

Multilingualism in JALT

Rudolf Reinelt

Ehime University

Alain Lauffenburger

Kagoshima Immaculate Heart University

Andrew Zitzmann

Japan Association for Language Teaching

Kip Cates

Tottori University

Reference data:

Reinelt, R., Lauffenburger, A., Zitzmann, A., & Cates, K. (2006). Multilingualism in JALT.

In K. Bradford-Watts, C. Ikeguchi, & M. Swanson (Eds.) *JALT2005 Conference Proceedings*. Tokyo: JALT.

In order to promote multilingualism in JALT, this paper sets out an overview of the forum by Rudolf Reinelt, followed by a statement on multilingualism in JALT by Alain Lauffenburger, a partial reaction by Andrew Zitzmann, and a description of multilingual practices by Kip Cates before Rudolf Reinelt uses the business plan metaphor in order to demonstrate present and future issues of the Other Language Educators Special Interest Group in the concluding section.

JALTにおける多言語使用を促進するために、この論の第一部ではフォーラムの全体を紹介し(Reinelt)、次にJALTにおける多言語使用に関する見解(Lauffenburger)、及びJALT側からの返答(Zitzmann)、続いて外国語授業における多言語使用の基礎的ないくつかの例を提示し(Cates)、最後に、それらを受けてビジネス・プランの比喩を使用して現在及びこれからの課題を紹介しJALT(英語及び日本語以外の)「他の外国語教育支部」の推薦(Reinelt)が述べられる。

Rudolf Reinelt

Ehime University

JALT, the Japan Association for Language Teaching, is concerned with all aspects of the teaching and learning of languages. While it fulfills its pedagogical and research aims at the highest level, it seems that this is not so much the case in the area of languages. Obviously, English is served at every level of teaching and learning, and in a way few other organizations in Asia offer, and this holds to a somewhat lesser degree for Japanese as well. Other foreign languages, however, seem to be underrepresented in JALT, and in order to give these a boost, a forum on Multilingualism was held at JALT2005 featuring 4 speakers: Alain Lauffenburger, Andrew Zitzmann, Kip Cates, and Rudolf Reinelt.

Flexible as JALT is, it has always included multilingual components (presentations, papers, etc.) in languages other than English, although often for very small (negligible) numbers. While members representing such languages feel that JALT offers excellent contributions to language teaching, they would like it to be more appealing to their colleagues. In his contribution, Alain Lauffenburger explores what might prevent them from becoming more active, taking himself as an example. To this and other multilingualism aspects of JALT, Andrew Zitzmann responds from inside the organization.

Once multilingualism is accepted and supported, as it is at the moment by JALT, it is important to demonstrate how it can be integrated into the language teaching process itself. Kip Cates' contribution gives ample examples how this can be brought about.

Still, in every organization, personal engagement and methodological variety has to be supplanted by appropriate representation. OLE, the Other Language Educators Special Interest Group, tries to represent such learners and teachers from within and especially from outside of JALT on an organizational level. It is from this point of view that Rudolf Reinelt contributes his brief conclusion.

Multilingualism and linguistic democracy, in JALT and beyond

Alain Lauffenburger

Kagoshima Immaculate Heart University

I do believe, like many other JALT members, that it was a brilliant idea of the founders of JALT to create a “Japan Association for Language Teaching,” and not simply a “Japan Association for English Teaching”. But the unfortunate reality is that JALT has, in fact, over the years become an association totally dominated by the English language and by English speakers. One of the consequences of this trend is that JALT has become unattractive to many teachers of languages other than English, who feel increasingly uncomfortable in JALT. A vicious circle has created a dynamic which could eliminate from it languages other than English within a few years. I myself have been considering leaving JALT for this reason, although I have been a member of it since my arrival in Japan 19 years ago. However, I decided not to simply disappear silently, but to try to give it a chance to change the present trend. I am doing so because it is my conviction that we need a real “Japan Association for Language Teaching” that would provide a

much needed forum for the promotion of multilingualism in Japan and beyond, a place where representatives of all languages and cultures could meet and interchange on an equal basis, and which could indeed lay the basis for linguistic democracy—which is, I believe, an essential ingredient for a world democracy. There is certainly no easy and simple solution to the dilemma of linguistic human rights vs. efficient international communication, including within the JALT organization itself, but this should not be a reason to ignore the problem.

The war of languages and linguistic imperialism vs. linguistic human rights and linguistic democracy

Louis-Jean Calvet coined the terrible expression “la guerre des langues” (“the war of languages”) (Calvet, 1987). Oops, are we “language warriors” in a global war of languages? And Robert Phillipson, with his landmark book “Linguistic Imperialism” (Phillipson, 1992), launched a bitter debate (Bisong, 1995; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995; Phillipson, 1996; Seaton, 1997; Phillipson, 1999; Sureh Canagarajah, 1999; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000; Modiano, 2001; Phillipson, 2003; Phillipson & Karnami, 2005), including a passionate rebuff by David Crystal (Crystal, 2000). Oops again, are we “linguistic imperialists” in a struggle for global dominance? Phillipson claims:

“In effect the flowering of ELT has been the direct result of state support.” (Phillipson, 1992, p. 310)

“[...] the ‘white man’s burden’ became the English native-speaking teacher’s burden, and [...] the role played by ELT is integral to the functioning of the contemporary world order.” (ibid., p. 318)

Phillipson concludes his book with a question:

“Can ELT contribute constructively to greater linguistic and social equality, and if so, how could a critical ELT be committed, theoretically and practically, to combating linguisticism?” (ibid., p. 319)

These questions cannot leave us, as language educators, indifferent.

Our responsibility as language educators and as global educators

I believe that it is a good sign, and a healthy thing, that we have not only a “global language” (Crystal, 1997), but also a debate on globalization in general and on linguistic globalization in particular. And yes, I do believe that there is indeed something wrong in our world order in general, and in our linguistic world order in particular. In recent years, I have felt that there is indeed something wrong in JALT. Or is it really normal that the “Japan Association for Language Teaching” is dominated by foreigners and by a foreign language? How could this happen? How could it have come this far?

What can we do in JALT?

I want nothing but the equality of all human languages, and non-discrimination of speakers of any language in our world in general as well as in JALT, just as international law, as stipulated in the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” (UN General Assembly, 1948), the “International Covenant

on Civil and Political Rights” (UN General Assembly, 1966) and the “Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities” (UN Commission on Human Rights, 1992), states. This is basic. Once we have agreed on this basic principle, we can start reflecting on its concrete applications.

I think JALT should give clear signals to reverse the present trend and begin attracting, again and more than ever before, people from our profession, teachers of all languages, Japanese and non-Japanese alike. We need to create a new dynamic for a new and even better JALT. Here are a few ideas to make JALT more multilingual and fairer:

- JALT should give a clear statement underlining its commitment to multilingualism, the equality of all languages and cultures, and the defense and promotion of linguistic human rights besides the teaching of languages in its literature, on its Internet site, etc.
- Japanese-English bilingualism should be the rule throughout the organization. The present situation, where the Japanese language has in fact been relegated to a lower status, is in itself a shocking and intolerable situation which is alienating many Japanese people, turned into a linguistic and ethnic minority at home, in a Japan-based association. This, in my eyes, gravely distorts human relations within JALT and hampers its enlargement. JALT should not be a *gaijin* association, and a JALT conference should not be a *gaijin matsuri* (a “foreigners’ festival”), as someone recently put it.
- Japanese is Japan’s national language, and should as such have in JALT a status at least equal to that of English, both in principle and in practice. But Japanese is also an international language. Every time Japanese and non-Japanese people, or non-Japanese among themselves, communicate in Japanese, they use this language as an international or interethnic language, don’t they? And this will doubtless be increasingly the case with the internationalization of Japan. I myself strongly wish to have the opportunity to use both English and Japanese as the two main languages in JALT, thus two interethnic languages rather than just the current compulsory one (besides other languages like French and German).
- Introduce sheltered presentations in Japanese for non-Japanese, just as we now have presentations in sheltered English for non-native speakers of English.
- To its Japanese and English names, JALT should add a name in the other languages represented in its organization, at least German and French, the two languages which have been most active beside English and Japanese for many years, for a start. This symbolic act would certainly make a difference in the consciousness of people.
- One should invite more teachers of languages other than English and Japanese to join JALT and set up groups of teachers of their language, have forums for teaching a vast range of languages—

- more Chinese, more Korean, more Spanish, and above all more Japanese.
- On the JALT Internet site, one should find, alongside information in English and Japanese, also at least general information in other languages.
 - For presentations at the JALT National Conference, one should be able to apply in languages other than English and Japanese, as the French Forum made a start this year.
 - In the conference handbook, the title and the summary for presentations in languages other than English should appear in the original language. If one sees a title or a summary in an unknown language, one looks for something else: there is always plenty of choice.
 - JALT should invite to the Educational Materials Exposition more publishers of materials for languages other than English. This too would give a positive signal, attracting more teachers of more languages, thus creating a larger market for a larger range of educational materials, and so on.
 - Main speakers at the JALT National Conference should come more often from countries other than English speaking countries. I also think that, alongside supporters of “Global English,” “World Englishes,” and the like, we should also invite more critical people such as Robert Phillipson, who is himself an EFL teacher and a

longtime insider of the ESL/EFL business, and thus encourage a real debate on those important issues. I believe that more critical, more lateral, more provocative thinking can benefit JALT and stimulate it to grow beyond its present limitations and become an even better and more mature “Association for Language Teaching”.

- Plenary sessions should not be only in English. There should be a balance with plenary sessions in Japanese, in sheltered Japanese preferably. Likewise, English plenary sessions should better take in account the fact that the audience is of different language backgrounds. Currently, one too often gets the impression that English speakers are addressing English speakers, as if they were among themselves.

Got any other ideas? Let us share them! The more brainstorming we do, the more interesting and practicable ideas will emerge from it.

Conclusion

Francis Fukuyama claimed in his landmark book that the fall of the Soviet system and the triumph of the Western economic and political system marked “The End of History” (Fukuyama, 1992). But I think many people will agree today that this belief was false. Likewise, many people believe today that the globalization of English marks the end of our planet’s linguistic history. I think that this belief is false as well. Many analysts believe that the rise of global English is intrinsically connected to the rise of the American Empire,

or maybe rather of the Anglo-American Empire, and that the decline of the empire, even only a relative decline, might very well mark a decline of global English as well (see Note 1). Inherent linguistic and pedagogic difficulties as well as diverse resistances will put a break to its rise, and old and new challengers will prevent the hegemonic spread of global English. There are clear signs, in particular, that China will claim for Chinese, the world's mostly spoken language, a status equal to that of English. We will thus rather have to cope for quite a long time with several more or less global languages (I myself actually still prefer using the good old expression international languages to qualify them). And I think it will be good. Our world is multilingual and should remain multilingual. Maybe the curse of Babel should rather be considered a benediction (see Note 2).

I have a dream, a dream of a multipolar world (Amin, 2005) of different but equal peoples, nations, cultures and languages, without domination and discrimination. History is not chaotic, haphazard, and directionless. It goes along a line. It has been moving ahead towards better human rights, more justice, more welfare, more democracy throughout the past centuries, despite all setbacks. And it will keep moving ahead, in linguistic matters as well as in others. I strongly believe, with many people worldwide, that “another world is possible” (Fisher & Ponniah, 2003), also in linguistic matters, a world without a war of languages, without linguistic imperialism and linguistic discrimination—a new linguistic world order, a global “linguistic ecology” (Calvet, 1999). And I do believe that in this perspective another JALT is possible, a truly multilingual and non-discriminatory Japan Association for Language Teaching, where every

language teacher in Japan can feel at home to the full benefit of all—teachers and students alike.

Notes

(1) There is a rich literature on this topic, on “Empire” building and its problems and consequences (Chalmers, 2000; Pilz, 2003), on the relation of cultural and linguistic imperialism to general imperialism (Galtung, 1980), on linguistic domination as a means of global domination (Durand, 2001; Durand, 2002), on the resistance against the “Empire” (Boniface, 2003), and on the decline of the “Empire” (Hardt & Negri, 2000; Todd, 2002), to name just a few titles besides the ones already named before. In his book “Après l’Empire. Essai sur la décomposition du système américain” (= “After the Empire. On the decomposition of the American System”), Emmanuel Todd comes to the conclusion that “l’Amérique perdra cette dernière partie pour la maîtrise du monde. Elle redeviendra une grande puissance parmi d’autres.” (= “America will lose this last game for the domination of the world. It will again become one powerful state among others.”)

(2) It must be remembered that the present spread of English is based on no international agreement. The only such agreement relates to international air traffic and postal services. English is the international language for air traffic, and French for postal services, but since the latter part is often not being respected any more, the whole agreement is in jeopardy. Besides this, every international organization decides on its official “international” languages. For example, the UN has six official languages with equal status: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

References

- Amin, S. (2005). *Pour un monde multipolaire*. Paris: Editions Syllepse.
- Bisong, J. (1995). Language choice and cultural imperialism: a Nigerian perspective. *ELT Journal* 49 (2) 122-132.
- Boniface, P. (2003). *La France cotre l'Empire*. Paris: Editions Robert Laffont.
- Calvet, L.-J. (1987). *La Guerre des langues et les politiques linguistiques*. Paris: Editions Payot.
- Calvet, L.-J. (1999). *Pour une écologie des langues du monde*. Paris: Editions Plon.
- Chalmers, J. (2000). *The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC.
- Crystal, D. (1997). *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (2000). On trying to be Crystal-clear: a Response to Phillipson. *Applied Linguistics* 21 (3) 415-423.
- Durand, C.-X. (2001). *La Mise en place des monopoles du savoir*. Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Durand, C.-X. (2002). *La nouvelle guerre contre l'intelligence. II. La manipulation mentale par la destruction des langues*. Paris: Office d'Édition Impression Librairie (O.E.I.L.).
- Fisher, W.F. & Ponniah, T. (2003). *Another World is possible*. London: Zed Books. (French translation : *Un autre monde est possible. Pour une autre mondialisation: Le Forum social mondial*. Paris: L'Aventurine. 2003)
- Fukuyama F. (1992). *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Perennial, HarperCollins.
- Galtung, J. (1980). *The True Worlds. A Transnational Perspective*. New York: The Free Press. (Quoted in: Phillipson, 1992)
- Hardt, M. & Negri, A. (2000). *Empire*. Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Modiano, M. (2001). Linguistic imperialism, cultural integrity, and EIL (=English as an International Language). *ELT Journal* 50 (4) 339-346.
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Phillipson, R. (1996). Linguistic Imperialism: African perspectives. In *ELT Journal* 50/2. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (pp. 160-167)
- Phillipson, R. (1999). Voice in Global English: Unheard Chords in Crystal Loud and Clear. Review Article of: 'English as a Global Language', by David Crystal. *Applied Linguistics* 20(2) 265-276.
- Phillipson, R. (2003). *English-Only Europe? Challenging Language Policy*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Phillipson, R. & Karmani, S. (2005). Talking Shop: 'Linguistic imperialism' 10 years on: an interview with Robert Phillipson. Robert Phillipson talks to Sohail Karmani. *ELT Journal* 59 (3) 244-249.
- Phillipson, R. & Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1995). Linguistic Rights and Wrongs. In *Applied Linguistics* 16/4. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (pp. 483-504)
- Pilz, P. (2003). *Mit Gott gegen alle. Amerikas Kampf um die Weltherrschaft*. Stuttgart & München: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt.

- Seaton, I. (1997). Comment: Linguistic non-imperialism. In *ELT Journal* 51(4) 381-382.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000). *Linguistic Genocide in Education – or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?* Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Suresh Canagarajah, A. (1999). *Resisting Linguistic Imperialism in English Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Todd, E. (2002). *Après l'Empire. Essai sur la décomposition du système américain*. Paris: Editions Gallimard.

Relevant websites

- United Nations General Assembly (1948): *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* [Online] Available: <<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>>
- United Nations General Assembly (1966): *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* [Online] Available: <<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instrree/b3ccpr.htm>>
- United Nations Commission on Human Rights (1992): *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities* [Online] Available: <http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_minori.htm>

Supporting multilingualism in JALT

Andrew Zitzmann

Japan Association for Language Teaching

As the name of our organization suggests, we are an organization for language teachers, and not only English teachers. Although the purpose of the organization, as its constitution states, is the carrying out of activities “for those interested in the improvement of language teaching and learning in Japan and contributing [sic] to the development of activities in language teaching and learning, social education, and international cooperation” (JALT, 2005), it has been acted on almost exclusively from an English perspective. Even though the general global trend has been moving towards English as a lingua franca, there are many other languages that have played and will play an important role in education in Japan.

JALT, as an umbrella organization, needs to make more of an effort to meet the needs and demands of those teaching other-than-English languages. It has taken JALT too long to fully act on its stated purpose. There are numerous other language-related organizations in existence for the various languages being taught within the Japanese education system. The organization now seems ready to proactively encourage other languages.

The holding of the multilingualism forum at JALT2006 is a positive sign that changes are on the way. People are now willing to step forward and bring about change, as one person alone cannot be expected to do all the work, especially when several languages are involved, as multilingualism would imply. It is now up to JALT, with

the assistance of the OLE-SIG and its members, to identify the area in which it can play the most beneficial role within the larger language teaching community, and using the resources available to it. The suggestions that Lauffenburger proposes are a very positive step forward. Once it has found its niche, JALT will be better able to serve its members and community in a multilingual manner.

References

JALT. *JALT Constitution*. Retrieved on March 7, 2005 from the JALT homepage [Online] Available:< <http://jalt.org/main/constitution>>.

Multilingualism, language awareness and world citizenship

Kip A. Cates

Tottori University

My interest in multilingualism stems from my background as a modern language major. At university in Canada, I majored in three languages: French, German, and Japanese. Frustration at traditional grammar-translation teaching methods led me to drop out of university and travel to Europe where I managed to acquire communicative fluency in French and German. That was the start of a 4-year odyssey around the world which opened my eyes to the diversity of the world's countries and cultures. Since then, I've been an avid student of the world's people and the languages they speak. At present, I've been to 50 countries and speak 9 languages (all badly): French, German, Spanish,

Russian, Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Japanese... plus a bit of English. As a language teacher and global educator, part of my work with Japanese EFL students is to share with them the excitement of foreign languages and the importance of learning about the world, its peoples and cultures.

Much of my thinking about multilingual education is based on the work of language educators such as Mario Pei, Eric Hawkins, and David Crystal. Mario Pei was an American linguist working in the 1950s who did a great deal to promote interest in the world's languages. He wrote a range of popular books with titles such as "The Story of Language" (Pei, 1952) and "Language for Everybody" (Pei, 1958). In these, he argued that students shouldn't just focus on one language but should familiarize themselves with minority languages, languages in neighboring countries and the major languages of the world. With this aim, he taught a unique course at Columbia University entitled "The World's Chief Languages" which focused on 37 languages around the globe.

Eric Hawkins is a British language educator working in the field of "language awareness." In his book "Awareness of Language" (Hawkins, 1987), he argues for the creation of a separate course at school which would stimulate young people's interest in language as a phenomenon and in the rich variety of languages in the world. David Crystal is a popular British linguist, language expert and author of the landmark "Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language" (Crystal, 1987). Through this book, he aims to celebrate language, promote awareness of the world's languages, and convey the magic of foreign language learning.

One aspect of my work in promoting multilingual awareness concerns a content-based course I've designed on "English for World Citizenship" which I teach at Tottori University. This one-semester, four-skills course involves teaching EFL through international themes aimed at practicing language skills while promoting global awareness. The course includes a series of 90-minute lessons on the following themes:

World Names	World Languages	World Music
World Religions	World Writing Systems	World Money
World Flags	World Gestures	World Education

In the English course, one class period is devoted to the topic of world languages. This begins with a quiz on greetings in different languages to see if students can identify phrases such as *ni hao*, *anyong haseyo*, *bonjour*, *buenos dias*, and *salam alaykum*. Students go on to study world language families (something they know surprisingly little about) with a focus on the Indo-European family including Romance, Germanic, and Slavic languages. Next, students read basic information (the history, number of speakers, places spoken, unique features) for seven world languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Korean, Russian, and Spanish. After that, they practice listening to recorded examples of these languages being spoken, then do a language recognition quiz to see if they can identify these from the sound alone. At the end of class, students learn and practice basic conversation expressions in all seven languages (*Hello, How are you? Fine, Thank you, My name is..., Good-bye*) until they can greet each other and hold a short conversation in simple French, Chinese, Arabic, Russian, or Korean. As homework, students can either research a particular language or try

out their foreign language conversation abilities with our university's foreign students and describe the experience in English.

A second class period is devoted to 'world writing systems.' This begins with a short quiz to see what writing systems students know. Next, students study (in English) about the history and features of 10 major alphabets: Latin, Greek, Cyrillic, Hebrew, Arabic, Egyptian Hieroglyphics, Devanagari, Thai, Hangul, and Chinese. They then practice identifying these writing systems on sight using newspapers from countries such as Russia, Korea, Israel, and India. As homework, students try writing by hand several of the scripts they studied in class (e.g., Arabic, Thai, Egyptian hieroglyphics) and submit an English report about the experience.

These two classes are taught in English, so students get intensive practice in English speaking, listening, reading, and writing. At the same time, they come away with greater linguistic awareness, a basic knowledge of world languages, heightened interest in foreign languages, and with world citizen skills such as the ability to identify languages or writing systems on sight.

As a global educator, I encourage high school and college EFL teachers to add this kind of "language awareness" or "world languages" component to their teaching. However, I also believe we should rethink our approach to teaching languages in school, especially at earlier levels. What would a multilingual approach to foreign languages in elementary school look like? How would this be different from the current language education system in Japan which focuses on English?

Let me give an analogy. Can you imagine going into a 31-flavors ice-cream shop, seeing an amazing variety of flavors on display, then being told by the shop clerk, “Sorry, we only serve vanilla. No tasting other flavors. Take it or leave it!” That is much like the way we introduce children to foreign languages now. To me, teaching English as the first and only foreign language in high school is like going into a restaurant with an exciting variety of exotic food and being told, “Here’s the menu. You’re only allowed to order one dish—English. You have to eat it. And if you don’t, we’ll force feed you.” By focusing solely on English as “the” foreign language at school, young people miss the chance to explore the magic of language and the amazing diversity of the languages of the world.

My image of a good early language program is one which offers elementary school children a rich menu of world languages and gives them a chance to taste a number of these before choosing one or more to focus on. I would argue that, instead of waiting until junior high school for formal language courses and then putting all our eggs into one basket (English), elementary schools should offer a course or component called “An Introduction to World Languages.” This would be a fun survey course where children could explore and play with the sounds, words, expressions, and gestures of languages such as Chinese, Russian, Korean, Spanish, Ainu and Arabic. One such initiative is the European primary school program “Eveil aux Langues” (*Evlang*) directed by Michel Candelier in France (Candelier, 2003). This attempts to stimulate children’s interests in world languages through child-centered activities dealing with languages as varied as Swahili, Hindi, Chinese, and Navaho.

This essay should give you a general idea of my thoughts on multilingual education, language teaching, and world citizenship. I’d be interested to hear your comments.

References

- Candelier M. (2003), *Janua Linguarum - L'introduction de l'éveil aux langues dans le curriculum*, European Center for Modern Languages / Council of Europe.
- Crystal, D. (1987). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Hawkins, E. (1987). *Awareness of Language: An Introduction*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Pei, M. (1958). *Language for Everybody*. New York: Pocket Books.
- Pei, M. (1952). *The Story of Language*. London, UK: George Allen Unwin.

Relevant websites

- Evlang: [Online] Available: www.isoc.siu.no/isocii.nsf/print/870118FEA6FAD049C1256CA6004FA097
- Mario Pei: [Online] Available: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mario_Pei

Reaching out to multilingual Japan beyond JALT

Rudolf Reinelt

Ehime University

Academic reports of studies and their results usually only contain a small concluding section on future tasks. On the other hand, business plans rarely look backwards and are, by their very nature, designed to look to the future and what is to be done there. In order to reach out to multilingual features in Japan beyond JALT, the rest of this paper discusses the Other Language Educators (OLE) SIG using the metaphor of a business plan. Its main factors give structure to the issues OLE is already dealing with or may face in the future. (Of course, JALT as a non-for-profit organization is not supposed “to make money,” but in order not to lose money, it does have to follow market rules, and so does OLE to a certain degree. It is with this understanding that the following discussion is presented.)

Business plans

Business plans, being a business themselves, come in many varieties, as any Internet search reveals, but most contain at least the following necessary factors in this order:

- a. “A sound business concept” (and description)
- b. An “understanding of [the] market” (and its strategies)

- c. “A healthy, growing ...stable industry” (the product or service)
- d. “Capable management” (How to make it a success) (i.e., personnel)
- e. “Able financial control”
- f. “A consistent business focus” (who, where, what, competition and position of the business)
- g. “Anticipation of changes, e.g., plans for conducting business online” (Tiffany, 2001).

Still other factors come into play such as ministerial decisions and the limited relationship between education (teaching) and its outcomes (e.g., FL productions of the learners), but have to be left out here for reasons of space.

OLE in the light of business plan factors

This part briefly discusses what OLE is already doing and what it can do relative to the abovementioned necessary factors:

- a) Due to a considerable number of factors beyond its control, such as ministerial orders, university policies, learner backgrounds and preferences etc., OLE can, and in order to be flexible enough, should even under the law not become a sound *business*. *It does, however, have a concept* in its mission statement. This spells out how it intends to help its members:

The OLE SIG Mission statement

OTHER LANGUAGE EDUCATORS (OLE, forming)
Special Interest Group gathers and disseminates information

on all aspects of the teaching and learning of languages and cultures beyond English and Japanese. OLE can be reached at <ole@jalt.org>.

The OLE SIG through its newsletter and other events:

- gathers and disseminates information on all aspects of the teaching and learning of languages and cultures beyond English and Japanese, and, especially,
- tries to help such teachers and learners, by developing a network of friendship and mutual support, to arouse interest in their field and to provide information and material to enable them to optimize the organizational conditions for their study, work and research to the best of their abilities.”

b) While OLE is, even financially, in no position to attain a complete understanding of the situation of foreign languages beyond English (“its market”) in Japan beyond what its networked participants (members, others etc.) contribute, OLE has in recent years provided research and information services for businesses on and in other languages, such as this year on Spanish (name on request) and on other language education in high schools (name on request).

c) Under the conditions mentioned immediately below, a number of (not so obvious) services are being offered. In the present situation in Japan, where

- under pressure from technical majors, and
- under the impression that in this age of globalization anything can be achieved solely with English and, accordingly other FLs requirements can be reduced if not abolished,

- there are enough vacancies for students and universities have to attract them by being “easy” by not requiring other foreign languages considered difficult.

OLE can hardly report “a healthy, growing stable industry” and its product, Other Language Education is in ever decreasing demand, but the following services are on the agenda:

- Under the above-mentioned circumstances, other FLs should make the best of the following double (mutual) relationship: Other languages education succeeds English in teaching and administrative developments (i.e. always follows with a considerable time lapse and in a less important position), but precedes English in administrative problems, e.g., when abolishing FL teaching completely in order to appear easy enough so as to attract more students (details on request). (This policy, drastic because of its unforeseeable ramifications, may, however, backfire. In times of student hunting, this may look nice for the university, but the next student generation will be in trouble, according to a student comment on a university questionnaire on abolishing 2FLs at Ehime University, June 2006.). In this situation, JALT and OLE should provide universities with arguments for keeping and requiring a 2nd FL.
- OLE serves JALT by contributing theoretically. Many results from English as a FL learning research hold for other FLs as well or can be applied with little difficulty. Other FL learning in

Japan is almost always 2FL (or FL2+) learning (Hufeisen (2003, n.d.) and Reinelt, 2005). For this reason, still other characteristics hold, such as having a default FL to fall back (Williams and Hammarberg 1998) on.

- In an English-dominated world, other FLs add an important wider cultural view and keep globally oriented.
- Research in the practice of multiple FL learning has all but eluded English language teaching, (but is of the highest importance for all other languages.). At times, other FL research is more advanced than English as FL research in the Anglo-American context, simply because it is more often confronted with unsheltered FL learning conditions. For example, subjective theories of the learners were already a topic in Freudenstein (1972) and Kallenbach (1996), before they were treated in the US and in Japan. The European framework of reference and its attempted application to Japan (Parmenter, 2006) is another striking example.
- In this age of publish or perish, the OLE SIG has helped JALT OLE conference presenters in the early stages of their conference proceedings submissions, so far quite successfully (Reinelt, 2006)

d) In order to provide OLE with what corresponds to “capable management”, i.e. *personnel*, it is bringing in/ winning teachers and researchers of ever more languages

who are better qualified academically. In the future, inviting overseas researchers from the target languages is also planned.

However, OLE is also aware of the problems of making JALT more multilingual as presentations given in two languages easily:

- double the amount of speaking time, and
- double the amount of space, if written in English and another language,
- strain resources when looking for volunteers for translation or review.
- Organizing other language presentations in blocks at the annual conference, such as the long-running German and French Workshops, has so far proved successful and enabled time, space and an atmosphere for bringing in new members every year.
- Still, in order “to make it a success” by attracting more Other Language Educators, introducing JALT and making it present everywhere is certainly one of the tasks at hand. This requires more JALT and OLE related events, to which also more institutional backing from JALT will have to be provided. One way is to disseminate more information about JALT and OLE to other FL teacher organizations.
- More Japanese other language educators have to be attracted. They are teaching the majority of such courses.

e) Financially, OLE is operating on a marginal budget only, but because of its always willing and supportive members, it has been able to circumvent financial difficulties. The new treasurer will certainly contribute to this already favorable state. Nevertheless, new financial options are always being explored. There are, however, limits to its expectable membership, since for OLE teachers will always be their second association in addition to their own language teachers association.

(f) The consistent business focus, i.e. who, where, what, competition and position of the business is both shrinking, because of factors mentioned above, and widening due to the continuing internationalization, requiring, in theory, ever wider multilingual contacts with which OLE will have to link up)

g) OLE teachers (and in consequence, learners) constantly have to adjust to new circumstances, such as the abolition of their posts in certain university departments in Japan. In order to streamline the anticipation of such changes, which often only precede those for English (abolition of difficult courses in order to facilitate university entry), OLE issues a newsletter, and it has also already started (conducting part of its business) in a list on the internet at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ole_jalt/ (Gromik, 2006).

Conclusion

This contribution, using the metaphor of a business plan despite the limited relationship between business and education after introducing its mission statement as concept, discussed market, service, personnel and financial aspects

and issues of OLE before hinting at how it effectively anticipates future changes in order to make it more attractive to multilingually oriented teachers and learners throughout Japan.

Alain Lauffenburger has been in Japan since 1986, and is teaching at Kagoshima Immaculate Heart University in Satsuma-Sendai, Kagoshima Prefecture. His interests include bilingualism, language rights, international communication and linguistic democracy. He can be contacted at [<alain@jundai.k-junshin.ac.jp>](mailto:alain@jundai.k-junshin.ac.jp)

Andrew Zitzmann was the current Director of Program for JALT. He teaches at various universities in the Kitakyushu area, as well as running his own English language school. He grew up in a trilingual environment in Canada, lived in Europe, and has been in Japan since 1993.

Kip A. Cates has a B.A. in Modern Languages and Linguistics (French, German, Japanese) from the University of British Columbia, Canada and an M.A. in Applied Linguistics from the University of Reading, England. He is the coordinator of JALT's "Global Issues in Language Education" National Special Interest Group (GILE SIG) and editor of its "Global Issues in Language Education Newsletter". He teaches English at Tottori University as well as graduate courses on global education for the MA-in- TESOL program of Teachers College, Columbia University (Tokyo campus). He has lived, studied or traveled in over 50 countries and speaks 9 languages. Email: [<kcates@fed.tottori-u.ac.jp>](mailto:kcates@fed.tottori-u.ac.jp)

Rudolf Reinelt has been teaching all aspects of German on all levels at Ehime University and various other institutions

in and around Matsuyama, Japan, since 1981. In the 1990s, he was asked to start the Other Language Educators (OLE) Special Interest Group and has been its coordinator since then. In the early 2000s, he did comparative studies on early phases of French, Korean, Chinese, Tagalog and German as 2FLs. Besides language teaching, he has published papers on various languages and sociolinguistics, syllabus development, intercultural communication, and the development of writing. He recently co-edited (with Petra Balmus and Guido Oebel) a book on “challenges and opportunities: crisis management in German as a foreign language”, published by iudicium in Munich. He can be reached at <reinelt@iec.ehime-u.ac.jp>

References

- Freudenstein, R. (Hrsg.) (1972). *Focus*, 80. *Fremdsprachenunterricht in den siebziger Jahren. (Focus 80s: Foreign language teaching in the 70s)* Bielefeld: Cornelsen & OUP.
- German year in Japan website. [Online] Available: <<http://www.doitsu-nen.jp/>>.
- Gromik, N. (2006). [Online] Available: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ole_jalt/>.
- Hufeisen, B. (2003). L1, L2, L3, L4, Lxalle gleich? (L1, L2, L3, L4, Lxall the same?) Linguistische, lernerinterne und lernerexterne Faktoren in Modellen zum multiplen Spracherwerb (linguistic, learner-internal and -external factors in models for multiple language acquisition). In: Baumgarten, Nicole/Böttger, Claudia/Motz, Markus/ Probst, Julia (Hg.) (2003). *Übersetzen, Interkulturelle Kommunikation, Spracherwerb und Sprachvermittlung* das Leben mit mehreren Sprachen. Festschrift für Juliane House zum 60. Geburtstag.
- Hufeisen, B. (n.d.). Didaktik und Methodik im Bereich Deutsch als Fremdsprache *Zeitschrift für Interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht* 8 (2/3) 13 (URL[Online] Available: <<http://zif.spz.tu-darmstadt.de/jg-08-2-3/beitrag/Hufeisen1.htm>>
- JALT OLE mission statement *OLE Newsletter* 37, 18.
- Kallenbach, Ch. (1996). *Subjektive Theorien. Was Schüler und Schülerinnen über Fremdsprachenlernen denken. (subjective theories: what students think about foreign language learning)* Tübingen: Gunter Narr.
- Parmenter, L. (2006). *Potential of the CEFR beyond Europe*. In: “A New Direction of Foreign Language Education: The Potential of the Common Framework of Reference for Languages”. Rihga Royal Hotel Osaka. March 5, 2006.
- Reinelt, R. (2005). *Die wievielte Sprache (the nth language?)*. XIII. Internationale Tagung der Deutschlehrerinnen und Deutschlehrer, Graz Univ., August 9, 2005.
- Reinelt, R. (2006) Updated Coordinator’s Report 2004-2005. *OLE Newsletter* 38, 3-15.
- Tiffany, P. (2001). An introduction to business plans. [Online] Available: <<http://entrepreneur.com/article/0,4621,287323,00.html>>.
- Williams, S. & Hammarberg, B. (1998). Language Switches in L3 Production: Implications for a Polyglot Speaking Model. *Applied Linguistics* 19(3) 295-333.