

ILTLP CLASSROOM-BASED INVESTIGATION REPORT

TEACHER'S NAME	SCHOOL	LANGUAGE	YEAR LEVEL
Kylie Farmer	Huntingdale Primary Bilingual School Grange St, Oakleigh South 3167	Japanese	Year 3 - 6

PROJECT TITLE:

Developing Intercultural Sensitivity through Japanese Integrated Language Learning Centres

AREA OF INVESTIGATION

Our goals were :

- for teachers to apply principles of Intercultural Language Teaching & Learning to engage students and to address the Intercultural Knowledge and Language Awareness dimension of VELs.
- for students to work towards being able to identify similarities and differences between Australian and Japanese culture and to take another perspective to develop their intercultural understanding.

As a team, we planned the 10-week Japanese Integrated Language Learning Centres (JILLC) program, with a focus on intercultural language learning (Attachment 1).

We also developed a simple survey for students based on Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Attachment 2). This was given to students before they began the JILLC program and again at the end of the 10 weeks to see if there were any changes in their intercultural understanding.

CONTEXT

Huntingdale Primary School is a Japanese Bilingual School in which all students study 7.5 hours of Japanese per week. This includes 2.5 hours of LOTE and 5 hours of Content Based Programs (Science, Music, Art, PE & Humanities).

Children have 1 hour each week in the Japanese Integrated Language Learning Centre program as part of their 7.5 hours of Japanese bilingual education. JILLC is conducted entirely in Japanese by native and non-native teachers, with Year 3 - 6 students working in multi-level, mixed ability groups. The first JILLC session in this unit began on 26th July.

The unit has been designed to complement the term 3 integrated theme in year 5-6 on Japan, in preparation for the Year 6 trip to Japan. It was also an ideal opportunity to use some of the new Learning Federation Learning Objects.

There has been some work in intercultural teaching and learning in the school since involvement in the ALPLP project and this was an ideal time to reinvestigate this and extend it in relation to VELs.

CLASSROOM PRACTICE

Initially we surveyed students to have some sense of their Intercultural Sensitivity.

Students then spent 2 weeks (2 x one hour classes) on each of the 5 activities.

The activities focused on:

School in Japan, Japanese Gestures and Body Language, Using Japanese Dictionaries, *Manga* and Sightseeing in Kyoto

The activities are detailed in the JILLC planner attached.

Teachers repeated their activity with a different group of students each fortnight.

The difference between this unit and our usual approach was that we had an explicit focus on Intercultural Knowledge and Language Awareness.

It was great to have so many students and teachers working together with the one focus and to be able to draw on various teachers' skills, interests and knowledge. Co-ordinating a large number of teachers to work together on the one project was a little challenging, however, everyone was positive, enthusiastic and very co-operative. It was just a little difficult to gather everybody's feedback as 2 of the key teachers were on leave during term 4 when we were finalising the unit, however, I was able to ask some staff and all students for their feedback which was invaluable.

DATA OR INFORMATION GATHERED

The data below was collected both pre- and post- the 10 week JILLC program using the survey of Intercultural Sensitivity

Responses	Year 3/4T		Year 3/4M		Year 5/6T		Year 5/6 P	
	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST	PRE	POST
1	1		1					
2	1							
3		4	5	3	1	1	1	
4	12	12	12	14	12	13	10	12
5	1	1		2	1	1	2	2
6	7	5	3	1	5	4	2	2

FINDINGS

Below are the 4 questions which I had when writing the Progress Report.

I have now added my responses at the conclusion of the project:

Will teachers be able to elicit and focus on developing student's intercultural understandings?

When planning this unit teachers started with a focus on developing student's intercultural understandings so this was framing all aspects of the activities planned. This was a big strength of this project and is an important strategy which we will continue to use. Teachers had previously felt they weren't sure how to address Intercultural Knowledge and Language Awareness however this has given them confidence to plan and teach this dimension of VELs.

An example of this was in introducing students to the use of character dictionaries, the teacher encouraged students to apply strategies they would use in English and to note if these were effective in Japanese too.

Will students be able to express their intercultural knowledge?

Some examples of the way in which students expressed their intercultural knowledge included:

“I am interested in Japanese culture. I accept other people’s culture and differences. I respect other people religious beliefs. I am interested in other people’s religions. I am fine being around different people.” S - Year 6

“How it (the survey) says that other people from other cultures are strange and dangerous, I think that statement is STUPID! No one should think that! Everyone is the same – even if they are from other cultures” K – Year 6

“Learning another language feels really beneficial. Teaching others our language is also fun. It doesn’t matter about what the best language is, they’re all the same words – just spoken differently.” P – Year 6

“Australia isn’t perfect. Everyone is different. No one is perfect.” C – Year 6

“I enjoy playing with people from different countries because they might know different games to play” D – Year 3

“It is important to get to know about the differences in cultures” K – Year 3

“I like to go to different countries and learn about different cultures” T – Year 4

“It doesn’t matter if the cultures are different. We are all the same!” L – Year 4

Will students notice a difference in the style of teaching and learning?

Students identified the linking factor amongst the range of activities in this program and were able to express some of the intercultural understandings developed: for example, similarities and differences between school in Australia and Japan and gestures used in Japanese and English.

Will they like it better?

Students really enjoyed the range of activities e.g. Map making, cooking, role-plays, *manga* drawing etc.

They enjoy the multi-age classes (and in fact, some students commented that they preferred it when we used to have Prep – Year 6 multi-age activities.)

INTERPRETING THE INFORMATION

The Year 3/4 students had studied a Unit of Work on “Multicultural Australia” just prior to this unit so their initial survey results are likely to have been impacted by this learning.

Another factor which may have also had an impact on the student data, was that 18 of the Year 6 students went on our 8 day school trip to Japan during this 10 week period so this is quite likely to have influenced the data collected at the end of the JILLC program.

The most notable observation from the data collected from the 4 classes was that generally students who began in the lower levels on the scale of Intercultural Sensitivity tended to move up by the end of the 10-week program. Students who began at the higher levels did not tend to move as much. This is possibly due to the maturity levels of the child rather than the impact of the JILLC program. The total number of students involved was quite small too, so it is difficult to take too much from the data, however, it was an interesting tool for encouraging students to reflect on their own opinions and to notice if there had been a change in their thinking.

In planning the activity looking at School Life in Japan we broke each group down into 4 smaller groups with a Japanese native speaking student in each group. We thought they may be able to guide the group and to help with any tricky *kanji* or vocabulary if needed. This worked well as they were able to share their first hand knowledge of school in Japan, however, they sometimes dominated a bit too much. It may have been good to have had a third culture introduced to challenge students already familiar with Japan.

In the Japanese Dictionary activity students found the analysis of strokes (e.g. Identification of stroke order and number of strokes) to be more difficult than the teacher expected. The teacher also expected the students to be more familiar with the order of *kana*. However, by the end of the unit the students had learnt more skills and concepts than expected in the short period of time. For example, students were able to identify the 3 types of characters (left- right, top-bottom and enclosed). He was particularly impressed by the way the Year 3/4 students were able to manage quite complex concepts relating to Japanese characters.

MATERIALS AND EXEMPLARS

Many of the activities were unable to be “attached” as they were online tasks, role-plays, oral quizzes, class discussions, etc.

One sample attached is a Venn Diagram looking at similarities and differences between Australian and Japanese schools. The task was to do a T chart, however, this student selected to do a Venn diagram to highlight the similarities (Attachment 3).

Students were encouraged to use Japanese as much as possible. The other sample included demonstrates the way in which one student chose to write about Japanese schools in Japanese and Australian schools in English.

EVALUATION

This has been an extremely effective framework for planning, teaching and assessing Intercultural Language Learning at our school and we intend to continue to plan our JILLC program this way.

The dictionary activities identified quickly students’ understandings and the teacher was able to introduce a number of valuable skills which could be applied to other areas of students’ LOTE learning. As a result of this activity we have identified the need to introduce more language awareness skills explicitly from Prep and to build this up to support students’ literacy skills in Japanese.

Another success of this project was that it encouraged students to focus on the similarities not just the differences when looking at Japanese culture. It also helped students to appreciate their own culture more as was evident in a students comment “Wow! Life is much easier in Australia!”

Teachers identified the importance of providing students with sufficient time to reflect on their learning. In applying the processes of “Do, Think, Notice, Compare, Reflect” in lessons, teachers felt they were able to do all aspects except the Reflection. It was felt that the 2 hours was probably not enough time to allow students the opportunity to reflect and thus develop deeper thinking. As a result, in planning our next unit we will increase the time allocated to allow for this. It could be that we plan a unit for a semester rather than a term next year.

We will also use the VELS Planning Framework used across the school when planning JILLC to make more explicit the VELS dimensions and standards being addressed through the program.

REFLECTION

Japanese Integrated Language Learning Centres is the ideal format for implementing a program based on the principles of Intercultural Understanding at Huntingdale PS. These principles provide a strong framework for planning, teaching and assessing this aspect of the curriculum. Students enjoy the multi-aged classes and the more active, flexible style of teaching and learning and the Intercultural principles guide this to strengthen the critical thinking aspect of the program. It also provides a common link for a range of activities by underpinning them with a common focusing question for students to develop their thinking through a range of tasks. Making explicit the strong connections between language and culture are also key in the bilingual program.

Classroom teachers enjoyed being part of this project and being paired with Japanese native-speaking assistants worked well. One classroom teacher commented that she was going to use the approach and

some of the materials in an integrated unit in her English classes!

Using the survey to see where students are at in terms of their Intercultural Sensitivity was very interesting. The comments provided by Year 5/6 students in particular about how they felt about the comments in the survey were eye-opening and provided great insight into students thinking and intercultural understandings.

Attachment 1

Huntingdale Primary Bilingual School
Japanese Integrated Language Learning Centres
Year 3 -6 Program Term 3 2007

FOCUS AREA	RESOURCES	INTERCULTURAL FOCUS	LANGUAGE FOCUS	STUDENT TASK
School in Japan	Series of photos and key questions collated by Tony Liddicoat	Noticing similarities and differences Comparing cultures Reflecting on differences and others perceptions of one's own culture	School vocabulary Adjectives Comparatives Present tense verbs Expressing opinions and preferences	Students do a T chart comparing schools in Australia and Japan
Gestures & Body Language	The Learning Federation "Lost Bags" learning object	Importance of gestures and body language in communication. Similarities and differences between gestures and body language used in English and Japanese	Polite language expressions used by shop staff and customers	Students complete The Learning Federation online learning object and do a shopping role play, using appropriate gestures, body language and oral language

FOCUS AREA	RESOURCES	INTERCULTURAL FOCUS	LANGUAGE FOCUS	STUDENT TASK
Dictionary Use & Translation	Japanese – English, English – Japanese dictionaries <i>Kanji</i> dictionaries Google online translating tool	Compare a range of Japanese dictionaries Identify similarities and differences to English dictionaries	Language Awareness “Alphabetical order” in Japanese dictionaries What is important in a dictionary?	Students create their own dictionary – either a <i>hiragana</i> , <i>katakana</i> or <i>kanji</i> dictionary
Manga	The Learning Federation “ <i>Manga Professional</i> ” learning object	Students compare Australian and Japanese styles of cartoons	Focus on onomatopoeia and other “cartoon” language	Students complete The Learning Federation online learning objects and create their own Japanese style <i>manga</i>
Kyoto Sightseeing	Sightseeing maps Photos of famous sites in Kyoto	Students do a virtual tour of Kyoto, visiting traditional and historical sites.	Times Names of famous sites Transport	Students plan a day trip around Kyoto – selecting where, when and how they would like to travel.

Attachment 2

Self Reflection Task

Name: _____

Date: _____

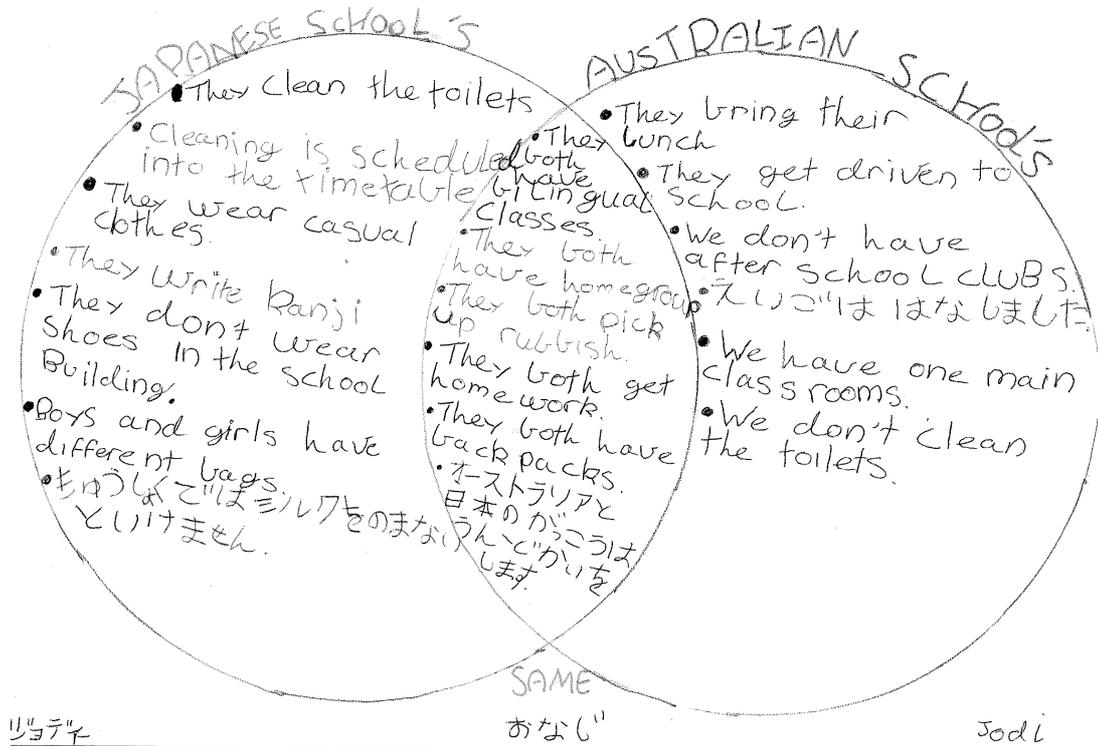
Draw a face to show where you think you fit on the table below:

Australia is all I need. I think we would be better off if all difference groups kept to themselves and didn't mix. English is the main language and everyone should speak it.	
I don't play with people from other cultures as they are strange and might be dangerous.	
Australia's way of life and values should be a model for the rest of the world. Difference doesn't really matter, the important thing is that people are the same.	
I mostly enjoy the differences that exist between myself and people from other countries. I accept that people from other cultures don't necessarily have the same values as Australians and that's OK.	
I like to imagine how a person from another culture would think about things. I can shift into speaking Japanese without a lot of stress.	
I think it is good to be able to have more than one perspective on how things can be done and to know about Japanese life.	

Write or draw any other ideas or feelings you have about the comments above:

Samples of Student Responses

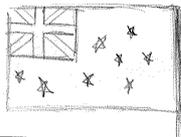
Similarities & Differences between Australian and Japanese Schools



Australian Schools

Japanese Schools

- オーストラリアのかがごうは9じにはじまります。
- Australian schools don't have to clean.
- Australian schools don't have a set timetable.
- オーストラリアのかがごうは3じ30分にあわります。
- Australian schools bring their own lunch.
- After school students go home.
- We study at home.
- We have assembly once a week.
- Sometimes we read in the morning.
- We have recess.



- 日本のかがごうは8じ15分にはじまります。
- The Japanese students have to clean the toilets and classroom everyday
- Japanese schools have a set timetable.
- 日本のかがごうは3じ50分にあわります。
- Japanese schools supply the lunch for the students, and Japanese are not aloud to bring their own food.
- Japanese students have club and events though it's not compulsory most students attend it.
- At 6:00 after club most students go back to school and study.
- Japanese have a morning meeting everyday.
- Japanese have to read for 10 mins every morning.
- Japanese don't have recess.

日本 (Nippon)	Australia
①日本の学校には掃除をします	① In Australian schools you do not clean the school.
②日本の学校ではみんなのおやつをもらいます。	② In Australian schools we bring our own lunches.
③学校では八時十五ではじまります。	③ School starts at 9:00
④学校におります。	④ School goes for longer
⑤日本の先生はきひしいです。	⑤ School uniforms
	⑥ Same bags for everyone
	⑦ Less people in a class
	⑧ More people in a class