

[共同研究：ハワイ社会の Multiethnicity]
研究ノート

Language Use in English-Japanese Interlingual Families in Hawaii: A Pilot Study

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1. Introduction

Interlingual families, in which parents do not share the same language as a mother tongue, potentially provide their children with opportunities to be exposed to two languages.

Great variation, however, has been found in the degree that this potentiality is actualized (e. g., Billings, 1990; Döpke, 1998; Harding & Riley, 1986; Lük, 1986; Lyon, 1996; Oka, 1989; Shang, 1997; Yamamoto, 1985, 1987, 1992, 1995, in press). Some families use both of the parents' mother tongues, while others use only one of them. Likewise, some children acquire bilingual proficiencies in both languages, while others develop only receptive bilingual abilities. Still others become monolingual. It has been also suggested that the mainstream language in the society has a strong influence upon children's language use as well as their language development.

The present study investigates language use of English-Japanese interlingual families residing in Hawaii.

2. Research questions and method of the study

2.1. Research questions

In the present study there are two specific research questions: (1) In what linguistic milieu are English-Japanese interlingual families in Hawaii living?; and (2) how are languages used among family members?

As for the first question, frequency data from the questionnaire will be reported and discussed. Regarding the second question, using a typological model of the patterns of language use in families proposed by Yamamoto (in press), patterns of language use of the subject families are categorized and some characteristics of the subjects are extracted.

2.2 Method

A questionnaire was prepared in two versions, a Japanese-language one and an English-language one. The contents of the two versions are equivalent, consisting of a checklist of family members and 15 questions (See Appendix). It was sent to interlingual families living in

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Hawaii which may meet the following criteria: (1) the family consists of a parenting couple with at least one child; and (2) one parent is a native speaker of English, while the other is a native speaker of Japanese.

During the period from October to November of 1996, 118 questionnaires were distributed by mail. Fifteen responses were returned, and eight of those were disqualified for failure to meet the two distribution criteria above, leaving only seven responses for analysis.

3. Findings

3.1 Linguistic milieu of the subject families: English-Japanese interlingual families in Hawaii

With data derived from the questionnaire survey, the linguistic milieu of the subject families is reported. The data include their family background, linguistic situations, attitudes and perceptions about bilingualism, and the parents' promoting efforts in bilingual child rearing.

3.1.1 Family background

All of the subject families are nuclear families, consisting of parents and their offspring, and none of them have other persons living in the same household (see Table 1).

Most parents are in their 30s, with the youngest being 29 years old and the oldest being 39 years old. The children's ages range from 0.5 to 12.

All the parents have a single nationality, either American or Japanese. Of the seven pairs of parents, six pairs (85.7%) are of a Japanese mother and an American father, and the remaining one pair (14.3%) is of an American mother and a Japanese father. In contrast, most of the children hold dual nationalities: eight children (80.0%) hold USA-Japan nationality, and only two (20.0%) have a single American nationality.

All the parents who hold Japanese nationality speak Japanese as their single mother tongue and all those with American nationality speak English as their single mother tongue. That is, six (85.7%) pairs of parents are a mother with Japanese and a father with English as the single mother tongue and one (14.3%) pair of parents is a mother with English and a father with Japanese as the single mother tongue.

Four of the children (40.0%) are judged to be native speakers of English, five (50.0%) to be native bilingual speakers of English and Japanese, and one (10.0%) is too young to be judged. It is interesting to note that in the family with three children, their native languages were judged to differ: the two elder siblings are reported to be bilingual speakers, while the youngest one to be a monolingual speaker of English.

Only two families (28.6%) have had experience living in Japanese environments for a year or longer, and five (71.4%) had never lived outside of Hawaii since the first child was born.

3.1.2 Family's linguistic situation

Most of the subject families live in a residential area, either in an inner city ($n=4$, 57.1%) or a suburb ($n=2$, 28.6%). The majority of the subject families ($n=5$, 71.4%) have no specific plan in the near future to move to Japan; only two ($n=2$, 28.6%) have such prospects.

Although most of the families report that they have opportunities to meet Japanese speak-

Table 1 : Family background

#	Family structure		Sex	Age	Nationality	Mother tongue	Residence since C1's birth
1	parents + 1 child	M		33	Japan	Japanese	Hawaii
		F		34	USA	English	
		C1	m	0.5	USA/Japan	N/A	
2	parents + 1 child	M		*	Japan	Japanese	Hawaii
		F		*	USA	English	
		C1	m	1	USA/Japan	English/Japanese	
3	parents + 1 child	M		37	Japan	Japanese	Hawaii
		F		29	USA	English	
		C1	m	2	USA/Japan	English/Japanese	
4	parents + 1 child	M		33	Japan	Japanese	Kobe → Hawaii
		F		38	USA	English	
		C1	f	4	USA/Japan	English/Japanese	
5	parents + 1 child	M		35	Japan	Japanese	Hawaii
		F		39	USA	English	
		C1	m	6	USA/Japan	English	
6	parents + 3 children	M		36	Japan	Japanese	Miyazaki → Utah → Miyazaki → Hawaii
		F		36	USA	English	
		C1	f	12	USA/Japan	English/Japanese	
		C2	f	10	USA/Japan	English/Japanese	
		C3	m	5	USA/Japan	English	
7	parents + 2 children	M		39	USA	English	Hawaii
		F		39	Japan	Japanese	
		C1	m	12	USA	English	
		C2	m	10	USA	English	

* = Missing data

M : mother, F : father, C1 : first child/only child, C2 : second child, C3 : third child, f : female, m : male

ers (many: n=3, 42.9%; some: n=3, 42.9%), very few children have monolingual Japanese-speaking playmates (sometimes: n=2, 20%). They mainly play with monolingual English-speaking children (often: n=7, 70.0%; sometimes: n=1, 10.0%) and English-Japanese bilingual children (often: n=2, 20.0%; sometimes: n=5, 50.0%).

Of all ten children, seven (70.0%) attend some kind of school. Of those seven, one goes to preschool (14.3%), four to elementary school (57.1%), and two to junior high school (28.6%). All but one attend public school (n=6, 85.7%). All the children attending school receive instruc-

tion in English. No child is reported to be attending a Japanese-speaking school.

In daily language use, quite a number of members of the subject families ($n=18$, 81.8%) code-mix to certain degrees: Two (9.1%) report that they always code-mix; five (22.7%) often do; 11 (50.0%) sometimes do. Only four (18.2%) report that they do not code-mix.

3.1.3 Attitudes and perceptions about bilingualism

3.1.3.1 Parental attitudes toward bilingualism

All the respondents think that being bilingual is beneficial. The reasons that they give are:

- *He can communicate with more people.*
- *Convenient (BENRI) [my translation]*
- *More languages one speaks is better [sic].*
- *It allows an opportunity to know (to experience, to continue to grow in) both cultures. It also ensures being able to communicate & enjoy relatives from both countries. Also, it helps build appreciation & respect for a diversity of cultures, races, etc.*
- *1. More opportunities for employment; 2. keep in contact with both sides of family (Japan & US).*
- *It helps link the two cultures of the parents.*
- *Language & culture exposure*

Previous studies by the present author (Yamamoto, 1985, 1987, 1991, 1992, 1995, 1996) found five major categories of reasons given by those who think being bilingual is beneficial: practicality; interpersonal communication; cross-cultural understanding; character-building; and cognitive development. The responses from the present subjects seem to be in accord with them.

3.1.3.2 General Japanese perception of bilinguals

All the parents feel that English-Japanese bilinguals are generally perceived positively in Hawaii (very positively: $n=5$, 71.4%; somewhat positively: $n=2$, 28.6%). On the other hand, more than half of them ($n=4$, 57.1%) think that bilinguals of other language combinations are perceived less positively than English-Japanese bilinguals are. The reasons given are:

- *Japanese is widely used as a foreign language and it is used in the mass media. (GAIKOKUGO TOSHITE NIHONGO WA KANARI TSUJIRUSHI, MEDEA DEMO FURERUKOTOGA DEKIRU) [my translation]*
- *Each language has different values attached to it.*
- *I think Hawaiian residents are somewhat positive toward bilingualism in any combinations, but a bit more so when one language is Japanese because of economic possibilities (tourism-related). (I also think this is evolving).*
- *I think Japanese-English bilinguals are more respected; mainly because of job opportunity.*

Those who do not see any difference in perception between those two different bilingual groups think:

- *I think most people view bilingualism as a powerful tool that opens new doors to opportunity.*
- *Speaking another language is an asset.*

3.1.3.3 Children's negative reaction to being addressed in Japanese in the presence of their English-speaking friends

Three families (42.9%) claim that they have not encountered any negative reactions from their children when speaking to them in Japanese in the presence of their English-speaking friends:

- *We tend to use English in those situations, to avoid making her English-speaking friends uneasy. At times, we have used Japanese with no negative reaction. (However, this may be related to age—if our daughter were 14, she may react differently).*

Only one family (14.3%) reported that they have:

- *My child has sometimes told his mother to speak English instead of Japanese, or just ignored his mother when she speaks Japanese.*

3.1.3.4 Specific experiences due to the fact that they were born and raised in an interlingual family

Three families (42.9%) claim that their children have had some desirable experiences, due to the fact that they were born and raised in an interlingual family. Two (28.6%) report that they have had no such experiences. Those who have had desirable experiences say that:

- *People say it is great that he speaks both Eng. and Jap.*
- *Compliments/feelings of awe from others who feel our daughter is “lucky to grow up speaking 2 languages.”*
- *Compliments from friends, family, acquaintances on how “lucky” we are to be bilingual & bicultural.*

3.1.4 Promotion of bilingualism

All the parents (n=7, 100.0%) claim that they are trying to raise their children to be bilingual. Reasons given by the parents for why they are trying are similar to those given for why they think being bilingual is beneficial.

- *My English is not really good. My parents do not speak English. I want him to be aware of both cultures he has.*

Table 2 : A typological model of language use between INT-A and INT-B

	TMU		IM-CBU		PBU				TBU
	T-1	T-2	T-3	T-4	T-5	T-6	T-7	T-8	T-9
INT-A	X	Y	X	Y	X	X+Y	Y	X+Y	X+Y
INT-B	X	Y	Y	X	X+Y	X	X+Y	Y	X+Y

- *We want him to learn both of our mother tongues (RYOSHIN TOMO NO BOKOKUGO WO MANANDE HOSHII). We both understand English and Japanese (RYOSHIN TOMO EIGO • NIHONGO WO KAISU NO DE).* [my translation]
- *We want him to speak as many languages as possible.*
- ①*She has dual citizenship & relatives in both countries so we'd like her to use both languages;*
②*Cultural enrichment;* ③*Respect of other cultures;* ④*We (parents) enjoy both English & Japanese & want our daughter to, too.*
- *We feel it is important for our child's economic and social future.*
- *I consider bilingualism a great talent & opportunity.*
- *Beneficial in the future*

Regarding ways to promote bilingualism, almost all the families (n=5, 71.4%) mentioned conscious use of the languages on the part of parents. They try to provide their child with balanced exposure to both languages.

- *For now, we speak to him in both languages (IMA NO TOKORO WA RYOHO NO KOTOBA WO TSUKATTE HANASHIKAKERU).* [my translation]
- *To talk to him only in Japanese, baby sitter and other babies who are there are English speakers.*
- *We use both languages (English in public, Japanese in private or in public where Japanese is spoken) – i. e., both parents use both languages. We want our daughter to see that each parent is somewhat bilingual & each of us enjoys both languages. Also, we read a lot of children's books to her, in both languages (again, both parents).*
- *Try to use Japanese in family, send child to Japan to visit Japanese relatives.*
- *We have set a time each day when we speak only Japanese.*

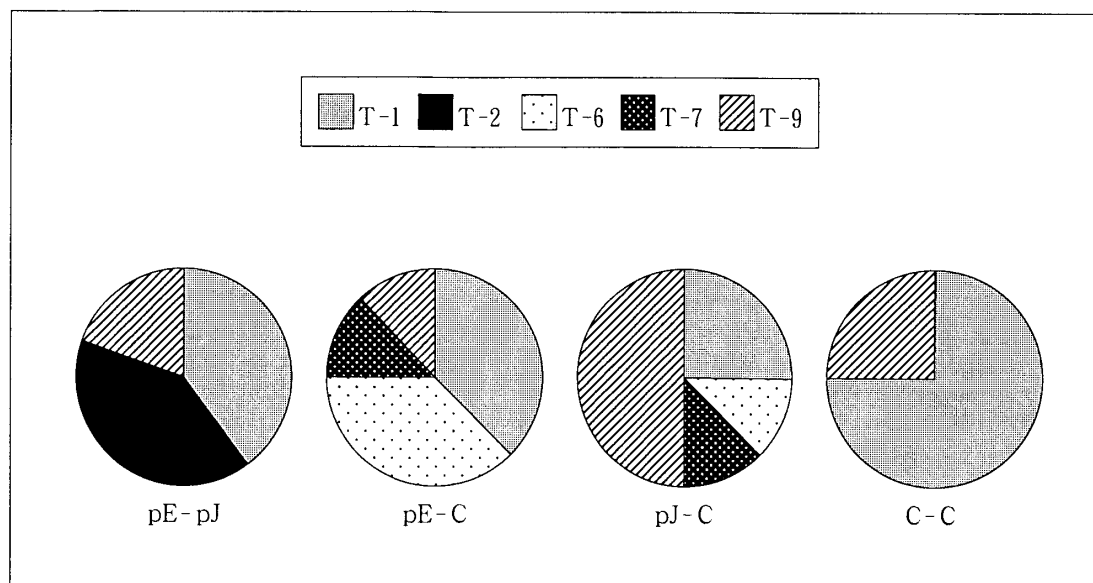
3.2 Patterns of language use of the subject families

3.2.1 A typological model of patterns of language use

When two languages are involved, there are nine types of language use possible. A typological model of language use has been proposed (Yamamoto, in press) with nine distinct types comprising four major categories (see Table 2).

Total Monolingual Use (TMU) consists of Type 1 and Type 2, in which both interlocutors, INT-A and INT-B, speak one and the same language to each other. Type 1, labeled as Total Monolingual Use of X language (TMU-X), is where both INT-A and INT-B use X language. Type 2, termed as Total Monolingual Use of Y language (TMU-Y), is where both use Y language.

Figure 1 : Language use between every possible pair



Individual Monolingual-Collective Bilingual Use (IM-CBU), corresponding to the “one parent-one language” principle (e. g., Döpke, 1992), is language use in which each interlocutor speaks a different language. IM-CBU includes Type 3, in which INT-A uses X language while INT-B uses Y language, and its complement, Type 4, in which INT-A uses Y language while INT-B uses X language. Although each interlocutor uses only one language, she/he comprehends the other’s language and, thus, two languages are actually used between the pair, as a whole.

Partial Bilingual Use (PBU) includes four types, 5 through 8, in which one of the interlocutors uses only one language and the other uses both languages: INT-A using X language while INT-B uses both (Type 5); INT-A using both while INT-B uses X language (Type 6); INT-A using Y language while INT-B uses both (Type 7); INT-A using both while INT-B uses Y language (Type 8).

Total Bilingual Use (TBU) is where both interlocutors use both languages to each other.

3.2.2 Types of language use in the subject families

Using this model, the language use between every possible pair of family members in the subject families is categorized (see Figure 1). Due to the fact that no data were supplied regarding the language use of their children, two families are excluded from the analysis, leaving five pairs of parents and eight children.

Regarding language use involving children, each child is separately considered, and thus, although there are only five pairs of parents, there are eight pE-child pairs and also eight pJ-child pairs. There are four sibling pairs (C1-C2: 2 pairs; C1-C3: 1 pair; C2-C3: 1 pair).

In this section, X refers to the majority language of the society, namely English, and Y refers to the minority language, namely Japanese. Likewise, pE is referred to an English native-speaking parent and pJ to a Japanese native-speaking parent.

3.2.2.1 Language use between pE and pJ

Several previous studies in Japan (Oka, 1989; Shang, 1997; Yamamoto, 1985, 1987, 1992, 1995) have found that parents prefer monolingual language use, choosing one of their native languages as their mutual language. The present study also found that it was the case. Four pairs employ TMU (80.0%), with two adopting TMU-English (T-1: 40%) and two TMU-Japanese (T-2: 40%). Only one pair (20.0%) uses both languages, TBU, in their communication.

3.2.2.2 Language use between pE and children

In contrast to the language use between the parents, bilingual language use is more often used between the pE and the child. In five cases (62.5%), either one or both members of the pair use both languages. Three pE-child pairs (37.5%) use TMU-English.

3.2.2.3 Language use between pJ and children

As in the case between the pE and the child, two languages are more frequently used between the pJ and the child. In six cases (75.0%), either one or both of the pair speak both languages. Only two (25.0%) employ monolingual language use, which is TMU-English.

It should be noted that although Japanese is used along with English, TMU-Japanese is not adopted in pJ-child pairs.

3.2.2.4 Language use among siblings

Previous studies (Döpke, 1992; Yamamoto, 1985, 1987, 1992, 1995) have suggested that children tend to use the majority language of the society to their siblings. The present study also found the same tendency. TMU-English is the most commonly adopted between siblings (T-1: n=3, 75.0%) while only one pair (25.0%) uses both languages to each other.

4. Conclusion

Due to the unexpectedly poor response to the questionnaire survey, caution must be exercised in interpreting the findings of this study. Nonetheless, they tend to corroborate previous conclusions that the mainstream language of the society has a strong influence upon children's language use.

In this study, even when the parents are trying to provide a bilingual environment by speaking the non-societal language, Japanese, the children themselves tend to use it less, if at all. This trend is most conspicuous between siblings, who rarely, if ever, speak to each other in Japanese.

Under such circumstances, children's productive bilingualism is not likely to be achieved, unless it is actively pursued.

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Appendix

I. FAMILY BACKGROUND

- Q 1: Please fill in CHART 1, regarding the sex, age, nationality, residence, and language of each family member.
- Q 2: Where has your family lived since the first child was born?

II. FAMILY'S LINGUISTIC SITUATION

A. Language Use among Family Members

- Q 3: What languages are generally used among your family members? Please fill in CHART 3, as the example below shows. *If more than one language is used, please circle the most frequently used language(s).*
- Q 4: Do you ever mix languages in the same sentence when speaking to each other? (Eg.: It's MENDOKUSAI, but I've got to do it) Please check only one box for each person.

B. Children's Language Use at Play

- Q 5: How often do your children play with: (1) children who speak only Japanese; (2) children who speak only English; and (3) children who speak both English and Japanese? Please check only one box for each item.

C. Language(s) Used for Instruction at School

- Q 6: Please fill in CHART 6, regarding your children's school enrollment and medium of instruction.

D. The Place Where You Live

- Q 7: In which of the following areas do you now reside? Please check one box each for A and B. If none of them is appropriate, please check "other" and elaborate your answer.
- Q 8: Are there many opportunities for your family to meet Japanese speakers in the area where you reside now?

Q 9: Do you plan to move to Japan in the near future?

III. ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS ABOUT BILINGUALISM

Q10: Do you and your spouse think being bilingual is beneficial or detrimental? (You need not to consider "reading/writing" abilities here.) Please check the appropriate box and describe the reason.

Q11: What do you think is the general Hawaiian perception of English-Japanese bilinguals? Please check the appropriate box.

Q12: Do you think bilinguals speaking other combinations of languages are perceived the same way in Hawaii? Please check the appropriate box and give the reason.

Q13: Have you and/or your spouse ever encountered any sort of negative reaction from your children when speaking to them in Japanese in the presence of their English-speaking friends?

Q14: Have your children ever experienced anything, either desirable or undesirable, which seemed to be due to the fact that they were born and raised in a bilingual family?

IV. PROMOTION OF BILINGUALISM

Q15: Are you and your spouse trying to raise your children to be bilingual? (You need not to consider "reading/writing" abilities here.) Please check the appropriate box and elaborate your answers.

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