

Princess Takamado English Essay Contest

Collaboration between Canada and Japan strengthened by English

Sae Takebe, Kyoto University

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English has played an important role in the world. The earliest appearance of the term 'globalization' in the English language can be traced back to the 1940s and it was not until half a century later that this concept took the public consciousness. Globalization let us consider movement of people from country to country through a long time, such as immigration. Immigration has brought the expansion and the stretching of social relations, activities, and connections. It also has brought the intensification and acceleration of social exchanges and activities. We can see that globalization makes the shifting global patterns of language use. Some languages are increasingly used in international communication while others lose their prominence and even disappear for lack of speakers.

English is becoming more and more important these days all over the world. English is a common language in the midst of the globalization of languages. There are five key variables that influence the globalization of languages; 1. Number of languages, 2. Movements of people, 3. Foreign language learning and tourism, 4. Internet languages and 5. International scientific publication. Here I would like to focus on the second one, or movement of people, namely immigration, and to express my opinion about the third one in the latter part. Canada has a reputation for one of the most immigrant-friendly nations in the world. More than 250,000 people immigrated to Canada last year, and

according to the latest reports, a full 20 percent of Canada's 35-million people are now foreign-born. Here shows that

the Canadian population is composed of

32% of all the population from England, 20% France, 16% Scotland, 14% Ireland, 14% Germany, 10% Italy, 5% China, 5% First Nation people, 4.2% other, 51% (some have multiple backgrounds), in 2011.

The languages spoken in Canada are composed of

English (official); 59%, French (official); 22%, Punjabi; 1.4%, Italian; 1.3%, Spanish; 1.3%, German; 1.3%, Cantonese; 1.2%, Tagalog; 1.2%, Arabic; 1.1%, and other; 10.5%, in 2011.

These two sets of data demonstrate that Canada has a number of immigrants (including both the past and the recent comers) and English is a necessary communication tool for them to live their life and integrate themselves into the Canadian local communities.

On the other hand, Japan has much smaller number of immigrants, just 1.1% of all the population, or two million people, is born in foreign countries. Thus, in Japan, Japanese is the most common language. English is not widely spoken because Japanese

is almost the only communication tool. Therefore, Japan has suffered from the problems resulted from this original national characteristic. Japan had developed on its own but the world has been globalized especially after the end of the World War II as I mention earlier.

Japan tries introducing new educational guidelines regarding English education, taken an initiative by Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. In 2011, at an elementary 5 and 6 year level, a foreign language activity is made compulsory. Education Ministry guidelines are designed to deepen the understanding of languages and cultures through the experience of leaning foreign languages, cultivate active communication, and enjoy the sound and basic expressions. Elementary school needs as many native English speakers as possible as assistant language teachers (ALT) for the purpose of students' acquirement of the enough ability to communicate with others in English and understand other cultures well. There are, however, some problems produced by ALT. For example, some of the ALTs work as a part-timer and there is the case where they do not have professional teaching qualification.

Regarding the education of the second language, in the province of British Columbia (BC) Canada, French is necessary to learn in school. Most teachers are not native French speakers, but they make efforts to study French online video lectures from the

university. Looking back to the inside of Japan, Japanese teachers don't have enough English skill and they could not talk with ALTs and do not have enough score to teach English, such as TOEFL iBT 75. Japanese teachers should follow the example of French teachers in BC.

Furthermore, according to the data by the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET), Japan has over a half of the total number of the ALTs from North America; 38,700 of 60,480 participants come from Canada and the United States of America. Additionally, 62,349 Japanese people travel in Canada and this is the third largest number of Japanese visitors overseas according to the latest statistics. Canada is famous for its large scale of the natural environment and its image as a peaceful nation, so Japanese people visit in Canada as tourists, workers, and ESL (English as a Second Language) students. Canada is popular among Japanese ESL students. As you can see, Canadian teachers go to Japan and Japanese people go to Canada to take advantage of and meet each country's demand and supply. Here, we are able to see the deep connection between Japan and Canada through English education.

Finally, I would like to conclude my essay and move on to the promising future relationship between Canada and Japan. Canada is a multi-culture nation and has various spoken languages. Japan has still fewer cultures and spoken languages inside.

Canada has such a great educational resources which Japan does not have! Japanese people visit Canada mainly for the purpose of studying English. In Canada, they can study other languages besides English. They perhaps can become a trilingual! Not only French, but also tons of languages. They can learn Arabic. They can learn Italian. Can you imagine the other country that gives such a chance? Not so many. In addition, Canada makes Japanese people culturally knowledgable. It is difficult for Japanese to realize other cultures in Japan. Japanese visitors to Canada, especially teachers, can provide what they get as a lesson in Canada for their students. This definitely leads to foster globalized human resources. "English" gives Japanese people such an amazing opportunity in Canada! Canada and Japan will keep the deep collaboration and support each other in the future.

(1000 words)

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澤純子（KUROSAWA Junko）愛知淑徳大学非常勤講師 鳴門教育大学小学校英語教育セン

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