

Internationalizing the Language-Learning Environment: A “Two-Way” Bilingual Programme for ESL & JSL Students

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INTRODUCTION

Numerous institutions throughout the English-speaking world have begun offering intensive ESL programmes for Japanese students, and still more, for various reasons, may be expected to join the competition. However, many of those programmes have come to appear stale and unimaginative, failing to respond to demands for more unique and effective content from an increasingly-sophisticated clientele. Believing that a two-way bilingual programme has the greatest potential for bringing about both improved student interaction and the internationalization of the curricula of the institutions involved, in the summer of 1992 Momoyama Gakuin (St. Andrew's) University and its sister-institution Douglas College of British Columbia, Canada instituted a 5-week enhanced ESL/JSL programme. The programme has since been repeated semi-annually and has become known as the Bilingual Language & Culture Institute (BLCI).

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Based on a very simple contract where learners agree: “If you help me to learn your language, I’ll help you to learn mine”, the BLCI 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 extra-curricular activities. The programme’s participants comprise students from Momoyama visiting Douglas College for English study (hereafter ESLs), and students attending Japanese-language courses at Douglas College (hereafter JSLs). There are two variations of the BLCI: the full programme offered in the summer, and a limited programme in the spring in which JSLs spend a part of their regular Japanese-language classroom hours together with the ESLs. The Momoyama students participating in the summer programme include both English majors and non-majors, while those joining in the spring are all English majors. Both summer and spring programmes are fully accredited.

In the BLCI, apart from spending approximately half of their classroom hours together, the students are also given structured opportunities to interact informally through “Bilingual Lunches”, “Bilingual Workshops”, and Field-trips, and are encouraged to spend time together socially outside school. Finally, as background to their language learning, both ESLs and JSLs receive courses in cultural studies in which patterns of language are related to patterns of behaviour in the respective host culture.

The broad aim of the BLCI is to provide an enhanced learning environment in which both classroom and outside-classroom experiences play significant parts. In the classroom students are expected to play the

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roles of both language-learner and language-teacher: learner in their own target language, and teacher 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 of this approach over standard classroom-based, ESL-only programmes are numerous.

First, by eliminating the distinction between "learner" and "teacher" in the classroom, the problem of passivity so common in Japanese classrooms is overcome: through having to provide information as well as receive it, students are obliged to remain conscious of their own behaviour and of their partner; the result is enhanced sensitivity and consequently enhanced receptivity. Second, ESLs, instead of being isolated in a programme which is within the host institution but outside its regular class schedule, as is so often the case, have opportunities to feel a part of the college's day-to-day life.

For both ESLs and JSLs, thirdly, the BLCI furnishes a chance to interact with a group of peers from their target language's host culture. The effect is to create a natural learning environment in which inhibitions due to cultural differences are outweighed by common generational factors. Fourthly, 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. Finally, for ESLs the opportunity to forge close relationships with young people within the host culture transforms their experience from a narrow pedagogical one to a broader socially-oriented one in which pedagogical and cultural lessons become intrinsically linked.

Believing that the BLCI outlined above is a vital new alternative to teacher-centred, classroom-focused approaches to language and cultural learning, its organizers applied to and were accepted to make an oral presentation about it to the 48th Annual Conference of NAFSA: Association of International Educators, held in Phoenix, Arizona from June 4-7, 1996, under the title: 'Elements of Diversity in International Education' (see Appendix 1). The present paper developed out of that presentation.

To ascertain the BLCI programme's effect on the students involved and to ensure that those students' voices were heard in the presentation, a survey was conducted of participants in the 1995 programmes, and the findings for the ESLs (for whom the present writer was responsible) are set out below. The data are based on responses to a questionnaire from students who took part in either the full summer programme or the limited spring programme. There were a total of 44 participating ESLs, of whom 33 (75%) responded to the questionnaire. To ensure accuracy, the questionnaire was written in Japanese, and students were also requested to respond in Japanese. Translations of responses cited in this paper were prepared by the present writer.

SUMMARY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire (see Appendix 2 for full details) covered a wide range of topics, which we divided into four sections: "affective questions", "linguistic questions", "culture-oriented questions", and "self-awareness questions". Students were invited to rank various propositions on a scale from 1 to 5, and to add comments if they wished.

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“Affective” topics included: the degree of closeness which students experienced towards the other culture; the degree to which ESLs felt part of the host college; the degree to which students increased their confidence in speaking their target language and in making friends with those from outside their own culture; the degree to which their own sense of cultural identity was strengthened; and the degree to which they came to feel a more “international” person as a result of the BLCI.

“Linguistic” topics covered the degree to which the BLCI (a) provided opportunities for learning appropriate language; (b) increased learning motivation; and (c) accelerated the learning process.

“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 upheld; and the effect that participation in the programme had had upon their own sense of cultural identity.

“Self-awareness” questions sought answers concerning whether or not the students felt they had increased their knowledge of their own culture; whether or not they felt more aware of themselves (as Japanese, as students, as young people, etc.); and the degree to which they were motivated by their partners’ interest to find out more about their own culture.

At the end of the questionnaire we tagged on some general questions concerning the degree to which students felt the experience would be useful or influential in their lives, and whether or not they would

recommend the BLCI 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.

ANALYSIS OF ESL STUDENTS' RESPONSES

1. Affective Questions

Transforming self-consciousness into self-confidence is always a key element in language education; a culture like Japan's, in which individual consciousness is often intrinsically linked to that of the group, makes that process particularly tricky, but simultaneously highly poignant.

Perhaps the most important finding in this section, from the ESLs' point of view, was how far they had managed to transform their attitudes towards language and towards communication: the majority stated their wonder at finding they could communicate with the JSLs even with what they considered minimal English ability (not necessarily an accurate self-assessment, of course: one of Japanese students' greatest handicaps is their low level of self-esteem with regard to their capacity to communicate in another language); others went so far as to lay the blame for their perceived lack of ability on the Japanese education system itself.

In almost every case it was the contact with the JSLs which was crucial: responsibility for teaching them Japanese combined with the

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natural language environment spontaneously created by the two groups allowed the ESLs to overcome embarrassment more quickly and easily than might be expected in a “normal” ESL classroom. At least equally significant was the ESLs’ discovery that they could readily understand their partners’ rudimentary Japanese, an event which had at least two important effects: it encouraged them to believe that their own “less-than-perfect” English was equally understandable, overcoming the traditional Japanese emphasis on “perfection or silence”; and it motivated them to take up the role of teacher so as to facilitate Japanese communication (perhaps also fuelled by a desire to avoid English, it has to be admitted!). Comments included things like: “Both sides were able to forget language differences and get on together”, and “I’m not so afraid of talking to people any more”.

Many young Japanese today include among their ambitions in life “to make foreign friends”, and the ESLs surveyed were no exception; references to “making friends” abound throughout their responses: “I felt I could make friends with anyone if only I was positive enough”; “I got to feel they were just friends who spoke a different language”; “Because they were friends, I wasn’t afraid of making mistakes”; and so on. However, in the light of responses to other questions, it seems likely that the apparent superficiality of this “ambition” in fact disguises a much deeper motive that in the non-conceptual world of modern Japanese youth culture cannot be expressed in any other way: the desire to break free of traditional Japanese restraints — the same desire that has been such an enormous source of energy throughout modern Japanese history.

2. Linguistic Questions

As to the linguistic side, most students agreed that being with people of their own age-group made it easier to use English, particularly since those people were also studying Japanese, which furnished them with a fall-back should they require it: "Being able to use either Japanese or English helped me get the meaning of words". The experience of speaking freely in their target language removed their inhibitions and gave them a greater thirst for more speaking opportunities: "I lost the strange feeling of tension I used to have towards English and towards foreigners"; "It came to seem natural to be speaking English"; "Because of all the different kinds of people in Canada, I realized there could be different kinds of English, too [including Japanese English]"; "My interest in English and my appetite for study have both increased". In addition, the language they were learning was perceived as being appropriate to their everyday lives, since their concerns and interests overlapped with those of the JSLs: "They taught me lots of natural and easy-to-use English expressions"; "I learned English that is not in textbooks"; "I learned most English when I went out with the JSLs". In many cases, the motivation to improve their English ability came directly from the desire to maintain contacts with the JSLs after the programme.

For some students, meanwhile, the opposite seems to have applied: the experience of feeling unable to converse freely with people they perceived as peers had the effect of encouraging them to take up further English studies after their return to Japan, a reaction that may have been less pronounced had they been in a traditional situation

where the only available language partner was a native-speaker teacher. The words “frustration” and “irritation” crop up frequently throughout the responses, accompanied more often than not by the determination to make the “next time” more successful.

3. Cultural Questions

You can't hope to understand where another person is coming from unless you first have some idea of where you are coming from yourself, and the BLCI 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. 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 in itself a nonsensical exercise: “The non-Japanese were really proud of their country... that made me aware of how little we Japanese understand our own selves”; “I had many chances to rethink what it means to be Japanese”; “I was shocked by the number of Asian students trying hard to learn Japanese and making rapid progress”; “I felt that we were all simply students regardless of race or country”; “...to make distinctions between Japan and Europe/USA is a narrow and stupid outlook”.

There is an unhappy tendency among teachers of English in Japan (though thankfully less common than it once was) to expect learners to assume an identity other than their own, symbolized by a name

that is more “representative” of English-speaking culture. The BLCI provided quite the opposite kind of environment, one which allowed students to reconfirm their own cultural identity even while they came to terms with that of the host country, as the following comment points out: “...in regular English classes one tends to forget one’s own language and culture, but in the BLCI 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.”

As the third most ethnically-mixed urban area in north America after Los Angeles and Toronto, it is no wonder that the setting for the BLCI, Greater Vancouver, impressed Japanese participants with its cultural complexity. It was also inevitable that this ethnic mix would be reflected in the make-up of the JSLs. In the case of Vancouver, particularly, the preponderance of ethnic Chinese among the JSLs has been notable, many of them either recent immigrants or international students eventually planning to return to their home country, and the significance of this for the programme has been a major concern among its organizers. At the same time, it was felt that the relative homogeneity of the ESLs’ own country, Japan, would make this situation a novel and challenging experience for them, prompting them to reconsider their preconceptions not only of Canada but also of Japan, not only of themselves as Japanese, but also of such concepts as “culture” and “identity”.

Happily, responses from the ESLs seem to have borne these expecta-

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tions out, confirming their surprise at finding so many non-Caucasian Canadians while at the same time using that reaction as a springboard for self-examination and reassessment of their Japanese heritage: “Canada is great! I was able to get to know not only white people but people from all kinds of countries”; “I thought the culture and lifestyle of foreign countries were colder and more stand-offish, but I was quite wrong”; “I was able to re-assess many aspects of Japan by seeing it from the outside, and so I became more aware of myself as a Japanese”; “Rather than feeling more Japanese, I felt that people in all countries [are] just people”; “The Canadian students seemed more Japanese than we were”; “Japan should learn from Canadian people’s kindness and positive thinking”.

4. Self-Awareness Questions

If all knowledge springs initially from self-knowledge, the questions which probed the BLCI’s effect on participating students’ self-awareness can be said to lay at the centre of the survey. From the Japanese students’ point of view, at least, these questions also seem to have generated the most profound reflection. For a majority of the ESLs, coming from an educational background that currently places little or no value on intellectual curiosity, it came as a shock, not only to their individual self-esteem but also to their cultural identity, to find that the JSLs frequently knew more about traditional Japanese culture than they did. Happily, though, thanks to the underlying seriousness of most Japanese students and to their tendency to react strongly to feelings of shame, this realization was usually a catalyst for self-examination and a motivation to redress that imbalance. We thus received comments like: “Sometimes I couldn’t answer their questions

about Japan, and realized how indifferent I am to my own culture”; “I had a chance to reassess parts of Japanese culture that I’d previously just allowed to wash by me”; “I felt I should reconsider my disdain for traditional Japanese culture”; “Many of them knew lots of things about Japan that I didn’t know”; “I was embarrassed because many of the Canadian students were so curious about Japan and I knew so little about it although I’m Japanese”; “I’m embarrassed to say that it feels as if I learned about Japan’s good points from the Canadian students”.

Clear thinking requires clear language, and this was another truism to be borne out by the ESLs’ experiences. Many of them found that the *ishin denshin* process so useful at home, whereby interjections like “*Ne*” and “*Desho?*” convey enough meaning to transmit a whole databank of information, did not work with their Canadian counterparts, forcing them to resort to actual WORDS to express what they wanted to say. In the process of doing so, many students were able to discover not only that they lacked clear ideas about most topics but, more significantly, that they lacked the ability to express what ideas they did have in clear diction. The shock appeared even greater in the light of the Canadian students’ propensity to hold strong ideas about most topics AND the ability to express those ideas relatively clearly. The result was an increased awareness of the complexity and fascination of the language (Japanese) they had hitherto taken for granted, leading in turn to a desire to know more about it. In some cases the motivation was their own career goal, such as the ambition — currently fashionable in Japan — to become a teacher of Japanese for foreign learners; in others it was merely the desire to avoid being placed for

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a second time in the embarrassing situation of being unable to explain their own language.

Comments were revealing: “I realized that the words we use in everyday language are not necessarily correct, and that I personally could not always speak precisely”; “I felt I lacked the Canadian students’ positive attitude to putting ideas across”; “Explaining points about Japanese was a precious experience for me”; “I’d taken Japanese for granted and hadn’t thought too deeply about it before...I realized for the first time after looking at their textbooks that Japanese was a foreign language too”; “...since I got back I’ve wanted to know more about Japanese, so I’m studying it now”; “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 the difficulty of teaching it”.

For most of the ESLs it was their first trip outside Japan, and the contact with Canadian students was clearly eye-opening. While the perception of no more than differences from themselves might easily have led to a casual confirmation of the myth of “Japanese uniqueness”, the discovery that these people with such clear ideas and often an extraordinary capacity to put them over actually thought and felt in much the same way as they did was a quick route to an appreciation of cultural relativity, especially in the context of a common age-group. We thus found the Japanese students writing things like: “I learned a lot about what was missing in myself through the Canadian students’ positive attitude to using time”; “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”; “I came to want to challenge everything”; “I found they weren’t so different from us”. The degree to which young Japanese unconsciously immerse their individual identities in that of the group was also brought home to some of the students, as revealed by comments like: “I found that the ‘self’ I thought was mine was not nearly as clearly defined as I had thought.”

Here too we found a readiness among the ESLs to reflect on their educational background and classroom behaviour, prompted by the evident ease with which the Canadian students balanced their energies between classroom and leisure time. In contrast to their own tendency to be positive when at play but negative when engaged in study, a tendency encouraged by the leaning toward teacher-centred pedagogy in Japan, the apparent all-round enthusiasm of the JSLs was evidently stimulating: “I was impressed by the Canadian students’ appetite for study, but they also knew how to enjoy themselves”.

5. Miscellaneous Questions

The final section of the questionnaire sought to draw together some loose threads by asking more general questions about how the students saw the programme affecting them in the long term. This seems, perhaps not surprisingly, to have been the most difficult part of the survey to respond to concretely. However, for many students the BLCI seems to have played a major role in jolting them out of their comfortable assumptions regarding the normality of Japanese life, while at the same time encouraging some of them even to consider

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the possibility of a life lived outside the confines of Japan: “I realized that I don’t have a clear set of values”; “I think my priorities changed after meeting Canadians”; “Realizing that different societies and cultures have different values, I felt that my own world had expanded”; “I realized that not imposing your own values on others is itself a ‘value’”; “I gained a more international outlook than I had before”; “I realized that Japan is also a ‘foreign country’, and that it’s nonsense to make distinctions between different countries”; “My dream of becoming a Japanese teacher became stronger”; “I began to imagine a life or future for myself outside Japan”; “I no longer think of Japan as the only place where I could work”; “It will be helpful because I want to be a teacher”; “I came to hope that there will be foreigners working in the same place as me”.

Much less difficult to respond to, it seems, were the questions asking students to assess the merits of the BLCI compared to programmes failing to provide regular contact with students from the host country. At the risk of giving this report a self-congratulatory tone, it has to be said that the majority of responses met the organizers’ expectations overwhelmingly, and at the same time offered the most practical reasons for why the BLCI was perceived by the students as superior: “The BLCI provides opportunities to study more than just language”; “... we could relax and talk more easily because we were with people of our own generation and have an interest in each others’ lives”; “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”; “We not only could learn English, but also

got 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'; "I think I'll be able to study more naturally in future because having Canadian friends means I need to have English ability"; "Because the first step to learning a language and studying a culture is to make friends"; and, finally: "There wouldn't be any point in going abroad if you were surrounded by Japanese all the time".

6. Free Comments

Not a few students took the opportunity we offered them to comment freely on matters that concerned them, sometimes repeating broadly what they had stated in their responses to questions, sometimes amplifying those responses or adding suggestions. In some cases these were negative assessments, and those too will be dealt with in this section.

One student remarked that contact with Canadian students gave her the courage to "just try to talk"; another observed that they made possible a lot of things that the Japanese students would never have managed on their own. More than one commented that the BLCI made it possible to feel that they were studying in Canada rather than merely taking part in a short-term programme for Japanese students, and for at least one student the experience made her feel "more satisfied than I had ever felt before.... not only was my English ability improving, but also [I felt] I was growing and developing personally every day".

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One major drawback to the full BLCI that was pointed out by some of the students who offered negative assessments, was that it took place during the summer when most regular Douglas College students were not on campus. This is a problem affecting most overseas language programmes, since the only sustained period of time available to operate them is in fact during the summer break. On the other hand, many more students on the BLCI seem to have felt that the presence of the JSLs solved that problem.

A complicating factor was the fact that the JSLs included a large percentage of international students or recent immigrants, many of whom were of ethnic Chinese origin; a small number of ESL students felt for that reason that they were not meeting “real” Canadians even after the demographic realities of Vancouver were explained to them, particularly since most of the long-term residents were prevented by part-time job responsibilities from spending a lot of non-classroom time with the ESL students. At the same time, it seems likely that such assessments by the Japanese students contain some degree of unconscious racism in the sense that, since Canada is still perceived in Japan as a “white” country, they continue to carry a large weight of ideological baggage persuading them that people of Asian descent cannot be “real” Canadians. It has to be admitted that a preponderance of people new to Canada in the group can result in a less than “Canadian” experience; at the same time, the fact remains that this is the reality of today’s Canada, and in any case the international ramifications of the programme appear to have outweighed such issues for the majority of the ESL students. It also seems worth noting that for every ESL student who felt that their experience had somehow not been “truly

Canadian”, there were others who gravitated naturally toward the other Asians, perhaps because they were sensed as more approachable, perhaps because of a common perceived identity as English-learners.

From the pedagogical point of view, the presence of non-native speakers raises two separate problems. The first, which applies more generally to recent arrivals to Canada, is the possibility of accents that may hinder or sometimes even preclude communication; however, as far as can be seen this was not perceived by the majority of ESL students surveyed as a major difficulty. The second is the fact that in the process of language exchange the students spend up to half their time using Japanese, running the risk of making the programme less of an immersion experience than an all-English programme might be. This problem is potentially far more serious, and needs to be taken into account when the programme includes an ESL-only segment in which the students are expected to converse purely in English. (In the case of Japanese students, this problem would seem to be accentuated by their lack of training in self-expression, which for less forceful students sometimes meant that English took a back seat to Japanese: “Because the Canadian students’ Japanese was so good, I spoke Japanese more than English”, was a comment unfortunately echoed by more than one student).

Time seems to be the essential element in solving this problem, in that students will gain confidence and become accustomed to speaking English spontaneously in proportion to the length of the programme (some ESL students specifically pointed out the need to make the present 5-week programme longer). An ESL component which provides

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students with maximum opportunities to practice oral English, such as by breaking down pre-existing group ties (especially important in the case of Japanese students), will help things along. Needless to say, instructors on both the ESL and JSL sides need to be in accord with the general aims of the programme, and to have achieved a good working relationship; awareness of those aims and a positive attitude to language-learning on the part of the students will also be essential factors. Whatever, the overwhelmingly-positive student assessments of the programme make it clear that reversion to an all-English, classroom-centred model is not an option. Perhaps the last word should go to the student, cited briefly above, who made the following moving comment on her experiences: "I'm sure 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 student who was studying in Canada."

SUMMARY: SOME ADVANTAGES OF THE TWO-WAY BILINGUAL PROGRAMME

1. Creating Authentic Motivation *

Homogeneous groups of ESL students, especially Japanese students, have a high degree of 'communicative inertia'. Bilingual programmes provide novel interlocutors, motivating students to speak English more readily.

2. Experiencing an Authentic Cultural Milieu

Bilingual programmes bring learners into contact with authentic representatives of the target culture. One of the most striking features of this kind of programming is the amount of incidental/unplanned learning of cultural information, especially non-verbal communication patterns, that occurs.

3. Shifting from Teacher-Centred to Learner-Centred Classrooms

Since these programmes are task-based and designed to have learners take responsibility for learning cooperatively, teachers' energies are freed to focus on planning, monitoring, etc. 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.

4. Validating Student Knowledge

Bilingual programmes use students as peer teachers: both groups are experts in their own languages, and can provide a tremendous range

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of general knowledge of their language. Moreover, since the programmes are content-based, they also allow students to share general knowledge of their respective country or culture.

5. Developing Friendships

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 BLCI was perceived by most students as a total experience, bringing enlightenment that was both linguistic and socio-cultural. 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 language 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.

- * The headings are based on a model developed by Dr. Tom Whalley, co-presenter at the 1996 NAFSA Conference.

APPENDIX 1

THE NAFSA PHOENIX CONFERENCE PRESENTATION

THEME: Elements of Diversity in International Education

TITLE: An Enhanced Intensive ESL Program — The Bilingual Approach to ESL/JSL Teaching

PRESENTERS:

Tad Hosoi (Chair), Director of the Centre for International Education, Douglas College. Responsible for all international activities at Douglas, particularly for marketing of the College's programmes.

Tom Whalley, ESL & Japanese Language Instructor, Douglas College. Initiated the development of a bilingual ESL/JSL high school programme for the British Columbia Ministry of Education in 1987.

Philip Billingsley, Professor of Asian History, Cross-Cultural Studies and English Language at Momoyama Gakuin University. Also Coordinator for overseas exchange programmes at Momoyama, and currently Acting Director of the University's International Centre.

APPENDIX 2: THE 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 BLCI.
2. I feel that I was able to make close friends among Canadian students through joining the BLCI.
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 BLCI.
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 BLCI.
5. I feel that my sense of identity as a Japanese became stronger as a result of joining the BLCI.
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 BLCI.

3. I feel that I was better able to do that thanks to the contact with Canadian students afforded by the BLCI.
4. I feel that my desire to continue studying English became stronger as a result of the contact with Canadian students on the BLCI.

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 BLCI.
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 BLCI.
3. I feel that my sense of Japanese identity became stronger when I was communicating with Canadian students during the BLCI.

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 BLCI.
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 BLCI.
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 BLCI.
4. I feel that I learned more about young Canadians as a result of the contacts made possible by the BLCI.
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 BLCI.

E. Miscellaneous

1. I feel that the socio-cultural experience afforded by the contact with Canadian students through the BLCI 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 BLCI will be useful to some degree in my future career.
3. I feel that the contact with Canadian students through the BLCI will be an important memory of my university days.
4. I would like to study in a BLCI-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 BLCI, your own experiences, this questionnaire, etc. — please feel free to do so.

Internationalizing the Language-Learning Environment: A “Two-Way” Bilingual Programme for ESL & JSL Students

Philip BILLINGSLEY

Abstract

Since the summer of 1992, Momoyama Gakuin University and Douglas College have been operating regular 5-week Bilingual Language & Culture Institutes (BLCI). Taking place in both the spring and summer of each year, the programmes are participated in by Momoyama students studying English as a second language (ESLs), and Douglas College students studying Japanese as a second (or foreign) language (JSLs).

The BLCI is based on a simple contract between the two groups of learners: “If you help me to learn your language, I’ll help you to learn mine”. The programme provides them with both structured and non-structured opportunities to interact, by including things like Bilingual Workshops and Field-trips alongside classroom instruction. The aim is to create an enhanced learning environment in which both classroom and extra-classroom experiences play significant parts.

The advantages of this approach are many: 1). It overcomes the passivity common in Japanese classrooms by eliminating the hard

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distinction between learner and teacher; 2). ESLs are incorporated into the host college's schedule instead of being isolated in a separate language course; 3). Students spend the majority of their time with people of their own age group from the host culture, creating a more natural and spontaneous learning environment; 4). Students have the opportunity to generate friendships with young people from the host culture, transforming the language-learning experience from a narrow pedagogical one to one in which pedagogical and cultural lessons become intrinsically linked.