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Japanese language education: Serving citizenship

Yuko Ramzan

University of Wollongong, NSW

Email: yuko@uow.edu.au

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to articulate the need for citizenship education in the Australian primary school, and to examine the possibility of Japanese language teaching as one of the tools to serve citizenship education in Australia.

A draft framework for LOTE K-10 was published by the Board of Studies NSW in 2001. The framework shows an emphasis on intercultural competence as objective. This emphasis fits in well with the major trends in education which give consideration to the multiple diversity in the multicultural society. Also, questions of nationalism and civic responsibility are increasingly significant themes in discussions of education and cultural practice, although citizenship education is not yet an established component within the Australian school curriculum.

This study will present actual process of teaching intercultural consciousness, and discusses capability of applying Japanese language learning experience to citizenship education in Australian primary schools. An action research has been conducted in grade 5 primary school classrooms.

Results of the study indicate ways for teachers to help students to develop a delicate balance of cultural, national, and global identifications through Japanese language learning experience.

1. Introduction

This paper presents a work in progress of my PhD study, which I started in the beginning of year 2002.

1.1 The Background to the Study

Since the establishment of Australia's National Policy of Language in 1987(Ozolins, 1993), schools have been encouraged to teach an increasing number of languages. Then, nine languages were selected to be desirable languages to learn in terms of community links, economic rationalism, and the geographical situation of Australia. Japanese language was one of the selected languages. As part of the trend, primary schools were also encouraged to teach a foreign language. Then the NSW *government* announced the revision of the existing 7-10 language syllabuses in its Education and Training Plan for 1999-2003, and the Board supported the revision of existing syllabuses for Languages in Years 7-10 with the aim of developing new syllabuses for K-10. As a part of this process, Languages K-10 Draft Framework was published by the Board of Studies New South Wales in 2001. This

framework shows renewed emphasis on integrating language and culture, and its aim is beyond the goal of communicative proficiency in the sense that learners are encouraged to find a '... meeting place between different forces, different cultures and different worldviews'. (Board of Studies NSW, 2001, p.12). Educating language learners to develop the ability to create intercultural competency is one of the key goals for future development of Language Other Than English education in New South Wales. This emphasis fits in well with the major trends in education which give consideration to the diversity of Australia's multicultural society.

Multicultural education in Australia emerged in the 1980s and the 1990s, and has given practical expression to the concerns that Australian values and customs should not be interpreted only as Anglo-Australian values and customs. (Foster & Harman, 1992, p.111) While this approach may have helped with the recognition of ethnic differences within the society, it did not address 'difference' in other cultural issues within Australia, such as sexuality or disability. It did not help to enhance understanding of each other within the society, or to link between one culture and another. It was almost like assisting society to become a collective mono-cultural society rather than making it a really coherent multicultural society. Racism is still a problem in multicultural Australia, and a commitment to fundamental change is still missing in many areas of Multiculturalism in Australia.

1.2 The Significance of the Study

By doing this research a sample curriculum module to implement citizenship education in the Australian primary school will be produced. This study will identify theoretical reasoning for citizenship education, and presents a practical way to implement such a curriculum. While the study examines what is missing from the present multicultural education, it will find ways to fill these gaps, and show whether Japanese language learning can offer a contribution. Moreover, it will find out whether Japanese language learning experiences can help the learner to develop their cross cultural awareness at the same time.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Revisiting multicultural education in Australia is necessary as the current program may not be effective enough to provide children with multicultural citizenship education, essential to their becoming a positive member of Australian society. Finding a tool to facilitate children being active participants of a diverse society is a crucial task for Australian education. Foreign language learning could be a concrete experience to assist children in this task.

1.4 Purpose of the research

The purpose of this research is to understand the construction of interculturality in the context of citizenship education in the Australian primary school, and to examine the possibility of Japanese language education as one of the tools to serve citizenship education in Australia.

1.5 Definitions of Terms

Citizenship education

There are different conceptions of citizenship education. However, I would like to use Kerry J. Kennedy's idea of Citizenship Education. Kennedy argues that citizenship education is capable of being constructed in multiple ways and that it is important to be aware of how those constructions take place. The challenge for civics and citizenship education is to

somehow meld together civic knowledge, civic megatrends and civic realities in a way that will meet young people where they are (Kennedy, 1997, p.1-5).

Multicultural education

This term is used in this study as it is mentioned in the Commonwealth government's policy statements of 1989 entitled National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia.

In Australia, multiculturalism has emerged as a policy designed to deal with specific needs of ethnic minorities, who rejected the policy of assimilation as being unworkable, and who declared that Australia was a multicultural society which would benefit if diversity was taken into account instead of being homogenised.

The central notion of multiculturalism was valued for achieving social cohesion in an ethnically diverse society, and Australian society appeared as a collection of ethnic communities united around a set of 'core values'. Multiculturalism made an important new statement on substantial citizenship, and it was no longer necessary to be culturally assimilated to gain full acceptance, even if you spoke another language and followed different cultural practices and life-style. Nevertheless, multicultural education is a limited notion, and does not address the broader concept of cultural identity in terms of gender, class, disability and so on.

Culture

Robert Bocock's definition of culture (1992) is used here. The meaning of the term 'culture' has changed over time, especially in the period of the transition from traditional social formations to modernity, and Bocock identified five main definitions of the term 'culture':

1. Culture = cultivation the land, crops, animals
2. Culture = the cultivation of the mind; arts; civilization
3. Culture = a general process of social development; culture as a universal process (the Enlightenment conception of culture).
4. Culture = the meanings, values, ways of life (cultures) shared by particular nations, groups, classes, periods.
5. Culture = the practices which produce meaning; signifying practices.

None of these definitions has entirely disappeared. Each is still active in contemporary usage.

Interculturality

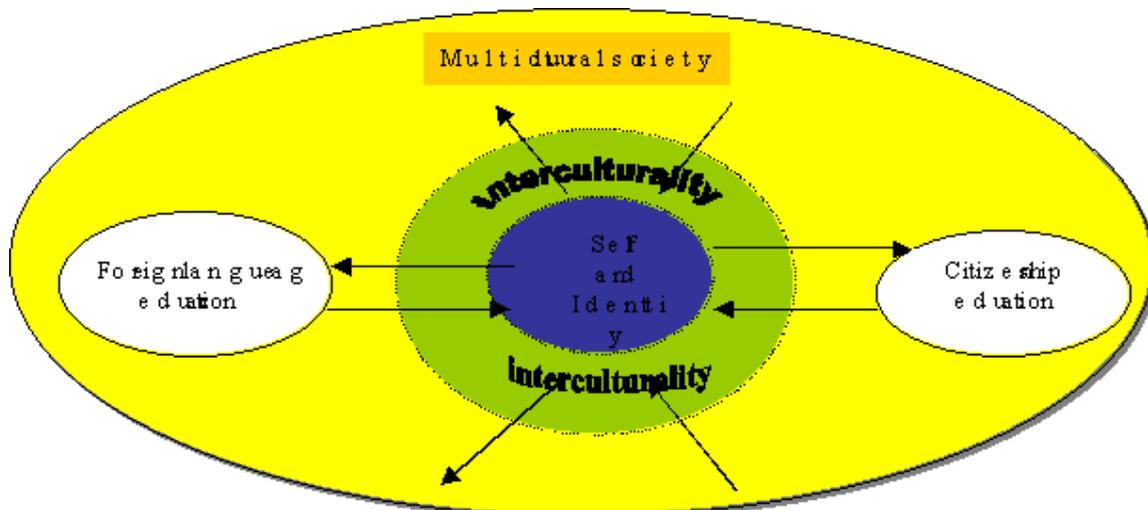
Originally described by Claire Kramsch (1993) in foreign language education. Traditional thought in foreign language education has limited the teaching of culture to the transmission of information about the people of the target country, and about their general attitudes and worldviews. However, understanding a foreign culture requires putting that culture in relation with one's own. As we have seen for social interactions as well as for the interaction with written texts, meaning is relational. Thus, for example, an intercultural approach to the teaching of culture is radically different from a transfer of information between cultures. It includes a reflection both on the target and on the native culture. Interculturality is a created sphere to understand other culture in relation to one's own.

Intercultural Language Teaching

Intercultural Language teaching (ILT) is a new approach to language teaching. At its core what ILT offers is an approach to teaching culture as an integrated part of language. One of the key goals of ILT is to educate language learners to develop the ability to create multiple 'third places' as they learn to interact with 'otherness' (Crozet, Liddicoat & LoBianco in Crozet and Liddicoat, 2000, p.1). The 'third place' notion refers to a comfortable unbounded and dynamic space which intercultural communicators create as they interact with each other and in their attempt to bridge the gap between cultural differences.

2. Theoretical Framework

This research will be located within sociocultural theory together with critical theory and poststructural theory. The goal of this research is to understand the construction of interculturality, the source of interculturality, and finally citizenship education and foreign language education within a cultural, historical, and institutional context. It can be described in the following schematic diagram where interculturality is the space between self and culture.



Sociocultural theory provides a link between psychological processes within the individual and cultural forms of behavior between individuals, according to Claire Kramsch (2000). Lantolf (2000) also explains about sociocultural theory, and says that specifically human psychological processes do not pre-exist inside the head waiting to emerge at just the right maturational moment. 'All higher mental abilities appear twice in the life of the individual, first on the intermental plane in which the process is distributed between the individual, and some other person(s) and/or cultural artifacts, and later on the intramental plane in which the capacity is carried out by the individual acting via psychological mediation (Lantolf, 2000, p.17).

There has been a range of views expressed on the nature and purpose of citizenship. Kerry Kennedy supports the notion of a common citizenship underpinned by a set of common values, and argues that the citizenship education or education of any kind, can ensure that people are able to live their lives based on principles of peace, harmony, respect and tolerance (Kennedy1997). Then, construction of power, construction of otherness and construction of self and identity are the main issues here to discuss what citizenship education within current society should be.

Poststructuralist approaches deconstruct dominant or traditional discourses and assumptions of society while keeping awareness of the instability of these structures that prompt reflection and prevent simple generalization. Discussion of post-modern is necessary as conventional modes of classification on construction of power, otherness and self are inadequate (eg. D'Alton, S. 1992, Denzin, N. 1992, Baudrillard, J. 1983). Nevertheless, the sense of critical thinking is central to the discussion for issues of power, disparity, and difference.

Critical theorists argue that all knowledge is rooted in some set of interests that inform the social and communicative practices of the subjects of class, gender, ethnicity, and race. These interests do not remain fixed, singular or static; they may clash, overlap or work together and are in a constant process of change. It negates claims of universal explanation made within each approach while gathering and synthesizing explanations from each that help formulate a normative theory of what ought to be done to emancipate the subjects of social practice from domination (eg. Phillips, J. 2000, Howard, C. 1995, Geuss, R. 1981). Critical applied linguistics values critical theory and sees applied linguistics critically, and theorizes human agency within structures of power and ways in which we may think, act, and behave, that on the one hand acknowledge our locations within social, cultural, economic, ideological, discursive frameworks, but on the other hand allows us at least some possibility of freedom of action and change. (Pennycook, 2001, p.120). However, it is avoiding the determinism of some critical stances, and echoes Clair Kramersch's (1999) sociocultural approach:

We need to start thinking of what is produced in cultural encounters, not just homogeneity or heterogeneity or imperialism or resistance, but rather what third cultures or third spaces are constantly being created. (Pennycook, 2001, p.71)

In examining interpretations of the relationships between the individual and social reality, Valsiner (1992) argues that society provides what is to be learned through mechanisms that transfer knowledge, and thus the developing individual is shaped to be a participant of that society. Anthony Giddens (1991) argues that Self is not a passive entity, determined by external influences; in forging their self-identity, no matter how local their specific contexts of action, individuals contribute to and directly promote social influences that are global in their consequences and implications.

Today, impersonal experience seems meaningless and social complexity an unmanageable threat. By contrast, experience, which seems to tell about the self, to help define it, develop it or change it, has become an overwhelming concern. In an intimate society, all social phenomena, no matter how impersonal in structure, are converted into matters of personality in order to have a meaning. (Giddens, 1991, P.171)

The discussion of this study will be based on how construction of interculturality within Self is going to develop by learning a foreign language in a primary school, and how the learnt

interculturality may contribute to citizenship education in New South Wales. The above discussed theories impact on, and underpin this research.

3. Research Questions

- How does Japanese language teaching and learning in New South Wales impact on children's understanding of interculturality?
- To what extent is a sense of identity an attribute of citizenship education in New South Wales?
- To what extent is a sense of identity an attribute of multicultural education in New South Wales?
- What contribution do Japanese language classes make to identity construction?

The following sub-questions are identified to contribute to the overall questions.

- How is the interculturality developed by Japanese language learning experiences applied to Intercultural Language Teaching?
- How can children identify self and other/foreign in Japanese language class?
- How are learners encouraged to find a meeting place between different forces, different cultures and different worldviews, through Japanese language learning experiences? What is the impact on the learner from that?

4. Research Design

4.1 Preliminary observations

Four schools were approached, and the Japanese language syllabus was examined, however the teachers did not follow an intercultural approach. The research design was then modified to embrace an action research design.

4.2 Action Research

An action research has been conducted to answer the research questions. Bogdan and Biklen (1992:223) defined an action research as follows.

Action research is the systematic collection of information that is designed to bring about social change.

This study tries to fill the gaps between research and practice in fields of citizenship education and Japanese language education in Australian primary schools by creating a situation in which the researcher defines research problems and conducts research in such a way that the outcomes are directly useful to classrooms. Changing curriculum to develop Intercultural awareness while learning Japanese language is the point to focus.

This research consists of two spirals of an action research which is described by Lewin's (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992). One set of spiral includes Initial Reflection, Planning, Action, observation, and Reflection. Policy analysis, observations of the classes and interviewing the teachers and the students will lead to set an environments to sow the seeds of developing the learners' intercultural awareness which is necessary to clarify how it develops within the Japanese language classroom. As a part of the action research process,

this study aims to discover ways to improve the innovation which is to enhance the learner's intercultural awareness.

4.3 Participants:

There are two participating groups.

Group A

Number of the students: 27 students from a grade 4 and 5 composite class.

Teacher: one teacher who is in charge of this class.

Group B

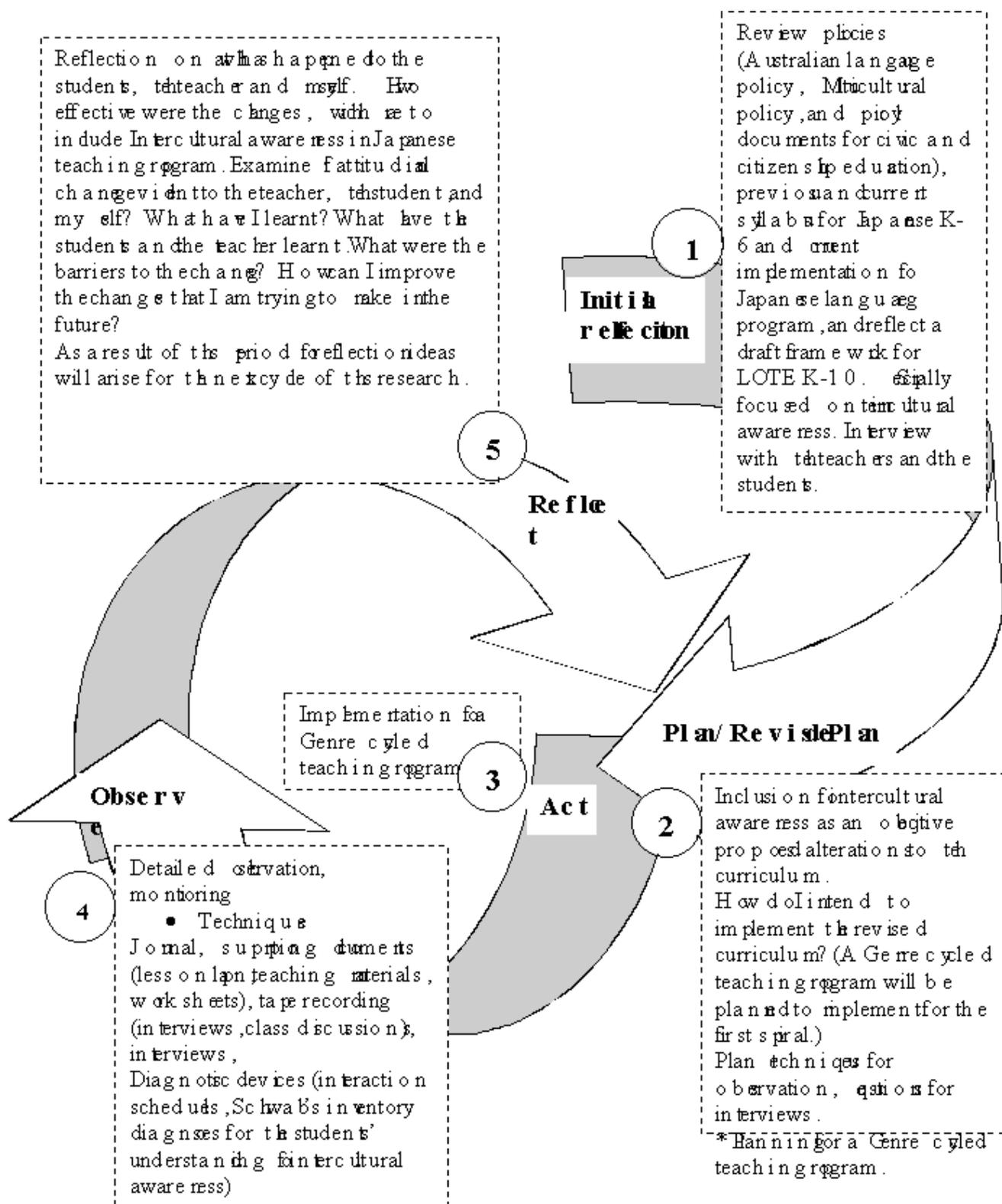
Number of the students: 15 students of a Grade 5 & 6 composite class

Teachers: who only teaches Japanese class and Human Society and Its environment.

4.4 Procedure

Although purpose of this study is to articulate the need for citizenship education in the Australian primary school, and to examine the possibility of Japanese language education as one of the tools to serve citizenship education in Australia rather than improving the teaching, the well constructed spirals allow this study to take logical steps to observe intercultural awareness in the Japanese language classroom. The spiral also helps to keep the two themes, citizenship education and foreign language education, on a same track to find a link between them. As previous researches show, implementing intercultural awareness consciously in the foreign language classroom is not very actively practiced, and whether intercultural awareness is observable in the Japanese language classroom is uncertain.

By taking the following steps, this study will identify theoretical reasoning for citizenship education, and presents practically if it works. While the study finds what is missing from present multicultural education, it will find ways to fill the gaps, and shows if Japanese language learning can be one of the ways. Moreover, it will find out whether Japanese language learning experiences can help the learner to develop their interculturality which could guide them to build up their self-enrichment.



A set of one spiral: Modified figure of the action research spiral (Kennus and McTaggart, 1992, p11)

4.5 Teaching program

A Genre based curriculum cycle in Years 4, 5 and 6 Japanese Language classes will be implemented consciously in action phase of the first spiral, and examine if the learner's

intercultural awareness can be evidenced. If so, how it is displayed by the learner. The observation points are: -

- What are possible ways to enhance the learner's intercultural awareness
 - What is the 'intercultural personality' (Kramersch, 1993, pp.9) developed by Japanese language learning experiences applying Intercultural Language Teaching.
 - How the children identify self and other/foreign in Japanese language class?
 - How learners are encouraged to find a meeting place between different forces, different cultures and different worldviews, through Japanese language learning experiences as it is expected by the Department of Education and Training in New South Wales. What is the impact on the learner from that?

The genre based curriculum cycle provides both the students and teacher with explicit assistance in learning the sort of language needed for success in the society where the language is needed. It provides opportunities for the learners to observe both their own culture and culture of the language they are learning. As Martin (1984) explains, a genre is a staged purposeful social process, goal oriented and works towards these goals in steps. He emphasizes that genres are not innate but learned through social interaction and they can be taught by using a variety of techniques. It guides the teachers to facilitate the learners to see the differences between the cultures. Christie (1990, cited in Hammond and Hood, p.61) defines genre as follows:

Genre refers to any staged, purposeful, cultural activity and thus it includes oral language genres as well as written language genres. A genre is characterized by having a schematic structure - a distinctive beginning, middle and end.

Susan Feez (1998) shows an example of the five stages of teaching and learning cycle using the genre approach. Stage one involves building the context of field of the topic or text type, Stage two is for modelling the text under focus. Stage three is a joint construction of the text. Stage four is an independent construction of the text. The final stage is to link with related texts. This cycle clearly explains how the genre approach accomplishes the notion of scaffolding as the way to engage students in maximum development. This approach is not especially developed for intercultural awareness, however, it provides a text as the specific cultural setting, and allows the learners and the teacher to draw out the specific cultural environment within the text as well as the cultural differences within the class member. It shows how to guide the students to learning a cultural practice through the cycles.

6. Data to be collected:

- Diary to record every involvement of this research
- Observation journal
- Interviews,
- Classroom interactions
- Supporting documents (lesson plan, teaching materials, work sheets, Japanese K-6 syllabus, the programming, learning assessments)

- Semi structured interviews with teachers and children during observation phase of each spiral.
- Semi structured interviews with policy makers of Japanese language education in NSW, and the members of syllabus writing teams.

- Multicultural policy documents, Australia's Language Policy, documents related to citizenship and multicultural education

The data collected will be analysed to answer the following research questions. The analysis will be framed by sociocultural theory together with critical theory and post structural theory.

Diary recorded every aspects of this research, Policy analysis and analysis of history of citizenship and multicultural education in Australia.

- To what extent is a sense of identity an attribute of citizenship education in New South Wales?
- To what extent is a sense an identity attribute of multicultural education in New South Wales?

The diary, a journal (data collected in the observation phase are written into a journal), audio recorded classroom discussion, supporting documents, interviewing with the teachers and the students as well as the policy makers and the members of the syllabus writing team will help to answer the following main research questions and sub-questions.

- . What contribution do Japanese language classes make to identity construction?
- How does Japanese language teaching and learning in New South Wales impact on children's understanding of interculturality?
 - What is interculturality developed by Japanese language learning experiences by applying Intercultural Language Teaching.
 - How the children identify self and other/foreign in Japanese language class?
 - How learners are encouraged to find a meeting place between different forces, different cultures and different worldviews, through Japanese language learning experiences as expected by the Department of Education and Training in New South Wales. What is the impact on the learner from the syllabus?

The discussion of all above questions will lead this study to answer the following question.

- Whether Japanese language learning experience can serve citizenship education in multicultural society.

5. Expected Outcomes

The following are expected to be produced as a result of this study.

1. Objectives and method of future implementation of citizenship education through foreign language education in primary schools in Australia
2. Articulation of interculturality developed in Japanese language learning experience in a primary school
3. Presentation of a model curriculum to develop intercultural awareness in Japanese language classroom.
4. Making suggestions as to what aspects of this program may easily be adopted by other LOTE classes.

6. Where I am now - Pilot study

6.1 Meeting with teachers of Language Other Than English in NSW

I started to visit four schools in term 2 of this year. The term was spent blending into the classrooms as well as getting to know the teachers of these schools. I also participated in the Japanese teachers' development day in May this year organised by the Association of Independent Schools of NSW, and also attended a conference organized by the Department of Education and Training NSW. Both of these activities expanded my network with Japanese language teachers as well as other community language teachers. Meeting with the teachers, exchanging opinions about teaching and discussing current issues of foreign language teaching especially in terms of intercultural awareness in language teaching helped me greatly to gain insight into my research to investigate what Japanese language learning can offer together with developing the language skills and what teachers need for their future teaching of this language.

Through this experience, I came to know that the teachers are not aware of how to incorporate teaching 'culture' in their language teaching program. Most of these hard working teachers said that they have developed the resources for culture teaching. However, the more I asked about the culture teaching the more clear I felt about their perception of culture teaching.

6.2 negotiations with the teachers

The negotiation with the teachers to implement the genre based curriculum cycles was started during the third term of this year. Both teachers agreed to implement it. I prepared the program based on the genre teaching cycles.

1. In the case of the group A

Although the teacher initially agreed to implement the genre teaching cycles, there was a strong opposition to the teaching cycle by the teacher. The reason was it seemed too difficult for the class although I was quite confident in the capability of the class after one full term of class observation, and I knew what they liked to do in the Japanese class. The program was altered many times, and the final version she agreed upon was quite different from that I originally planned.

In order to link the Japanese class with other key learning area, firstly the teacher was asked if there was any project she was planning for the class. She requested me to do something with Japanese classics because she planned English classics as a project work for the term and theme of family for the Japanese classes. We both agreed to use the 'Bamboo Cutter's Tale' as a model text for the Japanese class. This is the oldest fiction in Japanese literature, and it is read widely in Japan. There are many different versions of this story, and one of the simplest ones was used for the class. The main character of the story is an old bamboo cutter, his wife and an adopted daughter who they found in a bamboo tree. It contains many cultural themes, the use of which can be compared with other cultures, for example a Japanese person might compare another to bamboo. Another Japanese person would understand that this means their character is upright, strong, and honest, like the bamboo. The non Japanese reader would not understand the reference without the explanation. Enabling this discussion is central to such foreign language teaching. The participants and story line were also suited to the Japanese class, the theme of 'family'.

Narrowing the gaps between what the teacher wanted and what I wanted gave me the final structure. My program was developed to produce a simple cohesive text about 'the family'. However, the teacher did not think that the class was capable in doing it, and as circumstances would have it, we did not progress this project.

Intercultural Language Teaching aims to teach about cultures, comparing the first linguaculture with the target one, and supporting intercultural exploration. It cannot fulfil these aims unless we see the text as whole rather than seeing it on a vocabulary level.

6.2.2 In the case of the group B

This class's subject is Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) conducted primarily in Japanese. This teacher also initially agreed to implement the genre teaching cycle, however this ended up not be the case.

The program was planned around a theme of 'the forest' as requested by the teacher. My original plan was to read some factual texts about 'the forest' in Japanese and to produce a factual text as an independent work. However, the teacher did not think reading the Japanese text was the right way to go with the subject of HSIE. Her reason was, firstly, there might not be enough time to cover HSIE content if the Japanese text was to be read. Secondly, reading the text in Japanese or writing a set of text in Japanese should be done in Japanese class. Subsequently, the program was amended, and learning activities were chosen from the HSIE syllabus of NSW.

Although the teacher said that reading books and writing a text in Japanese language is not HSIE study, the class always started with an explanation of the Japanese language which appears in the activity sheets, and the students were expected to do most of their work in Japanese.

6.3 Interviews with the students

The following questions were asked.

Interview 1.

1. Do you speak any language other than English? Or have you learnt any other language besides Japanese?
2. Do your parents speak other languages?
3. Does any of your family speak other languages?
4. Were your parents born in Australia?
5. Have you been to any other countries?
6. Are you interested in other countries?
7. Do you have a friend who speaks other languages?
8. How long have you been learning Japanese?
9. What are you learning in Japanese class?
10. Why do you learn Japanese?
11. Do you like hearing things about Japan?
12. What do you like about Japanese class?
13. What sort of things do you know about Japan?
14. What sort of things do Japanese children like, do you know?
15. What do you think about Japan?
16. What do you think about Japanese people?
17. What do you think about learning Japanese language?
18. What do you like about learning Japanese?
19. What do you like to do in Japanese class?
20. What do you feel when you are in Japanese class?
21. How do you feel when you speak in Japanese?

22. What sort of things do you know about Japan?
23. Do you like hearing things about Japan?
24. How do you feel when you say some words in Japanese?
25. How do you feel when your classmates say some words in Japanese?

Interview 2

1. Tell me how you would describe yourself. Are you Australian?
2. What does it mean to be Australian? (Or Italian, Japanese etc)
3. Are all your friends Australian?
4. What about the others? (If bilingual ask what language is spoken with other friends)
5. Do you know what a citizen is? Does your teacher ever talk about being an Australian citizen? (If yes,) What does she mean?
6. Do you belong to lots of groups?
7. If you learn English and Japanese, does that mean you belong to both Australia and Japan? What's the difference?
8. Are people from other countries the same as you? (Do they act like you do? Do they think the same way you do?) Can you give me an example?
9. Do you hear about people from other countries at school? On TV? From your parents? In Japanese class? In science / English/HSIE?
10. If you went with your family to live in Japan, would you do the same things you do now in Australia?
11. Would you like to go the school in Japan? Do you think it would be the same as your school here?
12. (For those who speak other languages) Can you talk about different things in your language from English? Eg. Jokes, feelings, ideas, rude words etc.
13. What makes you the best person?
14. What is your opinion on the saddest incident that happened recently that affected the world. What can we do about it?
15. What is your opinion on people who live in Australia and wear their native costumes? (Japanese wear a kimono, Indian people wear Sari, some people wear scarves etc.)
16. What do you think of people that come from other countries and live in Australia? Do you know about refugees in Australia that are detained in refugee camps? What should we do about this issue?
17. Do you think disabled people are treated fairly? Example?

Interview 3

1. Do you think there is any difference between Australian and Japanese people? If yes, what is it? What is the similarity?
2. Do you think there is any difference between you and other kids, and you and Japanese kids?
3. Are there differences between a Japanese family and your family? Your family and your friend's family?
4. What are your opinions on Japanese customs like bowing?
5. Do you remember Setsubun festival in Japan? In setsubun people throw beans to chase evil spirits away from the family. What do you think customs like that? Would you do it with your family?
6. What type of people is called racist, in your opinion? What would you do when you have that type of people around you?

7. Do you think learning Japanese language helped you in any way? Do you think learning the Japanese culture helped you in any way? Do you think learning Japanese language and culture changed you in any way?

6.4 Issues

Firstly, it is the approaches to this manner of language teaching. When an oral explanation was given to the teachers about the cycle, they agreed to implement the genre based teaching cycle. However, when the actual program was introduced to them, both of them rejected it. In my observation, the rejection was due to differing perceptions about language teaching. The genre approach sees language as culture, whereas both teachers saw language and culture separately, although they agreed with the importance of cultural appropriateness and social-cultural consciousness when designing their lessons.

Both teachers' attitudes are common to many LOTE teachers I have met, notably, more experienced and skilful teachers. They are keen to develop their language teaching materials together with culture study of the target language. However, their approach is more like the 'culture as practices' approach. According to Bianco, Liddicoat and Crozet(1999, p.9), it seeks to describe culture in terms of the practices and values which typify them. They further explain, within this paradigm cultural competence becomes knowing about what people from a given cultural group are likely to do and understanding the cultural values placed upon certain ways of acting or upon certain beliefs. It is criticised the way that this paradigm tends to present cultures as relatively static and homogeneous. This in turn leads to a possibility of stereotyping the target culture. Intercultural language teaching aims at supporting the development of intercultural competence through the learning of foreign languages and by extension through the learning of how language and culture connect in one's first and target language. Genre approach is not especially developed for intercultural awareness, but it provides a text as the specific cultural setting, and allows the learners and the teacher to draw out the specific cultural environment within the text as well as the cultural differences between the class members. It shows how to guide the students to learning a cultural practice through the cycles. However, if the teachers have their own belief in their teaching, it is difficult to share the same teaching approaches as the program writer. I think the gaps between theory and practice appears in this type of circumstances. For example, the syllabus writing team in NSW writes the Japanese language syllabus according to what current theory encourages in the field. In the process of this development, actual classroom teachers' opinions are considered, before finalising the syllabus. However, when it comes to actual practice, the syllabus sometimes is interpreted in many different ways. In some cases, the original theory behind the syllabus is ignored.

The second issue is the time constraints. Primary schools are busy with other co-curricula and Japanese was often cut out whenever schools have extra curricula. It shows how LOTE teaching is positioned in the primary school teaching environment. This was also evidenced by members of the Board of Studies NSW when I attended the structured sample group meeting, K-10 Draft Syllabuses for LOTE, organised by the Board in September 2002. This meeting was meant to be for teachers from kindergarten to year 10, to exchange their opinions or to ask questions on the draft LOTE syllabus. However, the organisers ignored content for primary school by saying there are not many primary schools teaching LOTE as a regular curriculum.

The final issue is the interview process. The semi structured interviews were held with the students, twice with group A and three times with group B. With group A, their library time was allocated to conduct these interviews. However this time was not enough to conduct individual interviews, and as a result, group interviews of 6-7 were conducted. With group B, one whole of class interview, one group of three interview, and one individual interview were conducted during their class time. As the class numbers are small with group A (15 students) it was manageable to conduct a whole of class interview. It was noticeable that when in a group, the students tended to follow a student who had an opinion or who spoke first, rather than present a different opinion. Hence to gain a clear picture, it is important to organize enough time to include individual interviews. The interview questions may need to be modified after the implementation of the genre teaching cycle to better help answer the research questions.

7. What am I going to do next?

Through experience from the pilot study, I have learnt the following.

1. The need to find a teacher who agrees with the genre teaching approach.
2. The need to ensure the teachers have sufficient time to complete the teaching cycle.
3. The need to organise enough time to interview the participants.

When considering the above points for the action phase of the research, the following are accepted as vital to the overview of this research:

1. Policy analysis
 - Multicultural policy
 - Citizenship education policy
 - Other public policies. Eg. NSW Racial Vilification Act, etc.
2. Study the development of Japanese language education in NSW
3. Implementing the genre teaching cycle.
4. Interviewing the policy makers, the syllabus writing teams of Japanese language in NSW

8. Reflection

I have experienced frustration at not being able to fully present my ideas to the teachers I approached. There should have been more explanation beside the technical perspectives of the genre teaching cycle, while appreciating their experiences in teaching. I needed to explain to the teachers the purpose of my research, the whole process and the possible outcomes of my research. Moreover, I could have even told them of my passion toward this research, as choosing this topic for my PhD study was deeply influenced by my background; a migrant woman, from a Non English Speaking Background and married to a man from yet another culture. However, this pilot study was very valuable as I am a student researcher who has just started research activity.

As Beck (1998) agrees that however important it may be to debate curriculum content and structure, the subjects of citizenship, moral or spiritual education require the development of aims and objectives based on the clearest possible theoretical analysis. Together with my personal feelings, this research is going to define the role/place of Japanese language teaching in regard to citizenship education within the New South Wales education system.

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