

Any Multilingual Learning for CIB in Japanese school? - Reality of Educational Policy and What Happens in Classroom -

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Abstract : This article reviews the history of educational policy in Japan with respect to children with immigration background (CIB), in particular to consider its relevance and effectiveness in terms of opportunities for a multilingual education. This article concludes that CIB are provided opportunities to learn Japanese as a Second language (JSL), they receive little multilingual learning in public schools. As possible policy suggestions for multilingual learning, central government should take actions i) to expand financial support for local governments and others, ii) to establish research to develop a new curriculum for multilingual learning, and iii) to promote establishment of consortiums among organizational stakeholders.

1. Introduction: what happened in Japan before and after 1990

Multilingual learning is both old and new in Japanese school education. The number of people with immigration background in the country has increased almost 200% since the enactment of a law in 1990 known as the Revised Immigration Control Law (RICL). Accordingly, the number of foreign children enrolling in public schools of elementary, junior and senior high school levels reached nearly 72,000 in 2012, and it is estimated that around 40% of them are having hard time with Japanese language (MEXT, 2013a). Considering these circumstances, in 2007, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), established an ad-hoc advisory committee on education for foreign pupils enrolling in public schools to discuss helpful remedies for both the pupils and schools. However, since these foreign pupils are named “learners of Japanese as a second language

(JSL)” by MEXT, they are regarded as needing remedial education for learning the Japanese language. Historically in Japan, multilingual learning has been considered only for international schools. Nowadays, public schools do not seem ready for treating foreign pupils appropriately in multilingual and multicultural context. On the other hand, international schools for children with immigration background (CIB)¹ have been increasing in numbers and developing multilingual and multicultural curriculum. Lehman Shock in 2008 affected financial foundation of immigrant workers directly and foreign schools still face a crisis of survival.

Japan shows the smallest ratio of foreigners to the larger population among all advanced industrial democracies. However, looking back our immigration history, Japan has long incorporated people from other countries (Chung, 2010). Koreans are recognized as the first immigrants to Japan. They were said to start immigrating to Japan in the early Meiji Period² around

¹ Children with immigration background (CIB) in this article means not only those of nationalities other than Japanese, but also children of Japanese heritage who are born overseas and have difficulties understanding Japanese language or accepting Japanese culture and customs.

² Meiji Period (1868-1912) began as the first period of modernized (westernized) political system after Edo Period, the last feudal system. Meiji Period was when practical abilities and political system were restored from the Shogun (Samurai hereditary military dictator) to the Emperor of Japan. Since then, Japanese period changes due to emperor's death.

1880, and then Japan experienced a huge increase in their voluntary and involuntary immigration after Japan's Annexation of Korea in 1910. By the end of World War II (WWII) in 1945, Korean colony had reached its largest population of about 1.9 million. After WWII, many of them were repatriated, but, around 0.6 million Korean people remained in Japan. Since then, more people start coming into Japan from other overseas countries.

Due to pressure from businesses to alleviate Japan's labor shortages (in particular, unskilled labor), an aging population and low fertility rates, the government and the Diet (Japanese parliament) decided to revise Immigration Law and wrote the RICL. Since the enactment of RICL, three new types of immigrants came to Japan other than the immigrants from Korea and their descendants. The first group consists of two sub groups: those who are given three-year trainee visas to work and learn skills from Japanese professionals, the other international

students with a student visa, that permits them to work temporarily (part-time job). The three-year trainees start their work by receiving on-the-job training and "trainee allowance" in place of salary. Most of these immigrants are from China and Vietnam.

The second group consists of *Nikkei* people (ethnic Japanese), who are descendent of Japanese immigrants to Latin American countries, living mainly in Brazil and Peru. The *Nikkei*, through the third generation, are permitted to reside and work in Japan with the appropriate credentials. The permit is valid for up to three years, but is renewable for an indefinite number of times. What distinguishes Japanese and *Nikkei* people is whether or not they possess Japanese citizenship. Most of them work for small and medium-sized firms in construction and manufacturing companies (Chung, 2010). The last group consists of spouses, children or relatives of Japanese who have obtained a residence status. Most of them are of Chinese or Filipino background.

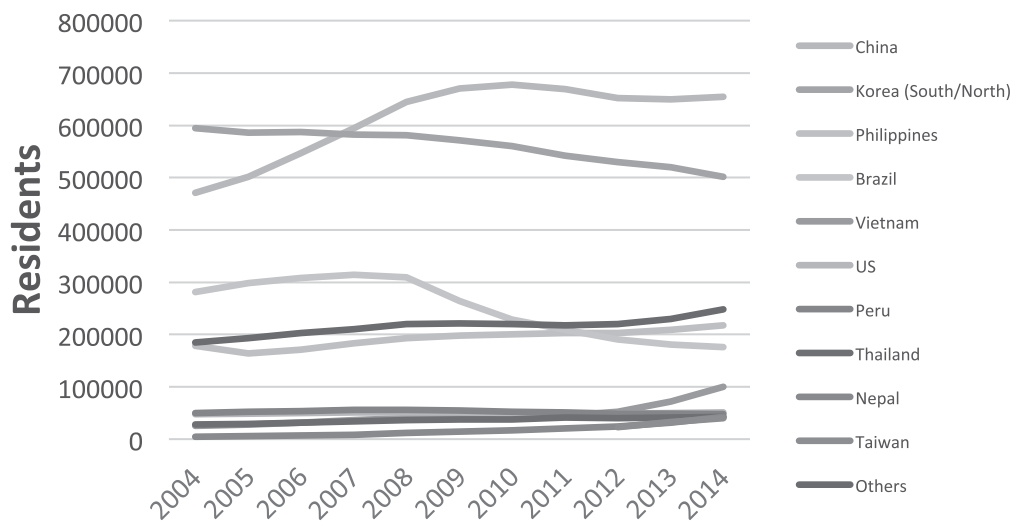


Figure 1. Country-based distribution of foreign residents in Japan

According to country-based distribution of foreign residents in Japan (Ministry of Justice, 2015), the number of Chinese, Brazilian and Peruvian immigrants increased drastically after the RICL was enacted in 1990. However, due to the Lehman Shock in 2008, Brazilian residents who constitute the third largest immigrant group (Figure 1) went back to their homeland year by year. On the other hand, immigrants from Southeast Asia show gradual but steady increase in their presence. From 1995 till 2005, Japanese government issued 20,000 to 80,000

entertainer visas annually to Philippian people, most of them are female. Since this visa is valid only for a short-term, they come and back repeatedly. After the Japanese government made visa issuing conditions stricter in 2005, some Filipina immigrants already in Japan tried to obtain permanent resident status and others came to Japan by getting married to Japanese men. As a result, the number of Filipina immigrants is reaching between 2000 and 5000 annually (Kalakasan & Kawasaki City, 2013). On the other hand, Vietnamese immigrants started to live as special residents in

Japan once refugee status was approved in 1979 (Takijiri & Uemoto, 2015). Since 1990, they have been coming to Japan as trainees and students similar to Chinese immigrants. These students are expected to work in Japanese company, not only in Japan but also in Vietnam (Suganaga & Nakai, 2015).

Immigrants or residents who came from countries such as Brazil and Peru in Latin America and the Philippines and Vietnam in Southeast Asia, are highlighted in this article. People from these countries, so-called “newcomers”, face more difficulties in being accepted and acquiring the Japanese language as well as maintaining their mother tongues than Korean and Chinese people, the so-called “oldcomers”, do³. Most of East Asian people, through the long-term acceptance of Japanese culture and language, may have overcome in some of the difficulties while preserving their own community and unity⁴.

2. Trajectory of multiculturalism and multilingualism in Japan

The question of whether there is multiculturalism or multilingualism in Japan varies based on the particular circumstances of the group. Right after the WWII, there was a discussion to rethink and recover Japanese identity and while abandoning Japanese fascism (nationalism). As a part of this, the Japanese Emperor, who was treated as “living god”, was officially declared just as “the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people” in the new and current Constitution (Article 1). Nevertheless, ideological issues were divided along two positions—rightist or leftist—, which seemed to be the only way of considering about how the Japanese should be and desire to behave as a nation. From the beginning of Meiji Period until the end of the WWII, children were

educated on a basis of mixed moral and ideological education between Confucianism and Emperor-centered philosophy, where Shintoism⁵ was closely linked, under the Imperial Rescript on Education (Kyōiku ni Kansuru Chokugo)⁶. The aim was to consolidate rapid modernization (westernization) and national unity under the Emperor. At that time, the citizens were considered as children of the Emperor, and—in case of emergency—would be expected to “offer yourselves (themselves) courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth” (cited from the Imperial Rescript on Education). Therefore, we today can easily imagine that loss of “the Emperor” after the WWII as the citizens’ “living god” strongly affected the Japanese people’s thoughts and ways of being.

However, this change did not necessarily give Japanese people an open mind to respect other countries or cultures (including languages). Rather, it might have actually caused them to stop deliberating about their identity and relationship with others, and make them focus their efforts on growing or developing materially and economically, keeping themselves isolated from the exterior world. Confucianism and Shintoism—which were the bases of the prewar and wartime education—in general, respect the relationship among the elements of the world, such as nature and human beings, human beings and other living beings, and among human beings themselves. Thus, their pure application was not supposed to mean isolation or predominance of Japan and Japanese people over other countries or people. However, the long-term political application of the Emperor-centered philosophy possibly spoiled relativism and humanism from these two religious

³ Certain numbers of newcomers were categorized as illegal immigrants by the Japanese government. At the end of 1990s, the number of illegal immigrants was increasing while the employment of unskilled workers was reduced due to the collapse of the bubble economy (Graburn & Ertl, 2008). To narrow this gap between demand and supply in labor market and, the Second Basic Plan for Immigration Control took effect in 2000.

⁴ This could be because of 1) systematic and long-run attempt during the colonial era to eliminate Korean language and culture and 2) prevalent obsession that started from the colonial era with racial homogeneity, uniqueness and racial purity and so on (Maher, 1995). Characteristics of oldcomers’ issues may be different from that of the newcomers’ issues.

⁵ Shintoism is a group of Japanese religious schools to establish a connection between present-day Japan and its ancient past, as well as between gods and human beings. In Japanese language, “Kami” literally means not only gods, which are plural, but also spirits, divinity, scared essences, inclusively, energy generating the phenomena. In addition, “Kami” can take its forms in various natural objects such as rocks, rivers, trees, animals, etc. Not only that, People also can possess the nature of “Kami”. In other words, “Kami” and people are not separate, but are interconnected (Murakami, 2006; Shimazono, 2010).

⁶ This regulation was stipulated in 1890 as the guiding principle of public education and was daily read and memorized by pupils. It was abolished in 1948 after the WWII.

philosophies, and emphasized the dichotomy and differences between elements, like interior and exterior of our world, i.e., “our people (country of the Emperor)” and “others” (Murakami, 2006; Shimazono, 2010). Nakane (1978) defined this dichotomy as “*uchi-soto*” (inside outside) distinction. This way of thinking might have allowed them to misunderstand that Japanese people were part of the larger world and to ignore or underestimate people of different origin (race/country), somehow, giving unfortunately “convenient” excuses to militarized government to get involved in the tragic war.

Even though the country has been open to world economy and grown considerably since WWII, it is not easy to determine whether people’s way of thinking is relativist/multilateral or conservative/unilateral. According to Befu (1993; 2001), the “myth” of Japanese homogeneity has not been broken, but rather still exists in the Japanese people’s mind and way of thinking today. During the miraculous economic growth in Japan between 1945 and 1990 (right before the collapse of the so-called “economic bubble” in 1991), a new postwar nationalism developed that built up notions of Japanese uniqueness and superiority (Yoshino, 1992; Befu, 2001; Graburn & Ertl, 2008). However, contrary to this myth, a variety of minority populations live in today’s Japan. Graburn & Ertl (2008) categorized them into three groups: 1) Japan’s indigenous people, the Ainu, Okinawan and Burakumin; 2) the oldcomers—Korean and Chinese people and their descendent; and, 3) the newcomers—recent immigrant workers from Latin America and Southeast Asia. In other words, the first group corresponds to autochthonous minorities, while the others (second and third groups) are allochthonous minorities (Heinrich, 2012). Faced with the increasing numbers of newcomers in Japan since 1990, the academic discourse with respect to multiculturalism began to change from the mainstream “myth” of Japanese homogeneity to seek the possibility of the nation’s diversity (Morris-Suzuki, 1998; Komai, 1999; Douglass & Roberts, 2000; Komai, 2001).

In addition to ethnicity or race, linguistic modernization was used to pursue uniformity, clarity and monotony, since one’s identity as being Japanese was widely considered to be grounded in (or dependent upon) one’s proficiency in Japanese language (Heinrich & Galan, 2011). However, due to the increase in number of immigrants, in particular *Nikkei* and Southeast Asian people who could not speak Japanese fluently, the disparity or diversity in language proficiency became visible. Since then, contrary to the “myth” of monolingual society, multilingualism was somehow detected and supported by a significant number of scholars (Maher & Yashiro, 1995; Goebel, 2001; Kanno, 2008; Heinrich & Galan, 2011). UNESCO (2010) confirmed that eight indigenous languages/dialects⁷ in northern region and southern islands of Japan were at risk of extinction. These were Ainu (Hokkaido), Amami, Hachijō, Kunigami, Miyako, Okinawan, Yaeyama and Yonaguni. In addition to the indigenous languages/dialects, more than 100 different languages were confirmed as being used in Japan, both by newcomers and oldcomers living in Japan (Heinrich & Galan, 2011).

Confronting the noticeable change from the myth of a monolingual society to a multilingual one, in particular after the RICL was enacted, the Japanese government had no specific policies at the beginning. In particular, there was no educational policy to address linguistic issues because of a lack of prior experience or recognition of multilingualism as Heinrich (2012) indicated:

The arrival of these newcomers made it clear that no policy, no concepts and no ideology of how to deal with linguistic diversity within Japan existed. It did not exist because diversity within Japan in the form of autochthonous minorities had been ignored (Heinrich, 2012: 151).

Since the time of facing this issue, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) had no concrete plan to promote teaching languages other than Japanese (Kanno, 2008). Even though MEXT and policymakers’ educational policy

⁷ One issue of these dialects implies dissolution of diglossia (Heinrich, 2012). Diglossia is a situation in which two types of dialects (languages) are differently utilized in a single language community. One of them is taught in formal education and commonly utilized by all members of the community, while another one is shared only in a smaller community.

⁸ The EIU was an unique definition of education in Japan related to internationalization or globalization. Other than the EIU, there emerged many definitions: international education, global education, intercultural education, education for cross-cultural understanding, etc. These definitions have common meanings, while they are slightly different. In this article, the author describes and analyzes mainly the EIU, which has been the core concept along with others.

have been promoting “internationalization” of children by means of enhancing the so-called Education for International Understanding (EIU)⁸ in public school, they only sought to foster proficiency in English for Japanese children and Japanese language for Children of Immigrant Background (the learners of JSL). The EIU was said to be born in the 70’s in the form of the “Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms” (November 19, 1974). It was understood by MEXT as the harmonious combination of the following three components (MEXT, 1996):

- 1) To make children have a wide perspective, foster quality and ability of understanding, respect different cultures and live together with others of different culture.
- 2) To assure children’s self-establishment as Japanese and as an individual for international understanding.
- 3) To foster basis of foreign language proficiency and ability of communication (expression) in order to enhance basic ability of respecting other’s point of view and expressing his or her own opinions and intentions in international society.

Even though these components are prescribed to be equitable, in the actual implementation, MEXT and many policymakers seem to concur in that it is sufficient and indispensable to foster proficiency of English language (Japanese-and-English-led quasi-monolingualism) at public school level as well as to enable children to understand Anglophone culture (quasi-monoculturalism) (Heinrich & Galan, 2011; Yoshimura, 2010). The EIU was promoted by MEXT through extra-subject activities, such as Foreign Language Activities (FLA)⁹ and Integrated Studies (IS)¹⁰. In the Course of Study (CS), which is the standard for curricula throughout Japanese school system, it is stipulated that in principle English should

be selected for FLA (MEXT, 2008). This does not necessarily mean that FLA must be carried out only in English, if desired, schools or teachers can “add” other languages as extra for FLA. However, due to severe time constraints, very few schools try to teach or deal with languages other than English in the FLA. In addition to limited language selection, the content of Foreign Language Activities tends to be focused on how to pronounce or use English phrases and words, rather than how to communicate in different contexts and how to actually understand and respect different cultures. This is due, in part, to the lack of teacher training, pedagogic materials and human resources and network teachers can count on (Hatae, 2014; Otani, 2014; Hiroe et al., 2015).

Before Foreign Language Activities were established as an extra-subject activity in the Course of Study¹¹, Integrated Studies was the only activity available to put into place Education for International Understanding. Even since the establishment of FLA, in the CS of IS, the EIU was described as follows (MEXT, 2008)¹²:

- 1) When carrying out learning on international understanding, activities should lead pupils to experience and research lives and cultures in foreign countries by working toward solving issues and explorative activity.
- 2) In learning activities, it is important for pupils to look at a variety of countries and regions, to experience and get used to foreign lives and cultures by researching its background and seeking for difference with Japanese culture from viewpoints of daily life such as food, clothing, and shelter.
- 3) It is also important for pupils to comprehensively learn by cooperating with foreigners in community or Japanese people who once lived in other countries through various activities. Such activities include cooking and eating foreign country’s food, thinking about difference of

⁹ Foreign Language Activities is an extra-subject activity only at primary level. Annual class hours allocated for this activity is 35 out of 980 total periods. At secondary level, English is taught as a subject, being equivalent to the Foreign Language Activities.

¹⁰ Integrated Studies was established in 1998 in order to enable pupils to think on their own way about life, to make proactive decisions and to solve problems better, through interdisciplinary-synthetic and explorative studies, at last, to nurture in pupils’ “Zest for living”. Annual class hours for this activity is 70 out of 980 periods.

¹¹ Before this establishment, FLA was, in some ways, included in IS. Ultimately, MEXT has decided to upgrade FLA to a formal teaching subject beginning in 2020. This means that FLA is going to be obliged to use authorized (screened) textbooks and conduct not only formative assessments already used, but also summative evaluations (exam-based evaluation) in the same way as other principal subjects, i.e., mathematics (arithmetic), science, Japanese language, social studies, etc.

¹² These reflect the author’s summary of the wording of the CS for IS, which are related to the EIU.

ingredients and its relationship with local climate, researching habit of eating and relationship with history and culture, comparing them with Japanese habit and culture, and discussing and presenting what pupils have experienced.

According to the above descriptions Education for International Understanding should be conducted by exposing students to the experiences of a variety of overseas communities and cultures, as much as possible with assistance and help from foreign people—both adult and children—in Japan. Currently, more than 60% of public schools conduct EIU as a component of Integrated Studies (MEXT, 2013b). However, this does not mean that EIU is done at every grade and in every classroom in the corresponding schools. Moreover, many schools cannot find the needed ‘human resources’ such as the foreign residents who represent different cultural backgrounds who live nearby. The biggest problem might be that children with foreign background (including immigration background) attending schools are overlooked as partners for the EIU. The MEXT and schools probably tend to treat Children of Immigrant Backgrounds solely in terms of their need to learn JSL, students who, according to MEXT (2011) and; Matsugaki & Ishizaka (2015), are not reaching the same level of Japanese proficiency as native Japanese pupils. In addition, as a result of the assimilationist policies applied by MEXT and accommodated by schools and teachers the only supports provided for CIB is to learn the Japanese language and does not

guarantee their access to instruction in their mother tongues (Okazaki, 2007).

Education for Children of Immigrant Backgrounds is officially determined by MEXT as an extra public service. In Japan, the Constitution (Article 26) assures that “all people shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection receive ordinary education as provided for by law”. However, according to the MEXT, “all people” in the Constitution literally means only Japanese citizens, not foreigners. This means the guardians (parents) of CIB have no obligation to send them to school in the territory of Japan (MEXT, 2011; 2013a). However, the International Covenant on Economic, the Social and Cultural Rights (Article 13 (1)) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 28 (1)) ensure every child’s right to education. To comply with this, Japan, as a signatory country of this convention, respects these articles and offers, if and only if children and their family request it, a free public education to them (MEXT, 2011; 2013a). In other words, while the Japanese government offers free public education to CIB, it is not an obligation for the government nor for CIB’s guardians (parents) according to MEXT. However, the Convention strictly stipulates, based on the Rights of the Child (Article 29 (1-c)), that every child’s parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values should be respected in the country he or she lives. The actuality in Japan is, therefore, does not reflect the intention of the convention at all.

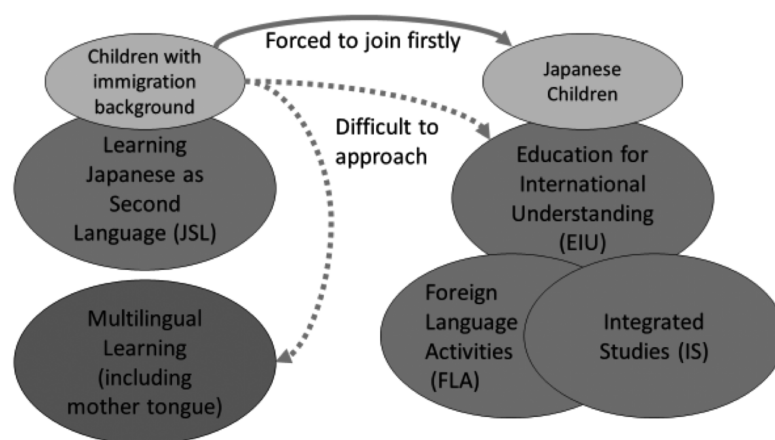


Figure 2. Actuality of learning and education for CIB

Based on the description above of how CIB are treated in Japan, Figure 2 summarizes the actuality

the CIB face when learning at school. First of all, those who have difficulty of manipulating Japanese

language need to attend JSL class intensively while completing lessons of other subjects. In this situation, it is very rare that they can count on appropriate multilingual learning activities in public school. In other words, they can enjoy lessons of other subjects only if they get integrated with Japanese pupils. The precondition for CIB to attend lessons is to assimilate with Japanese pupils, yet their situations and/or

characteristics are easily ignored. As a result, they are often left far behind or isolated in lessons. FLA and IS are not exceptions. They enjoy EIU through FLA and IS as if they were Japanese pupils, even though they can be supportive partners as well as normal learners in lessons. Of course, this is achievable only if the originally intended curricula of FLA and IS are appropriately implemented.

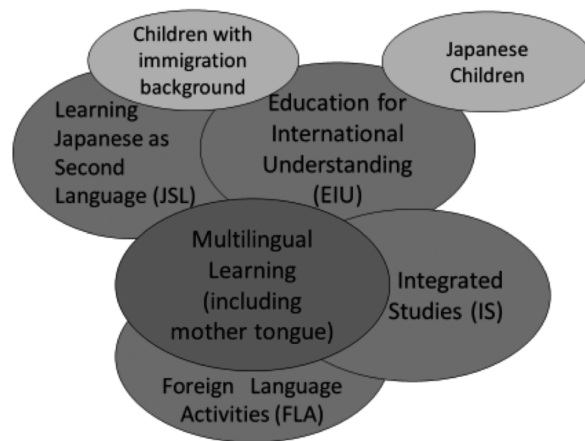


Figure 3. Ideal situation of learning and education for CIB (proposed by the author)

To effectively provide education for CIB, learning in JSL class, multilingual learning, EIU, FLA and IS need to be better coordinated in the process of their planning, implementation and assessment. In this way, Japanese pupils along with CIB can benefit from comprehensive approach of harmonizing these learning and education (refer to the Figure 3). Particularly for CIB, multilingual and multicultural learning is lacking the most as discussed above and is indispensable to be implemented. To illustrate what kind of multilingual and multicultural learning are versatile and what kind of issues exist in conducting them, exemplary cases will be introduced and analyzed in next section¹³. Most of the following cases are school-based or local government-based, which implies that the gap between the intended and implemented curriculum, unfortunately, seems not to be visible or seems to be ignored at the level of the central governmental.

3. Efforts for multilingual learning at schools and others.

To improve the learning in JSL for CIB, who cannot speak Japanese well, in 2007 MEXT established an ad-hoc advisory committee on education for foreign pupils enrolling in public school. Since then, MEXT had prepared several manuals about how to deal with the CIB focusing on the learning in JSL (MEXT, 2011; Tajiri, 2014). These manuals are supposed to be helpful recommendations for pupils, schools (principal/teachers) and corresponding local board of education. According to one of these manuals, “Guidelines for Accepting Foreign Children at School (MEXT, 2011)”, both CIB and Japanese pupils should enjoy the EIU by understanding their friends’ culture and identity while reconsidering their own. With this, pupils should ultimately overcome misunderstandings about others and achieve attitude and skills for living together and helping each other. Of note is that the manual explains the importance of appropriately supporting mother tongue development, and includes rationales

¹³ The reason why multicultural aspect is discussed by the author adjunct to the multilingual aspect is that, as described above, these two aspects are interconnected in Japan as issues and should be linked for future of multilingual learning for CIB. In the next section, it will be discussed more in details.

based on Cummins's Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis¹⁴ published in 1979. However, the manual does not contain any specific suggestions for the kinds of activities or tools that are useful to conduct the EIU and to deal with CIB's mother tongue. Based on Cummins's hypothesis, the manual argues that mother tongue is helpful to foster proficiency of Japanese language and academic ability for other subjects. Yet, it also mentions that there is different effect based on development phases of CIB. Furthermore, even though terms such as "identity", "self-esteem", "multiculturalism" and "mother tongue" are mentioned in the manual, there is no argument or explanations about exactly how to address or respect them.

On the other hand, the manual describes how to teach JSL classes in detail. Teachers who are in charge of teaching JSL first need to understand children's background, context and proficiency level of Japanese. Then, depending on the proficiency level, they apply different types of program, such as "Survival Japanese Program", "Basic Japanese Program", "Skill-based Japanese Program", "Integral Learning Program between Japanese and Other Subjects" or "Supplementary Program for Other Subjects" to children. Of course, JSL can offer a space for multicultural learning in community-based and/or interactive activities (Okazaki, 2007; Yamanishi, 2010; Kitamura, 2012). Yet, it still lacks discourse on multilingualism.

In 2013, the MEXT established a new ad-hoc advisory committee on how to guide children who need to learn Japanese as a Second Language. Based on the report of this committee, a "special curriculum" was introduced in 2014 to conduct official lessons for CIB to study JSL in public schools. Before this special curriculum was introduced, JSL was an extra-curricular and extra-subject activity. It was implemented as a part of afterschool activities or lessons for CIB, a kind of voluntary work for school teachers and schools, and extra financial administrative burden for local board of education and local government. Therefore placing

JSL as a special curriculum is meaningful for all stakeholders in this context. However, it is anticipated that this would result in huge gaps among schools and boards of education that introduce this curriculum differently. More importantly, some school or board of education even do not introduce the program, since there is local control over any special curriculum depends on their own decision (Tajiri, 2014).

Currently, in the discourse in Japan around multilingual learning multilingualism almost always stands for bilingualism. The most common method is to teach CIB separately in their languages: Japanese and their mother tongues. Of course, when JSL is taught, students' mother tongues are occasionally used as an auxiliary language by schoolteachers and JSL teachers. In some municipalities or towns, teachers are hired or asked to work and intermittently teach CIB. In some cases these mother tongue teachers might be social workers/volunteers. According to Saito et al. (2015) even though these teachers are outsiders in the schools, on top of the work described above, they are also expected to interpret and translate some information for CIB and their families, help schools to understand CIB's situations and teach Japanese language and other subjects accordingly. In public schools, it is very unusual that more than two languages are taught (i.e., Japanese and English) to pupils. However, in the case of international schools for CIB, bilingual or trilingual learning is a typical standard for language education. This is because CIB's needs for learning languages is diverse due to their career progression. In 1995 Nakanishi suggested that CIB are likely to follow different career paths (Nakanishi, 1995):

- 1) Intend to Return Home: want to go back to their homeland immediately or after graduating junior high or high school.
- 2) Japanese oriented: want to stay and work in Japan. Some of them want to graduate from high school or university.
- 3) Globally Oriented : want to go to the European

¹⁴ This Hypothesis (Cummins, 1979) argues that certain first language (L1) knowledge can be positively transferred during the process of second language (L2) acquisition. Both proficiency of L1 and L2 share the Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP), which is child's cognitive and academic proficiency, and is said to develop during a certain time, ideally in earlier childhood. If the CUP is not effectively developed by one-language-based life and learning, not only L1 or L2 proficiency, but also academic ability for other subjects would be negatively affected. On the other hand, Cummins (2000) explains that proficiency of social languages (the so-called "Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)") can be equitatively obtained through good transfer of meanings and functions at the CUP between academic languages (the so-called "Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)").

Union (EU) or United States (US) after graduating from school, or go and come back continuously between Japan and their homeland.

- 4) Don't see a future: want to study in high school, but, feel like not to make it due to difficulty of studying in terms of learning level or financial reason. Or want to work rather than to study.

For those CIB who intend to return to their home countries, it is important to graduate from international schools that offers bilingual learning (Japanese and mother tongue) with a qualification corresponding to homeland educational system. In addition, the Globally Oriented CIB who may require trilingual learning should attend international schools. The Japanese Oriented CIB may desire to join public schools where they can obtain the qualification corresponding to Japanese educational system. The most problematic case is are those CIB who do see a future for themselves. They cannot accommodate themselves to public schools nor international school due to difficulties of studying and/or financial issue. They usually do not achieve enough levels in Japanese proficiency, and even worse, some of them cannot develop communication skill based on their mother tongue.

With the terms Cummins (2000) used, not only academic language (the "Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)"), but also social language (the "Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)") cannot be achieved. This situation is called "double limited" or "semilingual". This could also happen to the other three types as well, if CIB fail to follow lessons or instruction in school. The double limited (semilingual) CIB could face difficulties of thinking logical and abstractly (Sato, 1995; Tamaki, 2014; Nii & Yururi, 2015). In addition to this double limited issue, it is also indicated by several researchers that if mother tongue is not appropriately taught or dealt with, CIB may not effectively foster their identities and capabilities to communicate with their parents (Kitayama, 2012; Ochiai, 2012).

Several approaches or activities have been implemented to responding to these issues, They

focus on language education that are implemented by schools, local governments, boards of education, or all together. While MEXT provide helps sometimes by giving project-based funds or additional designation of human resources, they are mostly conducted at and within local levels.

The methods for teaching mother tongue are not as well structured as for the Japanese language and other subjects. Mother tongue lessons are usually conducted as extra-curricular and afterschool activities. Therefore, similar to typical teaching style of JSL, "Toridashi" (bringing all CIB in a classroom and teaching them together) is applied¹⁵. However, the problem with "Toridashi" is that CIB at different proficiency levels gather in the same classroom and the teacher of mother tongue needs to teach the same lesson to them. Thus, the content of the teaching is usually very general or too simple. Needless to say, to conduct lessons of mother tongue appropriately and effectively, a coherent curriculum for teaching mother tongue is indispensable and must be implemented. The diversity of the students from immigrant backgrounds, the different languages they speak, and circumstances of being in Japan, along with a scarcity of governmental support¹⁶ for this field work together to prevent stakeholders such as schools, local governments and local boards of education from taking flexible and appropriate actions toward the issues (Nakanishi, 1995; Tamaki, 2014). Below, several examples are introduced to illustrate their advantages and disadvantages.

Hamamatsu City is a relatively large city (where in Japan?) and one of the famous cities where many people with immigration background (more than 30,000 people) are living. In 2014, the number of CIB who needed to learn JSL was 1405, or 2% of all the pupils in public schools (elementary and junior high schools) in this city (Saito et al., 2015). With the support of financial and human resources provided by the central and city governments, additional teachers were allocated to those public schools with many CIBs in attendance. Moreover, bilingual support personnel and learning counselors were dispatched to

¹⁵ Other than "Toridashi", "Hairikomi" (an extra teacher joins ordinal lessons (Japanese language and other subjects) to help the teacher in charge of that lesson) is commonly employed as a teaching method for JSL.

¹⁶ There exists some sort of financial assistance from central or local government in the field. However, it is insufficient to cover all the demands claimed by practitioners.

these schools, and Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) were contracted by the city's board of education to conduct activities for learning Japanese language and mother tongues.

There are two main approaches to the teaching of mother tongues in Hamamatsu City. One is bilingual support personnel providing learning assistance (combining Japanese and mother tongue) for new CIB in order to provide life normalization (adaptation) as a first step. This learning assistance, mainly as “Toridashi” during their schooling, but continues in different ways based on their necessity. The other is teaching mother tongue in the “Bogo Kyoshitsu (Classroom of Mother Tongue)”, managed by NPOs. This class is offered outside of regular school hours on Saturdays, when public schools are not in session. The purpose of this class is to help with the communication between parents and their children and to promote understanding of their countries through learning how to read and write mother tongue and teaching about their country's culture and history (Saito et al., 2015).

The second example of…… is a school in Osaka Prefecture which is located……. Shiki Primary School in Yao City is famous for its pioneering bilingual activities¹⁷. This school has a long history of educating CIB, and has been accepting CIB since 1984. In 1993, “Nihongo Kyoshitsu (Classroom of Japanese Language)” was established to teach JSL as an extra-curricular activity. As the experiences of managing this activity accumulated, the teachers started recognizing the importance of teaching students their mother tongue, as well. According to research conducted by Nishimura (2009), when students initially entered the schools, teachers discussed challenges they faced such as the difficulty of communication between CIB and their parents which they felt was affecting the students' self-esteem. In response to this, mother tongue instruction was introduced in the Nihongo Kyoshitsu starting 2003, whose name was changed into the International Class in 2007. Mother tongue learning started initially through JSL by explaining in mother tongue, teaching basic words or

knowledge about mother tongue. Later, its contents and class timetable were systemized apart from JSL. Basically, CIB learn mother tongues such as Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino and Thai in a proficiency-based class through “Toridashi” while Japanese pupils learn Japanese language or IS in different classroom. Mother tongue has now developed into a learning activity inside the school's regular curriculum, as well as in JSL (Nishimura, 2009).

The final example is from Hyogo¹⁸, a neighboring prefecture west of Osaka. Hyogo is a unique prefecture as evidenced by the fact that its board of education established the Multicultural Children's Center in 2003 to support CIB and their families comprehensively to smoothly live and learn in Hyogo. This center offers supportive activities such as 1) consultation for learning and schooling, 2) offering learning materials and information, 3) exchange program for the EIU, 4) registration and dispatch of interpreters, volunteers and learning supporters, and 5) research and training to understand the CIB's issues. In addition, Hyogo prefectural board of education started projects to support mother tongue learning for CIB in 2006.

Through these projects, schools with many CIB were assigned as base schools for mother tongue learning. Volunteers who can teach and guide mother tongue are therefore sent to these schools (Notsu, 2015). In addition to activities offered by this center, various NPOs also try to support mother tongue learning in their own places as well as in public schools (Ochiai, 2015). For example, “Hoamai Kyoshitsu (Classroom)” was established in 2006 at Shinyo Primary School, Kobe City as a project funded by Hyogo prefectural board of education, and currently supported by Kobe city board of education. The Vietnamese students in this school district represent around 10% of the school's pupils. In the “Hoamai Kyoshitsu”, classes in Vietnamese language and culture are offered for Vietnamese CIB every Friday after school. These CIBs are learning Vietnamese language through card games and twister game, and celebrating Vietnamese festival and performing “Shishimai (Lion Dance)”, a traditional dance in Vietnam.

¹⁷ Osaka is one of the first prefectures to deal with CIB's learning. There are approximately 200 schools in Osaka that hold a specified classroom for JSL or mother tongue learning (Majima et al., 2010). In Osaka, there are 1966 CIB who were at various levels of understanding Japanese language in 2012 (MEXT, 2013b).

¹⁸ In Hyogo, there are 774 CIB who face difficulties of understanding Japanese language in 2012 (MEXT, 2013b).

In all three cases above, schools, NPOs, boards of education, and other stakeholders are trying to provide multilingual learning activities to the extent possible within the constraint of financial and human resources. However, according to Matsugaki & Ishizaka (2015) there are still many CIB who do not receive sufficient support, particularly those who are scattered among different schools where there are only one or a few students in the entire school. In general, the case in Japan is that teachers and people in community have little understanding of CIB's issues or are familiar with international issues, thus CIB tend to be isolated not only from school, but also from the life of the community. As a result, they are more likely to be absent from school, stay at home doing nothing or play downtown at night, and eventually drop out of school (Tamaki, 2014). As mentioned above, even though the Ministry confirms the importance of treating CIB appropriately, its support toward CIB, schools, boards of education and NPOs is clearly not enough. Related to scarcity of MEXT's support, various issues exist as follows:

- 1) Inconsistency of methods or contents of mother tongue learning (education), and shortage of pedagogical consideration or sharing and accumulation of experience of harmonization among the EIU and teaching JSL and mother tongue (Saito et al., 2015; Tamaki, 2014).
- 2) Scarcity of human resources such as foreign or Japanese teachers who are capable of conducting mother tongue and culture education, and in-curriculum learning activities (Tamaki, 2014).
- 3) Too much dependence on voluntariness of local stakeholders such as teachers, schools, NPOs and local boards of education, etc. (Nishimura, 2009; Kitayama, 2012; Ochiai, 2012).

4. What's next for multilingual learning: Policy Recommendations

Several suggestions for policy directives or concrete remedies are introduced below. They

are based on the research of Japanese scholars who have been investigating these issues and offer several suggestions for better serving the children of immigrant background and strengthening multilingual teaching and learning.

Yoshimura (2010) proposed a harmonization of three types of foreign language learning: 1) English learning as a Foreign Language Activity (FLA), 2) Multilingual (Plurilingual)¹⁹ learning as FLA or IS, and 3) Multilingual learning with language minority (including CIB) as IS. The last type of learning is important for both majority (Japanese) and minority children (including CIB) in terms of the EIU. Specifically, Fukuda & Yoshimura (2010) proposed a kind of mixture of multilingual learning described by Yoshimura (2010) as follows:

- 1) 2-year-long IS: choose 5 principal languages (Portuguese, Chinese, Spanish, Korean and Filipino), which are spoken by CIB and a sign language (Japanese), and conduct 10 hour lessons for each language. Include research about the language and the students' background such as culture, geography, history and community, etc.
- 2) 1-year-long IS: choose 3 languages (Chinese, Korean and Filipino) for Grade 3, and conduct 5 hour lessons for a language, dealing with sound and words, greetings, colors, animals, fruits, numbers, animals' roaring and song, etc. Then in Grade 4, another program is proposed, choosing other 3 languages (Vietnamese, Indonesian and Thai).

Abe (2010) partially applied Fukuda & Yoshimura (2010)'s idea to studying IS activities in the classroom, where a child with Chinese background was the subject and confirmed the positive effects: 1) increase in knowledge about diversity of world, 2) affirmative attitude toward diversity of language, 3) raising interest in learning languages, and 4) increase in knowledge about languages for daily life other than Japanese and English.

Tamaki (2014) interviewed the principal of a Brazilian international school in his study. He found

¹⁹ Yoshimura (2015) highlighted "plurilingualism", which refer, in the definition of the Council of Europe, to "the repertoire of varieties of language which many individuals use, and is therefore the opposite of monolingualism; it includes the language variety referred to as 'mother tongue' or 'first language' and any number of other languages or varieties. Thus in some multilingual areas some individuals are monolingual and some are plurilingual" (Council of Europe, 2014). In contrast, multilingualism refers to "the presence in a geographical area, large or small, of more than one 'variety of language' i.e., the mode of speaking of a social group whether it is formally recognised as a language or not; in such an area individuals may be monolingual, speaking only their own variety" (Council of Europe, 2014).

that international schools need human and pedagogic resources for Japanese language, instead of those for other languages. This is contrary to Japanese public schools that do not have enough resources of other languages. Therefore, both types of schools could cooperate together to get synergic effect. International schools facing serious problems of finance are likely to welcome this kind of cooperation from public schools.

The Tochigi Prefectural Board of Education established a long-term (six month) in-service training for learning foreign languages beginning in 1991. Teachers can apply for this training to study foreign languages such as Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, without working during this training. Even though there has been some mismatch of teachers learned some language and schools in need of reinforcement for multilingual learning, a total of about 30 teachers have benefited from this training (Tamaki, 2014). This trial by Tochigi prefecture is worth mentioning as a possible model for reforming in-service training related to multilingual and multicultural learning.

In order to support the local efforts for multilingual learning introduced above, the central government should involve more, such as 1) increasing financial support for local government, boards of education and schools, ii) conducting empirical research for developing a new curriculum of multilingual learning (including reconsideration of consistency among multilingual learning, the EIU and JSL, etc.), and iii) establishing a consortium among public schools, international schools, NPOs and so on that would..... In conclusion, it is the hope of this author that MEXT would take a principal role and conduct more concrete actions on this field.

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