Education for Multicultural Society in the Global Age
- Promoting Active Communication with Different Communities in Japan-

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This study bases on the idea that promoting active communication and mutual understanding with different communities should meet the aims of education preparing the young people for multicultural society in the global age. In this paper, an experimental lesson for students at the University of Fukui implemented in the spring term of 2006 will be described. In the lesson Japanese students were encouraged to communicate with overseas students. Some key findings from the questionnaires distributed to explore issues and effectiveness of the lesson indicate that there is a lack of understanding of different communities and preparing the young people to live in multicultural society is one of the significant issues for countries like Japan where consisted of mono-cultural society for a long time.

Key Words : Multicultural Education, English Language, Global Age, Overseas Students

1. Background Information: the Global Age and Multicultural Society

1.1 The Global Age

There are many arguments suggesting that we are now living in "the global age". The global age refers to the present time when there are many emerging events and situations which people have to face globally: Nowadays people of different countries come into contact with each other much more than in the past; many issues such as the environment, human rights, conflicts between and within countries, are discussed at an international level; the Internet has sped up access to information produced in other countries; the ethnic mix of people living in many countries has increased; more people than ever before travel, study and work abroad.

The more human development grows, the wider its scale becomes. Moreover, its speed is incredibly fast, thanks to technology. As Eggleston[1] defines, the technological society enables us to act in a global scale. Such phenomenon, as many call it 'globalization', which refers to the compression of the world and the

intensification of consciousness of the world[2], now influences not only economic but also technological and cultural aspects of our daily life. In other words, as Brown[3] states it is "an irresistible and irreversible process beyond the scope of human agency to resist (p. 3)". Accordingly, these discourses lead us to find ourselves living in the global age.

Many issues featuring the global age should include world-wide ones which should be considered beyond the nation states, such as war and peace, poverty and development, population growth, and environmental issues. Although there are also some issues which rather belong to local states, such as politics and social issues, it is almost impossible to tackle emerging issues without considering our relationships with different countries and acting on a global scale.

1.2 Multicultural Society

According to the migration of people on a global scale, multicultural society which is rapidly developed emerges as one of the features of the global age.

The more global the economy becomes and the more technology is developed, the more people move throughout the world. Accordingly, the number of people

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who visit, work and study abroad is increasing. In the case of Japan, the number of people who go abroad only for sightseeing has increased 10 million for ten years since 1985. In 2005, 1.7 billion Japanese people went abroad[4]. As a result, people throughout the world seem no longer to be able to avoid coming into contact with other cultures.

The number of foreign people living in Japan was more than 2 million in 2005, and it accounts for 1.57% of the whole population in Japan[5]. It is the highest number on record, growing at an estimated rate of 47.7% since 1995. The number of foreign people who live in Fukui prefecture, where this research is conducted, is about 13,600, 1.66% of the whole population of Fukui in 2004[6].

Although Japanese people, except the small group of Ainu living in Hokkaido in the northern part of Japan, are basically homogeneous in terms of ethnicity, it is rapidly changing. Facing the aging society and the decrease in skilled workforce in many areas, it is clear that Japan needs to secure workforce of foreign people to maintain its economic status and stability. It is unavoidable and inevitable to accept many foreign people willing to work in Japan, and it results in creating multicultural or multinational society.

2. Emerging Issues in Developing Multicultural Society

2.1 Issues in Developing Multicultural Society in Japan

Moving and living abroad have been rather common for countries comprised of immigrants, and for countries in the Continent where many people have moved around since old times. Although Japan had also accepted immigrants from the Continent since early times, the impact of closing the door to overseas people for 200 years during the Edo Era strongly influenced Japanese society afterwards. During this period Japanese people developed their own culture under their own social orders, and it strengthened their tendency to focus on domestic issues rather than to form better relationships with other countries. Although Japan resumed trade with overseas in the Meiji Era, she lost World War Two, experienced mass destruction and again had to concentrate on domestic matters first. After reconstructing the modern society with high technology,

and gaining its economic power, Japan gradually attracted foreign people to move in. Nevertheless, Japanese still seem to stick to their insular tendency and do not pay much attention to other people living within their society.

Some research findings show that there are many Japanese young people who are interested in 'internationalism' but few of them are keen on 'multiculturalism'. According to the research conducted with 400 Japanese and British students in 2000[7], some outcomes from the two countries are in striking contrast. In this research, seven aims and eleven curriculum contents of education for the global age are listed in a questionnaire and the respondents were asked the degree of emphasis of each aim that should be given in the global age. The degrees are categorised in five ranges from 'much more emphasis than now' to 'much less emphasis than now'.

The curriculum content mentioned to be emphasized most by both Japanese and English students is 'world wide issues'. In total, 69.4% of the students from the two countries feel it should be emphasized more (see table 1 and figure 1).

Table 1

World issues (e.g. environment, human rights, war and peace)

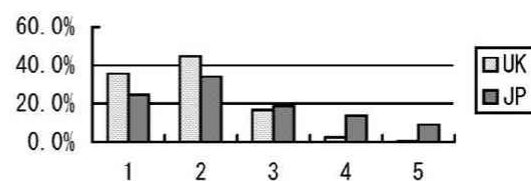| Scores*	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
UK(%)	35.6	44.6	16.8	2.5	0.5	1.88	0.81
JP (%)	24.5	34.0	18.6	13.8	9.1	2.47	1.25

Figure 1

*In the questionnaire, 5 degrees of satisfaction are divided into 5 scores as follows: Score 1 = Much more emphasis than now; Score 2 = A bit more emphasis than now; Score 3 = Same as now; Score 4 = A bit less emphasis than now; Score 5 = Much less emphasis than now. M = Mean Score. SD. = Standard deviation.

The findings also show that the aim which most English students (83.7%) feel should be emphasized is

'to help pupils to develop an understanding of different communities in their own country'. On the contrary, the smallest group of Japanese students (49.0%) are interested in emphasising this aim (see table 2 and figure 2). The largest mean difference is also found in ANOVA test in this case (F = 85.57, P<0.05).

Table 2

To help pupils to develop an understanding of different communities in their own country. (*learning to live together*)

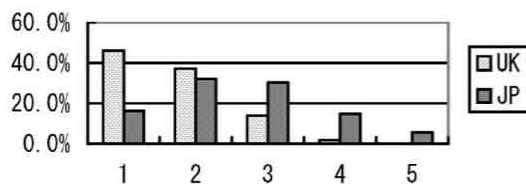| Scores*	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD
UK(%)	46.3	37.4	14.3	2.0	0	1.72	0.78
JP (%)	16.6	32.4	30.2	15.1	5.7	2.60	1.10

figure 2

In the research, interviews of 40 Japanese and British teachers were also implemented and the findings revealed Japanese teachers' views about multiculturalism are very narrow. The following statements come from Japanese teachers, describing their attitude towards Japanese and non-Japanese people:

> "We Japanese have a uni-racial society, so we are reluctant to think and act on a global scale. So our view is very narrow, we only concentrate on domestic issues. And I don't know if I can be kind enough to people coming from other countries [because I don't know how]. Even now, when I meet foreign people in Japan, I have a strange feeling with them."
>
> "It is difficult to understand 'difference'. We Japanese people often understand each other without actual communication, like '*ishin denshin*' [meaning tacit understanding], and we tend to see ourselves as the 'same'."

Those views can unconsciously cause rather apathetic attitudes towards different communities in Japan. There is also some research which finds that the young pupils have negative attitudes toward people living in Asian countries. According to a survey exploring high school students' views about Asian countries[8], the respondents show their images about people in Asian countries as 'poor, starved, developing / undeveloped, refugees, dark, overpopulated, dirty'. Although international understanding education is introduced in 62.6% of the primary, and 25.3% of the secondary schools in Japan[9], the above finding shows it will take a lot of time to change some stereotyped attitudes. It is not too far from the truth to say that those negative attitudes also influence their indifference towards multicultural society.

2.2 Issues and Tasks in Multicultural Society

Issues of multicultural society are also concerned with national and individual identities, social and cultural values each nation developed over many years. Even though people move around globally, it is quite difficult to assimilate into a different culture; 'culture' is strongly connected with individual identity.

Holding national identities and values, people need to respect and accept different customs and cultures which often make things more difficult and complicated. It seems much easier then for the host community to keep its system as it is and neglect different ones. For immigrants' part, on the other hand, it is inevitable to learn customs and languages of the host community to survive. However, if they are neglected or even discriminated, as it can be seen in some countries, it should be easier for them to stick to their own customs and cultures in order to defend their identities despite living in different countries. We may also say that those negative attitudes stem from some fear that multiculturalism may ultimately risk values and social order each country has developed, making every state borderless.

However, we are already living in the global age, developing our society more multinational and multicultural. It is the most significant and difficult issue to realise that we no longer belong to one state or one culture, and we can appreciate cultural diversity within our own community.

Therefore, it is inevitable for the host communities to prepare themselves to avoid any predicaments in the course of developing multicultural society, and there are

various tasks in political, legal, economic and social aspects. Education is also no exception.

On the whole, it is quite important to change people's stereotyped attitudes towards different communities, in order to avoid indifference and a lack of trust between different communities in one state. In order to change people's stereotyped attitudes, education which promotes mutual understanding and communication is important.

It will also be important to note here, however, that changing views and attitudes towards different people and developing respect and mutual understanding are still difficult issues even for Britain, which has developed a multicultural society for many years. The following remark was made by one British teacher in the research previously described:

"I have been predominantly in mono-cultural schools where it's been all white, middle class kind of environment and although people can maybe intellectually appreciate there is a need to have this broader outlook, the fact that they are not consequently in a multicultural environment, tend to make it seem not really an important issue which is difficult because obviously it is more important in those areas because otherwise you preserve stereotypes."

This opinion indicates that, as another teacher says, "The main problem as always is changing people's attitude". In fact it is quite challenging and easier said than done. Yet it is the key task for education in the global age, since it will lead us to build a truly multicultural society with some system and order which are flexible enough to be widely accepted as well as to preserve cultural diversity.

3. The Experimental English Class Aiming at Education for Multicultural Society

3.1 Learning English as Education for Multicultural Society

In order to promote mutual understanding and communication with different communities, foreign language education is also important as education prepares students to live in a multicultural society. Language has been one of the vital tools of human beings from its origin to communicate, trade and develop. There are approximately 6,000 languages in the world, including a dozen which are spoken by over 100 million people[10]. The more globalization leads to multilingual societies, the more learning of languages of countries other than one's own native land becomes important in many respects.

Learning foreign languages can further social and cultural understanding of foreign countries. In fact, some educators have already noted that learning foreign languages increases awareness of how the knowledge of other languages helps understanding of other cultures[11]-[13].

In addition, for those who are not native English-speakers, a method of communicating with people from other countries is made possible by using English. While English is not officially recognised as a universal language, its utility in the world has already been well recognised. As we can see here, learning about foreign languages, especially English, is much more than acquiring grammar and vocabulary[14]. It enables people to communicate with others, to help economic developments in a global scale, and most importantly, to learn different social trends and cultures. In addition to one's own native language, English will be great help to communicate with different communities within one country.

This study focuses on implementation of English education as education for a multicultural society, and in the following sub-sections an experimental English Class in higher education is shown.

3.2 Pre-Test: The Survey in 2005

Education preparing students to live in a multicultural society, including foreign language education is important, however, there are some problems of implementation. As already mentioned, young people are not interested in the understanding of different communities in their own country. In fact, after teaching English at University of Fukui, the national university of Fukui prefecture, for one and a half years, the researcher began to notice that the majority of the students, except for those who learn Cultural Studies, hardly had a communication with foreign people within their community, including overseas students.

According to a survey conducted in 2005 to 56 Japanese students reading Engineering Studies in the University, only 3.6% of them knew that there are a few

outdoor activities with overseas students, 8.9% knew there is an international friendship meeting held once a week, and 17.9% knew they can request a language exchange lesson with overseas students.

This situation is regrettable, since they are losing their opportunities to know different cultures and to make friends from different places without visiting other countries. It is also great loss for overseas students, who would like to know about Japanese culture and to make a lot of Japanese friends.

In addition, the survey revealed that there were many students (25.0%) who had little self-confidence in their English speaking skills even though they had interest in communication with overseas students. The following quotations are some typical opinions of those students:

> "I want to talk with overseas students, but I don't think I can speak English well."
> "I want to talk with them but I am very scared to speak English."
> "I am quite worried about my English skills."

Also, some students mentioned that they want to talk with overseas students but they don't have enough time, mainly because of the tight timetable, and working part-time jobs. Allowing for those opinions, it should be effective if we can provide some opportunities to talk with overseas students within English class.

It is also true that many overseas students of the University of Fukui hope to stay and work in Japan after their graduation, and they would be members of our community, or would consist of different communities in terms of culture and nationality. Allowing for this, it is significant to provide a good opportunity for Japanese students to communicate with overseas students more, if we are going to promote education for a multicultural society. Accordingly, in the spring term of 2006, the researcher arranged an experimental lesson of education for a multicultural society in her English class at University of Fukui. This purpose was to promote active communication with overseas students, aiming at education for a multicultural society, and its contents will be described more in the following sub-sections.

3.3 The Aim of the Experimental English Class: Promoting Active Communication with Overseas Students

The main aim of this experimental class is to promote active communication with overseas students in order to implement education for a multicultural society. Needless to say, developing communication skills in English is one of the most significant aims of this class. In addition to this, here I would like to look at the definitions of the education for multicultural society used in this study.

In this study, the definition of education for a multicultural society is based on the following aims:

1. To increase the students' knowledge and understanding of the different cultures.
2. To raise their awareness of different communities within the local community.
3. To enable students to adopt a global perspectives on contemporary concern and to gain an understanding of multicultural Japan in its world context.

The third aim is an ultimate goal and is based on one of the general curricular aims of multicultural education in England[15].

In order to implement the above aims, this study stands on the idea that one of the significant teaching methods is to promote active communication and mutual understanding with different communities. It is because of the nature of this class; developing communication skills is one of the significant purposes of foreign language education. In addition, it is actually the simplest way as the first step to know difference, promote mutual understanding, appreciate cultural diversity, and ultimately, change people's attitude towards different communities.

In the following sub-sections, detailed information on the experimental class is described.

3.4 Methodology

The experimental Class was organized during the Spring Term of 2006, at the University of Fukui. In this class, 30 Japanese students reading Engineering Studies were encouraged to develop their knowledge about different cultures, to communicate with overseas students, and to do an oral presentation about their findings at the end of the term.

In this experimental class, the textbooks, classroom

activities, and the syllabus planning were set in accordance with the aims described in the above sub-section. Moreover, in order to explore the effectiveness and issues of this lesson, questionnaires were distributed at the end of this class.

In consideration of the aim of this experimental class, the textbooks should provide some knowledge of cultural background of other countries and promote oral communication skills. Since textbooks which include both aspects with a certain standard appropriate for undergraduate students are few, and oral communication should be learned through actual communication with overseas students, the researcher decided to utilize a knowledge-based textbook, named *Kiss, Bow and Shake Hands*[16]. This textbook provides readings of interesting cultural differences in other countries which are found in daily life. There are 12 chapters, and the students were encouraged to read and translate each chapter in a classroom.

In addition to this main textbook, some sub textbooks were used in preparation of the assessment. In this class, assessment method is based on the students' reading, presentation and writing skills in English.

Apart from the above classroom learning, the outside learning activity needed to be arranged. The main aim of this class was to communicate with overseas students, so the researcher needed contact with someone at the International Student Centre of the university.

Before the Spring Term, the researcher met the professor who is in charge of the Centre, and he kindly agreed to arrange some meetings for my students with overseas students. Fortunately, he organizes an international friendship meeting which provides free talking time both in English and Japanese after school every other week, associating with Sosen-bu, University of Fukui Co-op., and University of Fukui International Student Association (UFISA), and suggested our students to attend this meeting. Accordingly, a syllabus of the experimental class for 38 undergraduate students was prepared as follows:

Table 3

The Syllabus of the Experimental English Class: Promoting Active Communication with Overseas Students in the Spring Term 2006

Prepared for: 38 undergraduate students

General Contents of the Course		
The aims	Learning Contents	Assessment based on
1. to develop Communication Skills in English	• Simple expressions • Words and Phrases for interviews • Words and Phrases for presentations * Students are encouraged to develop skills to use appropriate words and phrases in various situations and skills to express their opinions properly to overseas students.	Presentation Skills *Observation of Interviewing
2. To increase the students' knowledge and understanding of the different cultures	• knowledge-based understanding of different cultures in other countries • Learning about cultural differences in daily life: Greeting; dressing; eating and drinking; using gestures, and so on. • Compare them with Japanese culture and custom	* Reading skills (Attitudes towards different cultures)
3. To raise their awareness of different communities within the local community	• Actual communication with overseas students • In the interview, students are encouraged to check what they've learnt in the textbook. • Students are encouraged to explain some Japanese culture in English	(Attitudes towards overseas students)
4. Others: Concerning Social Research Skills	• How to make good questions • How to be successful in the interview • How to make a good presentation	Contents of the questions
Textbooks		
1. *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands*[16] 2. *Doing Your Research Project*[17] 3. *Scientific Writing and Presentations in English*[18] 4. Other useful materials		
Assessment Methods		
1. Reading Skills 2. Presentation Skills 3. A Short Writing (essay) about the Interview		

The Plan for the Spring Term 2006 (15 lessons)

① Preparation (lessons 1~9)

Studying the topics of *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands* [16]: Knowledge-based learning
・Students will learn about general cultures and customs such as greeting, clothing, body languages, foods. They will choose some of these topics for their following interviews, as well as some original questions which they want to ask.
・Some additional materials with more detailed information on the countries of the overseas students in the University of Fukui are distributed.

Concerning the Interviews: Oral communication Skills
・They learn some key ideas of Social Research, which are extracted from *Doing Your Research Project*[17].
・Students learn some words and phrases for interviews.
・They are divided into 3 groups, and each group should attend the international friendship meeting on the day it has chosen. Before they go to the meeting, they have to submit the contents of their questions.
・Students have to prepare around 10 questions with the topics chosen from the textbook, and a few questions which they want to ask.
・In addition to learning about words and phrases for interviewing, they also should learn how to make effective questions. For instance, they are encouraged to ask some questions about cultures and customs which are rather general issues. But they can start with more personal levels' questions which should be easier to answer for overseas students by using simple phrase.

② Interviewing （7th・21st June、5th July）

・Students go to the lounge at the International Student Center for the Interview with overseas students.

③ Preparation for Presentations （lessons 10～13）

・During this stage, students learn about some short writings and skills of good presentations by using *Scientific Writing and Presentations in English*[18].

④ Presentations (lessons 14, 15)

・Students give a presentation (speech) for 3 minutes.
・They also submit a short writing about their interviews on 24th July.
・Questionnaires are distributed.

At the end of the course, students were filled in the questionnaire. In the questionnaire, students are asked the following five questions concerned with communications with overseas students:

1. Have you ever had a chance to communicate with overseas students before this class?
2. In which occasion did you meet overseas students? (This question is for the respondents who answered "yes" in question 1.)
3. Do you think you want to communicate with overseas students after finishing this class? State your opinion.
4. What do you want to know about overseas students, and what kind of activities do you want to do with them? (Some key issues are listed and students can choose more than one item)
5. Write freely your opinions about this class.

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1 Presentation of Findings

First of all, answers for question 1 indicate that most students (80.0%) had not communicated with overseas students before this class.
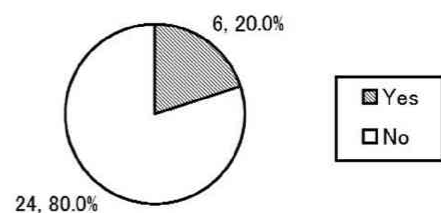

Figure 3
Question 1: Have you ever had a chance to communicate with overseas students before this class? (Numbers and Percentages)

In question 2, the students, who had communicated with overseas students before, answered they met overseas students as classmates. This means there were no students who intentionally got in touch with overseas

students.

For question 3 asking about their attitude towards communicating with overseas students, 58.0% of the respondents remarked positive attitudes, while 32.0% of them answered "neither yes nor no", and 10% said "no".
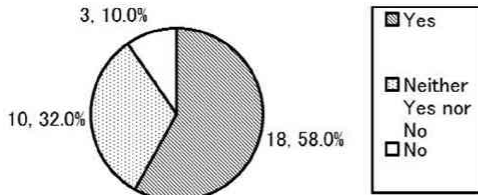

Figure 4
Question 3: Do you think you want to
communicate with overseas students
after finishing this class?
(Numbers and Percentages)

This figure seems not so different from the findings in the survey conducted in 2005, mentioned in section 3.1, but the reasons for this question stated by the students seem a little bit difference. In the survey of 2005, many respondents mentioned that they had no self-confidence in using foreign languages to communicate with overseas students. In this survey, there were 30.7% of the respondents who showed their positive attitudes towards developing their English skills. The following quotations are some typical opinions:

"I want to learn English more."
"I did understand my English skills are not good enough, but I want to develop my English speaking skills."

However, the findings also show that 19.0% of the respondents are still worried about their communication skills. This suggests that more development of speaking skills will be needed, if this type of English class should be implemented.

In addition, there are also some students who want to have friends from overseas more and are interested in other cultures as follows:

"After having a conversation with overseas students, I have noticed that there are many things that I don't know, and I find those

things are interesting."
"I want to know about other cultures more."

For question 4, 55.6% of the respondents answered that they want to know about general issue of the overseas students' home courtiers. There were also many students (33.3%) who mentioned that they want to ask the reason why the overseas students chose the University of Fukui.
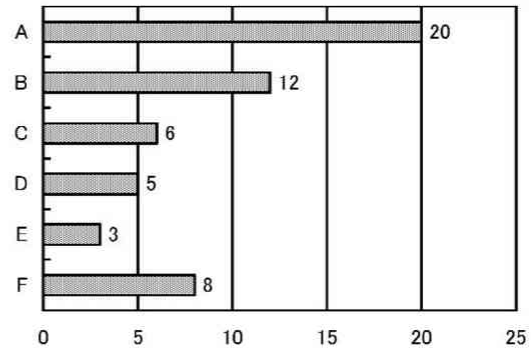

Figure 5
Question 4: What do you want to know about
overseas students, and what kind of activities
do you want to do with them?
A = Ask about general issues of their countries
B = Ask the reason why they chose University of
Fukui
C = Talk about academic subjects
D = Talk about good and bad issues of Japanese
culture
E = Teach Japanese
F = Others

As shown in the above, many students are interested in asking about general issues, such as traditional customs, foods, languages of overseas students' countries. If talking about Japanese culture is included, cultural issues seem to be the main interest.

Some positive attitudes towards learning about other cultures are also found in answers for question 5. Answers for question 5 are mainly concerned with two issues: one is about cultural studies (28.6%); the other is about English skills (71.4%). First, opinions about cultural studies are as follows:

**<Positive attitudes towards learning about
other cultures>**
"After communicating with overseas students, I

felt foreign countries are so near, so real. Speaking with many students coming from different countries over one table was so new to me, and very exciting. I thought we should have this kind of opportunity more."

"Although I was compelled to do this, I was happy to have this opportunity in the end....Everyone was so friendly, and if I have a chance, I want to talk with other overseas students."

"I went to this meeting for the first time, and was so irritated with myself since I couldn't speak English well. But I found that so many overseas students visit [not only Japan but also] many countries, and thought it's great. I wasn't interested in visiting abroad, but I think I will visit somewhere before my graduation. I want to attend this meeting again in the future."

"I think I really enjoyed this meeting, and would like to talk with overseas students more in the future."

As awareness for cultural issues, there is a student, who noticed that he needs to learn about his own culture more.

As for English skills, their opinions are basically the same as answers for question 3:

> **<Attitudes towards learning about English skills>**
> "My English was so poor, and I hardly understood what overseas students said to me. I think this meeting was so meaningful."
> "If we can have this type of opportunity more often, I think my English skills will be developed more."
> "I was so shocked to know that my English is so poor, and hardly understood what they were talking about. I want to develop my English skills more."

It will also be important to mention that some negative attitudes towards this class described in question 5 are basically about their English skills, and not about cultural issues at all. Many students realised that their English skills are so "poor", and they said they tried hard to understand what the overseas students were talking about. However, many of them mentioned that the meeting with

overseas students were meaningful, especially for developing their English skills. They understood that they need to learn English more, and this was quite an effective result in terms of English teaching, since a lack of motivation is quite a serious issue in learning foreign languages. In the following sub-section, analysis and further discussion are described.

4.2 Analysis and Further Discussion

First of all, I would like to look at activities within the classroom. In the classroom lessons, the knowledge-based textbooks which are mainly to develop students' reading skills were used. Although the main textbook provides plentiful information and develops understanding of different cultures, the findings which mentioned a lot about their "poor" speaking skills may suggest that there needs more emphasise on speaking skills.

In addition, students were asked to present the content of their interviews in the end of the term. Although students were provided some important information on presentation skills, they seemed to be very much concerned with interviews and didn't pay much attention to this. More time might be needed for developing presentation skills, however, this would be covered with some lessons for developing speaking skills, hopefully.

Judging from the above, more emphasis on speaking rather than reading skills should have been used for this class, although getting some basic knowledge about other cultures is quite important. It can be said that more careful consideration for selecting textbooks is needed. When selecting knowledge-based textbooks, we need some additional materials or, need to be more careful to develop students' speaking skills.

As for the interview with overseas students, it seemed quite successful in many ways. It encouraged Japanese students to learn about both cultural issues and communication skills in English. The findings in question 3 and 4 indicate that the meeting with overseas students became a good opportunity to raise motivation to learn English more, while the finding for question 4 suggests that interest in different culture is found in many students.

In addition, as the finding for question 1 suggests, 80% of the respondents had never communicated with overseas students before this class. As already mentioned, overseas students are some of the representatives of the

different communities within one country, having different cultural and national backgrounds. In terms of learning about different cultures within one country, we can say that the experimental class was successful as the first step. In fact, the professor who is in charge of the International Students Centre reported that some students who said they want to continue activities with overseas students in question 3 positively attended some activities after finishing this class. It shows this experimental class was quite successful.

Accordingly, we can say that this experimental class was useful to change indifferent attitudes towards different communities in the students' own country as the first step. Nevertheless, it should be noted that learning about racism and human rights which are the main concerns of a multicultural society was not mentioned in the contents of this experimental class. For one reason, there is not enough time for including those profound issues in the class which is mainly prepared for learning English. In this study, the contents concentrate on our indifferent attitudes towards different communities, leaving the details of racism and human rights to another discussion.

If we are going to emphasize this aspect more, another experimental class should be prepared with careful consideration. For instance, selecting of the English textbooks focused on social issues might be useful, and the discussion in English about those profound issues should be interesting if the students have a certain level of communication skills. However, in those cases actual communication with overseas students might not be combined easily, since having a discussion on issues such as racism with overseas students could be quite difficult and sensitive. This type of class should be either more careful with the topic to talk about with overseas students or more focused on knowledge-based studies.

In any case, careful consideration on selecting textbooks and teaching methods according to students' ability in English should be required. In addition, in order to prepare students to live in a multicultural society, this type of teaching and learning method should be continued and developed more. If this type of class activity is to be continued, it will lead the students to change people's stereotyped attitudes towards different communities, to avoid indifference and a lack of trust between different communities in one country.

5. Conclusion

In this experimental class, students learned about different cultures and had an actual communication with overseas students. The findings of the questionnaire indicate that their awareness of different cultures and motivation to develop English skills were increased. Having an actual communication with overseas students in this class became their first time to have contact with different communities within their local community, and this class was quite effective to provide such an opportunity. In order to raise their awareness of different communities within one country, and to live in a multicultural society in the global age, this type of class activities should be continued. The more young people communicate with overseas students and different people within the community, the more they adapt themselves to an emerging multicultural society developing global perspective.

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