J-E bilingual school library in Japan: a challenge

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Abstract

This is a case report on an experimental school which gives the E-J bi-lingual education in Japan. It has a bi-lingual school library which has two language collections, PCs, internet, and the E/J teacher librarians. The students are always comparing differences in the ways of teaching, contents of materials, the large cultural differences, and the ways of thinking.

The Japanese teachers are encouraged to teach not only in the lecture style but develop a "Japanese international" way, receiving the impulses from others. The librarians have been working together to develop the new learning style using the research process in one's curriculum.

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Introduction

      This is a case report from Japan which shows what kind of change can happen in certain bi-lingual school circumstances, and how a school library can be involved in the process.

I.   Bi-lingual school & library

SISF: Twin "international" schools

      Senri International School Foundation (SISF) is an experimental small school founded in April 1991 in Minoh-city, Osaka, Japan, which holds two types of schools.

      One is Osaka International School (OIS); an international school teaching in English. And the other is Senri International School (SIS); a Japanese government authorized private middle and high school, teaching in Japanese. OIS&SIS have some shared classes where the students from both school are combined. The student body manage the council and/or clubs etc jointly.

Further information: http://www.senri.ed.jp

SISF library at lunch time

SIS: a new Japanese "international" school

SIS is a government authorized Japanese school, but which was also intended to develop new educational styles in Japan to meet the demands of Japanese society in the 21st century. It was advocated "new international schools" in the 3rd report for the Japanese Ministry of Education, compiled by the Provisional Council for Educational Reform.

At first, the foundation was established with the educational philosophy "To create informed, caring, creative individuals contributing to a global community" In other words concretely,

- The capacity of intercultural communication
  - Bi-lingual education
- Respect for individuality, volunteerism
- Academically challenging program:
  - In the philosophy and method of International Baccalaureate Programmes

(See Appendix I)

SIS student types

There are three types of students in SIS

1. Japanese raised in Japan
2. Foreigners living in Japan
3. Japanese who were educated abroad and returned

They are monolingual/bilingual/multilingual when they came into school. They should learn both English/Japanese, and can develop more of their E/J abilities. Other languages such as French, Chinese, Korean, Spanish or German are also offered.

Characteristics of SISF library

SISF library is a shared organization in the twin schools. It means we are shared by ES/MS/HS, students/faculty/community. There is a variety of patrons, for example, a mother with a baby who comes to pick up her elder son in the kindergarten. It is a little bit like a public library.

Kindergarten kids with teachers

OIS Gr11 and 12 students are studying for their IB Diploma and look for some professional magazines for their thesis. Elementary Japanese classes come to the library once a month, - they come every week in their English classes – to listen to the picture book /Kamishibai (Picture card show) reading-storytelling session.

And the patrons are also mono-/bi-/multi-lingual. So we are an English/Japanese bi-lingual library with some multi-lingual materials: Korean, French, German, Chinese, and Spanish. We have the main English and Japanese collections of books, magazines, newspapers.

Videos are being replaced with the DVD. Old microfiches first moved into CD-ROM, and now to the Database online with charge through the internet. 30 PCs, which allow E-J operating systems, are used in the library as necessary.

There are two teacher librarians who is E/J native each. Two fulltime, two half-day library staff are bi-lingual Japanese.

But the bi-lingual library does mean more than these facilities.

(See Appendix II)

SIS/OIS students working with PCs

Bi-lingual: not only the language but …

In the first several years, we noticed that the students were always comparing differences between E/J styles. Returnee students asked why a Japanese teacher teaches only in the lecture style and not to have any discussions. This is a typical question they have raised.

Students are always comparing the teaching/learning methods, contents of the books, magazine articles, etc. Once a student wondered why there are no Japanese books on gun control. Yes, it should be a typical topic in US for HS student discussion, but not in Japan where gun control is not an issue.

In this bi-lingual library, we have been trying to be equal between two languages, two schools, but some times it is very hard. It is not only the languages but there are large cultural differences/similarities in the library materials. If there are no needs in each language community, there are no books to be published since they won't be sold.

It is quite interesting how different the way of thinking/decision making process is in E/J. One can some times see the differences within the same magazine in different version, which topics the editors put in both languages, e.g. Newsweek and Newsweek Japanese version.

Actually, the bi-lingual library reflects the real bi-(multi-)cultural community, the real world.

II.   Changes in SIS

Non-J style influence on Japanese teachers

The lecture method is a typical style of teaching in Japan. But in this school, Japanese teachers were encouraged to develop a new teaching style in SIS. SIS teachers are always receiving the impulses especially from the returnee students who have the variety of experiences abroad.

On the other hand, there are non-Japanese teachers in OIS and SIS next to the Japanese teachers. One can observe/discuss how the others teach a class. Within each subject faculty offices, they have some opportunities of interaction.

The library has been a good place to observe what is happening in learning in the research process. In OIS, especially with the IB philosophy teachers are encouraged to make the students learn in the inquiry process. There are plenty of research processes happening in the library.

Students are encouraged to use articles in both languages if necessary. It sometimes imports a different point of view into the thinking. It makes the discussion very active. Then the teachers began to find the merits.

Education styles change in SIS

Traditional Japanese lecture teaching style is:
- lectures, drills and testing factual knowledge
- effective memorization of knowledge
- one can manage a big class, 40-50 students in a class

It meets the Japanese colleges and universities exams preparation education well.

Western inquiry style is a teaching/learning process through dialogs, discussions, researches, and presentations. OIS is accredited by the Western Association of School and Colleges (WASC), and began as an IB Diploma School. Then the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) and the IB Middle Year Programme (MYP) were added. So there are plenty of classes taught in the inquiry style.

After getting so many little experiences and impulses from this different type of educational style, some of the Japanese teachers in SIS achieved a move to develop a "Japanese international" style. It is a combination of both lecture & inquiry styles as a whole.

In SIS, we find how we could apply this inquiry style of learning. And the effect of this style is producing our high school graduates who are sometimes evaluated well in the universities right now. They meet the higher education requirements such as: students who are eager to learn, learn by themselves and have basic research & presentation techniques. And it should be a certain international global standard.

There might have been a narrow stream of the inquiry style in Japan, but it seems it has been pushed aside. Mainstream has been the traditional lecture & testing style. But the need is changing to meet the requirements of the new century. So the style we find can be a new model of education in Japan.

Learning process in research

How and what the students may learn in the research process compared to the lecture style process? This has been our question.

We now find that the research process trains students:
  ✧ to learn with one's own interest/curiosity
  ✧ to learn by oneself willingly
  ✧ to be a life long learner

So then, how do the students learn how to learn by themselves? How can the learning style based on inquiry be effective?

The point is, once they learnt the research process, they began to be better next time. This is a repetitive experience. Feed-back from the final products make the students go on to the next research. Because they love to learn even by themselves if one has the interest in the topic. Or if one can choose what to learn/research according to one's own interest.

Librarian & curriculum development

I, a Japanese teacher librarian, have been working together with such SIS Japanese subject teachers to develop the new teaching/learning style in SIS. It is:
– how one can use the library/research process in one's curriculum
– put debate/discussions in the class schedule using the materials from the library
– help them to research effectively for the presentations within the period of time

There is the newly developed curriculum in SIS now. It was begun in the

Gr7 science classes in a team teaching style of the science teachers and the teacher librarian in 1993. And then it was taught by the teacher librarian only in 2000, independent from science, and then in the team-teaching style in 2002 expanded to have classes not only with science, but other subject teachers, such as home and family life science, and IT. We established a subject department of Integrated Study (IS) in 2005 and the co-working teachers have grown to include PE, English, social studies, and Japanese. The classes of the IS are mainly to teach the common research and presentation skills in a variety of topics.

SISGr7 mandatory class *Study Explorers*

This is an example of a curriculum development in SIS. We organize a team of teacher librarian and subject teachers: science, IT, Social Studies, Japanese (2008).

It is a one year student training course for the newly entered Gr7, the first year of SIS, to learn how to learn in any classes in SIS and after graduation. Students may explore the whole research process.

- 1st term
    1. 1 minute presentation: a great person
    2. 1 minute presentation: the body system
    3. 2.5 minute presentation with a little research: the body system
- 2nd term
    - ➢ Research paper writing: a great person
- 3rd term
    - ➢ 5 minutes PC presentation: a great person

This class is connected to the IT class for Gr7.

- 1st term
    - ➢ basic IT skills: word processing, charts, mail, and internet search
- 2nd term
    - ➢ PC presentation: the body system

And for the health class for Gr.7, too.

- 3rd term
    - ➢ Lecture: the body system

When we first began, we couldn't see what we can do with our students. There were so many trials and changes from the past. But we have been enjoying developing the better curriculum together every year.

SISGr8/9 mandatory class *Integrated Health*

This is the second and third year program in SIS. It is for to reinforce the research/presentation skills after the Study Explorers. The learning content is Health from the PE department. The team members are from IT, PE, home and family life.

It is a combination of teaching/learning styles.

- lectures
- demonstrations/experiments
- report writing by students: individual/group
- PC presentations by students

Gr10 students taking notes on cards, and word processing

The new educational style －what SIS teachers find now

Teachers find the student learning process in research and the merit of the common research skill training in each stage of the school.

1. There are some essential common learning/research skills
   - the importance of the way to
     assess the information / get the information in time

analyze the information / build one's own idea, opinions etc

present them to others in time

2. Learning: the importance to make the students
    - learn the skills to study
    - learn by themselves using those skills
    - learn in the research process
        · allows for the students' diversity, not only in language but in many ways
        · can offer those skills effectively
3. Teachers can develop
    - the way to teach those skills effectively in the learning process
4. School library use, and team teaching with librarians
    - the core of this educational style

(See Appendix III)

Finally

At first, we just began something new with our multi-cultural students in this very unique, bi-lingual school in Japan. We learnt quite a lot from the students. For example, their research behaviors in the learning process always give me feed-back on our collection assessment. There are so many interesting stories in SISF, but the library is the most shared place by everyone to experience the diversity and uniqueness of this school.

Appendix I:

1. **Senri International School Foundation (SISF)**
   - The number of faculty & staff: (May 1st, 2008)
     - Japanese: 90
     - Non-Japanese: 51 from mainly English speaking countries.

2. **Osaka International School (OIS)**
   - provides K-12 education
   - Number of students (April 16, 2008)
     - ES(K-5): 115, MS(6-8): 68, HS(9-12): 61
     - 10-22 students in each class
     - one class in each grade
   - teaching in English
   - WASC accreditation school
   - International Baccalaureate Programmes PYP/MYP/IBDP school

3. **Senri International School (SIS)**
   - a local Japanese private school for Gr7-12
   - Number of students (April 16, 2008)
     - MS(7-9): 180, HS(10-12): 264
     - 18-24 students in each class
     - 3-4 classes in each grade
   - teaching in Japanese
   - provide the curriculum basically determined by the Ministry of Education, Japan

4. **SISF Shared & joint programs**
   - Shared classes
   - teaching both school students together in one class
     - Music, Art, PE
   - mixed classes of SIS/OIS, grouping by the subject, in the high school
     - English, Japanese, History
   - classes grouping according to the language ability
   - Joint student body
   - Joint extra-curricular activities:
     - clubs, athletic programs, student councils etc
   - Joint school events:
     - School festival, Sports day etc

Appendix II:

1. **SISF Library floor plan**

- about 1000 m^2
- 1F
    - books & magazines
    - PC for student use – internet search & word processing
- 2F   Multi-media floor
    - Professional materials for faculty
    - Video, DVD
    - AV equipment
    - multi-media PC lab
    - PC LAN server room

⊗ = PC
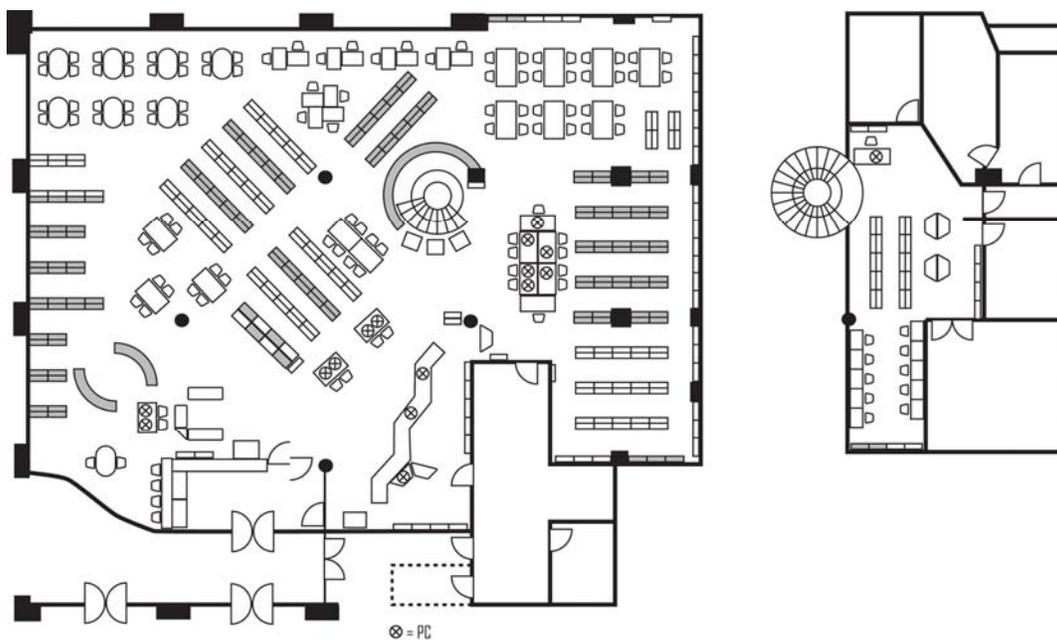
2. Library statistics 2006-7

      Number of books at March 2007

        J 33,369   E 27,242 volumes

      Number of patrons coming in the library

        '06: 835.4   '07: 847.0 person/day

      Number of books checked out

        '06: J 9.8   E 9.7   '07: J 10.4   E 17.9 /person

      Number of classes held in the library

        '06: 3.4   '07: 3.8 classes/day

      Number of mobile PC checked out in the library

        '06: 58.3   '07:   76.8 PC/day

3. Library staff

      Teacher Librarians

        English native 1   Japanese native 1

      Library assistants

        Fulltime 2   Part-time (5 hours) 2

      IT staff (connected but independent from library)

        Fulltime 2

Appendix III:

SIS understanding: the key points of the research process

1. Library skills / internet
   - search the traditional library materials
   - Internet search
   - Merits/demerits of each resources
2. Writing papers
   - Choosing the theme
   - Re-structuring of the collected materials
3. Presentation
   - Re-structuring of the paper: condense
   - Using visual presentation software
   - How to give the audience a better understanding

- Librarians
   - Strong support for kids during the process to get to the final product

SIS understanding: the common skills for learning
- Paper writing
  - Collecting materials
  - Contents writing
    - How to find/determine the topic/theme
    - Awareness of the structure
  - Bibliography writing
- Presentation
  - Oral communication skills
  - Visual presentation skills
  - Awareness of the structure
- Purpose of the product
  - To give the readers/audience a better understanding

Bibliography

- Hirono Aoyama, *A history of bi-lingual library* (in Japanese), Educational Research Bulletin no.8, Senri International School Foundation, Minoh, Osaka, Japan. June 2003, p.70-89.