

Developing Global Citizens

The challenge of fostering citizenship in Japanese high schools

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student of Osaka University. In the future, I would like to research on young people's political awareness in Japan.

In August 2006, I visited Melbourne to investigate citizenship education in Australian high schools. My present research is citizenship education, especially in how young people foster citizenship in such a multicultural society. I am currently teaching at Momoyama Gakuin University in Japan and also a graduate

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, society in Japan has been dramatically changing. We are confronting global issues such as environmental issues, human rights, development issues, and grossly unequal distribution of wealth. In these circumstances, it is important for young people to learn about such global issues and tackle them.

In contemporary Japan, as a particular result of globalization of population mobilization, we live in a pluralistic society, which is called a multicultural society in general. With the revision of the Immigration Control Law of 1990, the number of foreign people suddenly increased, especially, Japanese-Brazilian people and the returnees from China. Traditionally there are a lot of Korean people living in Japan from old days. In a survey by Ministry of Justice, foreign enrolment surpassed 2,000,000 people in 2005—1.57% of the total population (Ministry of Justice 2007). People in a multicultural society need to understand, communicate with, and see each other beyond different cultural and ethnic origins in various ways.

Education can play a key role in this present situation. In order to form an interdependent society and sustain our future society, young people especially should be taught to be aware of the issues which influence multicultural society, and to be good global citizens.

Background and Context

How can we foster good global citizens? What is the best way to teach young pupils to be good global citizens?

The concept of "citizenship education" was introduced from the western societies such as England and the United States into the Japanese school curriculum especially social studies. Some specialists in the field of Education and some teachers are keen to introduce this concept into the school curriculum, and they believe that it is also going to open the way for improving Social Studies.

In March 2003, the Ministry of Education announced that it is necessary to educate young people in being a good citizen in such a plural society. In particular, the Ministry focused on fostering young people's awareness and behaviour in developing society, their effort to achieve social justice, their public mind, and their attitudes to social standards (Conference of the Central Council of Education 2003).

Citizenship education has impacted on the Japanese school curriculum, and the teachers and education experts are beginning to pay strong attention to it. The idea has been understood in various contexts. In fact, there are many schools which are currently teaching citizenship education as a part of the curriculum. For example, one primary school in Tokyo teaches "citizenship" in replacing the traditional social studies by Shimin-ka (the subject of teaching citizenship). They mainly focus on pupils' value judgments and democracy. There is another primary school in the west part of Japan teaching citizenship in the context of history education. One junior high school in Tokyo is



teaching citizenship as a part of career education. They are looking at the relationships between community and individual. One high school in the Northern part of Japan teaches citizenship by using “Citizenship Today:

Student’s Book” published by Collins Educational as supplementary-teaching material. In this school, teachers focus on the issues relating political and business matters.

In the next section of this report, I am going to introduce one state high school in Osaka and look at its curriculum. I have been visiting the school every Monday since last September as a participant observer. Above all, the school focuses on fostering global citizens in multicultural society. That is why I chose this school for the report. I conducted a participatory observation as the main research method, in order to collect vital information.

Fukui High School

Fukui High School is a senior high school located in the city of Ibaragi, in the northern part of Osaka Prefecture, Japan. The school is a prefecture run school. The number of pupils is about 800 at present. The school curriculum was reorganized in 2001. After the school reform, the school re-started as a high school with the subject selection system. This was the first such attempt in Osaka.

The school has six different study areas:

- International Communication
- Social Welfare and Humanity
- Information Technology and Arts
- Science and Mathematics
- Sports and Health
- Environment

International Communication—the pupils study about English and multiculturalism in order to develop the skills of speaking and listening in English and understand cross cultural and intercultural issues in their local community and the wider world. In particular, the goal of this area is to develop a citizenship in multicultural interdependent society and also to improve English skills. Some pupils go on a home stay visit to Australia every year to have international experiences.

Social Welfare and Humanity—the goal is to foster pupils who contribute to local welfare. The pupils study about how to care for an elderly person or a handicapped person through field study (field work)

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and research activity. Then, they finally try to pass the examination to become a home helper.

Information Technology and Arts—especially in the part of Information Technology, the pupils mainly improve their PC skills and create a website. In the Arts, they first study about the theory of arts in the second year and then in the third year, they create a final work.

Science and Mathematics—pupils prepare for going to university or college.

Sports and Health—the pupils learn to develop their strength and master athletic skills. They also work with local children’s groups to teach basketball, volleyball, baseball, tennis, and football. Area studies are set up with the enthusiastic cooperation from the local community around the school.

In addition, international exchange, human rights education, and volunteer activities (service learning) are frequently carried out. As an example of international exchange, a school excursion took place in South Korea. The pupils of the second year spent 3 days in Seoul in order to exchange ideas with the students from the Korean sister school and to have a cross cultural/intercultural experience. Generally speaking, it is said that South Korea is a “far country” to Japan in spite of being a geographically near country. However, through some cooperative workshops such as peace studies and home visits, both

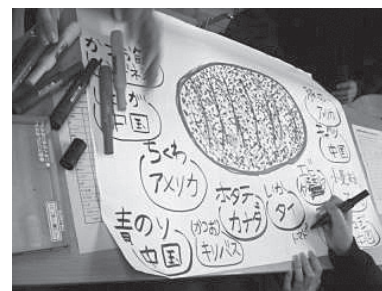
groups of students promoted mutual understanding and became close to each other. In addition, there is the “Dreams’ Come True Plan”, which started in 1997. This plan used to be called the “Fukui Project 21”. This is available for the first and the second year pupils for self-discovery and self-empowerment and is being put into practice as a part of career education at the moment.

Since the end of the 1990s, Fukui High School has seen positive school improvement, compared with the other high schools in Osaka area. So it is not too much to say that the school is the one of the most advanced schools in Osaka in trying to carry on school reform.

Community and the World

In this section, I describe the details of the course curriculum, especially the subject called Community and the World, and introduce the actual activities the students participated in this subject. I also show some students’ responses and refer to the educational effect relating to the context of citizenship education in the latter part of this section.

The area of International Communication has two main purposes for the pupils. The first is to improve the skills in using English in



Community and the World

| | Title/Theme | Activity/Target |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Session 1 2006/09/06 | “Let’s step into the unknown world” | The pupils filled in the life-plan sheet, and then they compared their life with the people’s life in the Third World. |
| Session 2 2006/09/11 | Workshop “If the world were a village of 100 people” | All the pupils played each role of rich country or poor country in order to understand world imbalance. |
| Session 3 2006/09/25 | The Trading Game | Same as the above; the pupils played each role of rich country or poor country in order to understand a world imbalance and an unequal distribution of wealth. |
| Session 4 2006/10/02 | Review and preparation for the poster sessions | Reviewing of the themes done so far for the midterm examination and making an appeal poster relating to a conflict or poverty |
| Session 5 2006/10/12 | Preparation and presentation for the poster sessions | Making an appeal poster and the presentation |
| Session 6 2006/10/23 | Presentation for the poster sessions and watching a Video | The presentation and the pupils watched the video titled “We are the world”. Then they discussed the way of eliminating world poverty. |
| Session 7 2006/11/06 | Thinking about the global balance of food supply-demand | Through cooking a Japanese-style pizza (Okonomiyaki), the pupils learned that all the materials come from overseas. |
| Session 8 2006/11/20 | Workshop “What does illiteracy mean to you?” | The pupils played a pharmacist and a person who need to buy medicine but cannot read the writing on the label. The person manages to get the right medicine from the pharmacist. |
| Session 9 2006/11/27 | Discussion “What should we do to resolve world imbalance?” | As review for the final term examination, all the pupils gave specific plans in order to suggest the solution of global issues. |
| Session 10 2006/12/18 | Making a leaflet | The pupils made up a leaflet based on poverty issues in the world. |
| Session 11 2007/01/15 | Making a leaflet | The same as shown above |
| Session 12 2007/01/22 | Final presentation | The presentation of the leaflet |

an international society, and the second is to foster an active global citizenship in a multicultural society. In particular, I focus on the second purpose in this section.

The course has a variety of subjects such as World Studies, Global Citizens, and Community and the World. First of all, the pupils in the second year take the subjects of “World Studies” and “Verbalization”. In World Studies, the pupils learn about global issues, such as world poverty, development issues, human rights, environmental crisis, world conflicts, and street children. In this subject, they primarily encounter the issues in the wider world, especially in the Third World. In addition, there is the subject Global Citizens as the elective subject. The aim is to develop mutual understanding in studying intercultural topics as a global citizen. It mostly focuses on cultural aspects. The pupils often have cross cultural experiences, for example cooking ethnic food and working with foreign residents to learn about a different culture and diverse customs.

In the third year, pupils take Community and the World and Current English. Especially in Community and the World, they think about diversity in the community and the linking between community and the wider world through this subject. The class was managed by the two teachers, and the number of the pupils was 27. The attainment target of this subject is to learn about the issues the world is currently confronting for being an active citizen, as well as to study various cultures and lifestyles in the world. From the beginning to the end of this subject, pupils see similarities and differences with each other, and then they try to consider how to live together in peace with people having different backgrounds and cultures. I joined this class from September 2006 to January 2007 as a participant observer. First, I give a short outline of the curriculum on page 7.

Student Learning

Pupils still have narrow perspectives even if they have got the basic ideas on global issues in the second year. However, the curriculum was



well-planned to challenge their narrow perspectives and to develop global citizens.

Session 1 to Session 3, just before the midterm examination, the pupils grasp the images of the today's world situation through the actual activities shown in the table above. In Session 2, they realized the difference between advanced countries and developing countries. Then again, they have seen their positions in the world context as Japanese. Above all, the Trading Game gave concepts relating to grossly unequal distribution of wealth, which is systematically structured. The pupils' remarkable impressions are "I understood that there are a lot of people who are not interested in the world imbalance, in the society", "I think that an advanced country is having wealth all to oneself. So we have to change this reality immediately", and "I see that it is not right to do things which are right for us to do in Japan, in a different country". I also noticed some peculiarly interesting responses to the Trading Game, especially the pupils who were playing a role of rich country developed extremely negative responses at the end of the game. Students expressed their feeling as follows, "It was not interesting", "I wanted to stop this Game right away", and "I felt uncomfortable during the Game". These feelings are frequently identified in the majority of the group, and strengthened by taking part in this kind of activity. I imagine that these feelings are going to be a significant point in fostering global citizens, because such feelings will be a starting point and help the pupils to consider the various issues in the world as a global citizen.

Through the interim presentation and the workshops of session 7 or 8, the pupils took part in a class discussion in Session 9. They discussed the relationship between poverty in the Third World and their daily life, and talked about specific ideas in order to make a better world where all nations could live together in peace. As examples, they proposed to set up a campaign for fundraising, to reduce poverty in the world or to report openly on the matters they studied in this course. In particular, it is important for pupils to express their thoughts in public, so we have decided to make a leaflet appealing to the public as a final work. Each pupil chose a topic such as poverty in Africa, environmental crises, or street children in India. They have an opportunity to present their thoughts, views, and appeal points on the topics they chose at the school event or outside of the school. This activity surely helps the pupils to gain confidence and gives them a social connection. In the end, it will contribute to foster the pupils' global citizenship.

In the context of citizenship education, it is clear that this curriculum of Fukui High School might not fully cover teaching citizenship, and might not be the best attempt at fostering citizenship. In particular, as compared with the citizenship education in Australia, it is not enough

to foster an "active" informed citizen in the curriculum of Fukui High School. In the Fukui curriculum, it will be difficult for the pupils to reach the level of being an "active" citizen perfectly. So, I think that, first of all, it is necessary to engage the pupils in a community-based work in order to foster good citizens. Also, especially in the Japanese school system, democracy and political literacy has not been taught in the school curriculum for many years. Australia focuses on democracy and political issues in teaching citizenship. However, in Japan, the separation of education and politics is common now. In addition, the time devoted to civic subjects of the National curriculum such as Modern Society, Moral issues, and Politics and economics are currently cut down. In this present situation, it is not easy to introduce citizenship education into the school curriculum in the Japanese context. In this sense, the programme of Fukui High School should be recognized as one of the good attempts in Japanese High Schools.

Conclusion

What do we do to get citizenship education to take root in the Japanese school curriculum?

The curriculum of Fukui High School gives global awareness and perspectives to all the pupils. However, the Fukui curriculum is only one example among diverse curricula of citizenship education in Japan. In terms of citizenship education, this programme contributes enough to foster global citizens and citizenship in a sense. Yet, though they have obtained the knowledge on global issues in the class, the pupils found that there is a lack of actual activities that are needed to be a real global citizen. Action is a very important element of teaching and learning citizenship. I remember that when I visited the high school near the city of Melbourne last summer, one teacher told me, "Learning is doing". Perhaps it is essential to learn about citizenship actively.

Citizenship education has just started in Japan. Therefore, the key concepts are still not clear at the moment. So we need to establish the attainment targets, and then to further develop the curriculum. From now on, in working towards national standards of citizenship education, we have to continue to refer to the Fukui and other school curriculum or overseas case studies.

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