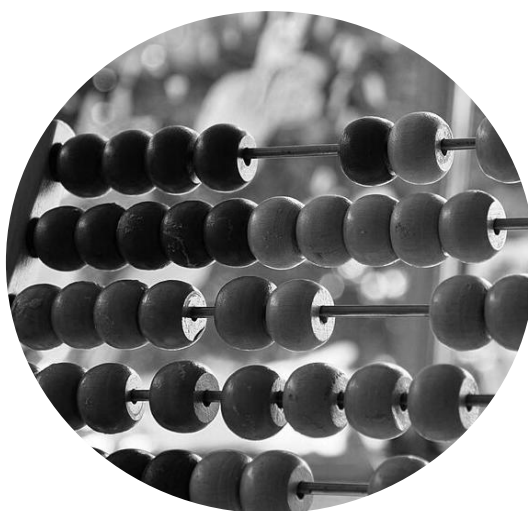


Vivre et travailler au Japon

Cahiers d'Études Interculturelles

N°13 – Septembre 2026

DIDACTIQUE



The Neuroscience of Multilingualism

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The Neurological Effects of Multilingualism and Multilingual Education in Japan

Eryka Berry

Okinawa Christian School International Senior Capstone

1 Introduction

I originally started researching the neurological effects of multilingualism and the state multilingual education in Japan during my last year of high school in 2025. It was my capstone project required for my graduation, which included a presentation and service project for which I hosted a multilingual poetry slam and brought volunteers to read to third-grade students at my high school in Swahili and Russian. Although a year since then has passed my interest in this topic has not and multilingualism remains a major part of my identity; and more importantly global diplomacy, communication and cultural understanding.

However, multilingualism is not only a skill that builds bridges and boosts productivity; it is also a cognitive asset that improves neural plasticity, cognitive flexibility, and enhances other executive functions such as memory and inhibition (Educational Content Team, 2026). As a person who has grown up in a multicultural environment and received a formal bilingual education since the first grade, I have experienced many social and academic advantages in speaking more than one language. This is largely because I lived in a homogeneous country like Japan, where only 13% of its citizens are multilingual (Margolis, 2024). Although a Ministry of Education survey from May 2024 showed improving English proficiency in Japanese students, multilingual education in Japan remains limited, due its perceived difficulty, cultural barriers and expensive cost (Margolis, 2024).

Despite the benefits of multilingualism, Japan faces several challenges that has set it leagues behind many other nations. This includes a cultural preference for

monolingualism, limited bilingual education programs, and financial barriers. By raising awareness of these issues, I hope to inspire those who are already in bilingual education to appreciate their opportunities and encourage them to expand their linguistic skills. Ultimately, this project aims to promote a broader understanding of multilingual education's impact on the brain and work towards making multilingual education more accessible for students.

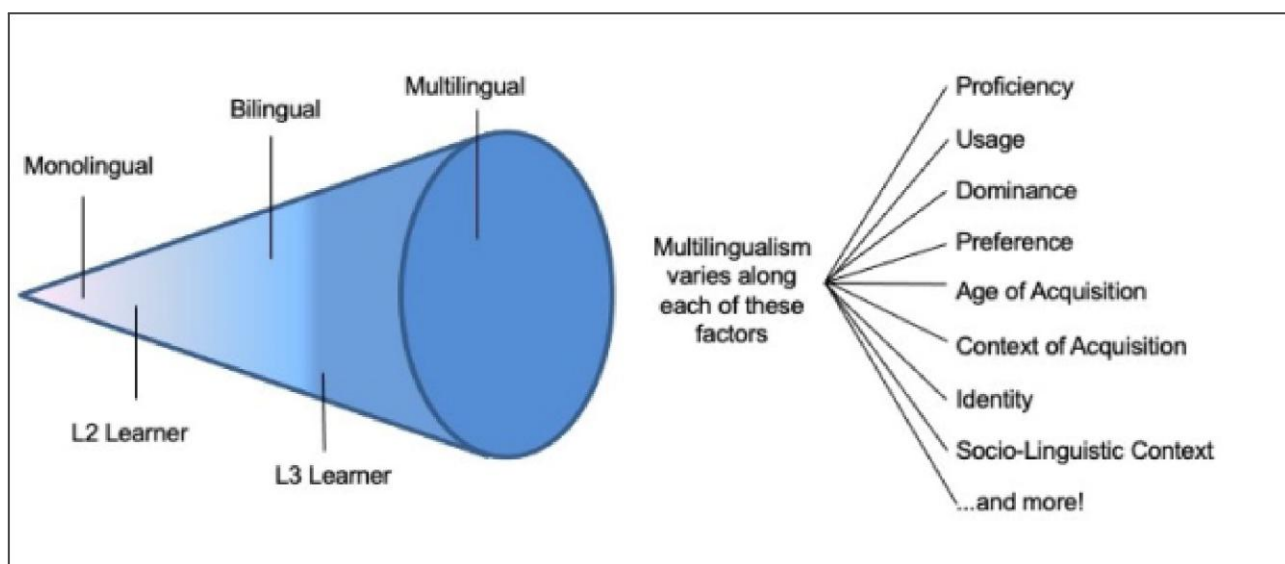
My capstone project merges my interest in neuroscience and psychology with my desire to encourage a broader appreciation of linguistic diversity in both national and international contexts. In addition, this project is inspired by my appreciation for my bilingual education, fully aware that public school education would have been much cheaper than the international schools I have attended. Although I am still working to improve my Japanese, I hope more people have an opportunity to experience the freedom and benefits of multilingual education.

2 Defining Multilingualism and the Neurological Effects of Multilingualism

The term multilingual includes a wide range of experiences and educational backgrounds and “often emerges as a by-product of a country’s history, regional ties, and socio-political context” (Chung et al., 2022). Most parents, teachers, and professionals will agree that being proficient in multiple languages is beneficial. However, extensive research has shown that multilingualism goes beyond the social and academic merits.

In this paper I will use the word “multilingual” to refer to individuals who can fluently speak, read and write in two or more language, regardless of the order or the ages the languages were acquired. This is based on research with children and young adults which showed “that the number of languages beyond monolingualism does not fundamentally alter cognitive control mechanisms.” (Chung et al., 2022). Research with similar demographics has shown that individuals with varying numbers of language skills, such as trilinguals and bilinguals, show similar advantages in executive function tasks when compared to monolinguals (Chung et al., 2022). This is significant

because executive functioning, which is controlled by the frontal lobe of the brain, “refers to skills that you use to manage everyday tasks like making plans, solving problems, and adapting to new situations” (Cleveland Clinic, 2024).



(Chung et al., 2022, 58)

Figure 1: Multidimensional Continuum of Language

As seen in the figure above, “the development of language proficiency occurs along the multidimensional continuum, where factors such as usage, proficiency, and age of acquisition vary from individual to individual (Chung et al., 2022). As individuals acquire additional languages, transitioning from monolingual to multilingual, the complexity of these factors increases with each new language learned, reflecting changes not only in linguistic abilities but also in cognitive processes (Chung et al., 2022). This is the reason it can be difficult to define multilingualism: as each individual’s situation varies. Some are multilingual due to education system, others, the places they’ve lived in or having multinational parents. Regardless, the gains attributed to multilingualism may be less associated with the number of words that need to be inhibited and more associated with a shift in the overall attentional system that changes as a result of managing at least two languages” (Chung et al., 2022).

Another neurological change that occurs as a result of multilingualism is “our

brain's remarkable ability to form new neural connections and reorganize its neural circuitry in response to the environment", also known as neural plasticity (Chung et al., 2022). Although other factors and activities, such as "formal education", "musical training" and "aerobic exercise", can boost cognition through neural plasticity, speaking two or more languages is a permanent state of mind since individuals are constantly interacting with language, whether it be verbal communication, reading, listening or mentally attaching a label and representation to an object (Chung et al., 2022). Not only is one continuously selecting or deselecting a language among other languages, but bilinguals are also engaging in a special form of mental exercise that has profound consequences for both brain function and structure (Chung et al., 2022). As a result of increased neural plasticity studies have found "greater gray matter volume for bilinguals than monolinguals in parts of the fronto-parietal network, specifically in the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) and parietal lobes (e.g., Abutalebi et al., 2012; Abutalebi et al., 2015; Del Maschio et al., 2018; Mechelli et al., 2004)" (Chung et al., 2022). Research reviewed by BMC has shown that such changes "can develop with relatively brief amounts of exposure to another language, highlighting the incredible plasticity of the human brain even into adulthood." (Hayakawa et al., 2019). However, Early acquisition of a second language, typically before age 6, leads to both languages being processed in the same brain regions, while late acquisition, particularly after puberty, engages distinct neural networks, often involving the frontal cortex, highlighting differences in brain plasticity and language management (Fernández et al., 2022). This is why it early exposure and acquisition are encouraged to ease the language learning process.

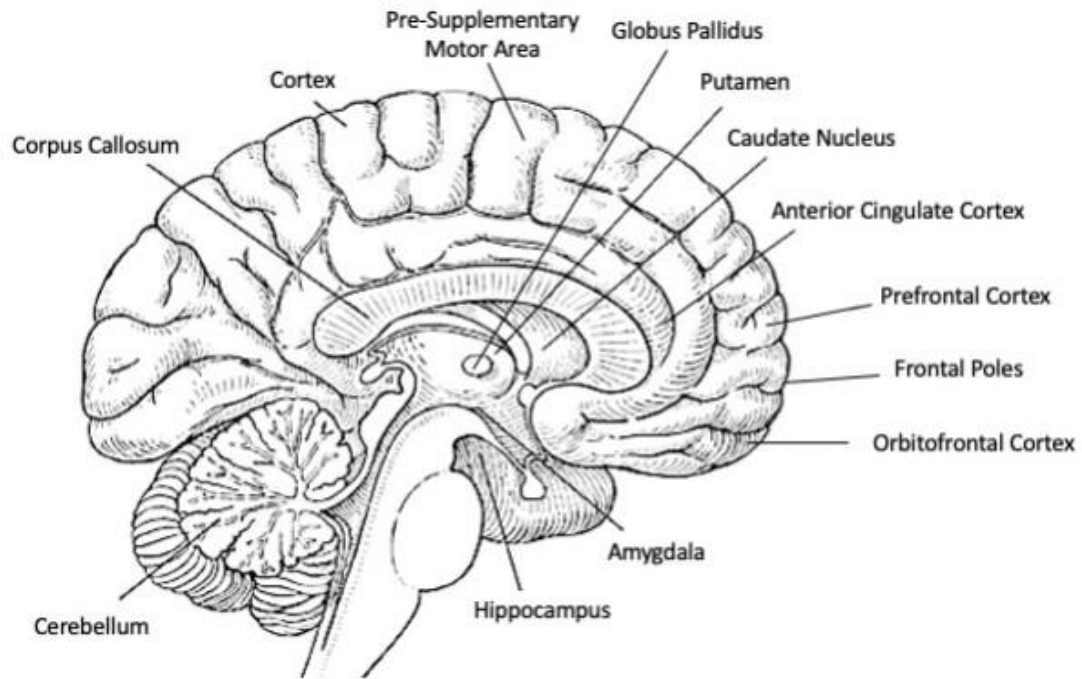


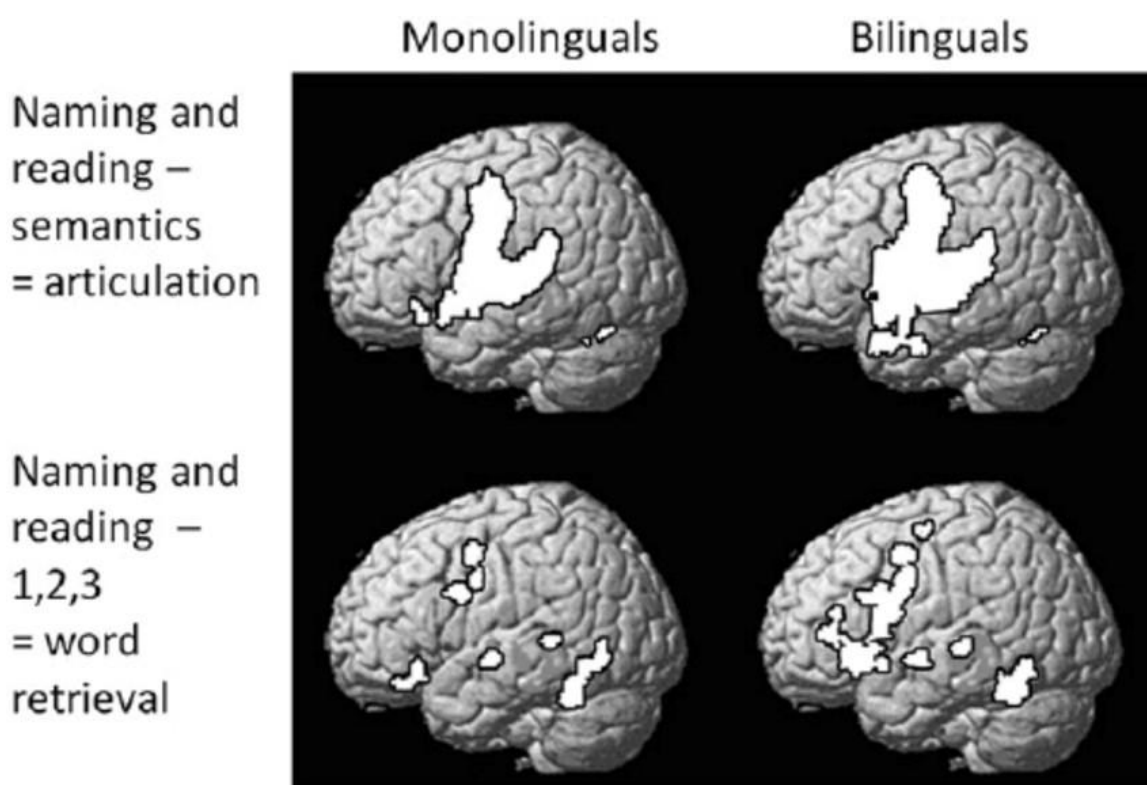
Figure 2: Medial view of the brain regions associated with cognitive control (Chung et al., 2022, 57)

Studies using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) have identified several brain regions affected by multilingualism, particularly in the context of nonverbal cognitive control tasks. Bilinguals and monolinguals show different activation patterns, with bilinguals relying more on frontal, temporal, and subcortical regions during tasks such as the Eriksen flanker task which is used to “assess selective attention and inhibitory function” (Eriksen & Eriksen, 1974 as cited in Baghdadi, 2021), while monolinguals primarily activate temporal and parietal regions (Luk et al., 2010 as cited in Chung et al., 2022). Bilinguals also demonstrate more efficient conflict monitoring, with faster reaction times linked to decreased activation in the dorsolateral anterior cingulate cortex, which “is a brain region that subserves cognition and motor control” (Bush et al., 2001).

Furthermore, fMRI has revealed stronger activation in language and motor areas compared to semantic and simple articulation tasks in bilinguals compared to monolinguals. This study examined how the brain processes word retrieval, recognition

and articulation using eight tasks involving speech (naming, reading aloud and repeating “1,2,3”) or finger-press responses to various stimuli. Triads of three items were shown to increase task efficiency and brain response. The authors explained that “The presentation of 3 naming or reading stimuli at the same time had the added advantage that the presentation rate per item was rapid, thereby maximizing the hemodynamic response per stimulus.” (Jones et al., 2011). Although, results showed that both monolinguals and bilinguals had greater brain activation and shared activation patterns, the fMRI showed slightly higher activation in the bilingual brain. This indicates increased hemodynamic response which is “the changes in blood flow and oxygen metabolism in the brain that occur in response to neural activity” (“How FMRI works”, n.d.).

Figure 3: Brain activation during naming and reading tasks in monolinguals and bilinguals. (Jones et al., 2011, 5)



3 Disadvantages of Multilingualism

Although the advantages that come with multilingualism are commonly acknowledged by researchers and educational institutions several disadvantages can arise. Since all known languages of a multilingual person are constantly active, even if only one is in use, the languages can interfere with each other. This can manifest in the form of mistakes in vocabulary, grammar, or accent (Chang, 2022). In a controlled educational environment or other social situations, this can cause difficulty in expressing one's opinion and thoughts. Especially if they are being instructed or speaking in an environment of a single language.

In addition, “learning a second language too early can lead to a loss of the native language, and the inadequate mastery of the native language makes it more difficult to learn a foreign language. Academic burden and external factors such as the lack of proper education can hinder the second-language-process as well.” (Zhang, 2022). This is why multilingual education providers should take into consideration “the interrelatedness of the factors at the individual, school, and country/region levels as well as the different types of factors.” (Kriss et al., 2021). Excessive stress is also generally unhealthy for overall brain development. On a social level “communication and social hindrances can be disturbing for monolingual peers sometimes associating multilingualism with oddity.” (Dumetz et al., 2021). This may result in isolation and tension between peers with varying linguistic abilities affecting the multilingual's mental health and social behaviour. Many multilinguals are also third culture children, immigrants or bi-racial individuals who may find it difficult to feel included in one specific group due to cultural and systemic barriers on top of linguistic differences.

A case study of a multilingual family raising children in four languages- Russian, French, Czech, and English– reveals the psychological and cognitive challenges faced by polyglots. Children growing up in such environments experience a delayed onset of speech production, often speaking later than both monolingual and bilingual children (Dumetz et al., 2021). These difficulties are compounded by social and linguistic drawbacks, including the frustrations of managing multiple languages and the complexities of “code-switching, word creation, and language mixing” (Dumetz et al.,

2021). Despite these challenges, the linguistic development of tetraploids does not significantly differ from that of bilinguals, although the process tends to take longer due to the simultaneous acquisition of multiple languages (Dumetz et al., 2021).

4 Multilingual Education in Japan

In light of all this, Japan, among many other countries, has put effort into furthering its education systems by implementing second or third languages. In Japan's case, “raising national standards of English proficiency was crucial to Japan’s economic success” (Barker, 2015). As a result, not only has bilingual education become a popular system, but it has also become a luxury only attainable at high quality if one goes to a private international school. According to the Statistics Bureau of Japan the yearly average of monthly income per household stood at 653,901 yen in 2025 while the general range for tuition at international schools in Japan is 1.5 to 3 million yen per year or approximately 250,000 yen per month. This is aside from addition costs such as bus, lunch and uniform fees depending on the school. On top of this “tuition fees tend to increase with grade level” making it more inaccessible every year (Tanaka, 2026). The reasons for the large price tag include “Limited Public Subsidies due to being classified as "miscellaneous schools" (*kakushu gakko*) under Article 134 of the School Education Act, personnel costs for small class sizes, recruitment and retention costs for international teachers, curriculum development and accreditation costs (e.g. IB and AP) and investment in facilities and equipment” (Tanaka, 2026).

The higher earning parents who can afford this education are usually highly and/or internationally educated, e.g. they are doctors, diplomats and businesspeople who have seen and experienced the benefits of studying, working and doing commerce in the current *lingua franca*; a further incentive to avoid public school education. Even though the public school now offers English classes or the MEXT English curriculum it is leagues behind other Asian countries. The cheaper alternatives such as Juku or cram school, are extra work on top of a student's busy schedule.

5 Interview with David Mr. Barker

My first interviewee was Mr. Barker. I reached out to him to learn more about the MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) English being taught in Japanese public schools; and the mental and cultural barriers that hinder Japanese people from learning new languages. He is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at Gifu University in Japan; with over 30 years of experience teaching English. Originally from North Wales in the UK, Mr. Barker has built a career in applied linguistics and English education. He holds degrees from several respected institutions, including Leeds Metropolitan University, Macquarie University and International House, and the University of Liverpool.

He has also authored several books and articles in both English and Japanese, aimed at supporting Japanese learners of English. Two of his books, published by ALC Press, became national bestsellers in Japan. In 2009, Mr. Barker established BTB Press to showcase his innovative teaching materials. His books are appreciated for their practical approach and have been adopted by many teachers to enhance students' English learning experience.

My interview with Mr. Barker offered a critical perspective on the state of multilingual and bilingual education in Japan, emphasizing its limited impact due to structural and cultural challenges. English education in Japan is often confined to minimal classroom hours; and teachers and students treat it as an academic subject rather than a useful tool to communicate. Mr. Barker compares Japan with Europe, where English is part of daily life for many teachers and students. He highlights a lack of authentic exposure and engagement with English, which severely limits the potential of multilingual education shaping Japanese society. Hearing this, I recalled a conversation I had with my American friend who was working at a public school in Okinawa, Japan as a JLT. She questioned the qualifications of her fellow Japanese co-workers who taught English at the school but could not proficiently communicate with her in English.

As an example, Mr. Barker brought up how several significant events and studies related to African American Vernacular English (AAVE), took place in and around New

York in the 1970s. The African American students struggled because the English language used at home and school were different. An environmental problem that the schools had to address in order to better meet the academic needs of the students.

Despite recognizing the practical and cognitive benefits of multilingualism, Mr. Barker argues that Japanese students don't need to learn new languages. He believes language learning should be approached as a way to understand diverse worldviews and cultural realities rather than merely an academic subject. He thinks that instead of English classes in elementary schools, there should be foreign language classes to introduce the spectrum of human languages. He says that “Language is a representation of reality” and is arbitrary. He explained how humans group reality to make language learnable, and each language does it differently. Language is not reality, and it has been made economically.

Mr. Barker also disagrees with the fear of native language disruption, mentioning research that shows no problems between learning multiple languages and maintaining one's mother tongue. He shared how textbooks and material used in public schools are hyper-political in that the content is based on messages and rhetoric that the Japanese government wants students to communicate. However, Mr. Barker argues that this message is very different from the actual things that Japanese students would want to discuss with foreigners. Japanese educational materials often reinforce the resistance to open language exposure and expression, further complicating efforts to diversify Japan's linguistic landscape.

Mr. Barker stresses that the accessibility of bilingual education in Japan isn't the issue. It is the lack of motivation and belief in the ability to learn languages. He mentioned how even in ages when textbooks and online sources were not available, millions of people learned English by translating the bible. He emphasizes that improvements must focus on increasing classroom hours, enhancing teacher proficiency, reducing class sizes, and adopting immersive rather than standardized methods. He believes that large class sizes have only allowed highly motivated students to succeed in spite of the system.

He also introduced me to the FSI, or Foreign Service Institute which “provides

language and culture training to U.S. government employees with job-related needs.” (Foreign Language Training, n.d.). This system has four categories of languages, which range from Category I to IV. Category I, contains languages closest to English, such as Spanish, French, Norwegian, and Dutch. And Category IV, contains the furthest related languages, also known as “Super-hard languages”, which include Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Arabic, Japanese, and Korean (Foreign Language Training, n.d.). Category I only requires 24-30 weeks of training or approximately 600 class hours, while Category IV classes require 88 weeks or 2200 class hours. These are the requirements set for a native level English speaking American adult to reach limited proficiency.

Mr. Barker used this tool to put into perspective the cultural and linguistic barrier that Japanese students experience. He explained that because the English language is linguistically distant from the Japanese language, it is most difficult to learn for Japanese people. He believes that they are learning the most difficult language in the worst way. Due to this, a mindset of “Japanese can’t do English” arises; a cultural and psychological barrier that must be addressed for people to succeed. Often, parents of students barely have the will or education to help their children with their English skills and homework because it is still a fairly recent addition to the Japanese education system. This often leads to more discouragement. Mr. Barker also mentioned his experience with Japanese students believing that a bad test score means they are incapable of that skill. Mr. Barker concludes that effective encouragement requires building students’ confidence and providing support; things that he considers important for creating successful multilingual learners in Japan.

I then asked how Japan can benefit from become a more multilingual society. He believes that due to the increased ability of Artificial Intelligence, good translation has become accessible to anyone. He believes that this will cause all the external benefits to be gone in five years. However, he believes that the internal benefits will remain relevant in self expression, academia and expanding one's worldview such as, travel, writing emails, academic papers, and reading.

Lastly, I asked for effective ways to encourage more people to expand their

linguistic skills. Mr. Barker shared three simple strategies he would implement in a classroom setting; making the students believe that it is possible, showing them how by leading in example and supporting students while they learn. When I asked him about the advantages and disadvantages of multilingualism, Mr. Barker explained that there are internal and external benefits. The internal advantages are a changed worldview and the realization that language is arbitrary. As well as experiencing the struggle of learning a new language, which Mr. Barker believes is important for teachers. He continues on by stating that you cannot teach a foreign language without experiencing the difficulty and technique of learning. And that teacher needs to be relatable. The external or practical benefits of multilingualism are translating for yourself and using linguistic skills to navigate through everyday life. Mr. Barker doesn't think that there are any disadvantages to being multilingual.

6 Interview with Jerome Dumetz

My second interviewee was, Dr. Jerome Dumetz, a consulting professor, currently working as the Vice-Rector for international relations at Unicorn University in Prague. He has a PhD in Cross-Cultural Management and has taught at over 25 universities worldwide. He has also lived in multiple countries such as France, the Netherlands, the United States, Canada, Russia, and the Czech Republic. Dr. Dumetz has authored several books and articles on cross-cultural management, and has facilitated hundreds of workshops, keynotes, and lectures around the world. In addition to his academic and publishing work, he consults for companies on managing multicultural teams and navigating cultural differences. His services include training programs and expatriate family support.

My interview with Dr. Dumetz shed light on the nuances of the advantages and disadvantages of being multilingual. He shared that the benefits of living in a multilingual environment include neurological development, increased creativity, and enhanced problem-solving skills. He raised a unique point on how third-culture children use language as a tool for identity exploration and adaptation. However, these same skills can be a disadvantage. For example, individuals may not feel a sense of

belonging and may be seen as outsiders due to their background, accent, or dialect. On the other hand, multilingual education fosters improved communication abilities, even though it may sometimes lead to ambiguity and confusion.

Dr. Dumetz addressed the issue of potential disruption in native language development due to multilingual education with a practical solution; maintaining balance and mental discipline across languages. This reflects the idea that multilingualism doesn't inherently threaten a native language, but instead, requires a well-rounded education in all languages. The challenges that hinder language learning in certain countries, such as Japan, are rooted in cultural psychology, limited access, and negative perceptions of foreign languages. However, Dr. Dumetz pointed out the influence of global cultural trends like Eurovision and K-pop as soft power forces that have broken certain barriers and increased openness to linguistic exchange. I have seen this effect through my education in Japan. Many of my classmates were exposed to the Korean language through K-pop and Korean food trends; one of them even went on to study at a Korean university. I was also reminded of the many tourists and immigrants who were introduced to the Japanese culture and language through Manga and Anime.

To effectively encourage language learning, Dr. Dumetz emphasized both cognitive and social motivations. Multilingualism is linked to long-term health benefits such as reduced risks of dementia and longer life expectancy. On a social level, it allows for more meaningful and efficient communication and deepens personal connections by allowing individuals to engage with others from a place of cultural and linguistic understanding. The ability to view the world and be viewed differently through language is not just a practical skill but a personal and social experience.

Conclusion

The goal of my capstone project and this paper is to bring awareness to the neurological effects of language learning and multilingualism. Within the field of neuroscience and psychology relating to this topic there is still a lot of nuance and debate. Especially because there are so many variations of what it means to be multilingual and studies have observed both interference of mother tongue and no

interference when acquiring multiple languages simultaneously. For my service project in 2025, I was able to share with the 3rd graders at my school my research findings on the neurological effects of multilingualism, achieving my goal.

Because I was previously residing and studying in Japan, I specifically researched the Japanese education systems approach to English and how it could be improved. Although, I attended international schools from elementary to high school, my peers, including myself, hindered our own linguistic advancement whenever we were demotivated and carried a mindset of impossibility. Access to the correct resources, long class hours and proficient teachers are crucial but do not create high performance alone.

Through my required service project in 2025, I realized that passion, curiosity and excitement should not be deprioritized, especially when teaching a subject far removed from students lives. It was interesting to see the 3rd grade students rely on the illustrations, intonation, onomatopoeia and the volume of the guest readers voice to understand the Russian and Swahili stories and then allow their curiosity to repeat and learn new vocabulary in those languages. Although, this was a one-time event it may have opened the doors to taking foreign language classes or self studying a new language sometime in the future. I was able to contribute to my community by sharing what I learned and possibly encouraging others to become multilingual.

I also reflected on Mr. Barker's take on foreign education in Japanese classrooms. Instead of the current style of having 1-2 hours of English classes without application or immersion, he recommended introducing a spectrum of human languages through foreign language classes. I believe that it would also be beneficial for Japanese students to study languages that are linguistically close to Japanese. Although there is political tension between Japan, China and Korea, perhaps linguistic and cultural exchange between these countries would make way for a more friendly diplomatic climate, reconciliation and more productivity and innovation in the East Asia. As well as improve the strategies and structure of the MEXT curriculum when it comes to teaching foreign languages to Japanese students.

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LE Q & R DES AUTEURS

Diverses choses à savoir sur les
Cahiers d'études interculturelles (CÉTIC)

Quels sont les thèmes de la revue ?

La revue a **trois grands thèmes**, qui se recoupent mais qui peuvent être aussi traités indépendamment :

- la vie au Japon
- le FLE et la didactique du français
- les questions interculturelles.

Idéalement, les articles de la revue se trouvent à la croisée d'au moins deux de ces thèmes : par exemple, « le FLE au Japon », ou encore « les différences culturelles France-Japon ». Cependant, on acceptera aussi des articles qui n'abordent que l'un des trois thèmes.

Dans la mesure du possible, nous essayons de regrouper les articles pour faire des **numéros thématiques**. Ainsi, le No3 traitait de « *la place de l'Autre au Japon* ».

Quel avantage à publier dans les *Cahiers d'Études Interculturelles* ?

Principalement de publier. **Avoir une liste de publications est fondamental** pour la recherche d'un emploi d'enseignant, au Japon comme ailleurs. Les *Cahiers d'Études Interculturelles* ont précisément pour objectif de permettre aux chercheurs et enseignants quelque peu en marge du système d'étoffer leur liste de publications. Je pense en particulier **aux étudiants, aux jeunes chercheurs, aux enseignants à temps partiel, à ceux qui travaillent hors du système universitaire** (dans les écoles et instituts par exemple), et qui ne sont pas dans les circuits habituels. Je pense aussi aux enseignants qui, comme moi, **cherchent à publier des recherches qui sortent de leur domaine habituel**, et pour lesquelles ils n'ont pas de canal de publication.

Notez bien que les auteurs **n'auront rien à payer**, mais qu'ils ne seront pas rémunérés non plus. La revue paraîtra en ligne et un exemplaire imprimé sera donné à chaque auteur. Les auteurs qui voudront distribuer leur publication devront l'imprimer eux-mêmes. La régularité de la publication dépendra des contributions.

CÉTIC est-elle une revue académique ou une revue grand public ?

CÉTIC est une revue **semi-académique**. Il y a parfois un peu de confusion chez les auteurs, certains pensant qu'il s'agit d'une revue académique, théorique, intellectuelle et spécialisée, et d'autres la voyant comme une revue journalistique ou grand public. Cette confusion vient justement du fait que CÉTIC se situe à l'intermédiaire entre ces deux approches.

Que signifie « semi-académique » ?

D'abord, que CÉTIC n'est ***pas*** une revue académique. Elle s'intéresse peu aux idées abstraites. Mais ce n'est pas non plus un magazine. Elle ne cherche pas à produire des papiers d'opinion comme dans la presse grand public. Le sens principal de « semi-académique » est d'apporter chez le lecteur quelque chose qui provoque la pensée, mais **qui présente aussi un aspect pratique presque immédiatement exploitable dans la vie quotidienne**. Par exemple, pour un enseignant, de nouvelles manières d'envisager ses classes. Ou encore, pour un étudiant ou un jeune qui s'installe au Japon, une nouvelle manière de voir, sur un point ou un autre, la société japonaise.

Quels sont, plus précisément, les papiers qui sont publiés par CÉTIC ?

Là encore, il y a un peu de confusion car la revue est divisée en deux parties :

- d'abord, une partie **ÉTUDES** qui comprend des papiers longs, écrits par des enseignants confirmés ou par des doctorants spécialisés sur des questions interculturelles ou pédagogiques.
- Ensuite, une partie **NOTES ET TÉMOIGNAGES**, composée de documents plus légers : des professionnels peuvent y témoigner de leur situation de travail, des enseignants ou des étudiants peuvent y présenter de petites enquêtes ; enfin il peut s'agir d'interviews, de lettres ouvertes, d'éléments d'observation participante, de réflexions sur la société japonaise par exemple. On peut également inclure dans cette partie des papiers de recherche un peu moins structurés.

Quels sont les papiers qui entrent dans la partie « ÉTUDES » ?

Comme je l'ai dit, ces papiers sont relativement longs (de 20 à 50 pages). Ils comprennent des références, et dans la plupart des cas des données. Ils sont en général

issus de recherches menées par les auteurs depuis un certain temps. Par exemple, dans le N°1, on trouve : « *Le choc des politesses : silence et longueur des réponses dans la classe de FLE au Japon* » qui est issu d'un travail de longue date de mon collègue Bruno Vannieuwenhuyse, et au sujet duquel il a déjà publié plusieurs petits articles. Dans le N°4, on trouve « *Joindre le geste à la parole : encourager la prise de parole spontanée dans la classe de conversation FLE au Japon* » qui se base sur le travail pédagogique de Bruno Jactat.

Depuis le N°3, les articles de la partie « ÉTUDES » **sont soumis à un comité de lecture**. Deux évaluateurs lisent l'article à réception, et proposent des corrections à l'auteur. La liste des évaluateurs est donnée sur la seconde page.

Comment se fait cette évaluation ?

Les évaluateurs sont choisis parmi les auteurs de la revue ou parmi des collègues extérieurs. Je leur demande simplement d'évaluer un papier de temps en temps, et s'ils n'ont pas le temps à ce moment-là, ils peuvent le refuser. Je choisis alors un autre évaluateur.

Quand un article est proposé, je décide en accord avec l'auteur s'il doit faire partie des « ÉTUDES » ou plutôt des « NOTES ET TÉMOIGNAGES ». Dans le premier cas, je le fais parvenir à deux évaluateurs, si possible aguerris aux sujets traités.

Les critères d'évaluation sont très simples. Il s'agit de considérer les questions suivantes :

- **Le travail est-il cohérent et correctement écrit ?**
- **Y a-t-il des données (enquêtes, interviews, références) ?**
- **Y a-t-il une conclusion, pas forcément révolutionnaire, mais nouvelle et/ou intéressante pour nous et nos collègues ?**

Malgré la simplicité de ces questions, certains papiers n'y résistent pas. **C'est pourquoi j'attire l'attention des auteurs**, notamment des auteurs de papiers théoriques et académiques, sur le fait qu'un minimum de données ou de références est nécessaire. Et surtout, que le papier doit apporter quelque chose d'applicable pour ses lecteurs.

Qu'en est-il des articles de la partie NOTES ET TÉMOIGNAGES ?

Les papiers de la partie NOTES ET TÉMOIGNAGES ne font pas l'objet d'une évaluation avec correction. On vérifie simplement s'ils sont acceptables. S'ils le sont, **ils sont pris tels quels**, exception faite de petites corrections orthographiques ou typographiques. Dans le cas contraire, on peut éventuellement demander à l'auteur de revoir son travail.

Pourquoi cette division en deux parties ?

Parce qu'elles sont dissemblables, mais se complètent. Les ÉTUDES sont des travaux de recherche mais ne sont pas exagérément théoriques ou intellectualisantes. Les NOTES ET TÉMOIGNAGES présentent une version plus légère des mêmes problématiques. Ils offrent des approches pratiques, quoique plus personnelles, de situations particulières. Ce ne sont pas non plus des approches journalistiques, car elles se basent sur des expériences directes et non de seconde main, elles ne cherchent pas un « angle » qui rende le papier intéressant, mais au contraire travaillent sur des données ou essaient de débusquer un « mystère ». Par exemple, dans le N°3, l'article de Meiko Ikezawa résout la question intéressante pour nous de la manière dont les Japonais s'adressent aux étrangers. Dans le N°4, je propose une sorte de jeu mnémotechnique pour régler la difficulté chronique que nous avons à retenir le nom de nos étudiants ou de nos contacts japonais.

Imaginons : je suis un enseignant de haut niveau, connu dans mon domaine, et je serais heureux de participer à la revue afin de lui donner de la tenue et encourager d'autres auteurs à y participer. Quels genres de papier puis-je soumettre ?

La première chose est de **savoir si vous acceptez de vous soumettre au comité de lecture** ou **si vous préférez que votre papier soit publié sans évaluation**. Si vous acceptez de vous soumettre au comité de lecture et d'être publié dans la partie ÉTUDES, votre papier sera évalué sur **les trois questions** énoncées ci-dessus. J'insiste beaucoup sur ce point : comme pour tout autre papier, on regardera s'il y a des références ou des données, **et si la conclusion apporte quelque chose pour nos collègues**. Si ce n'est pas le cas, il y aura un retour d'évaluation.

Maintenant, si vous souhaitez que votre papier soit publié sans évaluation, il paraîtra dans la partie NOTES ET TÉMOIGNAGES, en tant qu'invité en quelque sorte. C'est également un point important : **notez donc bien que vous pouvez nous proposer un papier sans passer par la case évaluation**.

Imaginons : je suis étudiant, jeune chercheur, enseignant sans publications. Quels genres de papier puis-je proposer ?

Vous pouvez bien entendu proposer un travail de recherche dans la partie « ÉTUDES ».

Dans la partie « NOTES ET TÉMOIGNAGES », vous pouvez aussi proposer un témoignage personnel (une situation particulière qui vous importe, comme par exemple « la vie d'une jeune étrangère au Japon » ou « la situation d'un employé français dans une entreprise japonaise ») ou encore une note de recherche (par exemple un travail que vous avez fait avec vos étudiants, une petite enquête, un recueil de témoignages). Essayez de soulever une question que tout le monde se pose (Pourquoi les Japonais... ? Comment faut-il faire pour... ?). Relisez bien les différents numéros en ligne, de façon à vous faire une idée.

Divisez votre texte en parties claires, avec des sous-titres. Avant de l'envoyer, relisez-le bien pour vous assurer qu'il fait sens, et pour corriger les typos et la présentation.

Peut-on publier dans une autre langue que le français ?
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Oui, en anglais. Cependant, nous invitons les auteurs à **faire relire leurs textes et à les corriger** avant de les soumettre. Jusqu'à présent, nous avons accepté que les articles en anglais proposés par des auteurs non anglophones ne soient pas rédigés dans un anglais parfait ou presque parfait. Mais cette politique ne fait pas sens, dans la mesure où les articles en anglais sont en principe destinés à être lus par des anglophones. Idéalement, les textes écrits en anglais par des auteurs non-anglophones, même s'ils ont confiance en leur anglais, doivent être **relus par au moins un natif ayant l'expérience de l'écriture académique ou semi-académique, et ensemble avec l'auteur, côte à côte à la même table.**

Enfin, si je sou mets un papier, combien de temps faudra-t-il pour qu'il soit publié ?

Ayez conscience de ce que le **temps éditorial est très long !** Il faut **cinq à huit mois entre la réception de votre article et sa publication** dans les *Cahiers d'Études Interculturelles*. ■

APPEL À TEXTES

- Enseignants ayant des travaux en cours et des textes à publier,
- étudiants et jeunes chercheurs,
- enseignants à temps partiel,
- enseignants travaillant hors du système universitaire (écoles, cours privés),
- mais aussi employés d'entreprises françaises ou japonaises au Japon ayant des expériences interculturelles à rapporter.

ENEZ PUBLIER DANS LES CAHIERS D'ÉTUDES INTERCULTURELLES !

L'intérêt pour vous est :

- d'élargir votre liste de publications (et d'augmenter vos chances d'obtenir d'éventuels postes)
- de travailler vos idées, de développer vos recherches, d'améliorer votre écriture...
- Je vous encourage à lire les publications de ce numéro et des précédents, et à vous demander si vous n'auriez pas, vous aussi, quelque chose à dire dans le même esprit.
- Consultez absolument le Q & R des auteurs qui se trouve dans les premières pages de cette revue.
- Dans le site revuecetic.wordpress.com, consultez et remplissez le formulaire de suggestion d'article.

Contact : Jean-Luc Azra
jeanlucazra@gmail.com

La langue de publication des *Cahiers* est en principe le français ; cependant, des textes en anglais pourront être acceptés.

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