

Building Japanese Students' Confidence and Intercultural Competence Through COIL

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Reference Data:

Takamine, K., & Petersen, J. (2026). Building Japanese students' confidence and intercultural competence through COIL. In B. Lacy, M. Swanson, & H. Yoder (Eds.), *Language S: Learning, Teaching, Assessing – JALT 50 Years – Challenges and Perspectives*. JALT. <https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTPCP2025-33>

The purpose of this qualitative pilot study was to examine the potential of collaborative online international learning (COIL) between Japanese and Norwegian universities to enhance Japanese students' English learning and intercultural competence. Over a period of four weeks, students engaged in asynchronous cultural exchanges through video presentations and peer feedback. Data included pre- and post-project questionnaires and reflective journals focused on students' perceptions of English communication, anxiety, confidence, and intercultural awareness. Findings indicate that participation in COIL fostered enjoyment and created a supportive environment that functioned as a safe space for English practice. Students reported increased confidence in speaking and listening, reduced anxiety, and heightened motivation to engage in intercultural communication. Participation in the project also encouraged critical reflection on one's own and others' cultures, supporting the possible development of intercultural communicative competence. Although challenges such as uneven language development and logistical constraints were identified, the findings suggest that COIL supports preparation for global communication in diverse, non-native English contexts.

本研究は、国際協働オンライン学習 (Collaborative Online International Learning: COIL) が、日本人大学生の英語学習と異文化理解能力に与える影響を検討したものである。日本とノルウェーの大学生が4週間にわたるビデオプレゼンテーションを通じて非同期型交流を実施し、学習者の振り返り記録とプロジェクト前後のアンケートを質的分析した。その結果、スピーキングとリスニングへの自信向上、異文化コミュニケーション意欲の高まり、他文化への相対的な視点の促進等、異文化コミュニケーション能力の発達の兆候が確認された。一部課題はあるが、COILの英語学習への有益性が示唆された。

In today's globalized world, university-level foreign language education increasingly emphasizes the development of communicative competence across national and cultural boundaries. In Japan, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) promotes the internationalization of higher education and encourages the integration of communicative language teaching to foster students' communicative skills (Radjai & Hammond, 2023).

Despite these efforts, Japanese university students continue to face challenges in foreign language learning, particularly anxiety and low confidence when speaking English. Many students fear making mistakes, being judged, and failing to meet expectations, which can result in reluctance to participate in classroom communication and concerns about losing face (Albertson, 2020; Matsunami, 2021). Language anxiety has been shown to interfere with learning processes and limit opportunities for meaningful practice, particularly for students with limited exposure to authentic English communication (Remmerswaal et al., 2025). Low motivation to speak English is further linked to limited proficiency and restricted opportunities for international exchange (Radjai & Hammond, 2023). In this context, fostering intercultural competence alongside language skills remains a key priority in higher education.

Virtual exchange has demonstrated effectiveness in supporting both linguistic and intercultural development (Hackett et al., 2023; Lee & Song, 2019; Sevilla-Pavón, 2018). In Japan, collaborative online international learning (COIL) has gained attention, particularly following MEXT-supported partnerships with US institutions. However, as English functions increasingly as a global lingua franca, with non-native speakers outnumbering native speakers (Kavanagh, 2016), and as global Englishes gain

prominence (Rose et al., 2021), there is a growing need to examine English-mediated communication between non-native speakers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

This pilot study explored how COIL fostered English learning and intercultural awareness through authentic communication between Japanese and Norwegian university students. During 4 weeks in 2024, students from a university in the Tohoku region of Japan engaged in asynchronous exchanges with students from a university in northern Norway, collaborating on video presentations and peer feedback. By focusing on Japanese students' perceptions and experiences, the purpose of this study was to investigate COIL's impact on English learning and intercultural competence. The following research questions were addressed:

- RQ1. What self-perceived language-learning benefits did Japanese students report from participating in COIL, particularly confidence in speaking and perceived challenges?
- RQ2. How did participation in COIL influence Japanese students' self-awareness, cultural understanding, and communication adaptability?

We addressed these RQs using qualitative data from students' reflective journals and open-ended questionnaire responses, supported by descriptive statistics from closed questionnaire items. Together, these data illustrated students' perceptions of English communication, confidence, anxiety, and intercultural learning before, during, and after the 4-week COIL project.

Literature Review

COIL is a pedagogical approach that connects students and instructors from different countries through online technologies and a shared syllabus, enabling synchronous and asynchronous collaboration and learning (Rubin, 2015). COIL emphasizes interaction and collaboration to foster shared learning experiences and mutual understanding in multilingual and cross-cultural contexts.

Previous studies indicate that COIL supports the development of intercultural awareness, openness toward other cultures, and intercultural skills (Hackett et al., 2023; Vahed & Rodriguez, 2020), and that it can enhance language development and broader global competences, including digital literacy and communication skills (Lee & Song, 2019; Sevilla-Pavón, 2018). At the same time, there are challenges associated with COIL implementation, such as insufficient language proficiency, cultural differences, mismatched academic calendars, technological issues, time zone constraints, and limited institutional support (House et al., 2022; Radjai & Hammond, 2023).

In Japan, COIL has been promoted by MEXT since 2018 as part of efforts to internationalize higher education, initially through partnerships with US institutions, and the COIL activities funded by the Japanese government have been centered on US partners (Radjai & Hammond, 2023). Given the increasing role of English as a global lingua franca and the growing importance of communication among non-native English speakers, further research is needed on COIL projects beyond the US context.

Intercultural competence has been conceptualized through a range of models and frameworks (see Griffith et al., 2016, for an overview). In foreign language education, intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is commonly defined as the ability to interact effectively and appropriately in a foreign language with individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Byram, 1997). Although Byram (1997) originally proposed five dimensions of ICC, more recent models conceptualize ICC as comprising cognitive, affective, and skills domains (O'Dowd, 2006; Perry & Southwell, 2011). The cognitive domain involves cultural knowledge and interpretive understanding; the affective domain includes attitudes such as openness, curiosity, and tolerance; and the skills domain focuses on the practical ability to interact effectively across cultures (Lee & Song, 2019). In this study, we adopt this three-part framework to examine students' developing intercultural awareness and communicative practices within the COIL context.

Methodology

Participants

This study explores the impact of COIL on Japanese students' English learning and their development of ICC. A 4-week asynchronous COIL exchange was implemented between a university in the Tohoku region of Japan and one in northern Norway in 2024. Participants included 32 Japanese students and 11 Norwegian students in the first year of engineering and science studies. The Japanese group included eight females and 24 males aged 18 to 19, with only a few having traveled abroad. The Norwegian group included one female and 10 males aged 21 to 50, all of whom had work experience in skilled trades. The Norwegian students possessed a high level of international exposure and felt confident in their English skills.

The COIL Structure

The students were divided into small groups for interactions, with a pair of Norwegian students interacting with two Japanese groups consisting of three or four students. The students participated in eight asynchronous COIL sessions over 4 weeks, totaling 16

class hours. They engaged in asynchronous interactions through video presentations, peer feedback, and revisions via Line OpenChat. During the first class, the groups collaboratively created a video presentation on a theme that encouraged cross-cultural understanding and sent it to their overseas partners. In the second class, they provided peer feedback on the video presentation from their overseas partners.

Data Collection

Data were collected through reflective journals and two anonymous questionnaires. The questionnaires contained both closed and open-ended items in English with Japanese translations. Before the first COIL session, a pre-COIL questionnaire was given to identify students' self-reported English communication abilities, attitudes toward English learning, and intercultural communication and cultural awareness, through Likert-scale items, which provided descriptive statistics. In the open-ended questions, students were asked to describe their experiences, feelings, perceptions, and challenges related to communicating in English (see Appendix A).

In the post-COIL questionnaire, the closed items illustrated students' self-perceived changes in English communication ability, intercultural understanding, and intercultural communication. In the open-ended questions, students reflected on their experiences during COIL interactions, challenges they encountered, cultural learning, and perceived learning outcomes (see Appendix B). Most responses on the pre-and post-COIL questionnaires were written in Japanese and subsequently translated into English by the researchers, although a few students chose to respond in English.

In addition, after each COIL session, students wrote reflective journals documenting their learning experiences, emotions, and challenges throughout the COIL interactions. The reflective journal prompts were provided in English (see Appendix C), but students were instructed to alternate between English and Japanese when writing their journal entries. The parts that had been written in Japanese were subsequently translated into English by the researchers.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (i.e., percentages and frequencies) from the closed questionnaire items were used to provide an overview of students' self-reported perceptions and experiences. Questionnaire responses and reflective journals were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2022) thematic analysis. After we familiarized ourselves with the data, codes

were developed manually, refined into broader themes, and interpreted in relation to the study's research questions and O'Dowd's (2006) three-part ICC framework.

Ethical Considerations

With institutional approval, the study's purpose was explained to students, and written consent to use the data was obtained from all participants at the outset. Students were given the option to withdraw at any time. Participating students were assigned codes (e.g., ST01) to assure anonymity and confidentiality. These identifiers are used when reporting quotations.

Results

This section presents findings related to the RQs from the pre- and post-COIL questionnaires and students' reflective journals. Findings concerning students' English learning experiences (challenges, anxiety, confidence, motivation), address RQ1. Findings regarding self-awareness, cultural understanding, and communication adaptability address RQ2. The findings are organized chronologically to illustrate how students' perceptions developed throughout the 4-week COIL exchange. Although students' development rate varied, the chronological structure helps illustrate the overall patterns of change observed during the project.

Pre-COIL Questionnaire: Low Language Proficiency and Anxiety (RQ1)

The pre-COIL questionnaire revealed that many Japanese students perceived communicating in English as difficult, particularly speaking, with 92% reporting that speaking English was difficult or very difficult. Insufficient language skills emerged as a key challenge, with students frequently citing limited vocabulary and difficulty understanding spoken English. Several students described spoken English as "too fast to hear" (ST17) and "hard to catch what's being said" (ST25). One student wrote, "Sometimes I can't understand words, and sometimes I feel embarrassed because of my vocabulary" (ST10). Another student stated, "Because I lack English vocabulary, there are many situations where I cannot immediately say what I want" (ST21).

In addition to linguistic difficulties, students reported strong negative emotions associated with English communication. When asked about communicating in English with people from other countries, over 70% expressed feelings of nervousness, anxiety, self-doubt, and frustration. Students frequently described concerns about grammatical

accuracy and whether their English would be understood by others. One student noted, “I get nervous because I worry if my English grammar is correct” (ST11). Another student wrote, “I feel anxious about whether the English I speak is being understood” (ST07).

The questionnaire responses also indicated limited experience with English communication in real-life contexts. Only 25% of students reported having traveled or studied abroad, suggesting few opportunities to engage in authentic English interaction prior to the COIL project. This limited exposure was reflected in students' self-reported difficulty and anxiety when communicating in English.

Journaling Week 1: Anxiety (RQ1)

Students' reflective journals from the first week of the COIL project highlighted language-related difficulties and anxiety about communicating in English. Listening comprehension and self-expression were frequently described as challenging. One student wrote, “Listening to English spoken by people from other countries was very difficult” (ST17). Another student stated, “I struggled to convey my thoughts and what I wanted to say” (ST25).

Several students noted that they were unaccustomed to hearing English spoken with a Norwegian accent, which made comprehension more difficult. In addition, many students expressed fear of speaking English and making mistakes, particularly during self-introductions and video recordings. One student wrote, “I felt embarrassed to introduce myself in English. It is likely because I was afraid of showing my poor or incorrect English to others” (ST18).

Journaling Week 2: Increased Self-Awareness (RQ2)

In the second week, students' reflective journals continued to report challenges with listening and speaking in English, alongside emerging self-awareness regarding communication. Some students described ongoing difficulties with processing spoken English and formulating responses. One student wrote, “It took me a long time to hear and understand English, think of an answer, and translate it into English. I feel uncomfortable speaking English and feel resistant to it” (ST22).

However, other students became more aware of their own communication styles and how to adapt them to foster effective communication: “When talking with others, I found that speaking clearly made it easier for others to hear what I said. I also found that gestures were an effective way to communicate with others” (ST13). Additionally, a few

students began to feel more confident in speaking English: “I could speak what I think in English a little more fluently, so I'm glad. I want to have more discussions in class. I feel I could improve my English skills gradually” (ST07). Reflections from this week also showed growing awareness of cultural knowledge, particularly when preparing video content about Japanese culture. One student wrote,

Today's lesson was about making a video about own culture. It was educational because you can't talk about what makes a culture unique unless you know about it. I hadn't realized that manga is part of pop culture and therefore part of our culture in general in everyday life. (ST15)

Journaling Week 3: Growing Confidence and Communication Awareness (RQ1, RQ2)

In the third week, several students described improved comprehension and greater ease in expressing themselves, but they acknowledged that communication still required effort. One student wrote, “I feel like I can hear better than before. It's taking time, but I feel like I can speak a little bit on my own” (ST21). Furthermore, more students felt less discomfort speaking English: “I no longer feel uncomfortable taking videos” (ST23). Some students mentioned that having open discussions and sharing ideas freely was important: “Saying things honestly is fun. We should share our opinions even if they are not very important” (ST11).

Journaling Week 4: Improved Confidence and Motivation (RQ1)

The journals from the final week indicated that more students gained confidence in communicating in English, which they attributed to their perceived improvement in speaking and listening skills. Students described their progress with joy, “I was able to speak well. Next time, I want to look at the audience more when I speak” (ST01), and “Today, I could understand what they said fully” (ST28). Students also expressed desire for more opportunities to communicate in English. One student wrote, “The time to communicate with them was too short for me. I want to communicate with them more” (ST19). This indicated that the students were more comfortable engaging in English communication and were motivated to practice more. Furthermore, many explicitly emphasized the importance of improving English and their motivation to continue learning: “The significance of improving my English skills has become clear in myself, so I want to continue to study English from now on” (ST04).

Post-COIL Questionnaire (RQ1, RQ2)

Results from the post-COIL questionnaire indicated generally positive changes in students' perceptions of English communication. Around 78% of students reported that speaking and listening in English had become slightly easier or easier after participating in the COIL project. When asked about their feelings toward communicating in English with people from other countries, all but one student reported positive emotions.

Students frequently described the COIL experience as enjoyable, interesting, or meaningful. Several students emphasized the enjoyment of learning about their partners' cultures. One student wrote, "It was fun to learn about the other person's culture" (ST12). Others noted reduced resistance to speaking English, particularly in video-based tasks. One student reflected, "At first, I was resistant to recording videos, but I got used to it and was able to enjoy the communication, which was very meaningful" (ST20).

Students also reported increased motivation to communicate in English and to improve their language skills. One student wrote, "It was fun to feel the cultural differences, so I want to actively engage in conversations if I have the chance" (ST13).

Responses suggested increased cultural awareness and reflection, with 75% of students agreeing that understanding one's own culture is important in intercultural communication. One student wrote, "If you don't understand your own culture, you won't be able to truly understand or appreciate the characteristics and uniqueness of the other person's culture, nor will you be able to empathize with them" (ST20). Roughly 68% also agreed that understanding other cultures is important for effective communication. One student wrote, "By understanding other cultures, the message the other person wants to convey becomes clearer" (ST09).

Several students emphasized respect for cultural differences and the need to adapt communication styles depending on context. One student wrote that it was important, "To prevent hurting others or failing to understand each other due to cultural difference" (ST17). Another student wrote, "By understanding your own culture, you can identify differences with others and develop an interest in their culture" (ST08). Some students also reflected on how culture shapes communication, as illustrated by the comment, "I thought that differences in culture might lead to differences in ways of expression" (ST16).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine how participation in an asynchronous COIL project influenced Japanese university students' English learning experiences (RQ1)

and intercultural awareness (RQ2). Overall, the findings suggest that cultural exchange through COIL provided opportunities for many participants to reduce anxiety and develop greater confidence and motivation to communicate in English, and to reflect on their own and others' cultural perspectives, which contributed to increased self-awareness, intercultural understanding, and communication adaptability.

Regarding RQ1, one of the most notable outcomes was reduced anxiety toward English communication. Before the COIL experience, many students reported fear of making mistakes, concerns about grammatical accuracy, and discomfort about communicating in English. These feelings gradually diminished as students became accustomed to asynchronous video interactions. Asynchronous communication likely reduced anxiety by allowing students time to plan and revise responses, and repeated interaction with the same Norwegian partners fostered familiarity and psychological safety. Interactions took place with non-native speakers of English, which may have reduced students' fears of being judged against native-speaker norms. This may have encouraged students to focus on meaning rather than linguistic accuracy, reflecting English's role as a global lingua franca in which successful communication takes precedence over native-speaker norms (Rose et al., 2021). The collaborative video-production tasks may also have provided peer support, making English communication feel less intimidating. This finding aligns with previous research showing that foreign language enjoyment can reduce anxiety and increase willingness to communicate (Zhang et al., 2024), as well as studies demonstrating COIL's ability to enhance motivation through meaningful intercultural engagement (Hackett et al., 2023).

In addition to reduced anxiety, students reported greater confidence in listening and speaking. Although some continued to struggle with their Norwegian partners' English accents, many developed strategies to overcome these challenges by focusing on sound patterns or adjusting their own speech for clarity. These observations suggest that COIL provided authentic opportunities to experiment with communication strategies, which contributed to gradual improvements in perceived communicative competence and motivation despite linguistic difficulties. Repeated interactions and ongoing video feedback likely strengthened students' listening, speaking, and confidence over time. Students also became more aware of adapting their communication by speaking clearly, using gestures, and prioritizing meaning over grammatical accuracy. However, progress varied considerably, suggesting that linguistic development in short-term COIL projects differs among learners.

Regarding RQ2, the findings suggest that the COIL project may have contributed to the development of ICC across all three domains. Through tasks requiring students to

explain aspects of their own culture and respond to their partners' perspectives, many reported greater self-awareness and reflection on cultural practices they had previously taken for granted, suggesting possible development within the cognitive domain. Many students also emphasized understanding both their own and others' cultures for effective communication, reflecting greater openness, curiosity, and respect for cultural differences associated with the affective domain. Several students also adapted their communication by speaking more clearly, using gestures, and considering how their messages might be interpreted by people from different cultural backgrounds, suggesting development in the skills domain.

These outcomes align with previous research highlighting COIL's role in fostering intercultural awareness and attitudinal change (Hackett et al., 2023; Vahed & Rodriguez, 2020). The asynchronous format may have supported intercultural communication by reducing the pressure associated with communicating in English while encouraging students to share cultural information, compare perspectives, and engage more actively with cultural differences through reflection on both their own and others' perspectives.

Despite these positive outcomes, several challenges were identified. Differences in academic calendars shortened the exchange, requiring instructors to adjust course schedules around examination periods. Imbalances in student numbers and participant withdrawal also created uneven group dynamics that frustrated some students. However, the asynchronous, small-group format helped sustain participation despite these challenges. These findings suggest that flexible project design may mitigate logistical difficulties common in international virtual exchanges. As noted by O'Dowd and Ritter (2006), local classroom dynamics and teacher support remain critical to the success of virtual exchanges.

Taken together, the findings suggest that asynchronous COIL can provide a supportive environment that increases confidence and motivation to communicate in English while reducing anxiety. The project also appears to have fostered self-awareness, intercultural understanding and communication adaptability by encouraging students to reflect on their own and others' cultural perspectives through repeated interaction in a supportive environment. Although the short duration and uneven participation limited the extent of language development for some learners, the project demonstrates the potential of COIL to function as an accessible and meaningful form of internationalization, particularly in contexts where opportunities for physical mobility are limited.

Conclusion

The purpose of this pilot study was to explore how asynchronous COIL can influence Japanese university students' English learning experiences and intercultural awareness. The findings suggest that the asynchronous COIL exchange seemed to reduce anxiety about English communication for many students and help them develop confidence and motivation to use English. The findings also suggest that the COIL activities seemed to contribute to increased self-awareness, intercultural understanding, and communication adaptability associated with the development of ICC.

The study also suggests that the asynchronous format, with video-production tasks and structured peer feedback combined with repeated interaction, may have created a supportive learning environment for both English learning and intercultural development. The supportive and low-pressure nature of asynchronous interaction appeared to be particularly beneficial for students who initially experienced strong apprehension toward English communication. At the same time, challenges related to academic calendar mismatch, imbalance in participant numbers and varying rates of development of English skills highlight the importance of flexible project design, close collaboration between instructors, and appropriate student support throughout the exchange.

Despite its limited scale and exploratory nature, this study contributes to the growing body of research on COIL beyond US-centered partnerships and suggests that asynchronous international exchange can play a meaningful role in preparing students for global communication in diverse, non-native English contexts.

Bio Data

Kaori Takamine is an associate professor at UiT The Arctic University of Norway. She teaches English and Norwegian to engineering students and students in a preparatory engineering course with a focus on communication across languages and cultures. She is also interested in interactive teaching methods and the use of technology in teaching and learning.

Jacob Petersen is an associate professor at Iwate University. Over the years, he has strived to help students make English a part of their lives and has also worked to incorporate technology in useful ways in education. He is interested in interactive teaching methods, such as face-to-face active learning and flipped learning classrooms, as well as online-based education with emphasis on course design and user experience.

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Appendix A

Pre-Intervention Questionnaire Items

- When did you start learning English?
- Have you ever been abroad?
- If yes, please answer the following questions a) to d).
 - Which countries have you visited?
 - How long did you stay in each country?
 - Which languages did you use to communicate in the countries you visited?
 - How would you describe your experience of staying abroad? Please explain.
- How easy is it for you to communicate in English? (1: Very difficult, 2: Difficult, 4: Easy, 5: Very easy) Please answer in terms of a) speaking, b) listening, c) reading and d) writing.

5. How do you feel when communicating in English with people from other countries? Please explain your thoughts clearly.
6. Is speaking English an advantage for you? (1: Not advantageous at all, 2: Slightly advantageous, 3: I don't know, 4: advantageous, 5: Very advantageous) Please explain your answer.
7. Have you experienced any difficulties when communicating in English? If yes, please explain the difficulties.
8. How important is learning and practicing English for you? (1: Not important at all, 2: Slightly important, 3: I don't know, 4: Important, 5: Very important)
9. Please explain your answer.
10. How motivated are you to learn English? (1: Not motivated at all, 2: Slightly motivated, 3: Motivated, 4: Very motivated)
11. Do you find learning English difficult? (1: Very difficult, 2: Difficult, 3: Easy, 4: Very easy)
12. How important is it to understand different cultures when learning English? (1: Not important at all, 2: Slightly important, 3: Important, 4: Very important)
13. How would you define "culture" in your own words?
14. Do you think culture influences the way you communicate? (1: No influence at all, 2: Slight influence, 3: Some influence, 4: Strong influence)
15. Is it important to learn about your own culture while learning English? (1: Not important at all, 2: Slightly important, 3: Important, 4: Very important)
16. Is learning about other cultures important when learning English? (1: Not important at all, 2: Slightly important, 3: Important, 4: Very important)
17. Can you compare your own culture with other cultures? (1: No, I cannot, 2: Unsure, 3: Yes, I can)
18. How easy is it for you to communicate with people from other cultures? (1: Very difficult, 2: Difficult, 3: Easy, 4: Very easy)
19. Do you think learning about other cultures helps you improve your English language skills? (yes, no, unsure)
20. Have you ever experienced a situation where cultural differences affected your communication in English? Please explain.
21. Are you curious about other cultures? (1: Not curious at all, 2: Slightly curious, 3: curious, 4: Very curious)

22. How important is it for you to speak with people from other cultures? (1: Not important at all, 2: Slightly important, 3: Important, 4: Very important)

Appendix B

Post-Intervention Questionnaire Items

1. How did your communication in English with your Norwegian partners go through the project? What are your feelings?
2. Have you experienced any difficulties when communicating with your Norwegian partners in English? Please explain.
3. After completing this project, how easy is it for you to communicate in English compared to before? Please answer in terms of a) speaking, b) listening, c) reading and d) writing
4. How do you feel now when communicating in English with people from other countries?
5. After the participation in the project, do you think speaking English is still advantageous for you?
6. After this project, how important is learning and practicing English for you now?
7. How motivated are you to continue learning English after completing the project?
8. Do you still find learning English difficult, or has it become easier? (1: Significantly more difficult now, 2: More difficult now, 3: No change, 4: Easier, 5: Significantly easier)
9. What have you learnt about your Norwegian partners' culture though the project? Please explain.
10. How important is it to understand your own culture when learning English, after this project? (1: Not important at all, 2: Slightly important, 3: I don't know, 4: Important, 5: Very important)
11. Please explain why (the reason for your answer in the previous question).
12. How important is it to understand different/other cultures when learning English after this project? (1: Not important at all, 2: Slightly important, 3: I don't know, 4: Important, 5: Very important)
13. Please explain why (the reason for your answer in the previous question)
14. How would you now define "culture" in your own words?

15. Do you now think culture influences the way you communicate? (1: No influence at all, 2: Slight influence, 3: Neutral, 4: Some influence, 5: Strong influence)
16. How important is it to learn about other cultures in your process of learning English after the project? (1: Not important at all, 2: Slightly important, 3: I don't know, 4: Important, 5: Very important)
17. How easy is it now for you to communicate with people from other cultures? (1: Very difficult, 2: Difficult, 3: Slightly easier, 4: Easier, 5: Very much easier)
18. Have you gained new insights into how cultural differences can affect communication in English?
19. Please explain your answer.
20. How important is it for you to speak with people from other cultures after this project? (1: Not important at all, 2: Slightly important, 3: Neutral, 4: Important, 5: Very important)
21. What is your experience participating in the project?
22. What is the most important thing you have learned from participating in this project?
23. Do you have any suggestions on how this project could be improved in the future?

Appendix C

Reflection Journal Prompts

In English, please write about 1 paragraph talking about:

1. Did you have any new ideas or feelings?
2. What were you not sure about?
3. What can you do to improve?