

Casebook of International Activities at Kansai University

A) A Study on Development Assistance in Developing Countries

B) Verification Study on the Mechanism of Learning Cross-cultural Understanding, Foreign Language, and Negotiation Skills through Japanese-Taiwanese Collaborative Team Activities

Professor Shinsuke Yoshida

Faculty of Foreign Language Studies

[Activity outline]

Main activities	A) Project for Enhancing Quality in Teaching through TV Programs (EQUITV) B) Verification Study on the Mechanism of Learning Cross-cultural Understanding, Foreign Language, and Negotiation Skills through Japanese-Taiwanese Collaborative Team Activities
Organizations involved	A) JICA and educational institutions in Papua New Guinea B) I-Shou University and other universities and high schools in Taiwan
Duration	A) 2003 - 2009 B) 2009 - up to the present

[Interview with Professor Yoshida]

-- Please tell us about the background of these two research activities.

The United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which states that “we are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind” and sets 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Among them, SDG 4 aims to “ensure quality education for all.” Since it is an enabler to achieve all the other SDGs, the international community has enhanced its commitment to educational development.

Education is considered as a fundamental human right for all. It is the foundation that allows everyone to reach their full potential and live dignified lives and is an essential component to sustainable social and economic development. It is also insisted that education lays the basis for developing an attitude of respect toward different cultures and values and in turn creating an inclusive and peaceful society.

In light of the above, our seminar has carried out teaching and research activities focused on the following two themes: A) a study on development assistance in developing countries and B) a verification study on the mechanism of learning cross-cultural understanding, foreign language, and negotiation skills through Japanese-Taiwanese collaborative team activities.

Study A) Project for Enhancing Quality in Teaching through TV Programs (EQUITV)



Model Lesson Broadcast across Papua New Guinea

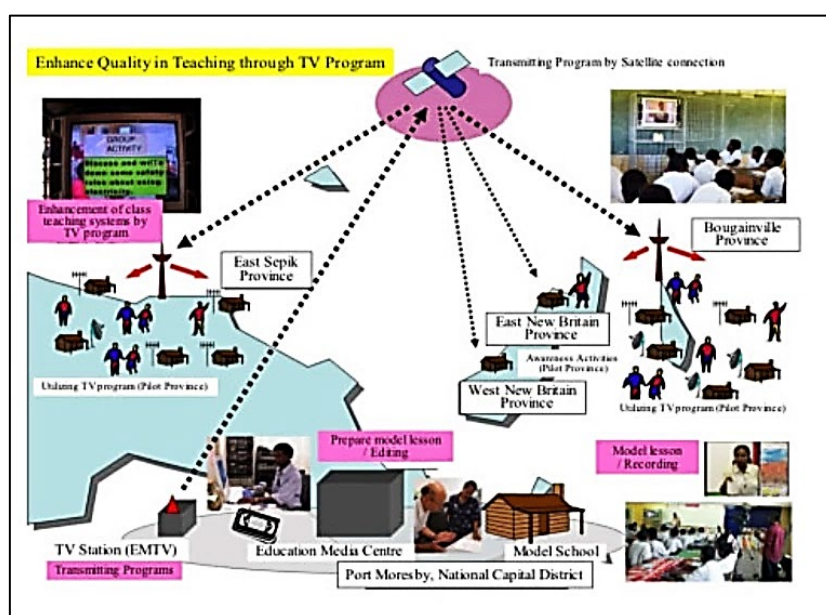
-- How did this research get started?

This research is associated with SDG 4.c, which states that “By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States.”

This goal was preceded by the adoption of the World Declaration on Education for All (1990), which promoted educational assistance to a developing country Papua New Guinea, where education was a major national issue because its mountainous terrain and numerous islands had

hampered the development of infrastructure, resulted in a shortage of schools and trained teachers, and caused the majority of the people to leave school before completing compulsory education. In this context, the Government of Japan provided official development assistance (ODA) to establish the National Education Media Centre and carry out the EQUITY project to broadcast model lessons and audio-visual materials across the country. It was an innovative initiative that not only helped educate students in remote areas but also promoted the training of teachers at the same time.

I participated in this project as a collaborative researcher as I engaged in research activities at the National Institute of Media Education, the Open University of Japan, in Chiba.



Conceptual Image of the EQUITY Project



Remote School Pupils Taking a TV Lesson through the EQUITY Project

-- What did you do in this project?

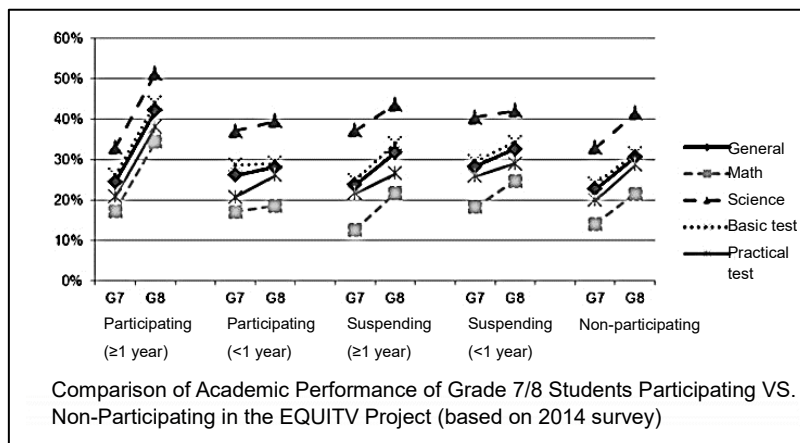
As a JICA expert, I was in charge of monitoring and evaluation (of model lesson programs and teacher training programs). In particular, I was responsible for providing advice on the implementation of the project in the mid-term review process. In order to assess the effectiveness of the TV programs at remote schools and provide feedback on the results, I was asked to (1) propose, choose, and advise on monitoring indicators; (2) ensure effective monitoring at remote schools and provide feedback to local teachers; and (3) hold workshops in remote areas and provide advice on how to improve classes.

-- What results did you achieve?

The project made a huge impact on teachers at remote schools that received the TV broadcasts. They learned classroom management for cooperative learning, gained access to audiovisual learning aids for experiments, which had been scarce in their local areas, and received support to develop their teaching skills. The project also benefited students by improving learning effectiveness and stimulating motivation for learning. In fact, it significantly increased their attendance rates and national achievement test scores. These results demonstrated that the improvement of primary education would contribute to the future development of the country.

-- How did local teachers and students react to the project?

In Papua New Guinea, most teachers were middle school graduates and felt unprepared to teach students. However, the TV programs improved the teaching skills of participating teachers. This project also significantly increased the motivation of students to study. Their attendance rates and motivation levels had been very low before the project began, but watching students taking model classes on TV stimulated rivalry among students in remote areas and motivated them to study hard. They mainly took math and science classes on TV and got higher grades in both subjects (see the figure below). The most interesting thing was that this project led to community development projects and increased the solidarity of communities in some areas. In addition, this project made people aware that they would need education to get a job other than farming. Educated people with computer skills could have ambitions to get a job at a foreign company. Thus, local people started to stand on their own feet, which demonstrates that the project also solved the so-called aid dependency problem (i.e., a phenomenon in which development assistance actually discourages people from working). In addition, the spread of education improved public security in local areas.



-- What difficulties did you encounter?

Papua New Guinea is an island country consisting of nearly 10,000 islands with towering mountains, so airplanes were the main means of travel. After getting off the airplane, we drove Land Cruisers through jungles. In short, transportation was very inconvenient in Papua New Guinea. Moreover, their staple food was bananas and coconuts, and we could not eat rice there. We also faced the risk of malaria. Another problem was that cities were not very safe.

Study B) Verification Study on the Mechanism of Learning Cross-cultural Understanding, Foreign Language, and Negotiation Skills through Japanese-Taiwanese Collaborative Team Activities

-- How did this research get started?

This research is associated with SDG 4.7, which states that “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”

In particular, we have focused on education for global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture’s contribution to sustainable development. We have created opportunities to develop global human resources, such as International Collaborative Presentation Meetings for High School and University Students in the Asian Region, held for 20 years with support from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and the Education Bureau of Kaohsiung City Government in Taiwan and each attended by 250 high school and university students from 50 schools in Japan and eight other Asian countries. Participants work together beyond national boundaries, using English as a lingua franca (common language) and telecommunication technologies, to explore a common issue, consult with each other to reach a conclusion, and eventually present it at the presentation meetings while directly communicating with people from different cultures.

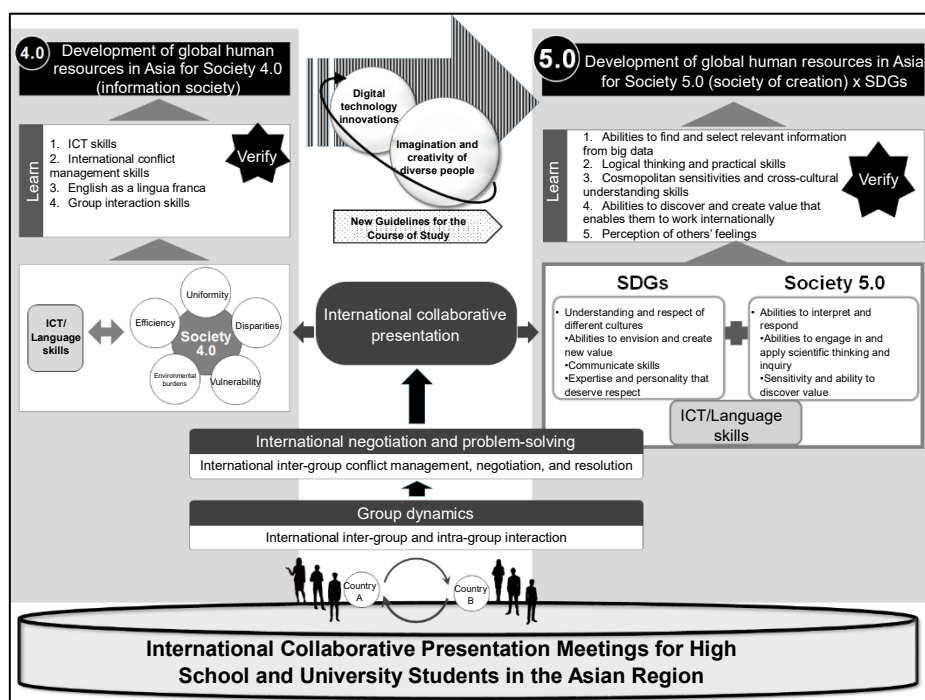
-- What did you do in this program?

Originally, I conducted a number of verification studies from different perspectives, such as linguistics, educational technology and communication studies, in this program. However, when “Society 5.0” was proposed to realize a society of creation by promoting digital technology innovations, the following three abilities were identified as essential (MEXT, 2018): (1) ability to accurately interpret and respond to writing and information; (2) ability to engage in and apply scientific thinking and inquiry; and (3) sensitivity and ability to discover and create value as well as curiosity and the inquisitiveness.

Meanwhile, the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles called for developing human resources who can contribute to solving problems and play an active role in the international arena. More specifically, it has become essential to develop people who can (1) understand and respect

different cultures, (2) envision and create new value, (3) communicate effectively, and (4) have expertise and personality that deserve respect.

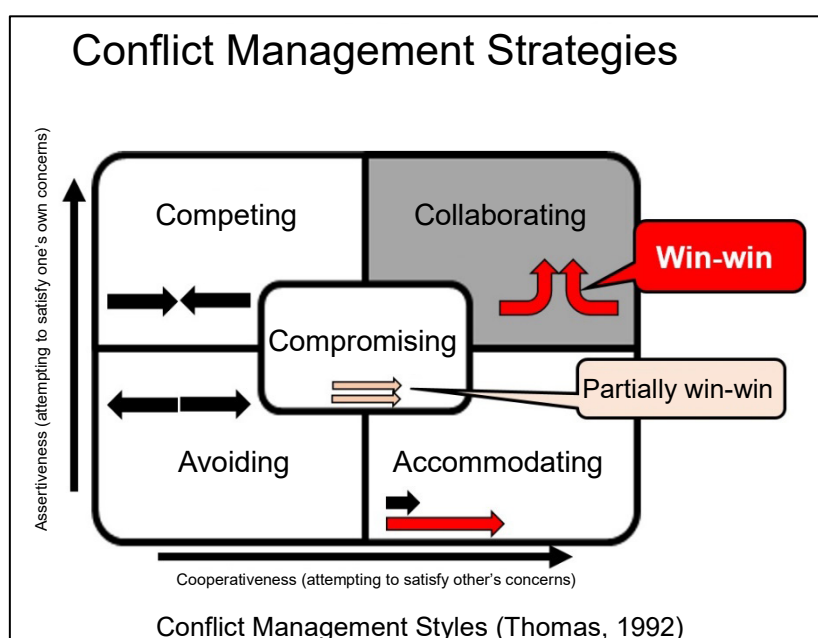
In response to these needs, I have added five verification perspectives as indicators against which we can measure the abilities of participants before and after they participate in this presentation program to evaluate its effectiveness from different viewpoints and add modifications to transform it into a sustainable global human resources development initiative. Now, I have focused on the following five perspectives: (1) the perspective of informatics to assess abilities to find and select relevant information from big data; (2) the perspective of educational psychology to assess logical thinking and practical skills; (3) the perspective of cross-cultural communication studies to assess cosmopolitan sensitivities and cross-cultural understanding skills; (4) the perspective of psychometrics to assess abilities to discover and create value that enables participants to work internationally with people from different cultures; and (5) the perspective of human psychology to assess the perception of others' feelings (see the figure below).



-- What difficulties have you encountered?

The International Collaborative Presentation Meetings for High School and University Students in the Asian Region are attended by students from Japan, Taiwan, and other Asian countries. Students in my seminar also attend as representatives of Kansai University. Participants include not only university students but also high school students. They work in pairs with students from

each partnering school according to their differing countries, cultures, and generations to make presentations. Naturally, they encounter conflicts. They have to choose one of the five styles of conflict management: avoiding, competing, accommodating, compromising, and collaborating (see the figure below). However, I would not want them to choose the easy way of compromise because this easy solution will end up in a partially win-win situation. Therefore, I encourage students to compete and accommodate with each other so that they can eventually reach the best solution: collaboration. It will enable them to find the best solution for both sides though they may need more time and a more positive and cooperative attitude to attain that goal. As for presentations, I teach students non-verbal communication skills, such as dramatic performance and gestures, through rehearsals so that they can deliver a successful presentation despite the extraordinary situation of appearing on stage before an audience.



-- What results have you achieved?

I think that students could learn the following from the experience of delivering a presentation at a formal meeting like this International Collaborative Presentation Meeting:

- Know-how to overcome conflicts and reach a win-win solution;
- Creativity to generate new ideas;
- Practical communication skills that enable them to negotiate effectively in the global community; and

- Global presentation skills to deliver effective presentations in an international collaborative setting.

I would also say that this project allows students to learn English as a lingua franca, or World English, to communicate with people from different countries in Asia.



Researcher name	YOSHIDA, Shinsuke
Department & Faculty	Department of Foreign Language Studies, Faculty of Foreign Language Studies
Position	Professor
Major	English education, Educational Technology, International Cooperation
Detailed information	http://gakujo.kansai-u.ac.jp/profile/ja/e5d390yfba0e2tebcc93ad81d95d6.html