

【研究ノート】

Global and Local Citizenship in Japan and
the United States: An Intercultural and
Inter-curricular Education for
Sustainable Development Project

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研究ノート

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Introduction

The Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Peace Project, an interdisciplinary curriculum development and exchange project, began in 2010 between Sapporo Odori High School (Odori) in Sapporo, Japan and Louisiana State University Laboratory School (LSU) in Baton Rouge, the United States. The project aims to increase intercultural understanding through raising students' awareness of domestic/world peace and ethnic/cultural diversity. It also aims to develop the critical thinking skills of the students, to develop a deeper view of themselves and their society, and to encourage active global and local citizenship through peer exchange.

The first part of this paper explains the features of Odori as a UNESCO School, followed by a description of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005 to 2014) and its related pedagogies. The second part outlines the organization process of the project, where two interdisciplinary curriculum coordinators (Nishihara, Odori, and Jennifer Bevill, LSU) recruited 34 volunteers from 12 disciplines and facilitated the identification of topics for collaboration and individual teacher exchanges. The third part of the paper reports the actual implementation of the project in two subject teaching areas as well as in two student-led extra curricular activities. The last part discusses the impacts of the project, followed by recommendations in the light of Japanese school context.

1. Odori High School as a Stakeholder of ESD

1-1. Mission of Odori High School as a UNESCO School

'Across the world, the classic model of the nation-state is being challenged and gradually transformed as globalization helps people to recognize that diversity is a feature of all societies and all nations, including those that may appear homogenous' (Osler and Starkey, 2010:88). Sapporo Odori High School was established in 2008 to provide equal opportunity education for a diverse range of students: new immigrants, returnees, ex-school refusers,

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high school drop-outs from a wide range of high schools, and others having difficulties with the traditional Japanese educational system. Unlike the standard Japanese school admission system, essays and interviews are at the core of the admission process and they can be conducted, if necessary, in any of five languages.

In terms of its multicultural diversity, Odori is often described as a mirror of the future of Sapporo. Effective citizenship education for the students and training for the teachers towards this end are both strongly demanded from society and therefore teachers in Odori are highly aware of the needs for intercultural education. That is, they are required to be practitioners of effective pedagogy for fostering 'inner-intercultural understanding' more than in any other high school in Sapporo. Although issues such as racism or xenophobia have always been quietly embedded in Japanese society, the school culture of Japan generally has not regarded multicultural issues as being a major concern. Also, due to the lack of teachers' experience and training in this field, many of them are not fully equipped with an effective pedagogy for intercultural education. Reflecting upon the strong needs both in the school and from society, Odori was registered in the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network, often referred as the UNESCO School, in 2009. This is a global network of schools across 180 countries, where students and teachers are encouraged to conduct interdisciplinary pilot projects on various themes in ESD and expected to be innovative stakeholders. Intercultural/multicultural education for global and local citizenship is one of the core themes of ESD by UNESCO, which is the focus of this project and is described further in later sections.

1-2. Characteristics of Education for Sustainable Development in the Pedagogy

In order to conduct a curriculum of multicultural education, educators must adapt pedagogy that goes beyond a transmission-based approach (Banks, 2012). In this regard, the Draft International Implementation Scheme of DESD (UNESCO, 2004) suggests the stakeholders of ESD demonstrate the following characteristics in their practice:

- *Interdisciplinary and holistic: learning for sustainable development embedded in the whole curriculum, not as a separate subject;
- *Value-driven: sharing the values and principles underpinning sustainable development;
- *Critical thinking and problem solving: learning confidence in addressing the dilemmas and challenges of sustainable development;
- *Multi-method: word, art, drama, debate, experience, ... different pedagogies which model the processes;
- *Participatory decision-making: learners participate in decisions on how they are to learn;
- *Locally relevant: addressing local as well as global issues, and using the language(s) which learners most commonly use.

(UNESCO, 2004:16)

Through in-service training sessions, Odori teachers repeatedly identified students' anticipation for a new style of education as a new call from a troubled society, and agreed that in order to raise awareness of in-school intercultural understanding and active citizenship on a broader scale, their teaching needed to possibly incorporate some of the characteristics stated in the DESD.

2. Identifying the Goals and Organizing the Project

The Japan-U.S. Teacher Exchange Program for ESD, administrated by Fulbright Japan, is where Jennifer Bevill and Aki Nishihara met in 2010 among 95 schoolteachers from both countries. All participants were encouraged to play a role as leaders/coordinators for interdisciplinary curriculum implementation in their own schools. After two joint conferences in San Francisco and Tokyo, Bevill and Nishihara continued exchanging ideas for a joint ESD project for intercultural understanding on the theme of domestic/world peace. As the autumn semester commenced in 2010, Nishihara presented the draft of the ESD Peace Project at a whole school meeting, which was received positively. The goals of the project as presented were:

- to increase intercultural understanding while raising students' awareness of domestic /world peace and ethnic/cultural diversity.
- to develop students' critical thinking skills, to develop a deeper view of themselves and their society, and to encourage active global and local citizenship.

Among approximately 90 teachers, 28 teachers volunteered to collaborate on the development and implementation of interdisciplinary curricula. Subsequently, at LSU, Bevill outlined the project and 4 teachers agreed on her proposal. Overall, including the coordinators, 34 teachers joined, in 12 disciplines from both schools.

Regarding curriculum design and content, Odori held one workshop where desired characteristics and innovative pedagogies (UNESCO, 2004:16) were suggested. Participants then brainstormed ideas regarding how to facilitate intercultural education with an exchange with LSU, in their own areas of expertise. Through the workshop and subsequent meetings within departments, the teachers discussed freely and creatively what approaches could be adapted within their particular subject areas, to achieve the common goals mentioned above. Pedagogically, they aimed to put a strong emphasis on shifting from traditional teacher-centred, transmission-based learning to learner-centred, problem solving, participatory learning involving discussion, debate, art, individual research and presentations.

3. Description of the Interdisciplinary Curriculum Exchange

Throughout the process the project team intended to integrate the holistic approach of ESD into daily teaching and learning. Teachers and students from various subject areas in

12 disciplines respectively identified topics for collaboration and joined in exchanges with LSU. The exchange included these classes: Japanese/American History, World History, Oral English Communication, English Reading and Writing, Japanese Calligraphy, Technology, Japanese as a Second Language, Basic Math, Food Design, Fine Arts, Basic Commerce and Economics, Daily English, and Cross Cultural Understanding. Materials, messages, and artwork were exchanged via videos, Internet, email, DVD or post. Due to space considerations, the content of two classes and two extra-curricular inter-school exchanges are described in this section.

3-1. Cross Cultural Understanding

Following Bevill's visit to Hiroshima, and Nishihara's visit to the Smithsonian in Washington both discovered discrepancies in history education between Japan and the U.S. which led them to set the discussion theme for students as; 'War - Definite Evil or Necessary Evil'. Discussion within the Odori class was held in Japanese, while the exchange part of the project was carried out in English. Careful consideration was taken throughout the exchange to not lead student discussion in the direction of oversimplification or straightforward decision making between what is right and wrong. Instead, emphasis was placed on the need for examining different perspectives and respecting their origins, while also expressing individual points of view and the need for open-mindedness. Both groups of students discussed the theme, followed by the Odori school students recording a video, with subtitles in English. Apart from one student, all supported the 'definite evil' viewpoint, which reflects the perspective of post WWII compulsory education in Japan. As a response, LSU students sent letters via email to Odori students with their ideas expressed in text and images. Odori students were surprised, and some were disappointed by the fact that many of the LSU students suggested that war was evil but inevitable, which aroused Odori students' interest the most.

During this exchange the Odori students became more proactive and requested, if they were allowed, to respond to individual LSU students' ideas and ask questions to them. Voluntarily, students spent a large amount of after school time completing the letters and many of them asked if the content of their letters was clear and not culturally offensive to the LSU students. Through these exchanges students seemed to deepen their view of themselves, and became more motivated to express their ideas, as well as being aware of cultural sensitivity and the need for tolerance. Although few of them were previously interested in learning a language, through this dialogue the motivation for communication in English increased dramatically.

3-2. World History - International Class for Newcomers and Returnees

To foster multicultural understanding in a school, it is essential for educators to reform verbal interaction between teachers and students, curriculum, extracurricular activities, and

attitudes toward minority languages (Romaine, 2009). This class, a history class for students who are learners of Japanese as a second language, aims to focus on that aspect, with an attempt to guarantee support in the students' first language as well as in Japanese. The students' Japanese proficiency was varied – from beginner to intermediate. Using textbooks from their home countries students explored textbook perspectives of Hiroshima and the atomic bomb. All together four countries' materials were used (South Korea, China, Russia and Japan) and the students gave a multilingual presentation, including the use of Japanese, at a whole school showcase, to which members of the local community were also invited.

During their presentation, controversial issues were revealed; for example, a student from China shared a personal reflection in a speech, saying he always wondered why Japanese schools did not teach what he was taught in school in China. It seemed the presentation had a strong impression on ethnically Japanese students, and the class received a number of written responses from other students, showing appreciation both for the new perspectives given and the positive attitude towards future dialogue. The presentation was sent to LSU students as a DVD and they also returned encouraging feedback. At a school level, it can be said that the students' tolerance toward viewpoints other than their own was increased due to the frank exchange of opinion. These presentations made all participants feel more confident to express themselves freely, and raised awareness of the possibilities of in-school intercultural and international understanding.

Starkey suggests that language learning should go beyond the merely instrumental. He insists language education is 'part of a humanistic education that encourages intercultural communication on the basis of equality' (2005). In the context above, it can be said that Odori students' attitudes and skills in intercultural understanding were fostered through language learning. They came to see fellow students from different cultural backgrounds as equals, as well as acquiring new knowledge themselves rather than it being merely transmitted to them.

3-3. Two Student-led Extra-curricular Activities

After one year of exchange with LSU, teachers began to recognize that the students gained more confidence in expressing their own opinions while respecting diverse ideas on given topics. The next step was to facilitate students to become autonomous learners. That is, we aimed to put students into a leadership role in control of their own education, which would lead to active citizenship. As Odori 3rd graders' school excursion was to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Memorial Park in May 2011, both sets of students at Odori and LSU agreed to take that opportunity toward developing an extra curricular joint project on Hiroshima. Students in the two schools simultaneously watched an atomic bomb documentary film, directed by a Japanese-American – 'White Light, Black Rain', followed by the writing of a reflective essay at both schools. These were then translated and

exchanged between the schools. Students from each school noticed and reported that many LSU students commented on how little they knew about the scientific effects of radiation exposure, whereas most Odori students approached their writing in more emotional ways, i.e., sadness, anger, etc. After exposure to a wide range of opinions from both schools, Odori students initiated a Talk Project with Ms. Namba, a lady in her eighties who lives in Hiroshima, on the first day of the excursion.

Talk Project with Ms. Namba in Hiroshima

The previous interactions with LSU facilitated the development of the critical and creative thinking skills of the students, and therefore the Talk Project with Ms. Kazuko Namba, a survivor of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, became one of the most strongly student-driven projects. Initially, 12 student representatives gathered and were given complete charge of designing how to use one hour with the guest, Ms. Namba, who had never before spoken in public. The student team was excited by the prospect of having complete autonomy in the project design and implementation and begun discussing questions regarding what Odori and the LSU students have in common to explore. The students also commented on how far they had come since starting the project and reflected that they were no longer shocked by what they would have previously seen as an impossible task. This highlighted their progress as active and independent learners. After thorough preparation with the least amount of guidance by teachers, the actual day of the Talk Project took place in the International Conference Centre in Hiroshima in May 2011. The students recorded the session to make a video letter to LSU, to share a dialogue, in which both schools could mutually learn from the one real voice of Hiroshima.

Talk Session with Sayaka, an Ainu High School Student

The exchanges during the academic year 2011 concluded with focusing on themes of inner peace, discrimination, prejudice and bullying. LSU produced anti-bullying advertisements and published them on the web for Odori students. The topics varied from racial discrimination and prejudice, cyber bullying, and some involved conflict resolution, to the prevention of suicide. LSU students then reported that they recognized that racial stereotyping was wrong and often incorrect, followed by making a pledge to stop making assumptions about individuals based on the colour of their skin.

Meanwhile Odori students learned about Hokkaido's indigenous Ainu people in creative reading/writing classes, followed by a student led talk session in a whole school showcase with Sayaka Kawakami, an Ainu high school student from Sapporo Hokuto High School. It is often recognised that the people of Hokkaido tend to regard discrimination against the Ainu as being a problem of the past. In terms of issues and human rights, the DESD Implementation Scheme made special mention of indigenous peoples insisting they are inevitable ESD stakeholders, in particular, because of threats to their life and future (UNESCO,

2004:25). However, it was only recently that the Japanese Government recognised the Ainu as an indigenous people of Japan, following the ratification of the United Nation Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. It is claimed that the implementation of Ainu rights recovery is 'still not proceeding at a commendable rate' (Ono, 2010). Additionally, at a meeting of school teachers and Ainu parents held at Sapporo City Hall in 2011, several parents reported the fact that many Ainu students in Sapporo are hiding their identity at school, under fear of being bullied, and the issue is most of the time ignored due to lack of awareness by teachers and students.

This Talk Session aimed to shed light on the gap between the students' stereotyped view of Ainu people, which is often over simplistic and optimistic, and the reality of existing discrimination, as well as promoting awareness of the human rights they are striving for today. Sayaka and four Odori students shared the current issues related to the Ainu and their human rights at a whole school showcase, which left a lasting impression on the audience. The team received a large amount of written feedback, not only from Odori, but also from the local community.

Some parts of the dialogues that took place during the project indicated sharp contrast in the ideas of 'peace' between the two countries and others showed similarities in the search for a common goal: a peaceful community, society, nation and the world. Japan is often described as a high context, collectivist culture in comparison with the US, a low context and individualistic society (Alder and Towne, 1993). In Japan, silence is often respected more than expressing one's opinion, and collectivism is valued: these features could be factors that hinder the possibility of dialogue respecting diversity. Some observers believe that groupism is too strong in Japan and that individualism should be more valued in the nation. In terms of optimal balance in multicultural education, Banks states that modernized pluralistic nation-states could best benefit from a balance between individualism and groupism, with neither characteristic dominating (2012). The exchange with LSU, which showed clear contrasts, contributed to enrich the intercultural understanding of Odori students, as well as improving their skills and attitudes toward communicating with diverse people, as an ESD approach aims for. The exchange motivated students to reflect upon who they are, to express themselves more deeply, and to understand what they need to enable a better understanding of people from different backgrounds.

4. Conclusion

As mentioned briefly in previous sections, teachers in various disciplines observed changes in and the impact on individual students through the project. It should be noted that many students who used to be passive learners and reported that they did not like participatory learning at the beginning, came to prefer student-centred learning with discussion. Some students who had habitually missed classes began to come to school with no absences. Oth-

ers who were former school refusers, volunteered for various extra curricula activities in school and became involved in service to the local community, which suggests that the project attained broader goals of citizenship education. Overall, the effect of student dialogues and interactions within Odori, and then with LSU, showed that the project and its embedded pedagogy have much more to offer than textbook based, exam driven learning.

Additionally, there were wider impacts of this project that went beyond the scope of the two schools, that is, the project has been recognized by wide range of practitioners of ESD, and as a result, teachers from Odori and LSU have been given opportunities to attend diverse conferences and to present the project as a model case. Students were also given the opportunity, on a national and international level, to present and exchange their learning experiences through the project. In 2011, two Odori students were invited to the Asia-Pacific ESD Students Workshop in Osaka, co-sponsored by MEXT and Osaka City University, where they presented the project to an international audience from Thailand, China, South Korea, the Philippines and Japan.

Taking an active leadership role in the project, Yuto Tateoka, the student president of Odori, was selected as one of 30 students from Japan for an ESD Student Exchange Program with U.S. schools, which was sponsored by Fulbright Japan, 2012. Back at Odori, he reported that the interaction with students in the schools in the U.S. was life changing and he is now eager to propose a multicultural project, which strongly reflects students' voices, and which aims to make Odori a school of tolerance towards diversity and proactiveness. Also, in this and the coming year, Odori has been invited to two ESD International Conferences and Seminars and the UNESCO World Forum of ASPNet High Schools, in Okayama, Japan. Two new students are participating as Hokkaido representatives. This forum is held as a summary session of the DESD, in conjunction with the Last Year Meeting of DESD, hosted by UNESCO in 2014.

The ESD Peace Project attempted to increase awareness of intercultural understanding and active citizenship through innovative pedagogies. The project called for a collaboration of teachers from various subjects, and as mentioned earlier, the team met the goals to a great extent. However, there are some challenges and recommendations for the future. First of all, coordination and collaboration was time consuming. Both coordinators and teachers on the project had to work over time in addition to their usual duties. In order to tackle this, the school principal should assign the coordinator less duties and less of a course load so that they can work smoothly. Second, it is essential to coordinate in a common language, and translation requires extensive time. Not only is it necessary to have participators with a good command of language in school, but the school should also make connections with possible local resource providers such as university students. Lastly, there are dilemmas involving the Course of Study by MEXT. In Japan, the Course of Study and its required

textbooks are the yardstick for all teachers in terms of achieving their goals for the year. In order to solve issues related to this, extensive research of ESD practice is essential to support the argument that an ESD approach does not hinder students learning in the long run. This should also be linked to a discussion of the definition of real 'academic ability'. In order to enhance the quality of education, current exam-driven, transmission-based pedagogy in Japanese schools needs to be critically reviewed and analyzed.

In conclusion, the project suggests there is certainly a possibility for curriculum innovation and its implementation in the light of holistic, student-centred pedagogies in order to foster ESD in the Japanese school context, although it should be conducted on a small scale due to the current Course of Study. Also, it proved that it is feasible for teachers from diverse disciplines to work together towards global and local citizenship education, which in fact is essential to an effective whole school approach for multicultural education (Banks, 2012). Lastly, this project has lead the author towards further research to critically review the framework of intercultural / multicultural education and citizenship education in relation to foreign language teaching. A comparative review of language policy implementations and their outcome in each nation-state, in particular a review of the differences between the nations of the EU and Japan, would benefit the understanding of the relationship between citizenship education, language teaching, syllabus design and textbook creation, which would, in turn, encourage innovation in actual school contexts.

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Notes

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[Abstract]

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The Education for Sustainable Development(ESD)Peace Project between Sapporo Odori High School in Japan and Louisiana State University Laboratory School in the United States was launched in 2010. This joint interdisciplinary curriculum development project aims to increase intercultural understanding through raising students' awareness of domestic/world peace and ethnic/cultural diversity, as well as to develop their critical thinking skills and to encourage active global and local citizenship. Teachers from 12 disciplines and their respective students from two schools exchanged multimedia messages via videos, Internet, e-mail, DVD and post. Students' attitude toward intercultural understanding was observed to be generally improved, which was followed by their active participation in ESD practice beyond the two schools. The project was funded by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology(MEXT)and the Asia Pacific Cultural Centre of UN-ESCO.

Key words : Citizenship Education, Intercultural Understanding, Interdisciplinary Curriculum, Language Teaching, Education for Sustainable Development(ESD)

