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ABSTRACT

Crosscultural understanding is a common goal of foreign language teaching; however, conventional cultural lessons provide only a superficial, monolithic view of culture. Based on the perceived ineffectiveness of conventional cultural lessons, this study explores an alternate way of teaching culture, employing the notion of culture as both shared knowledge and individual differences. This approach views culture as complex, dynamic, and diverse. Five Japanese undergraduate and graduate students who recently arrived at the University of Hawaii participated in this study as co-researchers, investigating the notion of culture. In daily journal writing and weekly meetings, the participants reported personal experiences which they felt were caused by cultural differences. They revealed their previously learned cultural knowledge of both Japan and America. Their basic concepts were that they equated culture with nation, perceived American Culture and Japanese Culture as monocultural entities, and ignored individual differences. These findings indicated that previous attitudes are difficult to overcome and that conventional cultural exercises are not sufficient to overcome such attitudes and can sometimes interfere with in-depth crosscultural understanding. It is suggested that teaching culture should start from understanding cultural diversity within one's own country. By observing diversity, students can see that each person belongs to a variety of subcultures and develops a cultural identity, which is both shared and unique. This awareness will help students view culture as diverse, dynamic, and complex, thus facilitating their readiness for crosscultural understanding. (Contains 44 references.) (Author/ND)

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ED 399 232

TEACHING CULTURE

Crosscultural Understanding Barriers faced by Japanese students

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Abstract

Crosscultural understanding is a common goal of foreign language teaching; however, conventional cultural lessons provide only a superficial, monolithic view of culture. In this paper, I begin by examining the definition of culture: culture as shared knowledge and as individual differences. Based on the ineffectiveness of conventional cultural lessons, I propose a study to explore an alternate way of teaching culture, employing the notion of culture as both shared knowledge and individual differences. This approach views culture as complex, dynamic, and diverse. Five Japanese students who recently arrived at the University of Hawai'i participated in this study as co-researchers, investigating the notion of culture. In daily journal writing and weekly meetings, the participants reported personal experiences which they felt were caused by cultural differences. They revealed their previously learned cultural knowledge of both Japan and America. Their basic concepts were that they equated culture with nation, perceived American Culture and Japanese Culture as monocultural entities, and ignored individual differences. These findings indicate that previous attitudes are difficult to overcome. Thus, conventional cultural exercises are not enough and can sometimes interfere with in-depth crosscultural understanding. I suggest that teaching culture should start from understanding cultural diversity within one's own country. By observing diversity, students can see that each person belongs to a variety of subcultures and, thus, develops a cultural identity, which is both shared and unique. This awareness will help students view culture as diverse, dynamic, and complex, thus facilitating their readiness for crosscultural understanding.

Introduction

When I was studying English in high school in Japan, my teacher used to say that to master a language, we need 3 L's: Language, Life (culture), and Literature. It is still commonly believed that we need to understand culture to learn a language. This position has been influenced by the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, which assumes that language forms culture. This hypothesis suggests that we cannot separate language from culture, and that teaching a language means teaching a culture (Byram, 1989; Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991; Byram, Esarte-Sarries, & Taylor, 1990). Although such a strong equation of culture and language as that suggested by Sapir and Whorf is problematic (Grace, 1987; Mathiot, 1979), there is a common tendency to include culture in language teaching.

Another importance of including culture in a language class is that students have to acquire crosscultural understanding in the present world. Japan cannot live independently of other countries because of the increasing internationalization of business, politics, technology, environmental issues, etc. More and more people in Japan have contact with people from diverse cultures. We live in an interrelated world. In other words, the world is getting smaller and smaller while our readiness for crosscultural understanding lags behind. Thus, it is important to include cultural understanding in school curricula. I will focus on the development of crosscultural understanding in this study.

English teachers and textbook writers try to include English Culture in teaching English. One of the problems of introducing English Culture is that there is a lack of understanding about what culture means. In most English textbooks in Japan, we can easily find references to countries such as America,

Britain, Australia, and Canada. It is almost impossible to introduce all the countries where English is used as the common or official language. Within America and other English-dominant countries, culture is diverse, too. If I teach only the cultures of America, Britain, Australia, and Canada, students will form stereotypical views about non-existent monolithic entities.

Another problem involves power differences among cultures. A lot of Japanese high school students think that American Culture is trendy, cool, advanced, desirable, and that African and Asian Cultures are primitive, under-developed, and not desirable. They often look down on African and Asian Cultures. One of the major contributors to this view is imperialism (Phillipson, 1994; Said, 1993). During the colonial period, European Culture was brought into Asia and Africa, and considered more advanced, sophisticated, and in short, superior. This view still has a strong and implicit influence on people. Teaching English and its associated cultures can unconsciously result in teaching the unbalanced power relations currently operating in the world. This conflicts with one of the main purposes of foreign language teaching: to broaden students' views and further crosscultural understanding. English, as a language of power, must be taught with great care. It is also important to discuss other cultures besides the English-dominant ones, even in English classes.

In this study, I would like to first examine what culture is. I am going to consider culture as transmission (Brislin, 1993; Byram, 1989; Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991; Byram, Esarte-Sarries, & Taylor, 1990; Seelye, 1984; Spindler, 1963), as propriospect (Goodenough, 1981; Wolcott, 1991), and as both shared knowledge and individual differences (Rosaldo, 1989). After introducing the present styles of cultural lessons, their weaknesses, and my own suggestions, I will then discuss an alternate way to teach culture. Finally,

I will introduce the study I conducted to show an alternative approach to teaching, report the outcome of the study, and discuss implications for culture teaching in Japan.

What is culture?

Culture has been defined in many ways. At the superficial level, it is food, clothes, music, housing, etc. At the deeper level I examine here, it is beliefs, values, perception, and attitudes (Brislin, 1993; Byram, 1989; Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991; Byram, Esarte-Sarries, & Taylor, 1990; Goodenough, 1981; Hall, 1959, 1981; Seelye, 1984; Spindler, 1963; Wolcott, 1991; among others). It is commonly believed that people use culture to interpret experience and generate behavior. In this section, I would like to introduce three ways of looking at culture: culture as a product of transmission (as in Brislin, 1993; Byram, 1989; Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991; Byram, Esarte-Sarries, & Taylor 1990; Seelye, 1984; Spindler, 1963), culture as propriospect (Goodenough, 1981; Wolcott, 1991), and culture which includes both shared knowledge and individual differences (Rosaldo, 1989).

Culture as transmission

Spindler (1987) suggests that people belonging to the same cultural community share similar beliefs, values, and attitudes, and transmit these from generation to generation. This cultural transmission operates in such places as home, workplace, community, and media (Brislin, 1993; Ochs, 1993; Scollon & Scollon, 1995). Scollon and Scollon (1995) use the term "discourse systems" and say that there is a specific discourse system for each cultural

community, and that people get socialized into it. There are various types of shared knowledge; both nonverbal and verbal.

Extensive research has been done to describe shared knowledge of a cultural community and communication difficulties which occur due to different cultures/shared knowledge (Goffman, 1967; Gumperz, 1992; Hall 1959, 1981; Saville-Troike, 1989; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; among others). Interpretation of culture by these scholars tends to emphasize the homogeneity of a whole community. The members of the community are generally constrained by the social rules of the community. Geertz (1973) states, "The second idea is that man is precisely the animal most desperately dependent upon such extragenetic, outside-the-skin control mechanisms, such cultural programs, for ordering his behavior" (p.44). Goffman (1967) suggests that members of a certain community who do not share most of the rules may be considered rude, crazy, weird, or retarded. In terms of communication difficulties, Hall (1959) discusses the consequences of differing interpretations of space and time in different cultures. He cited one anecdote of a Latino man and an American man: When talking, the Latino man moved closer and closer to the American man to show warmth and friendliness, which was miscommunicated as pushiness by the American man.

Spindler (1987) comments on the important role education plays in transmission of cultural values: "The object of cultural transmission is to teach young people how to think, act, and feel appropriately" (p. 279). However, this "appropriateness" is problematic, as it seems to represent only that of mainstream backgrounds which administrators and teachers commonly come from. Thus students from minority backgrounds, who do not have the same language, values, and attitudes which these educators

hold, are more likely to fail at school because of communication breakdowns and teachers' negative evaluations of non-mainstream behavior (Davis & Golden, 1995; Heath, 1982).

Cultural transmission is generally viewed as a set of socially shared values and behaviors which are transmitted to children within the community. Miscommunication and/or negative evaluations can occur when members from two communities come together.

Culture as propriospect

Wolcott (1991) has challenged the notion, "culture as transmission," as it leads to the erroneous view that culture involves a static, collective body of knowledge which is passed on from generation to generation and says that culture does not organize people but vice versa. Wolcott (1991) argues for a focus on the individual's notion of culture, propriospect, which has been created out of her/his unique experiences with different people and across situations. Wolcott adopts Goodenough's definition of culture and says:

The totality of the private, subjective view of the world and its contents that each human develops out of personal experience. Propriospect, then, points not to Culture in an abstract, collective sense but to the *unique version of culture(s)* each of us creates out of individual experience. (Wolcott, 1991, p.258, original emphasis)

Wolcott looks at culture as experience. Barrett also takes this notion, and says that culture is different from person to person, as people do not have exactly the same experience (Barrett, 1984).

Culture as shared knowledge and individual differences

Wolcott (1991) says we all *create* our own unique culture from our individual experience. However, the word *create* is misleading, as most of the experience individuals have is caused by interaction with other people, directly or indirectly. There is hardly any individual creation from nothing. People create art and music, and these seem unique. Those people, however, were socialized into particular art and music creation styles. In addition, we all belong to various subcultures, and individual experience, or *propriospect*, is a product of transmission by various people who have been socialized in different ways. Rosaldo (1989) provides an example of an individual, Gloria Anzaldua, who belongs to a variety of cultures.

In *Borderlands/La Frontera*, a recent work written from a Chicana lesbian perspective, Gloria Anzaldua has further developed and transformed the figure at the crossroads in a manner that celebrates the potential of borders in opening new forms of human understanding. "The new *mestiza* [person of mixed ancestry]," she says, "copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity. She learns to be Indian in Mexican culture, to be Mexican from an Anglo point of view. She learns to juggle cultures. She has a plural personality, she operates in a pluralistic mode - nothing is thrust out, the good the bad and the ugly, nothing rejected, nothing abandoned. Not only does she sustain contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else." In making herself into a complex persona, Anzaldua incorporates Mexican, Indian, and Anglo elements at the same time that she discards the homophobia and patriarchy of Chicano culture. In rejecting the classic "authenticity" of cultural purity, she seeks out the many-stranded possibilities of the borderlands. By sorting through and weaving together its overlapping strands, Anzaldua's identity becomes ever stronger, not diffused. She argues that because Chicanos have so long practiced the art of culture blending, "we" now stand in a position to become leaders in developing new forms of polyglot cultural creativity. In her view, the rear guard will become the vanguard. (Rosaldo, 1989, p.216)

Anzaldua seems to be a unique, multicultural person; however, if we take account of various subcultures we belong to, it is possible to say that we

are all like her. Depending on the situation, we use different sets of cultural rules appropriately. Therefore, in the study reported here, I utilize Rosaldo's notion that culture is both individual and shared.

Teaching Culture

Educators who are interested in teaching about culture consciously or unconsciously define culture in specific ways. In this section, I would first like to introduce what conventional culture lessons have been like. I will then discuss weaknesses of these approaches and propose an alternative approach.

Conventional style

Official English textbooks in Japan

The official English textbooks, which are published by the Ministry of Education, do not focus on cultural lessons, but on grammatical rules. However, they do show some aspects of, for example, British Culture, and focus on the cultural differences there are between British and Japanese Cultures. As it is difficult to show difference in attitudes, values, and beliefs, textbook writers show specific features of British Culture to represent them. For example, to show that the British respect freedom of speech, textbooks describe Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park. (New Crown English Series 3)

Cultural study textbooks/books

Three authors who have written extensively on cultural lessons for second language and foreign language purposes are Byram, Seelye, and Brislin. Byram (1989), Byram, Esarte-Sarries, and Taylor (1990), Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991) report teaching French Culture in Britain. To achieve positive attitudes toward French people, students learn about general topics, such as French food, special meals, jobs, housing, education, politics, history, geography, growing up, religion, language, people, and buildings.

Seelye published a book, Teaching Culture: Strategies for Intercultural Communication (1984), which he states is a product of his experience as a classroom teacher, and as an observer and participant in many cultures. Thus, he says, he takes an anthropological approach:

Most of the argumentative discussions over the definition of culture have been colossal wastes of time. The objective of this chapter is to bury the issue so that teachers can spend their time operationally describing, rather than defining, the term. Anthropological and literary approaches to culture and the relation of language to thought are examined. Culture is seen to include everything people learn to do. (Seelye, 1984, p.12)

He states seven goals for operationalizing cultural instruction. (The detailed citation is in Appendix A):

1. The sense, or functionality, of culturally conditioned behavior.
 2. Interaction of language and social variables.
 3. Conventional behavior in common situations.
 4. Cultural connotations of words and phrases.
 5. Evaluating statements about a culture.
 6. Researching another culture.
 7. Attitudes toward other societies.
- (Seelye, 1984, p. 9)

He provides activities which are designed to change students' performance. Each activity has "Terminal Behavior," "Conditions," and "Criterion." "Terminal Behavior" is what the students should be able to do or say when s/he has learned the specific aspect that is the desired outcome of the learning. "Conditions" are the circumstances under which the student will be expected to do or say what s/he has learned. "Criterion" is the acceptable performance. Below is an example of one of the activities:

Goal no.2

To demonstrate some ways in which language and other behavior are affected by social variables, carry out two of the following five activities. (The following is two of the five activities.)

A. Terminal Behavior: Identify the places of origin of speakers from four different regions of Hispanic culture (Spain, Caribbean, Mexico, Argentina).

Conditions: A one- to two-minute taped speech sample of five different speakers will be played twice during class time.

Criterion: Three of the five speakers must be correctly identified.

B. Terminal Behavior: Prepare a two- to four minute oral presentation in Spanish, based on one written source and on interviews with at least two native speakers, about five words or expressions that are associated with one sex or age group.

Conditions: For classroom presentation with at least two weeks advance notice.

Criterion: Seventy percent of the class must be able to follow exposition clearly.

(Seelye, 1984, p. 68)

The activities above seem superficial, simplistic, and stereotypical. It is impossible to take up one variable at a time, that is, place of residence or age/sex, and to observe how it affects the way people speak. It is the complex intervention of various variables, such as place of residence, age, class, and situation, that affect people's speech.

Seelye (1984) says, "Teachers are paid to change behavior" (p. 64). He seems to be giving cultural rules as knowledge for students to learn. We cannot just give information and do exercises in order to change students' behavior, especially within a short period. This is like the English-teaching method which prevails in Japan. Teachers give rules and exercises, and test to see if students have learned them. Although most of the goals Seelye presents may be desirable, it is unlikely that students' behavioral changes will occur using artificial exercises. Change of behavior does not always mean change of attitudes (Davis, 1995; McDiarmid, 1990b). Students may answer the exercises in a desired way, but they remain as ethnocentric as before.

Another approach to learning about culture developed by Brislin (1993) is "to develop greater sophistication about culture's influence on behaviour" (p. 57). He suggests that by developing this sophistication, one can overcome ethnocentric attitudes. The second way to learn about culture is to understand how people make attributions about others' behavior as well as their own. The third way is to understand the inevitability of disconfirmed expectancies. The fourth way is to realize there are different behaviors familiar to people from individualist versus collectivist backgrounds. Through these four ways, Brislin (1993) expects students to change their thinking, attitudes, and behavior (p.57).

I would like to present one of the activities from A Manual of Structured Experiences for Cross-Cultural Learning by Brislin. It is an exercise called 'Stereotypes.' The procedure is as follows:

1. List five different cultures within your discussion group and rank order them in conjunction with the statements below: 1) not at all aggressive, 2) conceited about appearance, 3) very ambitious, etc. Add up the total score for each statement on each ethnic group.

2. Address your rankings with at least the following questions:
 - A. Why does stereotyping persist? Is it useful? Harmful? What kind of situations tend to stereotype people?
 - B. If several persons undertook this exercise, what similarities in ratings exist? Were there few or different answers to each item? Are there any sex and age differences noted in the ratings?

(Weeks, Petersen, & Brislin, 1979, pp. 83-85)

Brislin probably intends to help us realize the stereotypical views we have about the various groups of people, and to invalidate the stereotypes through discussion. However, this exercise can result in generating stereotypes students might not have had before. First, students are asked to rate cultures rather than view culture as relative. Second, the statements are not descriptions of a certain culture, but rather descriptions of an individual person. One ethnic group cannot have one specific character, such as "not at all aggressive." In other words, this exercise looks at culture as a monolithic entity. It is doubtful if this kind of exercise is enough to cause students to overcome their own ethnocentric attitudes, and indeed, may create ethnocentric attitudes.

To summarize, the tendency of the conventional style of teaching culture is to treat cultures mainly as nations, and as monolithic entities. Even if individual differences are considered in the theoretical background, there are no such exercises in the two approaches discussed above which focus on that aspect of culture. It also focuses on differences between "their" culture and "our" culture and the idiosyncratic and striking differences of cultures. It is believed if we know the differences, we can communicate well with people from another community. Teaching culture clearly has problems, such as viewing culture as monolithic with clear distinctions between cultures; these problems are discussed in the following section.

Weaknesses

One nation = one culture

The conventional style of teaching culture tends to focus mainly on cultures of nations, such as "American Culture" and "Japanese Culture," ignoring that there are various other types of cultures within countries including various ethnic groups, social classes, urban-rural distinctions, etc. In addition, subcultures within any community exist, such as "Hospital Culture," "Culture of universities" "Culture of the younger generation," "Teachers' Culture," etc. Students might strongly feel that people from *other countries* are different from them, which can cause segregation rather than crosscultural understanding, and it might lead to a hegemonic form of nationalism.

Diversity within a nation

The conventional type of teaching culture tries to give students information about shared knowledge (beliefs, values, and attitudes) of a certain community. It is almost impossible to describe cultures of modern nations, such as American Culture, Japanese Culture, etc., as they are too complex and diverse. They introduce cultural generalizations of an entire country, as if they are homogenous cultures, and usually focus on mainstream culture. Thus, only the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the people with power tend to be introduced.

One person = one culture

Conventional cultural studies seem to have the concept of "one person = one culture." Gloria Anzaldua in "Border Crossings," possesses various cultural identities (Rosaldo, 1989), demonstrating that there is cultural diversity within an individual. However, the cultural textbooks do not take into account the individual nature of cultural identity.

The individual

Stereotypes are often used for crosscultural understanding. Fontaine (1989) supports the use of stereotypes:

When our expectations for people are based on their social category (culture, nationality, race, ethnicity, sex, age, profession, and so forth) rather than on their being unique individuals, the process is often called stereotyping. Particularly internationally, we may need to rely on such a process because we simply do not have much information about them as individuals. Stereotyping provides us with at least some basis for predicting what is and is not likely to be appropriate in doing business with somebody that we otherwise have no experience with. There is commonly at least some "kernel of truth" in our stereotypes, certain positive stereotypes such as those from another culture being friendly, intelligent, or businesslike may facilitate our initial willingness to interact with them and increase the positivity of that interaction. So stereotypes can be useful. (Fontaine, 1989, p. 114)

Whether the person is friendly or not is culturally determined; there is no universal definition for a friendly person and an over-bearing person. So, even if the stereotypes are positive, they are not useful, and might not be true.

Serangi, in his paper *Intercultural or Not?: Beyond Celebration of Cultural Differences in Miscommunication Analysis*, criticizes the use of stereotypes:

The use of a unified view of 'culture' and, correspondingly, the thematisation of cultural differences in accounting for instances of 'intercultural miscommunication,' both run the risk of stereotyping the field of intercultural communication research.

(Serangi, 1994, p. 424)

The conventional style of teaching culture suggests that there is an appropriate way of thinking, acting, and feeling in each community. There is an overall tendency of how people within a community will behave. At the same time, when we see individual people in the community, they are different.

One of the main purposes of teaching culture is to facilitate crosscultural understanding. When we communicate with a person from another culture, we cannot rely on stereotypes. Communities do not interact, but individual people do. Therefore, just focusing on generalizations is problematic. It is useful to learn the shared knowledge of one culture, but we should also be aware of the individual aspects of culture, or propriospect, too.

Alternative idea for teaching culture

The conventional way of teaching culture gave students cultural knowledge of a certain community and expected them to gain a better attitude toward the people in the community. However, teachers cannot overtly change students' thinking, attitudes, and behavior. As this conventional method has problems, I am going to start with the basic question; "What is

culture?" I want students to realize the complexity of culture through their own investigation of it. I want students to realize there are subcultures, and in addition, realize that each of us belong to various subcultures and has had experiences which make us unique; i.e. propriospect (Rosaldo, 1989).

Crosscultural understanding does not always mean understanding cultures of other countries. It means acknowledging the complexity of culture. Through the in-depth investigation of culture, an individual will probably "develop greater sophistication about culture's influence on behavior" (Brislin, 1993, p. 57). To recognize that we belong to various subcultures, Hall suggests that individuals must

achieve awareness of the structure of their own system, which can be accomplished only by interacting with others who do not share that system - members of the opposite sex, different age groups, different ethnic groups, and different cultures - all suffice.

(Hall, 1981, p. 44)

When we analyze our own culture and somebody else's, we should not look at culture as only that of a nation, for example, Japanese Culture, and American Culture. But we should recognize there are many different cultures, such as "Student Culture," "Hospital Culture," "University Student Culture," etc. I want students to investigate what culture is and to understand it in depth.

Heath's work in Literacy or Literate Skills? Considerations for ESL/EFL Learners provides us with insight into how to gain an understanding of our own and others' cultures. In her project, students worked with a researcher, and collected and analyzed data to respond to the researcher's questions. Thus the students themselves became co-researchers. Her topic was language, and in the end the students' awareness of language was increased a great deal, and their language skills improved.

Teaching Culture Project

Based on the above alternative idea of culture teaching, I conducted a study focusing on facilitating students' crosscultural understanding. As I could not go back to Japan to do the research, I conducted it here. In this case, the participants investigated cultural encounters in Hawai'i. I had five students who studied culture as my co-researchers. Through their active participation in finding out what culture is, I wanted to see if they would develop crosscultural understanding.

Participants

Participants were five Japanese undergraduate/graduate students at the University of Hawai'i. Participants and the people who appear in the participants' stories have been assigned pseudonyms. The following is the descriptions of participants.

Miyako

She has been in Hawai'i for six months and is 23 years old. She is majoring in computer science and agricultural engineering. Miyako was not so willing to participate, as she was not confident with her English. She still feels a lot of communication difficulties, so I told her it was not necessary for her to be able to understand all the interactions. Miyako does not seem to have much interest in cultural issues. She seems shy and says she does not have much interaction with American people. It is her first time to live abroad except for one month in Seattle. We had meetings in Japanese the first six times and then in English the last three times.

Kozue

She has been in Hawai'i for eight months and is 19 years old. Her mother is American, and her father is Japanese. Kozue was born and brought up in Japan, and her dominant language is Japanese. It is her first time living abroad. She is an undergraduate student and has not chosen her major yet, but is interested in journalism. Kozue shows a great interest in cultural issues, as she herself feels that she has two cultures; "American" and "Japanese." She is outgoing, and likes interacting with people.

Yukiko

She has been in Hawai'i for six months and is 22 years old. She is an undergraduate student in ESL. She has not lived in any other foreign place. Yukiko shows interest in cultural issues, as she will be an English teacher in the future. She took one class on crosscultural understanding as a requirement in a Japanese university. She is interested in the study I am conducting.

Toshiko

She has been in Hawai'i for 8 weeks and is 20 years old. She was an exchange student in Australia for one year when she was a high school student. Toshiko wants to major in Asian studies, as she is interested in cultural issues. For the ELI (English Language Institute) pre-test, which was a free topic essay, she wrote on crosscultural understanding. She writes in a journal every day, and says that it is not so difficult for her to take field notes. She is taking an anthropology class at the university and reads books on cultures.

Rumi

She has been in Hawai'i for 10 months and has never lived in other foreign countries. She is in her 30's. Rumi worked as a midwife in Japan and now majors in Public Health. She has work experience at a hospital in Hawai'i. She is interested in America and also in improving her English, as she still feels that she has a lot of communication difficulties. She has read a lot of books on Japanese Culture.

Data Collection

The above five participants collected data as my co-researchers, since I wanted them to understand the complexity of culture. They took field notes, and shared them with me. They wrote down what they noticed in their everyday life, for example, some behavior which upset them, which made them feel strange, which they did not understand, etc. They also took notes of situations when interlocutors seemed offended, confused, etc. The participants described what happened, how they felt and their interpretation of the behavior.

I met each of the participants once a week for about one hour to discuss what they collected and how they felt about doing this research. I recorded what kind of data they collected, and their evolving views on culture. They sometimes had difficulty in knowing what to observe, so I gave them some prompts, such as if the mother/baby interaction is the same with all American mothers she met, if all students behave the same way in class, etc. to facilitate their data collection. They took field notes and we discussed cultural issues in English. I asked the participants to write on culture twice. We had one group meeting with all the participants.

Participants' Stories

All the participants were informed of the purpose of this study, which was to understand culture. The participants and I did not have a specific definition of culture to start with, as we wanted to investigate the complexity and flexibility of culture, and I wanted to extract the participants' understanding of culture. They reported what they noticed in their everyday life in Hawai'i, such as what they found surprising, interesting, offensive, strange, etc. I did not specifically tell them to report their student life, but most of the data was related to it.

I explained that there might not only be American Culture, Japanese Culture, but also Student Culture, Hospital Culture, etc. I told them about the news item "Crowd Mistakes Rescue Attempt, Attacks Police" which was reported in the *Minneapolis Tribune*. The article was about an incident involving three policemen who were giving a heart massage and oxygen to a heart attack victim when they were assaulted by a crowd of Spanish-speaking residents. They thought the policemen were beating the woman. (Spradley, 1980) The participants got the idea that the policemen and the residents brought different assumptions, beliefs, and experiences to this incident, and that their beliefs shaped their interpretation of what was happening. The participants understood that there was a mismatch between the policemen's culture and the residents' culture that led to misinterpretation.

Most of the participants' stories, however, focused on what they thought were differences between American Culture and Japanese Culture. They seemed to be constrained by the "culture = nation" notion; that is, they neglected the existence of subcultures. They focused on differences and not on similarities.

Therefore, there are two distinctive cultures in the participants' stories: Japanese Culture and American Culture. First of all, I would like to introduce the participants' description of Japanese Culture. Their descriptions fit what many anthropologists and psychologists have said about the Japanese personality.

Japanese Culture

The participants seem to have an image that Japanese Culture is monocultural, mysterious, and different from American Culture. They came up with key concepts to describe Japanese Culture, such as, "non-verbalism," "indirection," "indulgence," and "politeness." Those terms are also found very easily in anthropologists' description of Japanese personality. I will introduce some of the participants' stories which show the above elements.

Non-verbalism.

Some of the participants reported that Japanese do not express their opinions as much as Americans do and that Japanese do not value verbalism. The participants thought that words somehow lessen and trivialize one's feelings.

Kozue said:

I was talking to Kevin (Caucasian, age: 22) over the phone. He was feeling down and I wanted to comfort him. I could not really express it well. Even if in Japanese I would not be able to express it. In Japan we have a saying like; once the feeling or what I think or want to express is verbalized, it loses the value. I want to express what I feel, but once it becomes words, I feel it so trivial. That is very Japanese thing, I discovered. I told him about it. He does not agree with me, and said that words can describe everything.

Kozue once mentioned what she learned from her mother:

I was talking about it with my mom, when she came here. She said in Japan, people who talk a lot should not be trusted. She is American. She says that trust does not come from words in Japan, but instead from feeling and eye contact and attitude. Mr. Kaifu (former prime minister in Japan) was a good speaker, but everyone thought that he was just kuchidake (only mouth), which means that he is good at speaking in public and doesn't do what he says. Probably it is historical custom that well spoken people are not trusted. I don't know. It is my mom's theory.

Befu (1971) agrees with her that Japanese do not value verbalism:

Americans tend to emphasize verbal ability a great deal more than Japanese. Although the emphasis has been slowly changing, the ideal Japanese has been a man of few words, one who would show his character through action rather than through verbal promises of what he would do and one who would persevere without complaint. In short, this nonverbal emphasis in the Japanese character seems to start very early in infancy. (p.153)

He explains why non-verbalism exists in Japan. He says that the way Japanese raise children provides a basis for the formulation of Japanese personality, and that it is different from the American way. He reports that American mother-child interactions are more verbal than Japanese ones.

Participants talked about Japanese perseverance and said that Japanese people complain less than Americans do. This probably relates to non-verbalism.

Kozue said:

I think Americans complain too much. Probably because for self assertion, and because Americans are individualistic, and they have to have their own opinions. They need to assert themselves. When I first came here, I was surprised that I was kind of forced to have my own opinions. It was tiring for me. I was not used to express what I thought, because in Japan, we can understand one another from atmosphere. We call it hara no uchi (inside stomach), which means we read somebody else's mind. Here in America, they express what they want. For me, it sounds like they are complaining. I am not saying the Japanese ways are good, or the American ways are good.

I was just thinking generally, but here is one example. I went to a hotel for a birthday dinner with my American grandmother. We had reservation, but there were many people, and they were not leaving. We couldn't get seated right away. I understood it wasn't the waiter's fault, as he did not know those people would take so long to leave. But my grandmother was kind of upset. She was complaining. I calmed her down. Then there were people who came after us. They also had reservation, but could not get seats. They were complaining and complaining. The poor waiter couldn't do anything. There are many examples like that. But I can't remember any specific ones like that.

Japanese non-verbalism often appears in the participants' stories in other ways. For example, Miyako, Kozue, Yukiko, and Toshiko were surprised that students speak up in class more in Hawai'i than in Japan. Miyako and Kozue said that their friends in Hawai'i like telling stories and are good at it.

Indirection.

Two of the participants talked about indirection in Japan. It is often said that Japanese hide their true feelings, emotions, or what they really want to express. The participants' comments suggest that they agree with such a statement and seem to think that it makes Japan mysterious. Miyako was explicitly told in Japan that she should express her mind in America, otherwise, nobody would understand her. It applies to the well-known story that Japanese say "yes," when they mean "no." Yukiko also learned this at school in Japan, and it caused a communication breakdown when she bluntly said "no" to her American friend here. Yukiko described what happened:

When I first came to YMCA, one Caucasian guy wanted to exchange room with me. I was thinking in the U.S. I can say just "no." Not like "Sorry, but..." I did not think it necessary to add excuses or explanation... I could not understand his English well. I thought it was OK just to say "no," but even now that guy does not talk to me. Maybe there is a way to reject and request here in the States. Maybe in school

in Japan, teachers focus that in the United States, people can say "no." I remember only that part.

Kozue reflected on how she communicated with her friends in Japan. She said she was afraid to oppose her friends; "Even if I don't really like the idea, I do not say that. Probably I say that indirectly."

Anthropologists who study the Japanese personality say that Japanese value implicit and subtle beauty. Kozue talked about a Japanese movie she saw here with her American friends. She felt that beauty was implicitly described through a falling leaf, etc. in the movie. She appreciated the indirect way of showing beauty, but could not share the feeling with her American friends.

Kozue said:

I was moved by the description of nature. Tiny things. Like leaves fall upon pond, etc. I really enjoyed it as it was full of Japanese appreciation of nature. Kevin and Tom didn't understand the beauty. They did not notice what I noticed.

Befu (1971) compares a Japanese garden and a Western garden and talks about subtlety:

One of the important esthetic styles in Japanese art reflects a notion which can be expressed in a cluster of English words such as subtlety, simplicity, and indirection. Subtlety implies lack of obviousness, and requires a careful study for appreciation. Japanese gardens are made to look "natural," as if no human effort has gone into their creation. One does not see the geometric formalism of some Western gardens, which immediately impress the viewer with the unmistakable fact of human creation. (p.174)

Indulgence.

Toshiko talked about amae (indulgence), and said that she could not find the appropriate translation for it, and felt amae is specifically Japanese.

Toshiko said:

I wanted to express amai in English, but I could not find the exact word I wanted to say. So I said "spoil", but I didn't like it, as it sounds more negative than amai. Later I looked the word amai in Japanese-English dictionary, and found "indulgent." But I'm not still quite sure if they mean the same. For me, "spoil" means that the parents are not good enough. Amai means that the parents love the kid too much. I once read a book on Japanese culture written by a Korean person. It said that there is no equivalence of amai in English but there is in Korean and Chinese. Amai represents Japanese culture. Amai doesn't sound so strongly negative for me, even if I don't want to be amai to my kid. "Spoil" has a stronger meaning, which is "ruin." I found the meaning in the dictionary. I still do not know what the word for amai in English. I do not understand what amai means in the Japanese society yet.

Doi (1962) introduced amae as a key concept for understanding Japanese personality. His book *Amae no Kozo* ("Anatomy of Dependence") was reprinted in hardcover 67 times in the first four years of its publication and in softcover 147 times since its initial publication in 1971. (Befu, 1993) This concept, amae, is clearly very popular in Japan. Befu explains Doi's definition of amae:

"Indulgence" is the tendency to depend and presume on another's love, or to seek and bask in another's indulgence. Any child is considered to have a natural tendency to seek and depend on parental affection. It is this indulgence in parental love that is the genesis of the behavior labeled amae.... The significant point about this concept is that Japanese adults too have the same need to indulge in affective relationships with others. That is, even in adulthood Japanese seek affective satisfaction through emotional dependence on other

individuals with whom the ego is in intimate relationship, although such behavior is not always identified as being amae.
(Befu, 1971, p.160)

Befu (1971) says that this amae is developed through the way mothers raise infants. American infants tend to be left alone more than Japanese ones. For example, American infants sleep in cribs, in their own room, and they are often left with baby sitters. On the other hand, Japanese infants sleep with their mothers, and are not left with baby sitters. Japanese infants always have emotional security and develop dependency on their mothers. In contrast, American infants have to cope with loneliness or emotional insecurity, and thus develop independence. This nature becomes the basis of individualism. Many anthropologists say that dependency is characteristic of Japanese, even in adulthood (Sabata, 1964; Kimura, 1973).

Toshiko talked about Japanese women's immaturity in another interview. This seems to be an example of indulgence and dependency in adulthood:

Japanese people are immature than age. I am immature too. When I compare Japanese students with students from America, or other countries, they are immature. I met a girl from Malaysia or somewhere. She said Japanese girls look young, and also behave young. Because people who are older than 20 years old live with their family, and they go to university, and they don't worry about money. Their parents pay. In some countries, they start thinking about money when they are 15 or 16 years old. They start working to help family too. We don't have much to concern about. We are really spoiled, and immature. This is what she said. She did not say I was spoiled. I feel I am spoiled. Maybe we are lucky and happy that we are spoiled. And this also makes us immature.

We rely on our parents financially and also mentally. I really feel that now. My parents and I have a good relationship. So it is hard to be away from them. I want to talk to them and ask for advice. I wanted to be independent. Now I don't think I am independent. I want to live with my parents. It is easier. I don't have to decide

anything by myself. Even if I live with my parents, I should decide by myself, but maybe I don't.

I will be independent if I live here for 5 years or so, but I don't want to be independent. I feel I will be too separated from my parents then. I will be a different me. I liked what I was, even if I was not independent. I liked the situation before. It was sweet.

I am a bit worried that the relationship with my parents will be different. Might not be as good as before. I am thinking like that so I am not mature. This kind of developing stage happens to everyone. Probably this stage comes later to Japanese people than to other people. That is probably why we look young.

Other participants (Miyako, Kozue, and Yukiko) did not talk directly about indulgence, but about group mentality, which is related to dependency. They said that they behaved based on what other people would think of them in Japan, and they called that "group mentality." According to Befu (1971), the reason for such behavior is that they need emotional security, or indulgence.

Politeness.

Japanese are known to be polite people. Four of the participants talked about Japanese politeness or about themselves being too polite.

Miyako said:

I feel like saying "Thank you." while I'm listening to the TA to make the conversation go smoothly. But the TA said, "I haven't finished talking yet." or "I haven't done anything yet." It was when I asked a question in a lab. It was not during class. I encountered this kind of thing with my Austrian friend. I am too polite probably.

In the above example, Miyako probably wanted to express that she really appreciated the TA's help, and also felt sorry for giving him trouble. The TA might not have thought that Miyako was too polite, but she considered herself to be so.

Yukiko had a similar experience. She got a fan from her friend, and he said that if there was any trouble with it, he would fix it. The other day he found something wrong with it, so he started fixing it. She was sorry to give him trouble, and thanked him and apologized. Her friend looked a little upset by her words. Her interpretation of his being upset was that he probably thought that she did not trust his words that he would fix it. She felt she was too polite in that situation. In this case her friend might not have found her too polite. He might have thought she did not want him to fix it, and was hurt, or he thought he had overstepped her boundaries. Yukiko did not realize that there might have been two different cultures in this incident.

Some participants said to consider how others feel seems to be very important and a polite thing to do among Japanese. Miyako told me she felt ashamed when she found herself occupying a shower at a swimming pool when other two people were sharing the other one. She thought she was inconsiderate.

Befu (1971) explains about considerations among Japanese people:

It is often said that Japanese lack a sense of individualism, self-identity, or the concept of self, implying that one's decision is heavily affected or colored by considerations of how others socially around him might feel about his decision and its consequences. Decisions a Japanese man makes are affected by these considerations because his anticipation of how the others will feel in turn affects his own emotional state of mind. Thus an ethical decision tends not to be made strictly on the basis of abstract or universalistic principles, but rather on the basis of his anticipation of the feelings of other.

The American sense of individualism and independence, in which one is to act on his own accord and on the basis of his closest associates, requires an emotional independence from "meaningful" others, so that one's actions are not influenced, basically, by considerations of whether the actions would please or displease them, but is determined by one's own conviction as to what is right or wrong. At the psychological level, individualism and independence result from not having developed deep, positive emotional ties with one's

parents and therefore not being able to transfer them to others, or to put it positively, from one's ability to manage his own emotional security without relying on others. (p. 166)

Kozue and Rumi said Japanese are very considerate of others, and that this consideration is less necessary in America. Kozue said that she did not have to worry about how American friends thought about her as much as when talking to Japanese friends. She explained it was because of a Japanese group centered mentality.

Befu says that the four characteristics above -- non-verbalism, indirection, indulgence, and politeness -- can be all explained by how mothers raise children, and are all interrelated.

American Culture

The participants came up with distinctive characteristics for American Culture, that is, "Americans have opinions. They are confident." and "individualistic." These characteristics are opposite to what they reported about Japanese Culture.

Americans have opinions. They are confident.

All the participants mentioned that students speak up more in class in Hawai'i than in Japan, and that they are good at telling stories. The participants have an image of Japanese being shy and Americans being confident.

Yukiko was surprised when her American friend was so outspoken about his abilities:

People here usually say their advantage or speak well of themselves. I cannot do it. Other people say, "I can do this." "I am good at..." or "I am

proud..." At first, I felt strange, as in Japan I rarely hear that. If I say that in Japan, I would get negative reaction. I think Japanese people pay attention to their disadvantage, even if they know they can do this. They don't say that, about their advantages.

For example, when parents are talking each other, one parent says, "Your child is very smart. I envy you." or something. The other parent says, "No, no, no. My child is not smart." I heard this many times in Japan.

Here I have one example. One day, one of my friends said, "Today it's very interesting." When he went to class, his classmates and teacher couldn't understand the content of the book. He explained about the content. His classmates and professor were impressed because of his knowledge. He said to me proudly, "That was very interesting. Nobody could explain it, so I explained." He is from mainland. He is a student.

Miyako was surprised that students speak up in class, and also that teachers encourage students to ask questions in class:

I have two classes here and both teachers always say we can ask any dumb questions. When students ask them questions, they look happy and answer them. I feel that one of them prefers our asking in class and not individually. I need courage to ask a question in class.

Kozue said many times that her American friends love debating and telling stories in a group. She found her friends here very different from her friends in Japan.

Individualism.

Most Japanese think that individualism is a symbol of America. Kozue thought that individualism is opposite to group mentality and means "being different and unique" and "standing out."

Kozue said:

In Japan I wanted to say opinions, which other people agreed. I started to appreciate having opinions which are different from other people since I came here. I get happy when other people say they never

thought of that. ... Here I am trying to be unique. In Japan I didn't do that, because I didn't like conflicts.

Toshiko also thought that "individualism" meant "being different from others." Yukiko complained that her American friend often told her to quit smoking. She said that America is a country of individualism, so people should not care what others do. It seems people understand individualism in various ways.

Befu (1971) explains the American individualism as follows: American mothers feed babies according to schedules and not on demand, and they do not sleep with babies. In this way, American babies acquire the ability to cope with emotional insecurity on their own. American mothers are the cause of fear and authority, as they scold directly. Babies learn that they cannot rely on their mothers for emotional security. On the other hand, Japanese mothers indirectly scold children, for example, "If you do this, your neighbors will laugh at you," etc. The cause of fear is not mothers but neighbors, and mothers are on children's side and saving them from shame. Thus Japanese children never face emotional insecurity. The emotional independence of American babies is the basis of individualism. Befu's explanation has some flaws because he looks at American mothers and Japanese mothers as monolithic types. I will discuss this point in the next section.

Findings

I hoped to see the participants' consciousness increasing as a result of the data they reported. Although I did not see great changes over the 11 week period, some alteration of attitudes did occur.

Miyako did not have much interest in the topic at first. She was not really eager to participate, so I told her she could quit any time she wanted. However, she did not quit and we had nine meetings all together. Moreover, she enjoyed the discussion we had with all the participants in the end. She realized that everyone had different ideas about culture. She wrote the following in the end:

By the way why do people need to know cultural differences or want to do? There are many reasons. One is of course that it is interesting. Another is that it is indispensable to communicate with people in other cultures. And one of the most important reasons is that it makes you understand your culture. Probably some parts of your culture are more universal and others are unique. And if you know many cultures, you will accept how different people think. When I watched TV about an ethnic group, I found out they cut their finger to show their sorrow every time their relatives died. At that time, I agreed with people who persuaded not to cut their finger any more. But now I am not sure if it is right or not, because my criteria are different from their ones, and their strong minds to show their sorrows impress me more than before. I am glad because I think it shows I can accept more things than before.

In the conceptual framework, I brought up the importance of looking at culture as a complex entity, consisting of various subcultures. In the final analysis, individual cultures are all different from one another because of cultural transmission from various sources. If the participants understand such complexity of culture, they would have a better understanding or tolerance toward different cultures. They could avoid superficial understanding based on stereotypes. Yukiko seems to be looking at culture at an individual level in her writing on culture. She said she learned to interact with a person not as American and Japanese, for example, but rather as an individual. She seems to have noticed that there are subcultures, such as "School Culture," "Tokyo Culture," "Kyushu Culture," "Friend Culture,"

I decided to treat people in my own way. - This is the way how I did in Japan. For example, when I meet someone, I tend to observe the person, what part of Japan he is from, what kind of school he goes? How does he react in talking to others/friends? How does he speak to others/friends? I begin with polite way of speaking, using polite expressions. Then I come to know what kind of person he is. The standard of this process is subjective, because it's enough for me to categorize people into many sections in my mind. For example, friends, close friends, teachers (good/bad for me) any kind of section and I decide how I behave when I'm with them. Now I think culture itself is different between me and friend, but we can talk about the gap (what we feel strange) when we have problem.

Rumi said in the last meeting that some new ideas came to mind when she was thinking about culture. She once said that America is more like bouillabaisse rather than a melting pot. She excitedly said that she realized she herself was like bouillabaisse. She noticed various cultures within herself (Rosaldo, 1989), and some of them are melting together, and some others still have their own shapes. She reported that she acquired four cultures; Kyushu countryside Culture, Kyushu city Culture, Tokyo Culture, and Hawai'i Culture.

The biggest achievement is that we now have a better understanding of what cultural knowledge the participants have and what they encounter in their life in Hawai'i. They interpreted their crosscultural encounters using such knowledge as "Japanese do not value verbalism, on the other hand, Americans do, etc." which is often discussed by anthropologists, such as Benu (1971), Nakane (1970), Doi (1962, 1971), etc. This cultural knowledge, however, might hinder them from achieving in-depth crosscultural understanding. I will discuss this matter further in the next section.

Crosscultural understanding barriers faced by the participantsJapanese Culture and American Culture as monocultural entities

Anthropologists (Befu, 1971; Nakane, 1970; Doi, 1962) and the participants both looked at Japanese Culture and American Culture as monocultural, monolithic entities. They did not mention diversity, which exists in both cultures.

As for the child-raising example, we cannot generalize that all American mothers or Japanese mothers raise children in the way Befu (1971) mentioned. It seems he talks only about white middle-class American mothers, who tend to have a whole room and a crib for a new-born baby, whereas Heath's study showed there were differences between childcare practices among white middle-class, white working-class, and black working-class families (Heath, 1983).

The participants in this study show there are also differences among Japanese families. One of the participants said all the family slept in the same Japanese tatami (straw-matted) room when she was small. All the futons (Japanese sleeping mats) were next to one another, and her mother slept with the baby. Another participant said she slept in a crib in her parents' room when she was very small.

In Japan, the way mothers raise children has been changing drastically, as it is influenced by foreign countries, especially America and Europe. When my sister was born 33 years ago, the "let-alone" principle was the trend, and my mother did not sleep with her. When I was born four years later, "skinship (maternal tenderness)" was the trend due to the influence of Dr. Spock. Dr. Spock was opposed to earlier childcare theory that had supported

rigid feeding schedules and that had warned against showing a child too much affection. (The New Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia) He is American and influenced mainstream Americans greatly, too. The childcare theory has been changing back and forth. Thus we cannot analyze Japanese personality according to Befu's theory now.

Even if the anthropologists and psychologists, such as Befu, Nakane, and Doi explain Japanese personality in a clear-cut way explained, for example, in terms of raising children, we should not accept it at face value. While such analysis of personality development is appealing, what prestigious academics say might become guidelines. That is, what they say goes beyond description and becomes prescription. American mothers might think they had better not sleep with babies in order to develop their children's independence. Thus, description and interpretation might become morals or standards. Befu calls this "passive" nationalism. (Befu, 1993, p.108)

Although Befu took a monolithic and psychological view in the early 1970's, by 1993 he had taken another perspective. Befu (1993) analyzes *Nihonjinron* (Japanology), which is a study of Japanese identity or personality, and says, "The basic thesis to be presented is that *Nihonjinron* constitutes a broadly based ideological stance for Japan's nationalism" (p. 107). He utilizes Robinson's definition of nationalism, that is, "an ideology that serves to celebrate and emphasize the nation as the preeminent collective identity of a people" (Robinson, 1988, p. 9). Befu (1993) reproaches Japanologists for implicitly promoting ethnocentrism or nationalism. They seem to be describing Japanese personality but there are not many ethnographic studies of, for example, the diverse cultures of Japanese mothers. Befu says that what the anthropologists say, such as "tateshakai (vertical society)" (Nakane, 1970) or "amae" (Doi, 1971) become a bandwagon.

Such expressions become trendy and a lot of people, even if they do not study Nihonjinron, are very familiar with such terms. This popularity can be seen by the number of reprints of such books as Doi's Amae no Kozo (Befu, 1993). These books are translated in many languages, too. The government helps fund publications, such as Nihonjinron, to facilitate patriotism. One of the former prime ministers once said that Japan succeeds economically because the Japanese are a monocultural and collective people. Such key words as indulgence, vertical structure, and group spirit, seem to have become self-fulfilling prophecies and indicate how Japanese should behave. My participants had a lot of such knowledge and used it to interpret their crosscultural encounters. This relates to one of the weaknesses the conventional culture teaching has. If one tries to describe a culture of a nation, such as Japanese Culture and American Culture, it is so complex and diverse that one ends up describing only the mainstream culture. It seems that we are all socialized into such ideology.

Another flaw of the popular Nihonjinron is that there are a lot of studies comparing Western Culture and Japanese Culture, but none that compare Asian groups, such as Korean and Japanese community norms. Lee (1984) criticizes the mainstream anthropologists and psychologists who study Nihonjinron, such as Doi and Nakane, because whenever they find differences between Japan and advanced Western countries, they consider such differences as something unique to Japan. Lee explains this tendency using the example of amae. Doi says this concept is specifically Japanese as he could not find the word, amae, in any European languages, but Lee indicates that there is a word for amae in Korean as well. If Japanologists want to explain Japanese personality, they should compare similar cultures, for

example, Japanese and Korean, then they will be able to find personalities specific to Japanese. It seems Japanologists have a Western-centered view.

Ethnocentrism is the greatest barrier to crosscultural understanding. As long as the participants' cultural knowledge consists only of stereotypical views of Japanese personality, they cannot fully have crosscultural understanding. The participants should question if they really have specific Japanese personality and are different from foreigners.

Nation = culture view

Another barrier to crosscultural understanding is that the participants looked at culture only as that of a nation. Hall (1981) says that we can "achieve awareness of the structure of their system, which can be accomplished only by interacting with others who do not share that system" (p.44). If this is true, then crosscultural understanding requires an awareness of differences between cultures. The participants saw only the differences between American Culture and Japanese Culture, and missed the differences or diversity within each culture; subcultures. When we see culture only as that of a nation, then it becomes nationalistic, which can lead to the view that one nation is better than another.

This research study, thus, shows the cultural knowledge the participants had. Their knowledge was a generalization of a society, not really an awareness of diversity. It tended to be stereotypes and nation = culture knowledge. Participants did not show much understanding of subcultures. This is the same weaknesses conventional cultural lessons showed.

Mismatch between Awareness and Behavior

Conventional cultural lessons focus on providing the students with the target cultural knowledge, and students are expected to develop a better, positive attitude to the target culture (Brislin, 1993; Seelye, 1984; etc.) The participants' data, however, showed a mismatch between awareness and actual behavior. There are two examples concerning this mismatch from the data:

Yukiko talked about her Caucasian friend, who had not paid back money to her Chinese-American friend. Yukiko sympathized with the Chinese-American friend and said the following:

Now it is already after a few weeks, but he hasn't paid him yet. The Chinese guy came to me to ask for advice. I said, "That is why it is hard to deal with white hair or blonde hair." He thinks that Asian people have common part or culture. That is why he came to me to get advice.

Yukiko unconsciously expressed the view that Caucasian people are different from Asian people and Asians, such as herself and her Chinese-American friend, cannot trust Caucasians. She expressed a stereotypical view, but this was the only time she said something like "blond hair...." However, in her writing on culture, Yukiko said, "Sometimes I can agree with an American more than a Japanese from the same place."

In a different meeting, Yukiko reproached an American friend of hers for his tendency to stereotype. She repeated that he should learn that not all Japanese are the same:

He always stereotypes! Even if we are talking about personal thing, he asks, "Is this Japanese way of thinking?" He has tendency to stereotype. I feel embarrassed, rude among friends. He says, "We don't say that in America... It is Japanese." He says, "Do Japanese people do this?" It is

rude among friends, as we are friends and like each other and have similar opinions.... He often says, this is American... this is Japanese... I don't like it.

Rumi talked about gestures between Americans and Japanese:

Japanese people have small gestures. They speak in a small voice. When Japanese people speak in English, they speak more loudly. American people use a lot of gestures. When Japanese people speak in English, we imitate the American people's gestures. Some Japanese people cannot imitate the gestures. It is because of their personality. It also depends on a personality if she or he has big gestures among Americans.

She talked about different gestures, and did not put a value judgment on which was better, big gestures or small gestures. She said when people spoke with big gestures, they looked confident. Thus she did not have negative views about big gestures, even if they were not her standard ways. On the other hand, she did not have tolerance for a dialect in West Japan, Kansai-ben, and had negative views about it.

He is a Japanese. And he was born in Osaka. He speaks Kansai-ben. Bari bari no (really strong) Kansai-ben. At first, I listened to his speaking English. He made a speech in English. I felt he was very full of confidence. And he was very brave. When he speaks in English. But another day. He speaks in Japanese. But Osaka-ben. Kansai-ben. I was very very disappointed. When he speaks in English, I feel he is a very nice person, or he has very brave or good personality, or something. Good impressions. But when he speaks in Kansai-ben, wow, my first impression all disappeared. When he speaks in English, I felt the dignity of personality. Very nice. But when he speaks Kansai-ben, his dignity decrease. And got destroyed.

It seems cultural lessons are similar to language learning, with comprehension coming before production. The participants expressed the understanding or tolerance of diversity or differences. There were, however, contradictions between what they said about their understanding of culture and what they did or said in other situations. So even if attitudes seem to

have changed, behaviors might not change, unlike what the conventional cultural lessons intended.

The participants in my study showed crosscultural understanding superficially, but some behavior indicated that there was still some kind of resistance. It is deeply rooted and hidden, thus it is very difficult to detect and change, especially in the short term. These kinds of internal conflicts may continue to play out throughout a person's life, but probably it is possible to lessen the contradictions through negotiation and renegotiation.

Implications for Culture Teaching in Japan

For crosscultural understanding, educators have always been concerned with introducing foreign cultures. Until several years ago, they had long been only concerned with bringing in what they thought were the advanced cultures. Thus English textbooks in Japan introduced America and Britain. Then they realized that the content was Western-centered, so recent textbooks have included various other countries, especially in Africa and Asia. Unfortunately, as long as Japanese have the barriers to crosscultural understanding I discussed in the earlier sections, no matter how much students learn about foreign countries, it does not help them much.

As long as Japanese think that they are monocultural and very special or different from the rest of the world, it is very difficult for them to achieve real crosscultural understanding. Even if Japan is becoming more diverse with foreign workers from Brazil, Iran, etc., and even if there have long been minority groups, such as Koreans, Chinese, and Ainus living in Japan, the Japanese mentality seems to be adhering to the same popular jargons, such as indulgence, vertical structure, and group mentality. If what Befu (1993)

discusses has validity, Japanologists, government, or mass media are consciously or unconsciously brainwashing us into nationalism and ethnocentrism. We need to question what Japanologists say about Japanese personality, using more ethnographic studies. We should see the diversity, that is, subcultures, there are in Japan.

Therefore, the way we can teach culture or facilitate better crosscultural understanding should start from understanding our own country, Japan. Students should observe diversity in Japan. If the students notice that everyone is different, and that s/he has her/his own culture, then they can understand that it is just a matter of scale. This means that the scale of difference between a Japanese and an American may be bigger than the difference between one Japanese and another. This understanding of a cultural continuum is better than simply dichotomizing Japanese and Americans.

If we equate culture with a nation, we are constrained by nationalism, which often relates to ethnocentrism, and it is then hard to bring people all over the world together. We should categorize culture in various other ways, too, such as Asian Culture, School Culture, Teenage Culture, etc. As for the example of indulgence, if we learn that there is such a concept in Korea (Lee, 1984), we might feel closer to Koreans. We do not always have to look at culture as "Japanese vs. something else." We can also focus on similarities (Robinson, 1985) and on variation within cultures. We should adopt a flexible view of culture which allows for change.

I would like to suggest that Japanese students conduct an ethnographic study of Japanese people as a way to build crosscultural understanding. It is necessary to move beyond what academics tell us, to question our own

assumptions of what culture is, and to holistically examine Japanese Culture, recognizing multiple and diverse perspectives.

APPENDIX A

1. *The sense, or functionality, of culturally conditioned behavior.* The student should demonstrate an understanding that people generally act the way they do because they are using options the society allows for satisfying basic physical and psychological needs.
2. *Interaction of language and social variables.* The student should demonstrate an understanding that social variables such as age, sex, social class, and place of residence affect the way people speak and behave.
3. *Conventional behavior in common situations.* The student should indicate an understanding of the role convention plays in shaping behavior by demonstrating how people act in common mundane and crisis situations in the target culture.
4. *Cultural connotations of words and phrases.* The student should indicate an awareness that culturally conditioned images are associated with even the most common target words and phrases.
5. *Evaluating statements about a culture.* The student should demonstrate the ability to make, evaluate, and refine generalities concerning the target culture.
6. *Researching another culture.* The student should show that s/he has developed the skills needed to locate and organize information about the target culture from the library, the mass media, people, and personal observation.
7. *Attitudes toward other societies.* The student should demonstrate intellectual curiosity about the target culture and empathy toward its people.

(Seelye, 1984, p. 9)

Appendix B

Objective: To demonstrate stereotypic attitudes held toward different groups of people.

Participants: One or more persons. Facilitator if done as a group exercise.

Materials: Pencils.

Setting: No special requirements.

Time: At least ten to fifteen minutes.

A	B	C	D	E	statements
					not at all aggressive
					conceited about appearance
					very ambitious
					almost always acts as a leader
					very independent
					does not hide emotions at all
					sneaky
					cried easily
					very active
					very logical
					not at all competitive
					feelings easily hurt
					etc.

(Weeks, Petersen, & Brislin 1979, pp. 83-85)

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