

The Need for Youth Exchange Between Taiwan, China & Japan Through the Culture of New Media & Moving Images

By Yukihiro Yoshida



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English-Chinese-Japanese Trilingualism

I currently conduct research and teach at the Keio Research Institute at SFC (located on Keio University's Shonan Fujisawa Campus) and in the Kyorin University Faculty of Foreign Studies, focusing on the concept of English-Chinese-Japanese trilingualism, an unusual topic even viewed internationally. Youth exchange can be defined in a number of ways as it varies greatly by scale, level, and orientation, and whether the sponsoring institution is academic or private. This paper will discuss the importance of youth exchange, looking at examples conducted through digital media and the culture of moving images in Taiwan, Japan, and China and covering genres such as media arts, theater, dance, and film — primarily projects at Kyorin University designed to promote the development of global human resources to drive future economic and social growth.

Much has been made lately of the importance of globalization and the Asian economy, but a pluralistic approach can also be taken toward the cultural spheres of the English, Chinese, and Japanese languages stretching from antiquity to the present day and across a variety of genres ranging from mature, established disciplines to new, cutting-edge domains. Japanese, English, Chinese, and Media Research — each of these fields stands at a historical turning point. I teach in an environment where technology offers a sense of a new future for language.

How the Chinese-Speaking World Is Perceived

Thinking about things in the Taiwan-China context suggests any number of intriguing areas for study among Japanese researchers in the social sciences, who have previously focused only on the West. For example, Hakuson Kuriyagawa, considered a bit of a relic in the field of English literature in Japan, is now being reexamined as a result of his influence on Lu Xun and his perception within the Chinese-speaking world as a thinker comparable to Nietzsche or Dostoyevsky. The Taihoku Imperial University in Taipei (now the National Taiwan University) is sometimes treated as the place where scholars such as Kinji Shimada established the study of comparative literature in Japan. Turning to Japanese language theory, we now have the ideas of American Hideo Levy.

There is already a long tradition of Japan-Taiwan and Japan-China exchanges related to theater and film during the modern period. The forms of such exchanges vary widely, from workshops in traditional

performing arts such as the Beijing opera to screenings of films. Because of the ease of transporting film, such screenings are often used as forums for international exchange, and their audio-visual elements also contribute to their use in educational and research contexts. Dance, a subject of my own theatrical research, is also utilized for international exchange because of its strong reliance on non-linguistic elements. Since the 1990s, there has been growing recognition of media arts that make use of new media, and such new genres are also attracting attention.

Kyorin University has built a strong track record as an early proponent of incorporating cinematic expressions from Taiwan and China into its research and educational efforts. In addition, the studies of translation and interpreting done by Kumiko Torikai and others have been of great value in the field of English language studies and English language education in Japan, and we are trying to do something similar with Chinese.

International Students Coming to Japan

Every year many students come to Japan from China and Taiwan to study. According to the 2013 survey of international student enrollment in Japan released in March 2014 by the Japan Student Services Association, among the total of 135,519 international students in Japan, the countries most highly represented were China with 81,884 (60.4%), South Korea with 15,304 (11.3%), Vietnam with 6,290 (4.6%), and Taiwan with 4,719 (3.5%). The top four are all Asian countries. Among the total of 11,717 short-term international students, the country most highly represented was China with 3,719 (31.7%), followed by the United States with 1,480 (12.6%), South Korea with 1,473 (12.6%), and Taiwan with 817 (7.4%). China, South Korea, and Taiwan make up 51.7% of the total, much higher than the 20.7% from the US, France, and Germany. Kyorin University, too, receives many international students not only from China and Taiwan but also from other Asian countries. As of May 2014, the university has 105 international students accounting for 2.3% of the student body as a whole.

I investigated to see what records there might be concerning youth exchange, and found that there are official institutions related to China and Taiwan that support exchange programs. When I contacted the China-Japan Friendship Association in China, however, I was told there was no available data, such as yearbooks or reports, related to youth exchange. On the other hand, the Friendship

Association in Taiwan did have various reports on initiatives such as the project for inviting graduate students from Taiwanese universities, which has been ongoing since 1994, exchanges among high school students, the Japanese language speech contest held among international students from Taiwan, and the Japan studies support winter camp.

The project for inviting graduate students from Taiwan University appears to be especially well developed, with numerous site visits and exchange opportunities every year, and past participants currently involved in its organization. In the private sector, a variety of institutions have engaged in exchanges between Japan and China and between Japan and Taiwan, as can be seen in the various reports and articles that result. In terms of policy and research, there is a need to provide support for this whole spectrum of exchange. The record of such youth exchange is extremely important for understanding the nature and significance of previous efforts and has great importance for a country like Japan that is so often discussed in terms of its need to globalize and develop as a travel destination.

Growing Contact with Film & New Media

The boundary between film and new media is becoming seamless. More and more media people from the United Kingdom and the US are active in China and Taiwan. Digital Hollywood University is one example of a media-focused school in Japan that has strong connections to China.

I launched a project with Digital Hollywood University to think about next-generation performances and have, since 2011, joined them in conducting research and presenting the results. For the project we conducted real-time sessions at an international forum held in China using a 3D network connection from Tokyo. The Senses Places project staged real-time workshop sessions linking China and Tokyo during the Digital Research in the Humanities and Arts Conference from August to September 2011 (<http://sensesplaces.org>). With such opportunities expected to increase in the future, there is a real need for exchange with Taiwan and China through film and new media.

Efforts by Kyorin University

Against this backdrop, Kyorin University began receiving funding from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) in 2012 through its project to promote the development of global human resources to drive future economic and social growth. What distinguishes our program is its focus on trilingualism. The university is strongly conscious of these issues, sending 15 students to participate in Japan's youth delegation to the Shanghai Expo during fiscal year 2010 and holding two international exchange gatherings in FY 2011 that drew more than 100 students. Although Kyorin University is not currently engaged in youth exchange, participation in this Project for Promotion of Global

Photo: Kakukku Yosuke



Senses Places @Odyssey Gallery

Human Resource Development serves much the same role. (After receiving MEXT funding, Kyorin University entered into partnership agreements with two new schools: the Peking University School of Foreign Languages and the National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism.)

The Kyorin University Faculty of Foreign Studies is the only school in Japan offering a curriculum in which every student learns both Chinese and English. The university seeks to develop global talent through English-Chinese-Japanese trilingualism. These three languages fly so freely about the campus that it often feels just like being in Taiwan. The university can be seen as a pioneer, one step ahead in adopting this forward-looking approach.

In the classroom, we also communicate using PCs and networks. Communicating through the use of moving images also has potential. A Weibo search for the Kyorin University Faculty of Foreign Studies produces many hits. One course offered involves Chinese-language information processing. This environment enables a teacher with an English-language background such as myself to engage in research and teaching with an eye to the Chinese linguistic and cultural sphere and to trilinguals. Computerization has progressed to the point where even in the humanities nearly all resources are digital. Today there are real-time translation apps like WordLens and my course at Kyorin University on IT English frequently introduces apps and language-related start-ups.

My Courses

In researching modern Japan since the 2000s I have developed a methodology of English-Chinese-Japanese trilingual research that has found acceptance in both the UK-US system and the Chinese linguistic and cultural sphere (Taiwan). My paper on Taiwan is currently the most accessed paper on ResearchGate (<http://www.researchgate.net>), a social networking service for researchers around the world.

In my teaching at Kyorin University, I encourage exchanges between Japan, Taiwan, and China through the culture of moving



Lecture by Tae Hitoto at Kyorin University Faculty of Foreign Studies on 8 July 2013.



Photos: Yukihiro Yoshida

images. My classes are opportunities for students from Taiwan and China to interact and work together. In courses I previously taught, such as *The Culture of Theater* and *The Culture of Film*, I taught basic topics such as Beijing Opera, always conscious of the trilingual environment. In my course, prioritizing modern Japan, I looked at literary critic Hakuson Kuriyagawa and the reception given to Beijing Opera in modern Japan. I also try to focus on originality in my teaching, introducing Western playwrights who were influenced by Beijing Opera such as Bertolt Brecht and including artists active in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and around the world when discussing contemporary representations using moving images and digital media. In my course at Kyorin University that offers language instruction through IT, I use smartphone-based teaching materials and introduce the latest information in this genre.

Because I am involved primarily in exchanges with Taiwan, I often invited people with connections to that country to give lectures. In the courses for which I am responsible, Taiwanese students and Chinese students study together. For the *Culture of Film* course I taught in FY 2012 and FY 2013, I invited Yoshimasu Gozo who is in contact with poet Hualing Nieh Engle. Also I invited Tae Hitoto who is a famous Japanese singer, Yo Hitoto's sister. Her lecture is included in *Shinpen Taiwan eiga* (Taiwan Cinema New Edition), edited by Saburo Koyama. Koyama and others at Kyorin University conduct research on Taiwanese culture, particularly cinema and literature, and screen Taiwanese films. The culture of theater, film and new media within the Chinese linguistic and cultural sphere can be seen as a single, important domain.

Because students from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism were also able to register for the *Culture of Film* course, its curriculum was designed with that discipline also in mind. Attending that course was a student who won the Best Student Award in the Department of Hospitality and Tourism and was later employed as one of the first cabin attendants at Spring Airlines. Many international students from Taiwan and China also registered for the course. Many graduates of Kyorin University go on to work as physicians in Taiwan and China, while many of those from the

Faculty of Foreign Studies are active in exchange associations and other organizations. That both Japanese graduates and international students work in Asia, and particularly within the Chinese linguistic and cultural sphere, after graduation surely has a significant influence. In fact, Taiwanese and Chinese students who met in my courses have gone on to work collaboratively. In two years, two international students from Taiwan and 10 from China enrolled in my course.

In addition to ideas grounded in specialized subjects, it is also important that the learning environment incorporate teaching materials, course development, and teaching method developments that emphasize technology, the interdisciplinary, and the cutting-edge. Massive Open Online Courses and the like now make it possible to broadcast courses freely, and it is surely possible to disseminate Japanese culture using English and Chinese with an eye to reaching the expanding pool of Chinese living overseas. For this reason there is a need to look not only to the Chinese-speaking world but also to the English-speaking world when developing networks and communities.

Kyorin University now makes it possible for students to study on-site through the Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development, and I look forward to further developments that make the project even more active.

Private-Sector Academic Exchange & Youth Exchange

In the private sector, I have also been involved in academic exchange in the fields of film, theater, and dance, primarily with the Taipei National University of the Arts in Taiwan. In 2006, at the invitation of the Taiwan Dance Research Society, Akiko Nikaido and I gave presentations at the *Dancing under the Rising Sun* Conference, the first international conference concerning Japanese dance in wartime. In 2010, at the invitation of Taiwanese Living National Treasure Lee Tsia-Oe, I joined Harumi Ishii, Teruo Kurosawa, Eiko Shimodo and others in giving presentations at the International

Photo: Yukihiro Yoshida



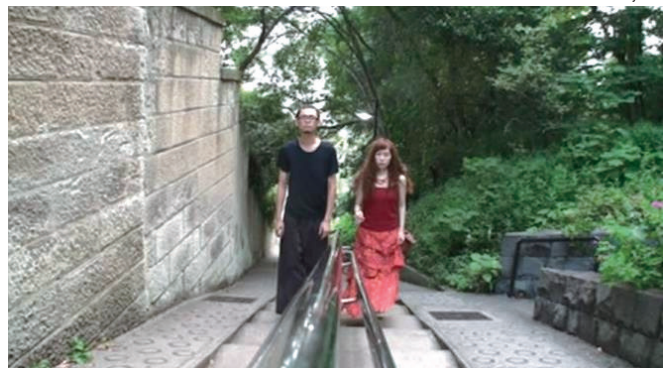
At the Taiwan Dance Research Society

Conference Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Death of Baku Ishii.

Furthermore, young performers from the worlds of theater and film have also taken part in private-sector exchange and residency programs in Japan. I organized an exchange visit with dancers Chung-Fu Chang and Pei-Jung Lee, who are well known in Taiwan, as well as residencies for Taiwanese actors Derrick Wei (one of the country's leading young actors) and Po-Ting Chen. They were all interested in Japan's *Butoh* form of physical expression and after arriving in Japan took part in workshops on its methodology. These resulted in the 2014 screening of Jun Manjome's *Munatsuki* (To the Heart) in the Body and Landscape division at the 28th Image Forum Festival. Because such activities have elements of a youth exchange program for the development of actors, public support would surely enable them to return even greater benefits to society at large.

The media arts are another major genre with tremendous potential. With all the talk today about the future of the Chinese economy, exchanges with Taiwan and China are likely to be of great significance for Asia and particularly the Chinese linguistic and cultural sphere. Perhaps because of this background, the most important festival in my own field of media arts, Ars Electronica, has developed stronger ties with Taiwan and China as leaders in the field continue to foster contacts within the Chinese linguistic and cultural sphere. It is still not uncommon in Japan for the worlds of theater and film and the world of media arts to be treated as separate, but even in this country there are now organizations like the Digital Hollywood University that are working to fill in the borders between the two genres. It seems likely, therefore, that there will be increasing efforts to pursue the new domain of exchange through new media. At the same time, it will also be important to rethink and revitalize the already established formats and methodologies of exchange through theater and film. There is a need not only to engage in substantial programs but also to publish reports that record the results.

Photo: Jun Manjome



Jun Manjome's *Munatsuki* (To the Heart) Camera: Jun Manjome, Cast: Po-Ting Chen, Tomomi Shimizu

Youth Exchanges Through Culture of New Media & Moving Images

In recent years, it has become common among researchers to note when writing academic papers the importance of drawing connections to the context of the English- or Chinese-speaking worlds. The paper of mine most frequently accessed among those I have posted to ResearchGate is a paper that does exactly this. In the area of youth exchange, too, it will be important to combine the skills of the English- and Chinese-speaking worlds and to develop reciprocal communities and networks that stretch across the frontier between them. In doing so it is important not to be limited to the university but to engage wherever practical knowledge and experience can be accumulated and theorized through networks. Program design and course operation for next-generation youth exchange has only just begun. There is surely a need for dialogue with regional and local governments and coordination with various public institutions.

I intend to continue pursuing Japan-side projects in cooperation with the Taipei Cultural Center, Kyorin University, Digital Hollywood University, and Nagoya University. I would be very pleased if such efforts contribute to the planning and practice of youth exchange through media, theater, film, and dance that creates new points of contact between Japan and the Chinese linguistic and cultural sphere. I hope also to work to develop methodologies for such activities and to work in leading fields as guided by on-site experience.

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