Global citizenship education and language learning

Salem K. Hicks
Kyoto Women's University

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While many Japanese students are often aware of broad, international issues as they apply to other countries – racism in the US or AIDS in Africa – they rarely adopt a perspective which places their identity, or citizenship, in direct or even indirect relation to the issues. Furthermore, Japanese university students in general seem to be indifferent to the world around them. This lack of engagement and interest is becoming more and more problematic as Japan participates in a globalized era in which problems and innovations are increasingly shared with the rest of the world. This paper will explore some of the meanings attributed to global citizenship education and report on a small pilot study that was conducted to elicit students' perceptions on global citizenship education and its perceived benefit to them.

多くの日本人学生は他国における一般的な国際問題、例えばアメリカやア　フリカにおける人種差別やエイズ問題についてはよく知っている一方で、直接的又は間接的な人々のアイデンティティーや人権との関連性については殆ど無知だと思われます。さらに学生達は彼等の周囲のその事実にも無関心であるように思えます。日本がグ　ローバル化時代を生きていく上で、これらの諸問題に対する関与や関心の欠 如はますます障害になっていくと思われます。なぜな ら、その取り組みはさらに多くの世界中の人々が共有し合う必要性があるからです。この論文 は学生達にグローバルな人権問題を認識させるように導き、そして気づかせる助けになる為の試験的な研究のレポートです。

While many Japanese students are often aware of broad, international issues as they apply to other countries – racism in the US or AIDS in Africa – they rarely adopt a perspective which places their identity, or citizenship, in direct or even indirect relation to the issues. Furthermore, Japanese university students in general seem to be indifferent to the world around them. This lack of engagement and interest is becoming more and more problematic as Japan participates in a globalized era with many shared problems and innovations with the rest of the world. This paper will explore some of the meanings of what global citizenship, its appropriateness in Japan, and the benefits it can offer our students.

The author posits the appropriateness of and necessity for inclusion of global citizenship education in the language education curriculum based on findings in a small pilot study over a one-year language skills course. This course focused on basic concepts in global citizenship education such as knowledge and understanding of social issues, critical thinking skills, and diversity in values and attitudes.

Citizenship education in Japan

Civics, or the study of rights and duties of citizenship, has been a part of the junior and senior high school curriculum in Japan since the revision of the Course of Study (national standardized curriculum) beginning in the late 1960s (Akuzawa, 2005). Ikeno (2005) identified three distinct eras of citizenship education in Japan since WWII: experience-oriented education; knowledge-oriented education; and most recently, ability-oriented education. The educational framework on citizenship education has "changed from focusing on common knowledge as a Japanese nation to the ability to construct a society" (p. 95). Some researchers are becoming more and more concerned with the seeming shift to a more "nationalistic" interpretation of civics education (Otsu 2000). This is not unique to Japan but is seen as a reaction to the pressures of growing globalization by several different countries (von Campe, 2008).

Concepts of global citizenship

Socrates is often cited as the original world citizen according to his teachings (O'Byrne, 2003) and "the vast majority of the recent claims to global citizenship originate from deep within Western academia" (Bowden, 2003, p. 350). Even after all the centuries, the concept of global citizenship is still evolving. Dower (2003) characterizes a global citizen as someone who has a global moral perspective that "all human beings have certain fundamental rights and all human beings have duties to respect and promote these rights" (p. 7). He examines the idea of global citizenship and whether it exists, in what form, and to what potential effect. Oxfam, has a much more practical sense of what global citizenship is and sets out very clear and far reaching parameters in its definition of a global citizen as someone who:

- is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen;
- respects and values diversity;
- has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally;
- is outraged by social injustice;
- participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from local to global;
- is willing to act to make the world a more sustainable place;
- takes responsibility for their actions. (Oxfam, 2006)

Clearly, Oxfam focuses their definition of global citizenship on action and participation.

Schattle (2008) compiled a database of spoken or published reference to "global citizenship" or one of its equivalent terms (p. 4) in various English media over a 10-year period. He then interviewed many of the people from his survey to clarify what they "had been thinking when they made their respective public statements regarding global citizenship" (p. 5) and identified three main concepts they associated with it. The first common concept he identified was awareness of oneself and the outside world, including national identity and recognition of global interdependence and a shared fate. He cited the definition given by an interviewee, "Thinking of workers in distant factories with the same degree of respect and concern as a person would think of his or her offspring" (p. 30). Schattle found this primary concept of self-awareness of who you are in the world was coupled with the concept of *consciousness* of the *interconnectedness* of our actions across the globe. An outward awareness includes an understanding of the complex issues from multiple vantage points, recognizing sources of global interdependence and a shared fate implicating humanity and the planet. Schattle quotes another of his respondents as conveying that global citizenship is "a mind-set that makes you aware of you as part of the human family, and going beyond your interests to recognize the

needs and challenges in resolving some of the problems that the world is faced with" (p. 31).

A second prominent commonality he found was the sense of responsibility and shared moral obligations. A number of people he interviewed had a strong sense of principled decision-making, meaning that they are concerned about the effects of government policies as well as their personal daily choices. In essence, these people feel a sense of *solidarity* with others.

A final primary concept was participation, whether it be democratic empowerment and participation among everyday people, or expressing a voice and being active and making calls for accountability and reform from either government bodies or other such institutions. This idea of participation, or active citizenship, is prominent in other definitions of global citizenship as well.

Some of the secondary concepts of global citizenship that Schattle found were cross-cultural empathy, engagement across cultures, and achievements, as well as international mobility. Although international mobility was seen as potentially enriching, it was not a main factor in defining global citizenship nor was it seen as necessarily leading to global citizenship.

What is global citizenship education?

Since WWII there have been several pedagogies of education based on global awareness raising. These include education for international understanding, development education, multicultural education, and peace education. In countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States, global education has been developing over the last 30 years (Hicks, 2003). International education, also referred to as peace education, promoted by the United Nations after WWII, urged for comparison and collaboration between cultures. It was argued by the United Nations that creating transnational sovereignty and learning more about cultures would eventually lead to world peace. After WWII, "Japan as a defeated country was keen to meet expectations as part of the re-entry process into the international arena" and "many enthusiastic individuals including teachers, instigated peace movements" (Fujikane, 2003, p. 135). National proposals in Japan for multicultural education, however, aimed at getting the Japanese to know about other countries rather than looking at immigrant populations within its borders, as was the case in the United Kingdom and the United States. Fujikane writes that peace education was always "outside, or even opposed to, the official educational policies" (p. 138) of the United Kingdom, United States and Japan as it challenged the concept of state-run education. Furthermore,

> Japan did not experience the rise of alternative educational ideas and practices equivalent to Global Education and World Studies. The centralised educational system did not allow space for grass roots innovation … rapid changes in the Japanese economy and other dimensions of Japanese success increased the stress on nationalistic themes in education. (p. 139)

In contrast to previous social awareness education, global education, raises awareness that we are living in one global world, and what happens in one part of the globe may have substantial impacts elsewhere. Global education further differs in that it not only develops international awareness but the focus is on rights and responsibilities, and duties and entitlements, which often cross national boundaries. It is concerned with "understanding the nature of global issues and taking an active role in addressing them" (Ibrahim, 2005) and is the development of a "common consciousness of human society on a world scale" (Schattle, 2008, p. 28), which emphasizes multiple perspectives and global interdependence. Lim (2008) feels it "prepares young people to be agents of change rather than just passive observ-

ers of world events; and at the same time, to live together in an increasingly diverse and complex society and to reflect on and interpret fast-changing information" (p. 1074). Perhaps the main difference in global citizenship is the ideology of citizenship, which entails responsibility and rights and the critical analysis of boundaries. Oxfam stresses that the conceptual movement from awareness through understanding to outrage at injustice to action, is essential and a commonly used framework for global citizenship education can be found in their proposed curriculum published in 2006. This very detailed curriculum outlines three main areas of global citizenship education: knowledge and understanding; skills; and values and attitudes. It calls for integrating activities into all areas of the curriculum.

The concept of global citizenship education includes three very highly complex and contested terms. The first is *global* which is currently used frequently and in so many different contexts, virtually replacing the word *international*. It involves transnational companies, international and regional organizations, non-governmental agencies, and individual citizens. Teaching about and for the international world is no longer focused on a construction of better relationships between nation states but on a growing and complex notion of "the global". The new global world has multiple layers of interdependent relationships and a variety of agencies. The traditional idea of the second term, *citizenship*, focuses on rights and privileges, as well as responsibilities and duties of people bound by national boundaries and loyalties. Some critics of the idea of global citizenship often pit distinct national interests against more obscure global interests and characterize the global citizen as being unpatriotic.

Finally, within the concept of *education* there are, of course, a number of pedagogies, teaching methods and approaches, as well as philosophies as to its nature or purpose. Increasingly, pedagogic and curriculum imperatives are paramount as often there is a gap between the theory and the practices of global education (Takagi, 2009). Analysing case studies of the curricula related to internationalization in Japanese national and private universities, Takagi laments that the ideals of global citizenship education are hindered because the "practice primarily responds to the economic and political aspects of globalisation and aims to enhance international competitiveness and the contribution of individuals to political solidarity, knowledge economy, a single market and the world of work" (p. 38).

The case for global citizenship education in Japan

There are several compelling reasons why global citizenship education is appropriate to include in the Japanese educational curricula in general, and in the English language curricula in particular. Since WWII, Japan has incorporated teaching human rights issues into school curricula (see Nabeshima, Akuzawa, Hayashi, & Park, 2000 for an overview). More recently some tertiary institutions have specialized programs dedicated to teaching global citizenship (Nakamura, 2004), so although this is originally a Western concept, it has been, to a certain degree, embraced by a segment of local educators. Another reason is Japan is looking at relaxing its immigration policies to encourage more laborers in certain sectors, which will in turn mean that Japanese people will need more awareness and skills in dealing with issues which will inevitably arise from a more pluralistic environment. Also, within Japan, active citizenship is on the increase. The new legal system which includes citizen judges, the proposed changes to the Constitution which may lead to more active participation in global affairs, and the desire to become a more independent (from the US) nation are all excellent reasons for the promotion of global citizen education.

In addition, global citizenship education benefits students as it may make them more competent and competitive in the global market. The Japanese Ministry of Education has issued directives to universities to increase Liberal Arts education

to prepare Japanese students to deal with the global environment (Stromquist & Monkman, 2000). Several of the larger universities have recently received major funding in order to attract foreign students within the Global 30 (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology [MEXT], 2009) scheme, offering most instruction in English. As such, it follows that Japanese curricula will have to include a much more global approach.

Context

The year-long pilot study took place at a university which specializes in foreign language education. It was conducted over two consecutive semesters with the same students in two mid-intermediate mandatory English communication courses. The classes met once per week, 18 students in the first class and 24 in the second class. Students were 3rd year English language majors, 30 female and 12 male students. At the beginning of the year, 92% of the students reported they rarely accessed any news media on a regular basis. Most of their previous classes did not involve much, if any, discussion on social issues in English and the students had very little experience with debate. Their general knowledge of social or global issues was quite superficial and "disinterested". The main social issues cited in a first class brainstorm were: poverty, desertification, pollution, and global warming – all of which students felt mainly affected other countries. Almost all students reported not having learned about citizenship education in secondary or primary school and they cited citizenship in terms of obligations to obey laws, pay taxes, and work for a living. The only right of citizenship they imagined was voting.

Method

Course syllabus

The course goals were primarily discussion and research skills. The course was not based around a textbook but rather on research of student-generated topics using the internet as the main source of information. Students were given a few research questions and asked to create discussion-based questions. The intention was not to teach a particular perspective but rather students were guided to examine different perspectives.

There were six main areas of pedagogical focus in the course:

1. Communication skills: giving long answers, follow up questions, extending the conversation, active listening, eye contact/body language; confidence building; interactive language functions; natural interactions.
2. Information awareness: topics in politics, International Relations, culture, sociology, education, social issues, etc. These topics were not especially technical as these students were not politics majors. They learned information on a level of citizenship.
3. Critical thinking skills; how to ask the "right" questions; giving opinions, supporting answers, pros and cons, understanding different perspectives, problem-solving, hypothetical situations, creativity, finding related issues, personalizing issues, stereotypes.
4. Electronic information literacy: students were taught how to find, understand, and evaluate information, then produce something original.
5. Language skills: vocabulary building, pronunciation, functional language, grammar skills.
6. Multicultural literacy and gender awareness: sensitivity; reconciling differences and integrating opposing values and perspectives.

These areas were touched on in every lesson and scaffolded as necessary. Class time was also used to develop metacognitive awareness of learning. The students were guided from awareness to empathy to hypothetical action planning. Students worked collaboratively in small groups to research information and then presented and discussed issues in other small groups. The majority of the class time was spent in small group discussion with a plenary wrap-up session at the end. As part of each class, students did a self-reflection journal in order to build metacognitive awareness and skills. After each class, students wrote about, but were not limited to, the following questions:

- *How well do you feel you understand the issue?*
- *What do you still feel is confusing?*
- *Is this issue connected to Japan or Japanese people or you in any way?*
- *Do you feel empathy for the other agents? People from the other culture? Animals? Environment?*
- *Do you feel any personal connection with this issue?*

Students handed in this journal reflection each week but were not given any feedback by the teacher unless requested by the student. In this way, students were able to develop metacognitive and critical thinking awareness and the teacher was able to understand how each student was processing at least some of their learning experience.

Students also engaged in hands-on learning and participation outside of the classroom. For example, towards the end of the second semester, students researched the topic of homelessness. Although they initially tended to view the topic as a "foreign" problem, there were too many Japan-based examples that were shared in discussions to continue to view the issue in this way. Their final assignment was to purchase a copy of the *Big Issue Japan* magazine, a publication which is a "business response to a social problem: homelessness" (The Big Issue Japan Website, 2010). Students were to engage in a conversation with the seller and write a report as preparation for an in-class discussion about their experiences. In this way, students could experience communicating with a homeless person and experience the global citizenship education goal of taking action through conscious consumerism.

Students were evaluated in three separate small group discussion-presentations on their use of language functions; level of natural interaction; discussion skills; use of appropriate vocabulary; and preparation of topic and discussion questions. Students were also evaluated on a final plenary opinion session in which each student had 3 minutes to present their opinion and supporting evidence on a question.

Survey

In order to measure students' perceptions about learning global citizenship in an English class, a short survey of 11 questions was conducted in the last class of the second semester. All of the questions focused on the global citizenship aspect of the course as opposed to perceptions about language acquisition using a simple 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. The questions were grouped into categories of awareness, understanding, empathy responsibility, and the importance of global citizenship education (see Appendix 1). The majority of students answered very positively in all of the question areas. Almost all students reported that the class made a difference in their global awareness and cross-cultural understanding (98%) and thought global citizenship education was very important in helping create peace and a sustainable world (91%). They reported gaining a better understanding of the interdependence between countries (91%) and having empathy for people from other countries (82%). The majority felt they had learned more about Japan and Japanese cultural values in the course (81%) although fewer students (79%) reported they could understand better about other

cultures because of this course. In relation to other questions, the questions about people having mutual responsibility (78%), and gaining interest in news (78%) and global issues (79%) were scored among the lowest. Almost all students (98%) reported their information literacy skills had improved.

Students were also asked to answer three open-ended questions: "What does it mean to be a global citizen?"; "What were the most important things you learned in this course?"; and "What was the most difficult part of the course?" (see Appendix 2). These questions elicited several responses which indicated that students were starting to conceptualize the meaning(s) of global citizenship, were starting to place their actions in direct relation to some of the global issues studied, and indicating some recognition of the importance of *taking action*.

Classroom observations

Within a matter of weeks in the first semester the levels of learning engagement increased. Students were speaking about current news items in the classroom before class started, whereas at the beginning of the academic year the majority of students reported they rarely accessed the news. Their awareness of general issues increased as well as their concepts of related issues. In discussion, they started to recognize connections between what they had previously perceived to be unrelated issues, and used examples of these issues to support their opinions.

As the semester progressed, their discussion stamina increased as well as the depth in which they could discuss issues and related issues. They began to understand the information that they needed in order to understand and discuss an issue. By the end of the first semester, students started to show marked improvement in their use of appropriate vocabulary and discussion structures. Quiet students also took up more time speaking in group discussions.

The students' research was much more focused and they were accessing more reliable websites for information. Students were also noting where they retrieved information and several times students were engaged in comparing conflicting information and evaluating which to believe based on the credibility of the source. This is supported by the positive response (98%) to question 6 in the survey, which asked whether they felt their information literacy skills had improved.

Several students also showed an increase in empathy for others. For example, one student said that Japan should only import H1N1 vaccines if the exporting country did not need them. In another activity, students played a game of auction, bidding for values they thought were important and desirable. In previous years the majority of students tended to bid for values which would benefit them directly such as a new house, wealth and personal success. After studying global citizenship education for over one semester, almost half of the students bid for values such as world peace, an end to world poverty and a clean environment. When asked why he would spend all his auction money on an *end to world poverty* rather than an *endless supply of wealth* one student stated, "If everyone has enough to eat and is safe most of the other problems will be solved". The researcher had not overheard this level of empathy in previous class years during this same activity.

Discussion

Among these two groups of students there seemed to be a marked change towards the goals of global citizenship education. The survey showed that students felt an increase in their global awareness and cross-cultural understanding and many reported becoming more interested in global issues, which was supported by classroom observations. One of the main concepts that people associate with global citizenship identified by Schattle is awareness. Based on the survey and comments reported

by students, as well as the classroom observations, the majority students became more aware of the interconnection between global issues and Japan, both as a nation and as individuals. As the course syllabus focused on presenting information using multiple perspectives and stressing inquiry about global interdependence, students became much more adept at critically analyzing issues as the year progressed. Many reported they had not realized how difficult and important it is to understand different perspectives. Analyzing multiple perspectives in some cases helped students not only to better understand the complexities of global issues but also to become more empathetic with different agents.

One interesting finding was the ongoing in-class controversy over whether people have a responsibility to help each other, especially across nations and cultures. Relative to other survey questions, students scored mutual responsibility low (78%). Students came into the class with broad ideas of the Japanese nation's responsibility to help other *poor* and *developing* countries. Students were almost unanimously favorable to the idea of foreign aid and assistance. However, on a personal level they were either unaware of how they could participate or focused on their *impoverished* status as students, thus their inability to donate money or any other resource. Through the hands-on experience of the final assignment, several students commented that they could in fact effect change with relatively few personal resources and developed a change of attitude.

Did students become "active agents of change" (Lim, 2008), a concept which is often a cornerstone of the concept of global citizenship? Through having to buy a 300-yen copy of the Big Issue from a homeless salesperson, all students had the experience of "lifestyle politics". Through this potentially powerful experience, understanding how their actions could impact on the life of the salesperson and how this magazine system exists in several countries around the world, students were able to at least experience first-hand some kind of political "action" through consumerism.

Finally, students worked hard at understanding the complexity and inherent contradictions in cross-cultural values in their face-to-face discussions and their reflective journals. Students were encouraged to critically analyze throughout the course whether or not the concept of global citizenship was a desirable goal, whether it was compatible with the idea of national citizenship, whether it was suitable for every culture, and how it would affect culture. In this way, students had more freedom to come up with answers to their own questions rather than just feeling a moral obligation to believe in the precepts of global citizenship.

Conclusions

Teaching global citizenship education is very complex and demanding, yet rewarding for both teacher and students. In this small pilot study, students responded very well to learning about global citizenship in their English language class and an overwhelming majority felt they had gained a better understanding of the interdependence between countries, especially between the affluent and developing ones. As Tagaki (2009) observes, the gap between curriculum ideas and practice in Japan is wide in terms of global education. However, the general consensus is that global awareness and related skills are becoming more and more necessary in the increasingly globalized world. As the findings here suggest, the students themselves feel it is suitable and beneficial to learn about global citizen education in a language course.

Bio data

Salem K. Hicks teaches at Kyoto Women's University and has a Masters degree in Educational Technology from Manchester

University. Her research areas include information literacy, global citizenship education and gender equity. She is the co-coordinator of the Gender Awareness in Language Education JALT SIG and the co-editor of the peer-reviewed GALE Journal.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire to measure students' perceptions about learning global citizenship

QUESTIONNAIRE Likert 5-pt. Agree-Disagree with the following statements [Positive percentages are listed here]		
Q1	98%	Do you think this class made a difference in your global awareness and cross-cultural understanding
Q2	79%	You became more interested in global issues
Q3	78%	You have become more interested in following the news
Q4	91%	You have gained a better understanding of the interdependence between countries; esp. affluent and developing
Q5	79%	You can understand better about other cultures because of this course
Q6	98%	You feel your information literacy skills have improved
Q7	81%	You feel you have learned more about Japan and Japanese cultural values
Q8	82%	You have empathy for other people from other cultures
Q9	78%	People have a responsibility to help each other
Q10	91%	You think global citizen education is very important in helping to create peace and a sustainable world
Q11	95%	You think it is suitable to learn about global citizen education in a language course?

Appendix 2

Open-ended questions to measure students' perceptions about learning global citizenship

Q1	What does it mean to be a global citizen? • *To think about and help other people in poor countries.* • *To understand and think about the politics very carefully.* • *To feel a deep connection outside of Japan.* • *The most important is to be active in some way, even small at first.*
Q2	What were the most important things you learned in this course? • *I learned the connection between my actions can have an effect on other parts of the world.* • *I began to see foreigners differently. Not so different from Japanese people.* • *How my psychology works! Sometimes I can't believe what I think!* • *It is so interesting to hear other people's ideas in the class. I was happy to hear my classmates' opinions and questions. I never hear them before.*
Q3	What was the most difficult part of the course? • *Thinking about different perspectives and trying to imagine what they might think.* • *At first to talk to a homeless person, but then it was the best thing.* • *To learn how I benefit from poor people suffering. We need to change.*