

Role of Japanese in English-medium Instruction Programs at Japanese Universities: Toward the Globalization of Education that Values Diversity

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Abstract: This paper highlights the role and efficiency of first-language use alongside English in English-medium instruction (EMI) programs in Japanese universities. To provide educational support and enhance bilingual communication between Japanese and international students, two courses are suggested: elementary Japanese for international students and intercultural communication for both. An analysis of their communication and remarks during these courses indicate that the use of English and Japanese worked efficiently to ensure communication, build relationships, and teach about Japanese culture. In light of the results, the use of English in EMI programs is considered to hinder the appreciation of Japanese culture and the value placed on diversity in globalization.

Keywords: Japanese language, bilingual communication, *lingua franca*, international students, Japanese students.

1. Introduction

With the globalization of education in recent years, education conducted in English (i.e., English as medium of instruction or *EMI*) is rapidly increasing within higher education in non-English-speaking countries (Dearden 2015, Kirkpatrick 2011, Wilkinson 2013). Every country encounters issues in implementing EMI programs. Case studies reflecting each situation have been conducted: e.g., relations between English-language proficiency and educational attainments in Indonesia (Ibrahim 2001), Korea (Joe & Lee 2013), and China (Hu *et al.* 2014); concerns surrounding the acceleration of English imperialism; and those regarding the lack of appreciation for the linguistic diversity of European countries (Doiz *et al.* 2011, Phillipson 2016). This paper focuses on EMI in Japanese universities and discusses the challenges involved.

To catch up with the trend on globalization of education, Japanese universities have begun promoting EMI programs with the aim of acquiring top-class international students and fostering a global mindset among Japanese students. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) launched the 300,000 International Students Plan in 2008. This was followed by the Project for Establishing a University Network for Internationalization (2009–2013, henceforth “Global 30”) to expand the intake of international students, then by the Super Global University Project (2014-present, henceforth “SG”) to provide budgetary support. This support enabled the rapid establishment of programs in which it was possible to obtain a degree in English only. These grew substantially in number: from eight undergraduate faculties at seven universities and 139 graduate schools at 73 universities before the Global 30 (2008) to 65 undergraduate faculties at 38 universities and 233 graduate schools at 100 universities in 2016, numbers that continue to increase (MEXT 2010, 2017). At the outset of establishment of EMI programs, it was thought that – by removing the barrier of Japanese-language learning – Japanese universities would acquire top-class international students. However, problems have emerged.

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First, many of the universities chosen for the Global 30 and SG projects have not incorporated their EMI programs into the curriculum of the university as a whole, establishing them instead as special departments or majors. As a result, the programs are unlikely to lead to the promotion of internationalization of the university as a whole (Ashizawa 2013, Ota & Horiuchi 2018). Moreover, university information is rarely translated into English, and few faculty members possess high English-language abilities, leading to reports of international students arriving with no Japanese language ability, facing difficulties carrying out administrative procedures and accessing information from the university, thus becoming isolated (Ota and Horiuchi 2018).

Second, Japanese students who are expected to study with international students in EMI programs are in a difficult situation. Japanese is the main language of the country, and English is barely used. Moreover, because university education has conventionally been conducted only in Japanese, Japanese students belong to the group of students from developed countries with the lowest English language proficiency (Educational 2017), particularly with respect to communication skills. Bearing these circumstances in mind, it is difficult to imagine that communication within EMI programs goes smoothly or that it brings any great educational benefit to either their Japanese or international students.

This paper identifies communication-related issues between Japanese and international students in EMI programs at Japanese universities and suggests bilingual use of Japanese and English. Offering elementary-level Japanese courses may promote the use of Japanese alongside English by both groups of students. Educational practices can be introduced that foster intercultural communication skills, based on Byram's model (1997) – allowing students to use Japanese and English effectively. Byram's model targets communication in native and non-native speakers alike, which is applicable to the students in this study (details in Section 2.2). Finally, with all these factors in mind, I discuss the positioning of EMI programs in the non-English-speaking world, as they are promoted in the context of globalization.

2. Literature review

2.1 English education for Japanese students

During Japan's modernization in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, Western knowledge was incorporated into higher education through the translation of Western works into Japanese, and a unique educational system was established in Japan. Since then, university education has been conducted entirely in Japanese. As a result, Japanese students have excelled in major fields but lack exceptional English-language skills, while a high level of Japanese-language ability is required of international students who wish to enroll in Japanese universities, to understand lectures and communicate smoothly.

Although Japanese university students possess a high level of English proficiency, which they acquire for university admission exams, they are not accustomed to using English as a means of communication. Moreover, the English education they have received is not designed for conducting academic study and research in English. When the medium of study is limited to English, they bear a heavy psychological burden and often do not communicate actively with international students (Iwamoto 2010). Over 90% of the international students who study in Japan are from non-English-speaking countries (Japanese 2017), so their first language is not English. Consequently, their English-language proficiency is not consistent; their English pronunciation and expressions are often influenced by their native language. It is not necessarily the case that all of them can communicate smoothly with Japanese students in English.

The focus of EMI programs in Japan has been on accepting as many excellent international students as possible, rather than Japanese students, since EMI officially started at universities in 1995 as part of the curriculum for one-year inbound programs. From the start,

no educational support was provided to Japanese students to study under EMI (Yamada 2003). To date, this situation remains unchanged (Rose & McKinley 2017). As a result, a number of Japanese students enrolled in EMI classes dropped out without completing their programs (Selzer & Gibson 2009).

Global 30 and SG have pitched studying abroad as an educational means to improve English proficiency for Japanese students. This suggests that MEXT regards globalization of education for Japanese students as being achieved by increasing opportunities to study at overseas universities and not via EMI programs with international students in Japan. Therefore, Japanese students struggle when studying with international students in English, which has had a negative impact on international students enrolled in EMI programs. They are placed in circumstances where they have no chance to learn Japanese culture from their Japanese peers, increasing their frustrations (Burgess *et al.* 2010, Hashimoto 2013).

2.2 Education for intercultural communication

Japanese and international students in EMI programs from diverse lingua-cultural backgrounds. They are required to have attained intercultural communication competence (ICC) as well as sufficient English abilities to ensure mutual understanding and achieve their academic goals.

Byram (1997) presents the ICC model, including language-related (linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse-related) and intercultural competence, claiming that learners (non-native speakers) need to be “acting interculturally” as equal “social actors” to acquire ICC, not aiming to speak like native speakers of the target language. Language-related competence enables communication by creating new rules in the process of interaction between people from different cultures.

Intercultural competence includes attitude, knowledge, and skills. Note that intercultural competence is required not only for non-native speakers but also for native speakers engaged in interaction with non-native speakers.

Byram’s model can be applied to the Japanese and international students in this study. They are expected to build good relationships and achieve their academic goals, overcoming the barriers of language and culture, exploring their own communication styles using Japanese and English.

2.3 Bilingualism in Japanese and English

It goes without saying that facilitating communication among students in EMI programs requires Japanese students to improve their English abilities. However, once programs have begun, there is no time to wait for this to happen. Moreover, it is limiting to describe everyday experiences and share feelings with one another in English: a language that is not used in Japanese society. Most international students in EMI programs come to Japan with no Japanese language ability, but they begin to learn Japanese after reaching Japan; it should be possible for them to chat and express their daily experiences in Japanese. Using a language rooted in the Japanese society that reflects the conditions of everyday life will help bring conversations closer to reality and aid the formation of relationships with fellow group members. The assumption is that the use of the Japanese language to express experiences will help Japanese and international students alike foster a sense of belonging.

The use of Japanese assists Japanese students in group discussions, given their otherwise low level of participation. Analyses of group discussions among Japanese and international students conducted in EMI lectures showed that introducing the elementary-level Japanese that international students had learned since their arrival evoked contributions from the Japanese students, allowing the topic to develop (Tasaki 2017, Yoshino & Nishizumi 2015).

International students' study of Japanese is meaningful when seen in terms of English use. The results of an analysis of questions and answers between Japanese professors and international students, following class presentations, suggest that even when English is the language used, if the international student has acquired discourse competence in Japanese to connect short statements and show recognition of what the other person has said, the content of the questions and answers develops in greater depth (Tasaki 2017).

Neustupn'y (1997) claims that for non-native Japanese speakers to build relationships with native speakers in Japan and work cooperatively with them, they must adopt a Japanese sociocultural aptitude (i.e., understanding of aspects of culture and the ability to act on the basis of that understanding) and possess sociolinguistic ability (i.e., using and understanding language appropriately, in line with one's relationship to another person and the social context of the conversation) – even if the language used is English. Fostering these abilities falls within the scope of Japanese-language education. These sociolinguistic and discourse competences overlap with the competences named by Byram (1997), as described in Section 2.2.

Based on these results and as a way of responding to the issues affecting EMI programs at Japanese universities, this paper proposes teaching elementary-level Japanese to international students upon their arrival in Japan, thus not limiting the means of communication between Japanese and international students to English. In other words, both groups gain knowledge of both Japanese and English. If international students gain proficiency in elementary-level Japanese, it also helps them communicate with clerical staff on campus, allows obtain information more easily, and no feel isolated at the university.

3. Education in EMI programs at graduate schools of science and technology

In the bilingual communication of Japanese and international students, the elementary-level Japanese spoken by international students new to Japan needs to be a common language. Japanese-language education should be provided as part of the curriculum of the university. Education is necessary for both sets of students to acquire ICC using English and Japanese as campus *lingua franca*: i.e., a means of communication among non-native speakers of English and between native and non-native speakers of Japanese.

This section examines graduate schools of science and technology that feature a particularly high number of EMI programs among Japanese universities. It also discusses the educational activities conducted to help Japanese and international students become bilingual.

3.1 Target students

Globally, Japan has a high standard of science and technology, and there are many overseas students who want to pursue their studies in these fields at Japanese graduate schools. In science and technology research in particular, much of the literature is written in English, and students are encouraged to write papers and present their research in English. Consequently, many universities have set up EMI programs and are actively taking in international students. In case of a master's program, these students reside in Japan for at least two years to complete their research.

Japanese graduate schools of science and technology are characterized by their student-centered research activities. When conducting experiments, students do everything from preparation to execution to tidying up afterwards. It is common for senior students to teach their juniors how to perform experiments. Students spend long hours in their labs, with informational and interpersonal relationships from the research group affecting not just their research activities but also their private lives. Adapting to life in the research group has been identified as the most important issue for international students aiming to obtain a degree (Sawyer 2006). To participate in networks and build relationships within the research group, it

is necessary to communicate with group members and share aspects of daily life outside research activities.

However, there are reports that, in EMI programs, communication between Japanese and international students has not progressed smoothly (Fukagawa & Takabatake 2017). While international students may be able to write papers, make research presentations, and engage in discussions with faculty in English, it is not easy for them to have everyday conversations – having no particular set topic with Japanese students who are not used to communicating in English. In graduate schools of science and technology, this communication bottleneck is a serious problem, causing obstacles to research activities that can only progress through cooperation.

To resolve such issues, basic knowledge of Japanese is surely useful for communication, but it is not realistic to conduct all communication by elementary-level Japanese. English is required for complex and specialized topics. Therefore, it is suggested that students become bilingual in English and elementary-level Japanese. To facilitate this, beginning-level education for fostering bilingual ability – consisting of Japanese-language education for international students and intercultural communication education for both Japanese and international students (in English and Japanese) has been conducted. In the following sections, I discuss the implementation, and highlight the role, of Japanese-language and efficient bilingual communication based on analysis of students' remarks on feedback sheets and transcribed audio and video recordings of students' communications and teachers' observations.

3.2 Japanese-language education

At the time this study was conducted, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology offered a Japanese-language course for international students as a graduate-school course. Students took elementary-Japanese classes of 90 minutes each: six classes per week in the fall semester and three in the spring. Although the course was not compulsory, all new international students enrolled.

3.2.1 Class overview

The main objective of the course was for international students to acquire Japanese proficiency to share their daily experiences with Japanese students while building relationships as research colleagues. Because Japanese-language study and research activities took place concurrently, this objective had to be realized quickly. In addition to grammar and vocabulary, the course focused on improving students' ability to develop a topic of conversation, with conversation practice taking the following points into account.

Fostering conversational skills in Japanese

From the earliest stages of the elementary level, the Japanese conversational style – in which participants collaboratively link small utterances (Szatrowski 2004) – was taught through sample conversations. Students were encouraged to develop the given topic bearing this in mind. In particular, the role of the listener was emphasized, with variations of Japanese backchannels taught in terms of both linguistic and non-linguistic behavior, to enable students to use them in actual conversation. Using previously learned vocabulary and grammar – the substitution of unlearned vocabulary with English was permitted – students practiced expressing their thoughts, processing statements made by their partner, and developing a topic relevant to daily life occurrences such as shopping, lunch, weather, etc. – while occasionally adding questions to elicit responses from the other person. This style is not too difficult for international students with limited grammar abilities and so can easily be incorporated into practice.

Use of English

In light of the circumstances of international students conducting their research activities with English as the main language, the use of English should be natural during the elementary-Japanese class, which helps students with their daily communication.

The effects of first-language use in second-language classes have been acknowledged in various aspects, such as constructing good relationships between teacher and learners, fostering solidarity of learners (Nikula 2007, Widdowson 2003), and promoting study of grammar, vocabulary, and culture (Moore 2013, Sampson 2012). The necessity of using the first language of learners to discuss what to do in multilingual and multicultural societies has recently been acknowledged (Hall & Cook 2012).

English, a common language for learners of Japanese in Japan, promotes vocabulary learning and interaction. Its use ensures that learners acquire needed information in class (Turnbull 2018). It also provides students with opportunities to achieve proficiency in Japanese and accomplish their communication goals. The training described here can be of help for Japanese and international students alike in conducting research activities in both languages. The elementary-Japanese class activities placed emphasis on deepening the content of discussions, with the use of English words and simple sentences to supplement unknown vocabulary items or grammar points, which were permitted in Japanese classes. This allowed students to express thoughts without being restricted by their level of Japanese vocabulary. Analysis of their communication shows that this level of English use is effective in eliciting the negotiation of meaning, the better cooperatively to discover Japanese meanings and develop topics of conversation, thereby improving Japanese language proficiency.

Activities with Japanese students

In the Japanese class, a visitor session was set up in which Japanese students from the same departments as the international students were invited to participate. On this occasion, activities were designed in which students could share their daily experiences in Japanese, with the goal that the activities would lead to building of relationships between international students and their Japanese counterparts. A sample activity is shown below.

Group discussion: Positive aspects of the university and scope for improvement

Taking the university as a topic allowed both sets of students to exchange opinions on an equal basis. The activity proceeded as follows:

- 1) International students checked vocabulary and grammar relevant to the topic.
- 2) In groups of three, international students discussed this topic among themselves, learning how to express what they wanted to say in Japanese and change their response depending on the content of the other person's statements.
- 3) The Japanese students were asked beforehand to speak slowly and clearly, in simple sentences.
- 4) Group discussions were held comprising two international and two Japanese students, to elicit a greater diversity of opinion than a one-to-one discussion would allow and enable the Japanese and international students to assist one another's speech, to achieve mutual understanding.

3.2.2. Results of Japanese-language education

The Japanese-language course was evaluated on the basis of analysis of learners' feedback sheets (see appendix) and transcriptions of audio and video recordings of the group discussions in class. The overall evaluation for the course was considered high if the score

was more than four on the five-point scale in every activity. The main achievements and challenges of the course are described below.

Sharing of everyday experiences

In the group discussions with the Japanese students, students expressed both positive points and points to improve in relation to campus facilities (classrooms, cafeterias, gymnasiums, etc.) as well as classes and faculty. Suggestions were substantiated with explanations.

Remarks on the feedback sheets showed how Japanese and international students alike realized that they were able to communicate in Japanese as peers: “I realized international students had the same kind of impression on the circumstances of the university as me” (Japanese student), “We talked a lot in Japanese with the help of English” (Japanese student), “It was the first time we spoke about the university with Japanese students; it was fun” (Malaysian student). Through these discussions, students were able to see what meanings others attached to their experiences at the university. By sharing these experiences in Japanese, students were able to develop a sense of being among likeminded students. The use of the Japanese language and the educational setting encouraging both sets of students to use Japanese with the help of English. In the process, the international students were able to express themselves, learn the Japanese names of the facilities and learn standard Japanese expressions related to evaluation.

However, a number of challenges remained. Although the international students had practiced expressing what they wanted to say in Japanese beforehand, and this produced results, it was still very difficult for them to understand the Japanese students. That served as an obstacle to further development of the topic. Although the Japanese students used simple sentences as requested, they also used characteristic Japanese sentence inversions, fillers, and pauses that native speakers use among themselves, which confused the international students. This suggests the necessity of providing Japanese-language education to Japanese students, to enable them to use elementary-level Japanese as a means of communication with international students.

Promoting communication in English with Japanese people

One effect commonly found on the class feedback sheets was that tasks such as everyday shopping became easier for international students as a result of being able to speak basic Japanese. There were also comments that the number of conversations with Japanese students increased. Some students said that, by learning Japanese pronunciation, sentence structure, and responses, they came to find the English spoken by Japanese people easier to understand: e.g., they understood why the Japanese pronunciation of “hamburger” was difficult to understand (omission of sounds not present in Japanese, accent difference), why people often used the word order of declarative sentences while asking questions (word order does not change between declarative and interrogative sentences in Japanese), and why people often said “yeah, yeah” in the middle of conversations (frequent use of backchannels in Japanese).

Some students added that, by learning how to take part in Japanese conversations, they developed the ability to make their own utterances short and provide communication backchannels, even during communication in English. This shows consideration on the part of the international students, who made an effort to help Japanese students speak in English. This represents a great supportive contribution on their part in letting communication proceed smoothly for Japanese students not used to communicating in English.

Network formation among international students

In the Japanese course, networks formed among the international students who studied together. The feedback sheets showed many comments such as “In Japanese class, I made friends with international students from various countries and other majors” and “I obtained

information about daily life during Japanese class”. Situations where students voluntarily used Japanese in their small talk before and after class became common.

Although collectively referred to as “international students”, these students are foreigners from different cultural backgrounds, speaking diverse languages. By coming together regularly in Japanese class as fellow learners of Japanese practicing conversation together, they built relationships as peers – sharing their experiences and information about living in Japan as a foreign country. It seems that conversations in Japanese about life in Japan enhanced awareness and served to foster a sense of identity. Examined from the perspective of building networks, the act of learning Japanese together at university can create deeply meaningful connection for international students. The results show the value of international students studying Japanese together at graduate school even when Japanese is not required of them.

3.3 Intercultural communication education

Byram (2008) states that intercultural competence should be cultivated by interacting with people of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Acknowledging the importance of interaction, a number of courses for intercultural communication have been conducted at universities in Japan, including group projects that encourage Japanese and international students to work toward goals cooperatively (Suematsu & Arongna 2008, Yoshino & Nishizumi 2015).

Through this kind of meaningful communication, students are expected to recognize aspects of culture and create their own communication styles to accomplish the objectives. For the training to be effective, the students’ tasks should fulfill their needs or interests and must be equally engaged in by their fellow students. In particular, training for Japanese students lacking experience in group discussions should be provided. The following describes a lecture that takes these considerations into account.

3.3.1 Course overview

For Japanese and international students to acquire sociocultural and sociolinguistic abilities as well as intercultural competence, and for them to build mutual relationships on equal footing as fellow students of the university, a course titled Intercultural Communication is conducted at Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology for first-year Japanese and international students (see appendix), alongside the elementary-Japanese course. The course includes the study of culture and English communication and makes use of group projects. Because all the international students taking the course are also enrolled in the elementary-Japanese course every year, the use of elementary-level Japanese is encouraged. In the second half of the course, a group project is introduced to promote mutual understanding and communication between Japanese and international students.

The teacher for the course (the author) was in charge of the elementary-Japanese course as well and thus aware of the elements of Japanese that the international students had already studied. That made it easier to take the initiative in using Japanese in this course, too.

The course is composed of three elements: lecture, discussion, and group projects.

Lecture and discussion

In the first half of the course, students learn about definitions of culture and ways to promote intercultural communication, based on the literature. When introducing new information and theories, the teacher conducts group discussions incorporating students’ immediate circumstances, allowing them to understand abstract concepts through concrete examples.

To cultivate sociocultural and sociolinguistic proficiency in Japanese, the course examines the norms of behavior necessary for daily life, including Japanese expressions required in the context of supermarkets, stations, restaurants, etc. It discusses the underlying

Japanese values and aspects of lifestyle. The international students exchange opinions with Japanese students about the Japanese norms for expression (contextual use) of apology and gratitude, along with ways of addressing, greetings, and praising people, and backchannels learned about in the elementary-Japanese course. They discuss the difficulties faced in using these norms and how the norms are different from their own cultures. These activities raise both Japanese and international students' awareness of the sociolinguistic and sociocultural aspects of the Japanese language.

Group projects

In the second half of the course, students conduct projects in mixed international and Japanese groups of four to five members. The task is to “demonstrate ‘invisible culture’ through ‘visible culture’” (Lazar et al. 2007), each group taking one aspect about life in Japan that international students think interesting or unusual, then showing how it is understood by Japanese people and what function it serves. Each group then demonstrates the Japanese values, ways of thinking, and communication styles that underlie the issues, while making comparisons with the cultures of the international students' countries. The objective is to help Japanese and international students use phenomena close to them as an opening for discussing Japanese culture from their respective viewpoints, as well as to grasp Japanese values and share experience of how these values manifest in daily life.

3.3.2 Results of intercultural communication education

Discussions on culture and communication

The introduction of information about and theories on culture and communication and the subsequent group discussions included lively exchanges of opinions analyzing students' experiences in Japan. Introduced to the concepts of high- vs. low-context cultures (Hall 1976), students worked in groups to find expressions in their shared languages of Japanese and English that reflected high- vs. low-context cultures, discussing how the expressions worked in each context. Students proceeded to imagine the kinds of communication issues that might arise between people from different cultural backgrounds, learning through concrete examples about the difficulties of intercultural communication and ways of dealing with them.

In analyzing Japanese communication, the international students posed many questions to the Japanese students and brought up points of difference from their own languages. Figure 1 presents an example of such discussions on differences in greetings. The Japanese and international students offered a variety of opinions and shared their feelings through discussion, along the way discovering their own personal approaches.

Unlike the elementary-Japanese course, English is the main language used in this course. The international students have no problems with language and are able to discuss content in depth. The course is conducted concurrently with the elementary-Japanese course to give international students opportunities to analyze Japanese language and behavior in concrete situations alongside Japanese students, so that their sociolinguistic skills might be improved by listening to the ideas of native speakers. This corresponds with Byram's (1997) suggestions for improving intercultural competence.

The international students' questions about Japanese language and customs represented an opportunity for Japanese students to consider anew the sociolinguistic and sociocultural characteristics of the Japanese language themselves. This enabled them to cultivate the ability to analyze their own language and culture: an important intercultural communication skill that is required of native speakers (Byram 1997).

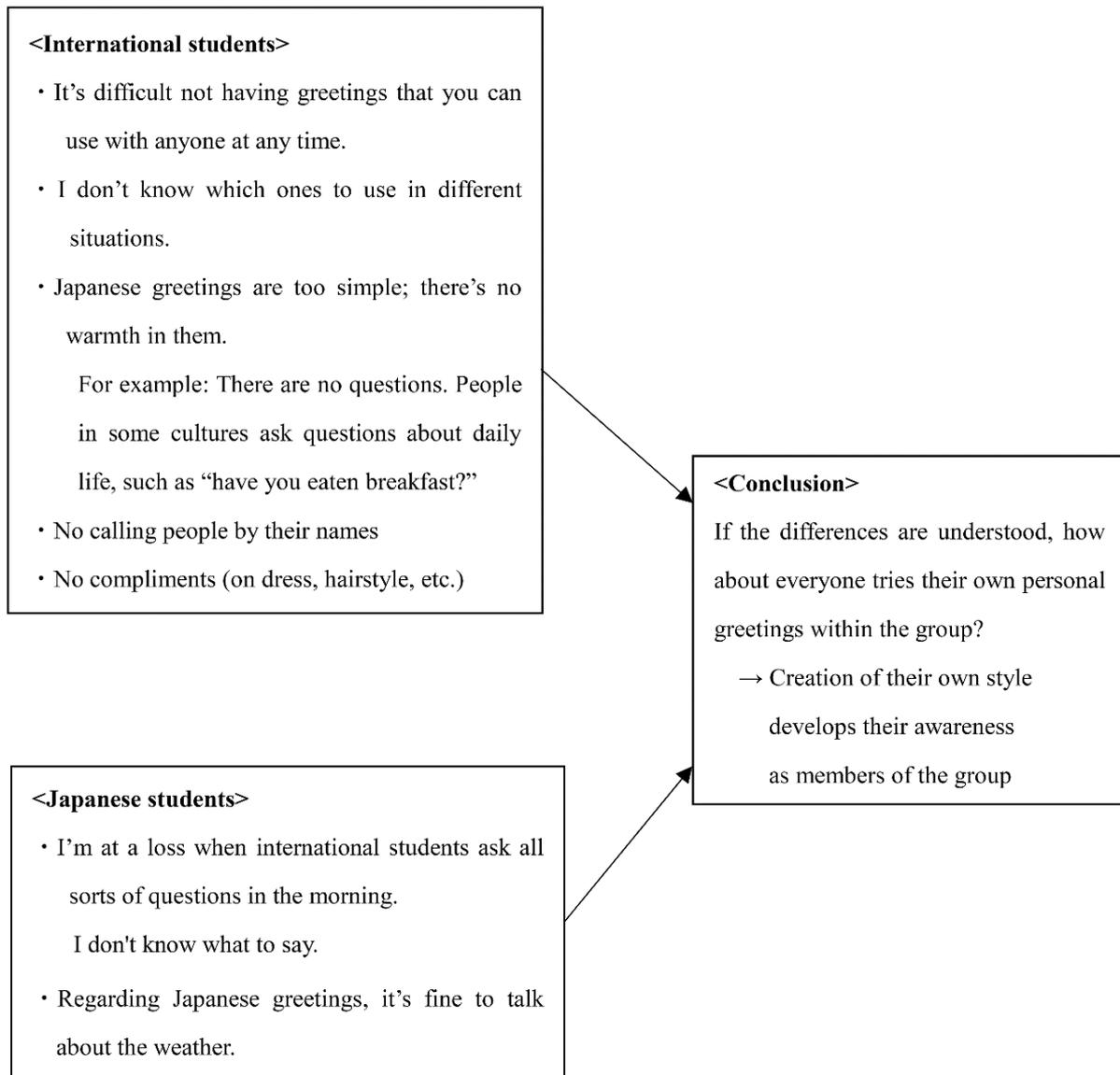


Figure 1: Discussion on greetings.

Group projects

The topics chosen for group projects were things/places that students used/visited on a daily basis, such as bicycles, convenience stores, and vending machines. This paper presents as an example the results of one group's analysis of day planners, which Japanese people of all ages carry. The project focused on surveys the students conducted to understand the inclinations of Japanese people and international students. No attempt was made to process the survey results statistically to find generalizations.

Group project: Day planners

- **Members:** two Japanese students and three international students (one each from Ghana, Vietnam, and Indonesia).
- **Question:** why do Japanese people carry day planners? Do international students carry them, too?
- **Survey method:** questionnaires and interviews with Japanese teachers and students and with international students (twenty each).
- **Results:** all Japanese people surveyed carry day planners, as do about 80% of the international students (70% of whom purchased one after arriving in Japan).

On the basis of the results, the group made the following observations about the reasons behind the differences between Japanese and international students regarding day planners.

- **Ways of setting up appointments**

Japanese people make appointments several months or even up to a year in advance, so a day planner is a necessity. As a result, they can adjust their schedules easily, and more people can participate in events. In contrast, in some of the international students' home countries, people make appointments only two to three days in advance.

- **Lateness**

Whereas Japanese people regard lateness as behavior that disrupts group activities and causes annoyance, in some of the international students' cultures, it is not considered a serious issue to be ten-to-twenty minutes late.

A class discussion followed students' presentation of the survey results. Most of the international students said they felt pressured by Japanese people to arrange appointments months in advance and felt judged harshly for lateness. During discussion, a Japanese learner pointed out that the Japanese phrase for "I'm sorry for being late" is learned at an early age. Discussion ensued on whether the phrase's frequency and importance were related to the Japanese attitude to lateness. Nonetheless, the international students acknowledged the benefits of being able to conduct group activities smoothly owing to everyone arriving on time.

Many of the Japanese students expressed opinions to the effect that Japanese people's ideas of consideration for others and "not causing trouble for other people" had a major influence on the way they made appointments and their own attitudes toward lateness. Nevertheless, some reported that they, too, felt pressured from having always to make appointments in advance as well as being judged harshly for being late, many saying that teachers had admonished them for lateness. In this way, they shared their experiences of Japanese life with the international students. This is precisely the process of acquiring attitudes and knowledge of Japanese culture by sharing between native and non-native Japanese speakers (Byram 1997).

Japanese language learning

During group project discussions, video recordings and teacher observations showed that various words and expressions from daily life such as "station," "go shopping on foot", and "inexpensive" were expressed in Japanese. The international students asked the Japanese students for appropriate phrases for each situation, encouraging communication between the two groups. Statements such as "did you complete the PowerPoint?", "not yet", "what time is

the meeting tomorrow?”, “it’s a bit difficult”, “that’s good”, “awesome”, and “that’s convenient” were also observed in Japanese, as students used their Japanese to work collaboratively and share feelings. Short utterances placed less burden on the language-learning international students. The use of Japanese, which is highly context dependent, is appropriate for this kind of collaborative work. The international students’ use of Japanese effectively reduced the Japanese students’ psychological burden of feeling compelled to use English, making it easier for them to contribute.

4. Issues in bilingual training

As noted in Section 3, Japanese-language and intercultural-communication education were carried out concurrently. As shown in Figure 2, the aim was to develop the Japanese language skills necessary for building relationships between Japanese and international students along with fostering their sociocultural, sociolinguistic, and intercultural communication. A certain level of success was achieved.

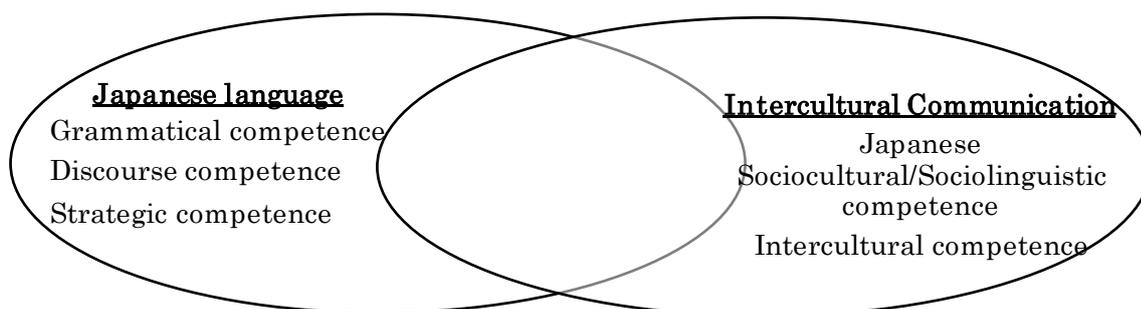


Figure 2: Capacities cultivated in the two courses.

Canagarajah (2007: 923-939) states that English as the *lingua franca* used by non-native speakers of different languages should be context dependent: created cooperatively within the local context in the process of interaction to achieve certain objectives. Speakers often bring language resources other than English and establish their own communication styles. These points can be applied to the Japanese and international students in this paper: most of them use English as non-native speakers, incorporating Japanese into their English depending on the context.

It is true that a negative reaction has arisen regarding the use of Japanese in EMI at universities in Japan because it shows up the lack of English-language abilities among Japanese students. Both Japanese and international students have avoided using Japanese even though it can be a useful language resource. It appears that English-language education at Japanese universities aims to cultivate monolingual English speakers, without consideration for their multilingual and varied cultural circumstances (Murata *et al.* 2019). Bucking this trend, this paper reports on a unique style of English as *lingua franca* suitable for EMI in Japan, cultivating bilinguals who speak English and elementary-level Japanese.

The most crucial issue remains the development of Japanese students’ ability to adjust their Japanese to communicate better with international students. During group discussions in the elementary-Japanese course, situations were observed in which the international students were unable to understand the Japanese students. It is necessary for Japanese students to understand the vocabulary and sentence structures that international students learn at the elementary level, to be aware of the kind of Japanese that is easy for international students to understand; they must adjust their communication style to make it easier for conversation to develop. Their ability to adjust plays an important role in the context of globalization for the

following reasons. First, it improves communication with international students who come to Japan having only limited Japanese ability, the number of whom will probably increase in the future. Encouraging communication support and enhances research activities.

Second, if Japanese students understand the relevant characteristics of the Japanese language in terms of syntax, phonology, and pragmatics, it will enable them to perform comparative analysis with English. Japanese native speakers will then be able to understand the points that require attention when using English, leading to improved English proficiency.

Third, improved adaptability on the part of Japanese speakers should be useful in spreading Japanese language and culture overseas. Japanese students who have opportunities to work overseas can teach Japanese to foreigners.

I believe that Japanese language education for Japanese students can only support and enhance research in graduate schools of science and technology, as well as fostering a global mindset. As such, it should be considered an essential part of graduate-school education.

5. Conclusion

In an era in which the use of English as the dominant international language is continuing to expand, EMI programs are essential to the globalization of education and research. In EMI programs, all students receive an education in English regardless of their linguistic or cultural background. However, using only English at a non-English-speaking university – based on the standards of the English-speaking world – cultivates students holding a standardized Anglophone perspective. Even when studying at a Japanese university in an EMI program, international students need to understand Japan's values and ways of thinking and appreciate Japanese culture and the diversity of global society. Learning a language is a way to understand various cultural aspects, since language is reflected by the culture and lifestyle where it is spoken. It is often said that Japan is a monolingual country and that foreigners without proficiency in the Japanese language feel isolated. Instead of relying on English alone, international students and other foreigners can learn Japanese, the better to work with the Japanese people and foster an identity as a resident of Japan.

Appreciating diversity is an essential aspect of studying abroad. For international students at Japanese universities, this means learning Japanese and acquiring sociocultural and sociolinguistic abilities alongside Japanese students. A high level of Japanese, enabling specialist discussion, is not demanded. The purpose of learning Japanese is to understand the values of Japanese people, the Japanese communication style, and the structure of Japanese society; share experiences in Japanese while building relationships with Japanese people and other international students; and broaden perspectives on language and culture. Even an elementary knowledge of Japanese functions sufficiently when used alongside English in collaborative communication with others – as this paper has described.

To attract students from other countries and accelerate globalization of the university, the university must not neglect appropriate education to help students from the host country adapt. In the non-English-speaking world, English education is essential; but it is also necessary to provide training communicating in one's native language with people who are presently learners of it – of which the Japanese-language education for Japanese students described in this paper is an example.

Each country and university faces different challenges in implementing EMI programs in non-English-speaking countries, depending on circumstances. To advance EMI programs and foster distinctive student experiences, it is necessary to identify challenges and design measures to tackle them. In future research, I will survey EMI programs at Japanese universities for faculties and graduate schools outside the science and technology domains. I will investigate the challenges they face and, in that way, contribute to the development of EMI programs in Japan and beyond that facilitate globalization with respect for diversity.

About the author



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Appendix

Japanese-language course (elementary)

1. **Number of students:** 15.
2. **Country:** Brazil (2), Vietnam (3), Ghana (2), Indonesia (2), Cambodia (2), Uzbekistan (2), Malaysia (2).
3. Classes take place for 90 minutes on Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In alternating weeks, the classes are organized around grammar and conversation (Week One) and activities (Week Two). The activities include interviewing about breakfast, making small talk (about shopping, earthquakes, the weekend, etc.), giving speeches (about the school festival or winter bread), presenting posters (introducing one's own culture), and conversing with Japanese students. Note that these activities are ordered by degree of interaction.
4. All 15 students completed the course evaluation (in English) using a five-point scale from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). The average score is in parentheses.
 - "The course was useful for communication with Japanese students." (4.5)
 - "The course was useful for understanding daily life in Japan." (4.0)
 - "The contents of the course (grammar, conversation practice, and activities) helped improve your Japanese skills." (4.1)
 - "The number of the class was appropriate." (4.0)
5. Students also submitted feedback sheets for each activity. Select comments are quoted in the paper.

Intercultural-communication course

1. **Number of students:** 21.
2. **Country:** Brazil (2), Vietnam (3), Ghana (2), Indonesia (2), Cambodia (2), Uzbekistan (2), Malaysia (2), Japan (6).
3. The course consists of 15 classes, where the first eight classes offer orientation followed by lectures on culture and intercultural communication, while the seven remaining classes are organized around group projects (involving group work followed by presentations and feedback).
4. Nineteen of the 21 students completed the course evaluation (in English) using a five-point scale from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). The average score is in parentheses. Students also offered general comments and suggestions; select comments are quoted in the paper.
 - "The course was useful for understanding other cultures." (4.2)
 - "The course was useful for understand your own culture." (3.9)
 - "Appropriate group projects were used to achieve the goal of this course." (4.1)
 - "The lectures in the first part were useful for the group projects." (4.0)
 - "The course gave me confidence to communicate with people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds." (4.3)
 - "The course was useful for building a relationship between Japanese and international students." (4.0)