. Nishimura suggests that both syntax and function differ systematically across the three varieties and notes that her study demonstrates the existence of different base language forms of bilingual speech within the same community. The chapter concludes with a discussion of language choice, suggesting that it is conditioned by the audience. The Japanese-based variety is used when the audience is Japanese-speaking, the English-based variety is the unmarked choice when speaking to other Niseis, and the mixed variety is used when talking to a mixed group of Japanese native speakers and Niseis.

This section would have been clarified by an explanation as to how the base language was determined. Other authors have used quantitative measures, such as the morpheme counts employed by Myers-Scotten (1993), to identify the matrix or base language, which can then be defined as "the

language of more morphemes in interaction types" (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 68).

Chapter Four examines the nature of the switched item in each variety. Like other studies of CS indicating that noun switches are most common, in this data English nouns and noun compounds accounted for nearly 80% of the intrasentential switches within Japanese speech. In contrast, Japanese switches within English speech consisted mainly of fillers and discourse markers such as the emphatic adverb "*moo*" (p. 95). Within the mixed data, nouns again dominated English switches within Japanese sentences; however, the number of Japanese nouns in the English sentences was quite low. Most of the Japanese switches were sentence-final Japanese utterances (p. 99). Discussing the high percent of English noun switches observed in this and other CS studies, Nishimura concludes that, in general, English nouns are the most common switch made by bilinguals regardless of their second language.

It must be noted that this section would have been considerably strengthened by the use of a test of significance such as Chi Square for the frequency counts of the various switches. This would have demonstrated that the difference in switch types among the three varieties was indeed statistically significant. Inclusion of a basic data table showing the length of each audio-recording for both the Canadian and San Francisco data, the number of switches per minute for each, and the number of J/E and E/J switches for the three varieties in each data set would have also been useful.

Chapter Five analyzes the syntax of intrasentential CS, demonstrating that government-binding framework analysis based on the direction of the sentence head can explain constraints on Japanese/English CS. Here "head" refers to the main element in a phrase on which the other elements depend and which controls the function of the phrase as a whole (Crystal, 1995, p. 422). English is a head-initial language (taking the complement to the right), whereas Japanese is head-final (taking the complement to the left), and when the appropriate direction is maintained CS can be done freely (p. 127). Nishimura presents examples of switches which preserve the directionality of the head, such as the following (p. 118-120) :

- (5) d. Only small prizes *moratte ne* [were received, you know].
- (7) a. I live *Nihon ni* [in Japan].
- (11) a. *Kodomotachi* [The children] liked it.

Chapter Six discusses the functions performed by the switches using an analytical framework derived from interactional sociolinguistics -- a field based on the work of researchers such as Gumperz, Schiffrrin, Tannen and Goffman, who suggest that the construction of meaning in an interaction is based on the expectations of the participants. From this perspective, the frequent occurrence of English nouns in otherwise Japanese utterances seems to be motivated either by lexical gaps or by habitual use of the English word within the speech community, whereas the use of Japanese discourse markers in English speech is seen as indexing the Niseis' bicultural identity. Such switches are suggested to be "involvement intensifiers" (p. 141 - 142) which indicate the speaker's involvement in the conversation. The use of switched discourse markers to emphasize frame boundaries is also noted. These switches signal that a



new topic will begin.

A particularly interesting point is Nishimura's discussion of the use of the Japanese topic marker *wa* within English sentences as a strategy for topic introduction or reintroduction. She also identifies "portmanteau sentences," a type of repetition where an English utterance and its repetition in Japanese share a constituent and form a SVOV sentence. The final element of the English utterance thus becomes the first element of the Japanese portion. In such switches the first verb is in English and the second is in Japanese, as in the following (p. 103):

(24) b There's children *iru yo* [exist (animate)].

Nishimura considers that this switch type functions as a "reach-out strategy" (p. 139-140) accessing two types of audience at the same time, Niseis and native Japanese.

The final chapter summarizes her research, emphasizing the main finding that different types of CS exist not only within the same speech community but also within the same individual. However, Nishimura's assertion that the present analysis covers the "entire repertoire" (p. 35) of the target community is perhaps overstated because of the small number of subjects surveyed and the limited number of switches reported. In the San Francisco data only two subjects were recorded, and the use of this data to support the Canadian findings would have been more salient if the data sets had been statistically compared. Furthermore, the division of the "mixed" variety into Japanese and English base languages raises some question as to the validity of the category. This should be clarified in future studies by a more complete definition of the discourse context of the varieties and a more rigorous quantitative assessment of each.

Despite these limitations (and we must recall that Nishimura has always worked within the qualitative tradition), the book is an extremely significant contribution to the data on Japanese/English CS and is a signpost indicating important directions for future studies of switching function and syntactical constraints in different speech communities.

#### REFERENCES

- Crystal, D. (1995). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
Myers-Scotton, C. (1993). *Duelling languages: Grammatical Structure in Codeswitching*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

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***Educating Hearts and Minds: Reflections on Japanese Preschool and Elementary Education.* By C. C. Lewis. (1995). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 249 pp.**

Catherine Lewis has been observing and thinking about Japanese schools for over 15 years, since her first visit to Japan as a high school exchange student. In *Educating Hearts and Minds* she summarises what she has learnt and suggests how the lessons can be applied to U.S. elementary schools and preschools.

An educator in the U.S. reading the above paragraph might well groan along with one of the elementary school teachers quoted in Lewis's book, "Not another explanation of why we're getting it all wrong and the Japanese are getting it all right, please." There has been no shortage of books and seminars designed to make U.S. education more Japanese.

Fortunately, Lewis's is by far the most balanced and thoughtful account so far. Yes, she looks for what is good in Japanese preschool and elementary education and asks if it can be applied in the U.S.; but she looks way below the surface features of the classrooms she has visited in Japan, to seek out the values and assumptions that underlie educational practice and, having asked if similar values and assumptions could be applied in the U.S., she offers reasoned answers and, often, evidence to back them up. Surprisingly often, the answer is "Yes."

As the sub-title proclaims, this is a book of reflections. It is not a research report or a carefully described observational study, although the reader is referred to works from both of these genres (often, but not always, also authored by Lewis) where appropriate. Rather, this is the work of a researcher who is stepping back to take stock of her conclusions. Ample supporting evidence is offered for each of Lewis's contentions about Japanese schools but there is no careful analysis of conflicting evidence or attempt to permit the reader to draw alternative conclusions.

After a brief explanation of salient features of the education system as a whole, Lewis focuses on the part she knows best: preschool and the early years of elementary school. In preschool, she analyses the centrality of play and its role in building community and instilling self-discipline, concluding that academic development occurs in Japan not despite this heavy emphasis on social skills but because of it. She finds a similar explicit stress on social goals -- friendliness, helpfulness, persistence, responsibility -- in elementary school practices, together with the important element of "hansei" -- regular chances to reflect on one's behaviour and to consider whether one has helped to achieve the social goals laid out for the class as a whole.

After these overviews, the following chapters focus on detailed aspects of how teachers work simultaneously towards social and educational goals. One chapter analyses the formation and role of small groups in the classroom. Another looks at practical measures taken by teachers to enhance the sense of community without crushing the individuality of each child. A third examines how children and teachers deal with misbehaviour in ways designed to lead to understanding of the undesirable effects of misbehaviour rather than simply demanding compliance. Finally, Chapter 7 explains how the very same principles which have been nurtured by community-building and deployed in dealing with misbehaviour lead directly to an atmosphere in which learning occurs.

Towards the end of each chapter, there is a section in which explicit comparisons are made with practices in U.S. elementary education, but in the final two chapters such comparisons are central. Chapter 8 poses the question "What is a successful school?" and, after answering it in several ways, proceeds to show that by most measures Japanese schools are more successful than their U.S. counterparts. This conclusion is accompanied by a strongly worded caveat that "differences between the two countries mean that strategies that are effective in Japan might not work, or might not be regarded as appropriate, in the United States" (p. 189). Interestingly, though, Lewis then describes a project in California which set out to change schools to make them places where children could become "good learners and good people." The project is of interest because the California educators, without any knowledge of Japanese education, decided to implement many of the philosophies and practices Lewis has reported from her observations in Japanese schools. Lewis uses this project as strong evidence that the parts of Japanese education that really count are consonant with values which are widely held by Americans.

The final chapter recapitulates these core values: focus on the whole child, emphasis on prosocial values, building a supportive community, methods of discipline that promote commitment to values, classroom life driven by children's thought-processes, an interpersonally complex classroom environment and frequent chances for reflection. Lewis proposes that such goals should be used to judge all schools, not just those in Japan.

A thoughtful and authoritative book, then, with much that is of interest to U.S.-based educationalists. For Bilingualism N-SIG members with children in or about to enter preschool or elementary school in Japan, it offers strong reassurance about what they will experience there from an author who is better placed than most to judge such an issue.

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