

Four Days in Taiwan: Culture and English Communication Between Japanese and Taiwanese Students

Steve Cornwell
Scott Johnston

台湾の4日間： 日本と台湾の学生間の文化・英語コミュニケーション

コーンウェル スティープ
ジョンストン スコット

Abstract

In university English Departments, one major goal is to have students communicate through English in real life situations. However, this is often difficult to accomplish. This article describes and analyzes a unique short-term culture exchange program in which 18 Japanese and 24 Taiwanese students interacted in Taiwan. Since English was the only common language, students spoke it during planned activities as well as informally in their rooms in the evening. The findings suggest that when all participants are English-as-a second-language learners, they are less concerned with mistakes and more concerned with communication. Students indicated that when they speak with native English speakers, they have more trouble understanding and communicating than they did with the Taiwanese students. While additional research needs to be undertaken to discern long-term effects, the findings suggest that very short programs can have an immediate impact on students' language abilities and attitudes.

Key words: short-term international programs cultural exchange
intercultural communication International English

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抄 録

大学の英語学部の主たる目標の一つは、学生が実生活において英語でコミュニケーションするようにさせることである。しかしながら、これを達成することはなかなか容易ではない。本稿は中華民国（台湾）で18人の日本人と24人の台湾人の学生が交流した、短期文化交流プログラムについて報告、分析する。英語が参加学生の唯一の共通言語であるため、学生たちはあらかじめ計画された活動のみならず、夜自分たちの部屋でも英語で話をした。このことは、参加者がみな、第二言語として英語を学ぶ学習者の場合、間違いを気にするより、コミュニケーションをすることに関心がはられるということを示唆している。学生も、台湾人の学生と英語で意思疎通をするより、英語を母語とする人と話すときのほうが理解が困難であると述べていた。長期的な効果をみきわめるにはさらなる研究が必要であるが、今回の発見点は、かなり短期のプログラムでも学生の言語や学習態度に直接的な影響がみられることを示している。

キーワード: 短期国際教育プログラム 文化交流 国際語としての英語
異文化間コミュニケーション

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This paper will report on the International English Program—Taiwan (IEP), a two-credit course that culminated with a four-day cultural exchange program between Osaka Jogakuin College (OJC) and Yuan-Ze University (YZU) on YZU's campus in Chung-Li, Taiwan on the outskirts of Taipei. It will provide some of the history and background that led to this program being developed before describing the pre-departure sessions that helped prepare students for their time in Taiwan, the actual four-day program, the debriefing session held after students returned, and an analysis of the program.

History

In 1998, and again in 2001, OJC held a three-day overnight intensive English workshop at the YMCA campgrounds on Rokko Mountain. Steve Cornwell and Tonia McKay were asked to design a program that would allow students to enjoy communicating in English. It was purposefully designed to be different from the rigorous, academic classes students were normally exposed to in their day-to-day student lives at OJC. For example, the sessions included an international role play with students taking on characters from different countries and then introducing themselves and finding out about each other; an information gap called "The Family of Nations" where students "memorized" information on one of three countries (Ecuador, Indonesia, Switzerland) and then exchanged in triads; several teacher-led sessions such as sharing Japanese culture in English; English through videos; and a travel simulation where students were taught how to exchange money, get tourist information, make a reservation at a hotel, and get train schedules before using all those skills to visit New York City, "the Big Apple." Students participating in the program reported that they enjoyed the opportunity to use English in a more communicative setting and teachers commented on how well the students did when working in English on the various activities.

During some of the free time at the workshops, Mr. Tetsuro Chihara, then Vice President for Academic Affairs and currently Acting President of OJC, started a discussion on how English usage would be increased if students from another country could also participate in such a program. For example, if OJC students were able to go to Korea for a four- or five-day program, there would be an authentic need to use English. This idea was discussed in various committees over the next few years with OJC even contacting a few groups in Korea including KoTesol (the Korean TESOL affiliate) to see if any interested schools could be identified. However, no schools expressed interest and with energy going into preparing for the opening of OJC's four-year program in 2004, active efforts to develop an overseas intensive English program were put on hold until 2005 when OJC's semester abroad program was inaugurated.

In 2005 OJC began a semester abroad program by signing memorandums of

understanding with schools in Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and New Zealand. One school, Yuan-Ze University (YZU), which was also starting its own exchange program, quickly became an active partner with a team of its faculty and staff members visiting OJC in 2005. It was at this time that the possibility of an intensive English program focusing on culture exchange was discussed and after a few follow-up emails outlining what a possible program might look like, both schools agreed to proceed with its development. In March 2006, Scott Johnston and Steve Cornwell visited YZU to meet with OJC semester abroad students and to hold a working meeting with YZU staff and faculty to set the foundation for the program. One concern that we discussed was that the program not be too lecture-oriented or teacher-centered. We also discussed ways to make it more than just a sightseeing trip. With the foundation set and a tentative outline agreed upon, YZU began planning and budgeting for the onsite portion of the program.

Short-term Programs

While developing and implementing this program, literature on cultural experiences was considered. For example, Ward, Bochner, and Furnham (2001) point out that there are four groups of cultural travelers: tourists, sojourners, immigrants, and refugees (p.19). Our students would be sojourners who, "...voluntarily go abroad for a set period of time that is usually associated with a specific assignment or contract" (Ward et al., 2001). Since our students were sojourners, we hoped to specifically avoid the tourist concept in which students take on the identity of tourists and not cultural and language learners. There is an abundance of literature on short-term cultural and language programs of three weeks or more. See Johnston (2006) for an example of a short-term cultural program to Japan. However, there is much less on very short-term language and culture programs. In *Study abroad levels: Toward a classification of program types*, Engle and Engle (1999) use the words "study tour" to describe programs of several day to a few weeks (p.10). In these tours, using a foreign language is not a component.

It would be easy to think that short-term programs do not need much preparation because they are so brief. However, recently program coordinators are realizing that short-term programs especially need to prepare students for the experience and debrief them after the experience (Hulstrand, 2006). Students on short-term programs need as much help if not more in understanding communication styles and culture since they have a very short time to interact.

In this way, this particular program, with preorientation and debriefing, has the potential to add to the literature on very short programs where two groups of English-as-a foreign-language learners communicate in a country in which English is not the native language and on the effectiveness of such a program.

The IEP Taiwan Program Predeparture

The International English Program (IEP) is a two-credit course developed for OJC students. This specific program to Taiwan was announced to OJC students in April and 18 students applied. This program was unique at OJC in that it did not have a minimum English proficiency requirement. The rationale was that this program would focus on cultural exchange and even lower level students would benefit from it. At the same time, both OJC and YZU wanted their students to exchange ideas in English and develop a close relationship with each other, so that they would improve their English communication skills and enrich their cross-cultural understanding.

The predeparture program consisted of 14 hours of academic work and 2 hours of orientation. The academic component consisted of a) 8 hours of predeparture training, b) 3 hours for a museum visit in Osaka, and c) 3 hours for a debriefing after returning. See Table 1 for a course overview.

Table 1 Course Overview Schedule

Day	Content	Hours
July 1, 2006 (Saturday)	Visit Osaka History Museum to learn about what museums can teach us and about Osaka history	3
July 12, 2006 (Friday)	Choose topics to talk about Japan; think about interacting in English	1
August 4, 2006 (Friday)	Lecture and presentation on Taiwan	3
August 5, 2006 (Saturday)	Lecture and presentation on Taiwan	3
August 14, 2006 (Monday)	Discuss concerns and expectations; prepare groups for presentation	1
August 21-24 (M-TH)	In Taiwan	(4 days)
September 22 (Friday)	Debriefing/Review of program	3
TOTAL HOURS		14

Initial meetings

Students from OJC and YZU were paired by email so that they could begin to get to know each other. They exchanged a self-introduction email and could access a website that YZU had set up with information about both schools and some of the places we were going to visit. YZU students were on summer break when the emails were scheduled to be exchanged, so some students did not receive emails right away. When OJC students expressed their concern, we suggested they email again and also be patient as some people do not check email daily.

As part of the orientation, a series of administrative meetings with a representative from the Japan Travel Bureau (JTB) were set to make sure that students understood what they needed to do regarding travel and insurance arrangements. Either Johnston or Cornwell tried to be present at these sessions in order to get to know the students better. They also provided students with information from OJC's first-year integrated units

discussion material on how to introduce oneself, talk about one's goals, and describe one's character. They also provided information on questions one can ask to keep a conversation moving.

Museum Visit

Since a visit to the Taiwan National Palace Museum was part of the Taiwan program, we scheduled a visit to the Osaka Natural History museum with the specific goal of having students experience a museum visit in order to think critically about what they can learn about culture at a museum and to learn what they might tell the Taiwanese students about Osaka's history. Johnston and Cornwell visited the museum prior to the students' visit and were able to meet with one of the curators. As a result, OJC was able to reserve a meeting room and arrange for a short introductory lecture to orientate students to the museum. Students were given a worksheet we had developed based on education material developed by the Smithsonian Institute. To set a context, it asked them to think about museums they had visited in the past and also what items they had collected in the past. Then, students were divided into groups of three or four and were told to enjoy all the exhibits but to find the answers to certain group-specific assigned questions such as what is the old name of Osaka in Japanese or why is the Osaka Honganji temple famous? Finally, they were asked the following questions:

1. What did you see in the museum that stands out?
2. After visiting this museum what experience are you looking forward to when you visit museums in Taiwan?
3. Would it be hard to explain the museum exhibits to a visitor from Taiwan? What can you do to prepare to ask questions and answer questions on our trip?
4. Are there any concerns about interacting with your Taiwanese partners?

Taiwan Lecture at OJC

There were some concerns that students needed to be aware of the cultural and historical context of Taiwan given Japan's colonial history with the country. Indeed, research indicates that it is short trips which need to provide students with more background knowledge since they will not have a long time in the country to learn about the country (Hulstrand, 2006). Thus, six hours of the program were set aside for learning about Taiwanese history and culture. Mr. Taniguchi, a Japanese instructor at YZU and a long time resident of Taiwan, was invited to come to OJC and introduce the students to Taiwan and Yuan-Ze University. Using a Power Point presentation, Taniguchi mixed lecture, photographs, music, and video to provide students with background information on Taiwanese culture and history.

Final Predeparture Meeting

On August 14th, we met for the last time before departing. At this time, we reviewed the schedule (See Appendix A) and checked to see that all students had successfully communicated by email with their YZU partner. All had communicated at least once, while others had had multiple exchanges. As part of the program, OJC students would introduce the college and Osaka using Power Point. Cornwell had put together an initial version of a Power Point presentation and showed it to the students, giving them a clear idea of what was expected for the presentation they would be giving in Taiwan. Some students had already sent in photographs and we took time for students to transfer additional photographs into the Power Point presentation. The groups also talked about what they would say as part of the presentation. Some of the groups' topics dealt with OJC's Bangladesh program; clubs and special events such as the karate club, the gospel choir, the candlelight Christmas service and the school festival; living alone as a student; and customs in Japan. Students also selected a Japanese song that they would sing at some point during the program.

Students had been given homework to write about a) what they were looking forward to, b) what they were worried about, and c) how they might change academically, culturally and personally. We shared these ideas first in small groups and then all together. The students' concerns dealt with the safety level in Taiwan, their ability to get along with their Taiwanese roommates, worries about disease such as dengue fever, coping with the high temperature in Taiwan, using the toilets, and their language skills and ability to communicate in English. This was a positive opportunity for students to share these fears and get them out in the open. Finally, after making sure everyone knew what time to meet at the airport, we ended our session.

In Taiwan—August 21 to 24

August 21 Monday

At 9:00 a.m. students gathered at Kansai International Airport to leave for Taiwan. After exchanging money and checking in, a representative from JTB provided final advice before our group went through security and immigration. Security was heightened due to a terrorist scare in England a few days earlier. After enjoying the duty free area, students proceeded to the gate and boarded the aircraft for an uneventful flight to Taipei.

We were greeted at the airport by Cindy Hsieh (a YZU staff member) and a student helper. We boarded a bus for a 20-minute ride to YZU. Upon arriving, students were met by their buddies and were put into six different groups of Taiwanese/Japanese students. Then the program staff, which consisted of Joyce Kao and Cindy Hsieh, office managers of the Department of Finance and the Department of Management respectively, and eight student

helpers, introduced themselves using a game. In the game, first information was provided about the various program staff in English, such as who likes basketball, who has been to Japan, and so on. Then the students were quizzed orally on this information and prizes consisting of snacks were given to groups with the correct answers. By the end of the game, all groups had received several prizes which they took with them as they went to their rooms.

All students and program staff stayed in the YZU dormitories. Most of the rooms were set up for four students with what looked like four very tall bunk beds arranged over four sets of desks and book shelves. It is not customary for mattresses to come with dorm beds in Taiwan, so YZU had provided everyone with sleeping bags. This had been agreed to during the planning of the program; however, the sleeping bags were summer weight and thus did not provide much cushioning. Using the bunk beds was like sleeping on a piece of plywood. After getting settled into their rooms, each group walked to the management building for the opening ceremony.

At the opening ceremony, faculty and staff were introduced and then staff played a (rhythm and clapping name) game designed to help students learn their group members' names. The game was similar to one played in Japan and so soon the entire room was noisy with each group playing. Then each group nominated its best player to participate in a competition among the winners. This turned out to be a very exciting way to engage all the students and keep them focused on each other without expecting a large amount of initial English language use. At this time OJC and YZU exchanged gifts. On behalf of OJC, Cornwell presented a picture frame made of traditional Japanese material to Sy-Ming Guu, Dean of the College of Management, and the dean responded by presenting replicas of ancient tea sets to both Cornwell and Johnston.

After a Taiwanese buffet at the school, students participated in another activity called The Legend of YZU. In this activity groups had to go to six stations scattered throughout the campus and accomplish various tasks. For example, one station was set up on a basketball court next to the athletic track. Students had to shoot baskets until their group had made 25. Another station was set up outside the library. It had one student being blindfolded, given a water balloon, and spun around three times. When she stopped spinning she had to toss the balloon in the air. Another student was assigned to catch the balloon without letting it break. Since the blindfolded student could not see where or to whom she was throwing the balloon, some balloons broke splashing the students. When students in a group successfully caught three balloons without letting them break, they cleared the station and could go on to the next one. At another station, Taiwanese students taught the Japanese students to memorize and recite Chinese poems written in Chinese.

The first group to complete all the stations was declared the winner and received a prize. The Legend of YZU was a great way to bond the groups together through the need to cooperate. Students also used a lot of energy running around campus and this prepared them to retire to the dorm for the evening where conversations continued on into the night.

August 22 Tuesday

In the morning OJC students gave their presentations on OJC and Osaka (introduced earlier) and the YZU students did likewise, presenting on YZU and Taiwan. The YZU students talked about topics such as food, minorities in Taiwan, and YZU school life. The presentations offered an opportunity to learn about the culture of each country and school. And they also helped students bond. For example, in the OJC presentation there was a clip where students had learned from Taniguchi how to say “That’s too expensive” in Chinese in preparation for visiting the night market. All the participants laughed loudly when that scene was shown. Also, during one of the YZU’s presentations that dealt with popular snacks, samples of the actual snacks were distributed for students to enjoy.

Then the groups were given instructions for their Culture Night Presentations along with a little time to discuss what they might do. There were three groups assigned to present on Taiwan and three to present on Japan. The only requirement was that it had to be about the assigned country and entertaining. The instructions were purposefully ambiguous to allow the groups the freedom to use their creativity and ingenuity in developing their performances.

After getting a boxed lunch, we boarded two buses and headed to the National Palace Museum. When planning the visit, we had decided to separate the OJC and YZU students so that the Japanese students could do the tour with one of the museum’s Japanese-speaking guides and the Taiwanese students could do it in Chinese. After the guided tours, the groups were reunited and asked to fill out information gap worksheets prepared by YZU specifically for the museum visit.

Then, around 5pm we headed to the Shilin Night Market, an area of Taipei with lots of small and large eating stalls and small stores. Each student was given 150 Taiwan dollars and then sent off for about two hours to enjoy shopping and eating. One hundred and fifty Taiwan dollars is about 450 yen which was enough to buy dinner at the market. During this activity, the Taiwanese students had to explain the types of foods and costs of items in English. Thus, a lot of English interaction occurred during this time. Students (and faculty) enjoyed eating and drinking such things as stinky tofu, dim sum, chicken cutlets, mango ice, and tapioca drinks.

Around 7:30 pm, we went to Taipei 101, at the time possibly the tallest building in the

world, where we spent an hour looking down on views of the night life in Taipei. Again, communication occurred in English about the different parts of Taipei that students could see. After getting back on the bus, we started on an hour trip to Jiufen, an historic city on the east coast of Taiwan. Each bus had video screens where students could sing karaoke, and the trip passed quickly with Chinese, Japanese, and English songs being sung. The views on the trip were beautiful as we climbed the hills that led to Jiufen with the night sky, ocean, and the lights of this small town all interacting. We arrived after 10 pm and students were led down tiny, winding paths to their respective guest houses. The rooms and beds with mattresses were a welcomed treat after the austere bunk beds in the YZU dorms.

August 23 Wednesday

This rainy morning, we had a guided tour of the area, starting at a temple/shrine and continuing through the grounds of a museum of a gold mine remaining from the Japanese occupation. Students were given 150 Taiwan dollars and sent to eat on the “main street” of Jiufen which is a winding street that leads down a hill that is full of shops and eateries. The eating and shopping was again done in groups, with conversations going on in English. We returned to Taipei and briefly stopped to see Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall. Since it was raining heavily, many students did not actually go to the Memorial Hall but instead took a break at the National Concert Hall, which along with the National Theater, are located on the grounds of the Memorial Hall. Some tourist guides describe how student groups sometimes practice dancing at the National Concert Hall and the National Theater, and we saw groups practicing during our short visit.

On returning to YZU, groups had about three-and-a-half hours to prepare for their culture night presentations. Though many were tired from the day’s travels, this activity required students to interact and cooperate. Thus, it was another strategic opportunity to use English to create a performance that would be viewed by all the other students. Dinner consisted of a lunch box and was eaten while students prepared for the evening presentation. While the groups were preparing their presentations, the staff had gone around getting their topics, and had then created a Power Point/video presentation to introduce each group.

Following the preparation, everyone gathered in one of the many auditoriums on YZU’s campus to enjoy the culture night presentations with program staff serving as the MCs and YZU faculty and staff serving as judges. This culture presentation was very entertaining and highlighted the students’ creativity. All the groups used English to introduce their presentations and all were entertaining and creative. For example, one involved students being themselves shopping in Taipei and asking for a discount while

shopping. It concluded with a dance. Another group introduced Japanese calisthenics (*rajiō taisō*) with everyone getting involved, including the audience. Yet another group introduced a Taiwanese bamboo dance, with instructors and all the Japanese students being asked to try. At the end of the presentations, the Japanese students sang the popular SMAP song *Sekai ni hitotsu dake no hana* (Makihara, 2003) and the Taiwanese students taught the song Happy Birthday in Chinese to the Japanese students.

August 24 Thursday

On the last day, students prepared for about an hour to present their group's reflections about the program in a session called Memory Sharing. Poster paper had been given out the night before and groups had been urged to think about this after the culture night presentations. Most groups created a poster of some kind and during this preparation some groups' members even spoke individually about their feelings and experiences. It was surprising how in such a short period of time the students had bonded so quickly.

During this Memory Sharing session, each group talked about different aspects of the program. One group had ranked the activities and given each a mark. Another group had drawn pictures of people in the program. Another had included words learned in Japanese and Chinese. In addition, during the Memory Sharing session the president of YZU, Tsong P. Perng, addressed the students in English sharing his own experience visiting Osaka. Dean Sy-Ming Guu and Associate Dean Jashen Chen of the College of Management handed out certificates to each of the student participants.

A questionnaire developed by Hsieh, Johnston, and Cornwell with input from the program staff was distributed to all participants (See Appendix B). After a buffet lunch and much hugging, crying, and picture taking (clear signs of a successful program), the OJC students left for the airport and their return trip to Osaka.

Debriefing Session upon Return

At the final session in Osaka, we began by showing students the video that had been prepared by the YZU program staff during the four days we were in Taiwan. We also showed students a website where photographs of the program in Taiwan had been uploaded and gave them time to look at these. In preparation for the debriefing session, we had sent an email to students asking them to write a letter to us telling us how they had changed because of the IEP program to Taiwan. We urged them to take some time to think about this as they wrote so they could really share their thoughts and feelings. We also encouraged them to tell us in the letter what they had learned about communicating in a foreign language.

Thus, after watching the video and looking at the photos, we had the students get into

the six groups they had been in while in Taiwan. The groups were asked to share their letters with each other and then to come up with 10 keywords that summarized their experiences. Each group put their keywords on the white board. The key words ranged from friendship, conversation, nervous, communication, and kanji to food, smell, culture night, and high tension girls (referring to the high level of energy many of the Taiwanese students exhibited).

We formed new groups, and these were asked to create a 5-minute presentation drawing on these words to report back to the entire group. Some of the topics and comments highlight what the students had learned. Some topics that came up were English language, kanji (Chinese/Japanese characters), and new views of English. For example, several students talked about how easy it was to speak English with the Taiwanese. One student said, “English is a good tool. It is a common language, like kanji.” While in Taiwan, students realized that if they did not understand a Japanese or Chinese word, if they wrote the Chinese character they could guess the meaning. Another student commented, “Before going, I was nervous about English. Taiwanese also nervous. So we have same problems of English grammar.” Another student added about English, “If we could not speak perfect English, not problem. Our feeling improve that we want to speak English.”

After the presentations, there were some questions and a discussion on what places to visit if there were to be a program in Osaka. We ended the session by giving out a questionnaire in Japanese that looked at areas the staff at OJC wanted feedback on.

Lessons Learned

When reflecting on the program, we came up with the following insights:

English usage

We were amazed at the amount of English students used during the Taiwan portion of the trip. In fact we kidded each other that it seemed that students were using more English during the first evening at YZU than in some classes during the semester at OJC. As mentioned earlier, proficiency was not a factor in whether students could or could not participate in the program. That notwithstanding, all students used English (and a wide range of circumlocution techniques) to get their points across.

English improved

According to the questionnaires, many students, both from YZU and from OJC, felt that their English ability had improved. While it would probably be difficult to show any increase in proficiency over 4 days, anecdotally we did notice a great improvement in students’ confidence and willingness to use English. For example, after breakfast on the last

day there was a little time before we had to be at the Memory Sharing session. Students spent it sitting in their groups talking—sometimes it was one-on-one and other times it was in threes and fours.

Nonnative speakers easier to talk to

According to the questionnaires, informal talks, the letters, and the final presentation, many students commented on the idea that one reason everyone was using more English was that it is easier to talk to nonnative speakers than it is to interact with native speakers. They noticed immediately that the other students made similar grammatical mistakes and came to the realization that everyone did this. Thus, they might have recognized that there was no shame in making mistakes as no one held the “power” of being a native-language “expert.” Without this power differential, it is easier for students to use English to talk to students who speak a different language than it is for them to talk to native-English speaking teachers.

Different from a home stay experience

Related to the above is an idea that this type of program where students stayed with other students in a dorm setting is very different from a home stay program where they would stay with a family and possibly have a home stay brother or sister. In a dorm setting, which is very similar to an overnight camp setting, it is expected that everyone will stay up late talking, sharing stories, laughing at jokes, singing songs, and basically enjoying oneself. Since it is a group setting, if one person falls quiet, someone else will pick up the slack and continue. This seems to be different from a traditional home stay where each student is usually on her own with several native speakers, and the rules of interaction are not necessarily peer-to-peer. During the course of a home stay, family members may be too busy to spend time attempting to communicate, or they may sometimes be impatient with the time it takes the second language learner to form sentences. In addition, home stay family members have other responsibilities that can take them away from the student. Moreover, the student often has her own room where she can go to be alone. Finally, with home stay parents the relationship is one of adult-student. In contrast, in the IEP program, students were “on” 24/7 interacting with their peers.

Well-organized Administratively

The implementation of the program at YZU was very well-organized with eight program staff working to make it run smoothly (selected from among current and former YZU students) in addition to the two staff members (Kao and Hsieh). The program staff's English ability was quite good, so they were able to communicate easily with all the

participants and the OJC faculty as well. They had also put a student participant in charge of each group so it was easy to make sure each group knew what was happening next and to communicate any schedule changes. The program staff seemed to be everywhere at once and through their judicious use of headsets and walkie talkies they were able to communicate across campus or even throughout the night market. Thus, when one group was late returning (not an unusual event), the program staff was able to find out right away where they were and when they would be at the meeting spot. We found out that the program staff had, prior to the program, gone to all the places we were going to visit and had even stayed overnight in Jiufen. It was obvious that YZU had invested the resources in getting support staff to work on the program and help the full-time staff.

Conclusion

This short-term (four-day program) was successful in engaging students from Taiwan and Japan in communicating in English about their lives and culture. While there were some problems, such as not having enough time to eat and shop at the market and in Jiufen, students did communicate in English over four intense days of interaction in real-life situations. Students were not in classrooms learning English with a teacher directing the interactions. Rather English was being used to communicate with new friends naturally in interactive activities or informally on their own. This aspect of Japanese nonnative English speakers, speaking with Taiwanese nonnative English speakers, in a nonnative English country (Taiwan), though it may sound counterintuitive, is in fact one of the reasons this program was so successful. Both groups were using a second language—the only common language available—to communicate, and in a context in which neither held power in terms of language ownership.

The question arises, of course, will this type of program always work? The answer is probably. More short-term programs need to be carried out and analyzed. The analysis needs to be both short-term and long-term, in order to see if the program has a continuing influence on participants in the future. However, it is not just the length and location in a nonnative English speaking country that are key. Central components are the organization of the program, the communication between the staff in both countries, and the creation and implementation of a program that is interactive and participatory, not lecture-based or tourist-focused. If these factors are considered, such programs will have immediate positive influences. And, in time, we will learn about possible long-term effects.

Related Sites

Smithsonian

http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/field_trips/field_trips.html

National Palace Museum in Taipei

<http://taiwan.national.palace.museum/move>

YZU / OJC Kai Da Ge Lan culture camp site

<http://www.cm.yzu.edu.tw/ENG/exchange/act0608.htm>

YZU picture site

<http://www.wretch.cc/album/yzuojc>

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Appendix A
Schedule in Taiwan

Date	Time	Activity
August 21 (Mon)	13:10	OJC students arrive in Taiwan
	15:00	OJC students' registration and meeting each other
	16:30	Opening Ceremony
	18:00	Dinner Banquet
	19:20	The Legend of YZU: Game seeing the campus
	21:00	Staying at YZU Student Dormitory
August 22 (Tues)	08:00	Breakfast
	09:10	OJC Student Life & Japanese Culture
	10:10	TEA BREAK
	10:20	YZU Student Life & Taiwanese Culture
	11:20	OJC and YZU faculty impressions of students Making the assignments for culture night—three groups on Taiwan and three on Japan. Students use their creativity.
	12:00	Lunch Time
	13:00	Culture travel: National Palace Museum
	18:00	Night life in Taiwan: Shilin Night Market, 101 Mall
	20:00	Staying Overnight at Nine-Set (Jiufen)
August 23 (Wed)	07:00	Breakfast
	08:00	Jiufen Town Tour
	11:30	Lunch in groups
	14:00	Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall
	16:00	Rehearsal for Culture Night with boxed lunches
	20:00	Culture Night: Skits, songs, dances by the six groups
August 24 (Thur)	08:00	Breakfast
	09:10	Prepare for the Memory Sharing session Each group discusses their thoughts, impressions and what they learned during the camp.
	10:30	Memory Sharing
	11:30	Closing Ceremony
	12:00	Lunch and Photographs
	13:30	Heading to CKS International Airport and return to Japan

Appendix B
IEP Evaluation: Taiwan 2006

Please answer these questions so that we can make this program better in the future. You may answer in English or your native language.

1. I felt prepared for the program.

1. Strongly agree 2. somewhat agree 3. undecided 4. slightly disagree 5. strongly disagree

2. I enjoyed the program in Taiwan.

1. Strongly agree 2. somewhat agree 3. undecided 4. slightly disagree 5. strongly disagree

3. I had more trouble using English than I expected.

1. Strongly agree 2. somewhat agree 3. undecided 4. slightly disagree 5. strongly disagree

4. My English speaking ability improved.

1. Strongly agree 2. somewhat agree 3. undecided 4. slightly disagree 5. strongly disagree

5. I learned a lot about Taiwanese/Japanese people and culture.

1. Strongly agree 2. somewhat agree 3. undecided 4. slightly disagree 5. strongly disagree

6. Because of this program, I am more interested in traveling overseas.

1. Strongly agree 2. somewhat agree 3. undecided 4. slightly disagree 5. strongly disagree

For the following question, put 1 next to most important, 2 next to 2nd important, and 3 next to 3rd important.

7. What did you gain most from participating in this program?

- _____ confidence in speaking English _____ learning about a new culture
_____ making new friends _____ other (what? _____)

8. Write about two things you liked about this program. Why did you like these?

A. _____

B. _____

9. Write about two things you did not like about this program. Why didn't you like these?

A. _____

B. _____

10. What surprised you about this program?

11. What are two ways to improve this program?

A. _____

B. _____

Here is a list of the events we participated in. Do you have comments about any of them?

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Email exchange & Preparation | The Legend of YZU (campus tour) |
| Student Life and culture presentations | National Palace Museum |
| Shilin Night Market | Taipei 101 |
| Jiufen Guided Tour | Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall |
| Culture Night Presentations | Memory Sharing |

Comments

Also do you have any comments about the staff, your group, dormitory stay, the meals at YZU, the hotel in Jiufen, the bus trip, etc.

Comments
