

# Bringing out the best in both monolingual and multilingual students with Japanese as a second language

## A case study of our class

### 1. Background information

There are researches showing that bilinguals have many advantages over monolinguals, for example, being able to have various perspectives through talking with people from different countries, and having a greater amount of vocabulary. (See Figure 1) We study in a class with students from different linguistic backgrounds. Our classes are mainly in Japanese. We want to consider how to make the most of all students' unique skills.

### 2. Research question

How to create lessons that bring out the best in both bilingual and monolingual students?

### 3. Research methods

#### 1) Questionnaire

Target: 20 students from the same class

Goal: To get a grasp on the self-evaluated language level of the

students we study with and the various strengths of each students to improve the class

#### 2) Interviews

Target: bilingual and trilingual students from one class

Goal: To know the problem of the current classes from their

perspective

### 4. Research findings

#### 4.1 Questionnaire results

The first/second/third languages spoken by our classmates and their self-appraised fluency (Students were asked to select their language proficiency based on the CEFR, which categorizes language proficiency into different levels)

<First language>	<Second language>
Japanese (90%/18 students)	English (80%/16 students)
English (5%/1 student)	Japanese (10%/2 students)
Vietnamese (5%/1 student)	Chinese (5%/1 student)
	No second language (5%/1 student)
	B2 ... 20% A1 ... 10% B1 ... 20%
	A2 ... 45% No ... 5%

#### <Third language>

50%- none 25%- Korean 10%- English 5%- Japanese sign language  
5%- Chinese 5%

Level: 50% no third language 35%- A1 10%- B2 5%- A2

#### 4.2 Findings: Interviews

Q: Do you have any concerns related to your lessons at school?

1) Student who speaks Vietnamese as her first language, and English and Japanese as her second and third language

- Wants more opportunities to make use of all of the languages that she speaks

2) Student who speaks English as her first language and Japanese as her second language

- Not being able to keep up with the classes because they proceed on the premise that the all students can understand Japanese at an advanced level.

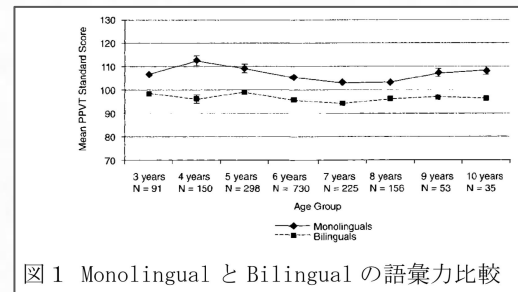


図1 Monolingual と Bilingual の語彙力比較

Figure 1: Cognitive Development in Bilingual Children (Yukio, 2015)

### 5. Discussion

Bilingual students in our class are not experts in one language, but possess decent language proficiency in several languages. (English, Japanese, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean)

Problems:

1. There is no support for people who are not native Japanese speakers.
2. They can't make use of their strength of being multilinguals, such as being able to have various viewpoints because of their background, and the ability to comprehend different languages.

### 6. Conclusions and suggestions

#### Conclusion

To create lessons that bring out the best in both bilingual and monolingual students, the important thing is to support people who need extra support with Japanese if the classes proceed based on instructions in Japanese. In addition, it is also a good way to create more opportunities for monolinguals to interact with multilinguals, so that they can broaden their vision in different areas.

Suggestions:

- Use text books with explanations in easy Japanese and English next to the new words, so that it's easy to understand for those who don't really know Japanese words.
- In history class, there should be time to discuss each other's countries and compare other countries history classes.

### 7. Bibliography

A study on bilingualism and language processing mechanisms in Japanese-Chinese bilinguals, by Rivin, 2017

<https://dliisv03.media.osaka-cu.ac.jp/contents/osakacu/kiyo/111TDA3693.pdf>