

# An Ethnographic Approach to Utilizing Classroom Diversity

Andrew Reimann

## Introduction

*In a drop of water you can see the whole ocean.*

*Chinese Proverb*

As traditional dichotomies of Global and Local intertwine and fade into haziness, similar notions of language, culture and communication change, evolve, distort or are targeted as rich new paradigms. In light of this, the role of culture as an integral part of language teaching has become increasingly popular and significant. Unfortunately it remains ambiguous and problematic in that there is little consensus on how or what aspects of culture to incorporate. Most texts and materials present only irrelevant, biased snippets of tourist culture and teachers generally introduce culture subjectively based on their personal experiences and background. As a result students have difficulty making their own interpretations and tend to create an “us and them” world view and perspective which does little more than reinforce stereotypes and communication barriers. The result is that often young Japanese language learners, who have spent significant time in the classroom and are no doubt more proficient than previous generations, are still surprised when they encounter foreigners who can use chopsticks and are uncomfortable if not incapable of communicating in ambiguous or unfamiliar situations.

This paper aims at addressing the need for more balanced and practical cultural learning in order to raise student's awareness levels and develop real intercultural communicative competence. Focusing on activities, both inside and outside the classroom, viable and effective student centered and generated approaches to cultural understanding are described. Applying ethnographic research methods students engage, explore and interact with other cultures

locally. As students are in charge and free to shape their own perspectives they are able to reach a 3rd place identity or neutral position from which to objectively observe differences, create their own unique, unbiased world view and ultimately become more sensitive, tolerant, open-minded and compassionate towards others.

Successful communication invariably requires mutual understanding, and the journey to understanding others must first begin with knowing yourself. How are you unique? What do you have in common with your friends, family and others in your community? How are you different? What are your strengths and weaknesses? How do you communicate with people who are different from you?

In today's world It is no longer enough that language learners merely have a command or a level of competence in English.

As a Global Language, English is rapidly changing and metamorphosing into many unique and diverse varieties based on the minority cultures which use the language for their own specific purposes within their own specific contexts. It is highly likely that Standard English will be replaced by local branches in the near future. As a result, being able to copy behavior and perform like a native may be of limited use. Today's English learners require a deeper understanding and a comprehensive arsenal of meta-skills which will assist them with acquisition and navigation of the finer nuances and sub levels of communication and interaction.

By approaching difference as a resource rather than as a barrier and by engaging in Ethnographic research through observation, participation, interviews, surveys, interaction with others and reflection on

discoveries. Learners will develop their own world views as well as the skills they require to communicate effectively.

These include: the ability to model, understand, and operate flexibly in the world in any given culture, create one's own appropriate context for living, cross over from one culture to another and become a cultural "shape shifter", learn how to learn, develop tolerance for ambiguity and difference, strong sense of self and self-reliance, perceptiveness, open-mindedness, empathy, adaptability, flexibility, critical thinking, curiosity, motivation, non-judgmentalness and an overall warmth in human relationships.

### Rationale

Recently, the demographic of the Japanese University Classroom is rapidly changing. With the drastic decrease of regular student numbers many universities are pursuing more creative avenues to stay afloat and delay their perhaps inevitable demise. Some of the more constructive efforts which do not include heavy budget cuts, layoffs and overcrowded classrooms, involve opening the universities up to a greater diversity of students especially: *shakai-jin*, (mature students) and *ryugakusei* (foreign students). As populations of "neets" and "freeters" also increase and high school students take a year off or enter university exam preparation cram schools, there is a move away from traditional perceptions of what is an appropriate age to be a student. This is especially evident at the post graduate level where undergraduates who discover their prospects are bleak return for more education. In short the average age of university students is also increasing.

» Some statistics from typical classes.

» Mature students: (Aged 25+) 10-20%

» Foreign Students: 20-30%

With this new diversity comes a greater challenge for the teacher, but also a wealth of opportunity. The question then is; *How to make use of this new resource?*

If one of the fundamental goals of language education is to increase cultural awareness and

intercultural communicative competence then such a change in demographic is a huge step in the right direction and a valuable asset. Such diversity is useful in the practical consideration of cultures and a key to understanding differences, identities, communities, worldviews, communication styles, perspectives and other social phenomena. Typically, attempts to integrate culture and language learning have met with limited success. Most efforts rely on heavily biased and stereotype reinforcing texts. Overly focus on obvious differences, exploring differences out of context, resulting in detachment, misunderstanding, oversimplification and irrelevance. Today's learners require a deeper understanding and a command of comprehensive skills which will assist them with acquisition and navigation of the finer nuances and sub levels of communication and interaction. They need to become aware of various sub levels of culture and not just a tourists perspective

Some questions to be considered in exploring this include:

- Apart from language, what other skills do learners require?
- What are common communication or negotiation problems that all people have when engaging with a new culture or in a new environment?
- How can these be taught or acquired out of context?
- How can this new classroom demographic be best used as a spring board for developing cultural awareness?
- What is the role of the teacher in facilitating cultural awareness?
- How should teachers begin to use their experience and intuition effectively?
- How should new and inexperienced teachers be initiated into such a paradigm?
- How can teachers introduce intercultural learning strategies?
- What are the best means of raising awareness?

Merryfield (1993) expresses that "global education

is one of the more ambiguous innovations in education today." Most approaches and methodologies have been criticized as either imposing culture or using culturally specific methods in an inappropriate context. Typical texts and cultural content materials or activities offer largely trivial, unrelated and irrelevant facts on the target culture and as a result are limited in potential to learning about cultures rather than learning from them. Methodologies need to move away from a tourist or target culture specific knowledge and focus on fostering a deeper more general cultural awareness. Widdowson (1998b:331) suggests that although it is necessary for learners to develop a basic capacity for cultural awareness, it is problematic to introduce the necessary skills and strategies within the context of the classroom. He argues that the classroom can create a community with its own cultural context providing the relevance necessary to acquire these new competencies and most importantly a forum where language and culture are learned from rather than about. He goes on to say that teachers and students need to collaborate to create a "negotiated culture" in the classroom and determine an appropriate methodology accordingly. Byram echoes this stating that the traditional dichotomy of classroom and real world is contrived and false.

Considering this, It is necessary to empower local teachers, open up the domain of pedagogy to learners, democratize the language classroom, and allow learners to negotiate or shift between cultures, have teachers and learners be more reflective and critically aware of strategies and processes, develop meta-pedagogical, critical, "becoming appropriate" and overall cultural awareness's. The role of the teacher should be as a guide and mentor, exploring, discovering and learning alongside the students. Without resorting to an us vs. them, show and tell, stereotypical tourist cultural awareness raising attempts, the teacher can guide the students on a journey of self discovery and cultural awareness raising that extends beyond the classroom, resulting in life long learning and sensitivity regarding cultural and individual differences. One of the greatest benefits

here for the Japanese language learner as communicator, is in developing a more open and flexible mind, thus creating a level of awareness and global perspective which no longer results in registering surprise, shock or amazement when encountering foreigners who can use chopsticks, speak Japanese or enjoy Japanese food.

A practical method for achieving this is through a form of student initiated, controlled and managed Ethnographic Research. Although this type of approach is only just being pioneered in Language Education, similar methods of intercultural training have a long history in other areas and institutions including international business, global corporations, the peace corps, united nations and even the U.S. Military. Being a relatively insulated and homogeneous country, such an endeavor may appear problematic in Japan. However given the appropriate guidance, inspiration and insight, even the seemingly sparsest of contexts can become seething pools of intriguing difference and exciting diversity.

### The Ethnographic Research Project

Ethnographic research as a possible means for developing cultural awareness and communication skills has drawn attention particularly in the Council of Europe. Here, where communication with peoples of different language and culture backgrounds is almost a daily event, the necessity for developing an awareness of difference and a sensitivity for the ambiguous as part of language learning is well documented. Such an ethnographic approach needs to incorporate a broader spectrum of disciplines not just linguistics or anthropology but the full range of social sciences including geography, history, sociology, psychology, communication, economics. This also needs to be extended into teacher training if there is to be sufficient momentum to successfully carry out a complete paradigm shift.

Some of the most notable examples of research in this area include: Byram, M. 1997, Roberts, C., Byram, M., Barro, A., Jordan, S. and Street, B. 2000 and Jordan, S. A. 2002. These studies, though

innovative and highly relevant, all suffer from the same deficiency, they are missing a crucial link which binds cultures together and is the essence of intercultural understanding. "Know thyself" Without a valid or grounded starting point students lack perspective and any introduction to culture becomes trivial and irrelevant. Learners need to consider the origins of their Worldview, their backgrounds, experiences, memberships, community, role in society in order to discover and feel comfortable with their unique identities. Thus allowing them to look outward at the unknown. Such reflexivity requires making the familiar strange, analyzing everyday events and finding meaning in the mundane, making the invisible visible. This is the heart and soul of ethnography and the starting point for the journey to cultural awareness. Kramsch 1993 refers to this as finding a "third space" a common ground from which to view culture objectively as opposed to the usual here/there, mine/yours, us/them dichotomies. In his development of Intercultural Awareness pedagogy, Byram identifies five skills/abilities (saviors) which make up Intercultural Communicative Competence.

These are:

**Attitudes:** Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about ones own.

**Knowledge:** Understanding social groups and their products and practices and the general process of societal and individual interaction both in local and foreign contexts.

**Interpreting and relating:** Ability to interpret an event in another culture and relate it to ones own.

**Discovery and interaction:** Ability to acquire and apply new knowledge in unfamiliar contexts.

**Critical cultural awareness:** Ability to evaluate based on explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products.

These skills and abilities represent the basic requirements language learners need to be successful communicators. However theoretically sound, a practical means of fostering such skills and abilities

has yet to be developed, for any kind of universal application or at least for the average language classroom. Several advocates of Intercultural awareness have echoed these sentiments most notable examples include Kramsch 1993, Byram 1997, Samovar 1998, Moran 2001, Jordan 2002, Barduhn 2003, however a consensus as to the best way to link reflexivity of awareness raising with the critical analysis of difference has yet to be achieved. Many of the studies and methodologies require that the ethnographic research be conducted abroad in periods ranging from six months to one year and approaches ethnographic research projects by way of an unrealistic "Star Trek" method. That in order to understand and become aware you need to experience first hand, jumping in off the deep end and boldly going where no one has gone before. Although this is a viable means of cultural awareness raising, it is not necessarily the most relevant, practical or successful. Neither is it cross culturally appropriate in that it focuses only on western based ideals, methods and resources. Most language learners in developing countries will hardly have the luxury of being able to take a year off and conduct ethnographic research abroad. Even in Japan, where more resources are spent on Language Education than anywhere else, such opportunities are limited to around 30%. The preparation for these ethnographic projects is also not carried out in the target language and requires specialized teachers to supplement a regular language curriculum. To make this practical, local teachers should be trained in the basics of ethnographic research methodology as part of teacher education.

## Results and Discussion

From the surveys completed by students engaged in Intercultural Education and Ethnographic Projects, and the type of responses and comments generated, a more complete picture of the benefits of such a pedagogy become clear. Pre and post project questionnaires were given to 75 students who participated in the Ethnographic Research Project. A third survey was given to a total of 278 students of various levels,

backgrounds and disciplines to obtain insight into the general level of Intercultural Awareness among Japanese University students. Based on the student's comments, as seen below, it is evident that participation in the project was a positive and beneficial experience. Most students indicated that, although difficult and challenging, they enjoyed the project and feel that they developed some useful skills. Few students noted that this project improved their English levels, however such a self analysis is often difficult and in this case may be premature. Analysed in connection with the survey results, the extent of other skills developed becomes apparent. In terms of creating a working hypothesis, presenting or discussing ideas, conducting fieldwork, creating surveys and writing up research the results indicate a marked improvement and deeper awareness of required skills and abilities. The third survey which gauged Intercultural Communicative Competence in general indicates a strong trend towards increased cultural understanding by students who have either had extensive contact with foreign people or have spent a period of at least three months or more living abroad. Although the Ethnographic Project does not duplicate the travel abroad experience it is able to recreate the experience of difference and diversity which is in essence the crux of living in a foreign community comfortably and being able to communicate successfully. In short the results seem to support an ethnographic approach to developing Intercultural Communicative Competence, as exposing students to local differences, opening their eyes to the diversities at home is the first step to a developing a global understanding.

### Conclusion

Whether the learning environment is homogenous or diverse, there is a wealth of ethnographic information and opportunity for the average language learner. Every classroom is full of sub cultures, micro cultures and co cultures that have nothing to do with nationality. All students differ in their backgrounds, memberships, interests, perspectives and other socio-

psychological or affective traits. After exploring their own identities and perspectives, learners can turn this reflexive information outwards and explore differences among their peers, communities and social circles. Through self directed ethnographic research, conducting fieldwork: through observation, interview or survey students can delve deeper into everyday life bringing to the surface new information and understanding of differences and diversity at home, which they previously ignored or were oblivious to. Some examples include families, work, verbal and nonverbal communication styles and habits, gender differences, social interaction between various groups in different contexts for example dating, shopping. If students can develop skills which allow them to become sensitive and aware of differences within their own communities then they will be better equipped to handle ambiguities and differences that exist elsewhere and as a result become much more competent communicators and well rounded global citizens.

### Student's Comments

What is the most important skill you developed through this activity?

- "Write a report in English."
- "I became to pay attention to the difference way of thinking not only different culture but also generation."
- "I learned how much information we can understand from studying about one small thing. And that it can spread to several possibilities of studying human behaviour and relations."
- "Giving a presentation in English is the most important. It's not just writing or speaking English, so I have to consider the content of the research."
- "To make a presentation - prepare."
- "Developing hypothesis, I think this was very important because we have to motivated ourselves with our own hypothesis and the research will have a good beginning. "
- "Patience"
- "Listening to others opinions"

How does conducting fieldwork research compare to reading research? Which do you prefer? Why?

- “I can make a hypothesis, branch idea easier than reading research for me.”
- “I prefer conducting fieldwork research because I could understand the conclusion as experience. It's unforgettable.”
- “Fieldwork research can be more exciting because you can actually interact with people. But it can be more complicated since all of us has different thoughts and idea, it would be hard to put together the results.”
- “Fieldwork research is not easy as it seems. I prefer fieldwork research (although it depends on the situation) because I can see for my self.”
- “I prefer conducting fieldwork research because I feel like studying more than reading.”
- “Fieldwork because reading in book is also theory when you conduct a research it must be in the field.”
- “I like the interaction with informants (fieldwork), Reading research can get tedious.”
- “I think it is more interesting than reading but I prefer reading because I don't have enough time to look over a wide range.”
- “Induction from data I like. Fieldwork is concrete.”

What did you like best about this activity?

- “To develop the idea”
- “After I finish this research, I could guess what people are thinking and feeling with body languages.”
- “I was able to study and think about what I never noticed in my daily life.”
- “Interviewing by asking questions.”
- “Everybody's presentation.”
- “Observing and interviewing, collecting data gave me a lot of different views.”
- “No reading research.”
- “Listening to teacher's experience and young peoples opinions.”
- “Direct communication is best.”

What effect if any did this activity have on you English ability?

- “Writing research and presentation”
- “I forgotten how important the English speaking is, even though I'm a student of Faculty of International Culture, I haven't used English a couple of years at all. But I realize I can't do my research without English.”
- “I can't say that it effected to improve my English but I noticed the survey question would sound different when translating into another language.”
- “It effected on not only my ability of writing English but of speaking.”
- “At University are few the opportunities to practice English and talked to Japanese.”
- “I noticed that I can't to express my abstract feeling in English. If I were good at English I could tell my thought to others.”

How could the teacher better help you?

- “To correct report before presentation (grammar and vocabulary)”
- “I should have asked for help, then I understand better.”
- “Maybe the teacher could show us one presentation as an example.”
- “He made me think deeply about Japanese Culture, during class not only contemporary topic but also tradition in Japan were studied. And research topic were fabulous.”
- “Help clarify hypothesis.”
- “I need help of vocabulary when I couldn't recollect the word.”
- “I would like you to recommend me some textbooks concerning it and read and discuss.”

#### Student Hypotheses & Research Questions

- Types of exchanges and rapport between customers and employees at convenience stores
- Individual differences in vulnerability and the use of personal space.
- Individual differences in hair touching habits in private and public.

- Reasons for leg and arm crossing in public spaces.
- Male/female differences in eye contact and power distance.
- Behavioral differences due to camera shyness.
- Differences in rule following among local and exchange students.
- Face touching habits of public speakers.
- International differences in relationships between adolescent boys and their parents.
- An investigation of the “unnatural” right-handedness phenomenon in Japan.
- Degree of Cell phone dependence among university students.
- The significance of speech acts “ooh” & “aah” when initiating a conversation in Japanese.
- Cross-cultural differences in expressing and displaying affection.
- Differences and difficulties in non-verbal communication and intercultural communication.
- Variations in interaction between male and female University students.
- Exploring the rise of dekichatta kekkon “shotgun weddings” among young Japanese.
- English usage among young people; exploring Japanglish and “Garu-go” .
- Reasons for the decline in manners and the rise of rudeness among Japanese young people.
- What women want: Significance of changing marriage trends in Japan. The case of “ristora kekon” .
- A survey of bicycle safety in Japan. Exploring the cause and frequency of accidents.

## References

- Barduhn, S. (2004). Developing Cross-Cultural Awareness in The Monolingual Classroom JALT Language Teacher. Vol. 28, No. 7. July 2004. (pp. 13-15).
- Byram, M. (1997). Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Jordan, S. A. (2002). Ethnographic Encounters: The Processes of Cultural Translation. Language and Intercultural Communication Vol. 2, No. 2, (pp.96-110). Clevedon : Multilingual Matters.

Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford University Press, Hong Kong.

Merryfield, M. M. (1993) Reflective Practice in Global Education: Strategies for Teacher Educators. *Theory into Practice*. 32(1), (27-32).

Moran, P. (2001). *Teaching Culture: Perspectives in Practice*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

Roberts, C., Byram, M., Barro, A., Jordan, S. and Street, B. (2000) Language Learners as Ethnographers. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Widdowson, H.G.(1998b) Skills, abilities and contexts of reality. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18: (323-33).

## 授業での多様性に対処するための エスノグラフィック・アプローチ

### 要 約

今日の日本では、大学授業においての受講者の統計が変化している。一般生徒が減るに伴い、多くの大学は生き延びるためにより独創的な方法を追い求めている。大きな予算削減や、解雇、大人数を詰め込んだ授業などではなく、主として社会人や留学生など、より多様な生徒にまで大学を開くことが建設的な取り組みであろう。ニートやフリーターの人口も増え、高校生が長期欠席をしたり、大学授業用の詰め込み塾に行ったりと、大学生となる的確な年齢の認知が従来とは異なってきている。要は平均的な大学生の年齢が上がってきているということである。このような生徒の多様性は、教師にとって大きなチャレンジでもあり、

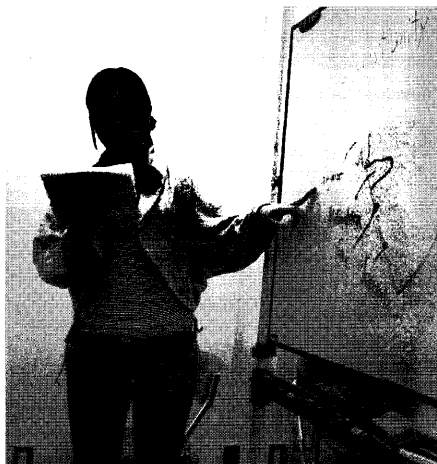
豊富なチャンスでもある。そこで問題は、この新しい機会をどのように用いるかである。この論文は、生徒の自覚レベルを上げ、本物の国際文化コミュニケーション能力を開発するために、よりバランスの取れた実践的な文化学習の必要性に焦点を当てたものである。このような相違を障害とし

てではなく、機会として取り組むことはエスノグラフィック・リサーチを通して、観察・インタビュー・分析・他者との影響そして考えを発見することになるであろう。そしてまた、学習者は自身の世界観と同様、より効果的なコミュニケーションを必要とするスキルを開拓するであろう。

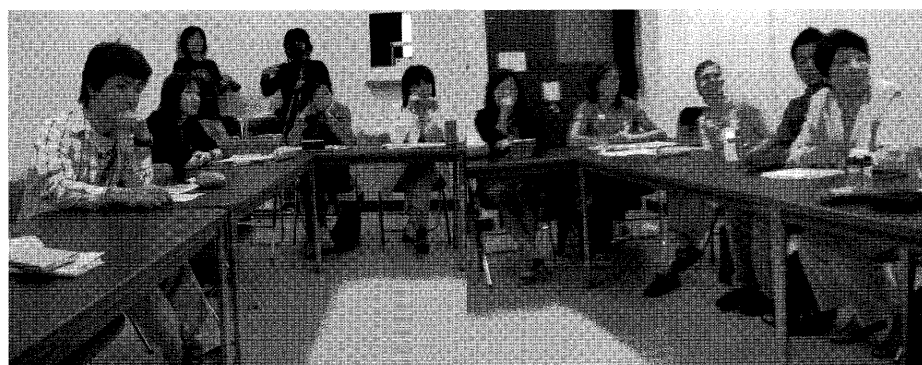
### Students Engaged in Ethnographic Research Activities



**Conducting Fieldwork: Interview and Observation**



**Presentation**



**Discussion**



**Ethnographic Research Feedback Results**

Question	Min	Max	Mean	Sd.
Gender	1.00 <sup>1</sup>	2.00	1.67	0.48
Ethnographic research experience	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	2.00	1.56	0.50
This activity was useful	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	1.00	1.00	0.00
This type of research is difficult	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	1.00	1.00	0.00
I needed more instruction	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	2.00	1.44	0.50
I better understand subjects presented	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	1.00	1.00	0.00
I would like to try this activity again	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	1.00	1.00	0.00
I better understand my topic	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	1.00	1.00	0.00
I am inspired to investigate further	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	2.00	1.11	0.32
I developed a different perspective	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	1.00	1.00	0.00
I understand other topics better	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	2.00	1.22	0.42
I improved my English ability	1.00 <sup>2</sup>	2.00	1.44	0.50
Preference in hypothesis development	5.00 <sup>3</sup>	10.00	6.89	1.55
Preference in conducting fieldwork	4.00 <sup>3</sup>	10.00	7.44	2.09
Preference in writing up results	3.00 <sup>3</sup>	9.00	6.00	1.85
Preference in classroom presentation	5.00 <sup>3</sup>	9.00	6.11	1.69
Preference in classroom discussions	5.00 <sup>3</sup>	10.00	8.56	1.80
Difficulty in hypothesis development	5.00 <sup>3</sup>	9.00	6.67	1.43
Difficulty in conducting fieldwork	3.00 <sup>3</sup>	10.00	7.11	2.21
Difficulty in writing up results	3.00 <sup>3</sup>	10.00	7.33	2.19
Difficulty in classroom presentation	4.00 <sup>3</sup>	10.00	7.44	2.14
Difficulty in classroom discussions	1.00 <sup>3</sup>	8.00	5.00	2.34
Ability in hypothesis development	3.00 <sup>3</sup>	7.00	5.11	1.30
Ability in conducting fieldwork	4.00 <sup>3</sup>	8.00	5.89	1.47
Ability in writing up results	1.00 <sup>3</sup>	8.00	5.56	2.44
Ability in classroom presentation	1.00 <sup>3</sup>	8.00	4.11	2.41
Ability in classroom discussions	3.00 <sup>3</sup>	10.00	5.89	2.36
Overall research activity ranking	5.00 <sup>3</sup>	10.00	7.89	1.62

N=75    <sup>1</sup>1=male, 2= female, <sup>2</sup>1=yes, 2=no, <sup>3</sup>1= low score 10= high score

Some examples of Ethnographic activities which can be done locally and quite easily include:

Phenomena	Hypothesis	Method
Some lunch specials are more popular than others	Teachers prefer rice dishes, students prefer noodle dishes	Observation, interview
Male/female behavior between classes is different	men usually smoke alone, women talk in groups	Observation, survey
Different age groups use of mobile phones	Young games, music, mail Old news, weather, mail	Interview, survey

When exploring cultural behavior, brainstorm ideas by answering the following questions.

<b>Who</b>	Who is involved? How many? What are their roles/relationships? Background information.
<b>What</b>	What exchanges, actions and events occur? What type of communication or interaction?
<b>Where</b>	Where does the behavior take place? What is the context and situation?
<b>When</b>	What time, day, season does the behavior occur? What events affect or are affected by it?
<b>Why</b>	What is the purpose of this behavior? Is it conscious, unconscious, planned or spontaneous?
<b>How</b>	How are the actions involved related? What kind of verbal/non-verbal communication is used?

## Results Summary

Category	Percent				
	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male 33.3%</b>			<b>Female 66.7%</b>
	<b>Yes</b>			<b>No</b>	
Ethnographic research experience	44.4%			55.6%	
This activity was useful	100%			0.0%	
This type of research is difficult	100%			0.0%	
I needed more instruction	55.6%			44.4%	
I better understand subjects presented	100%			0.0%	
I would like to try this activity again	100%			0.0%	
I better understand my topic	100%			0.0%	
I am inspired to investigate further	88.9%			11.1%	
I developed a different perspective	100%			0.0%	
I understand other topics better	77.8%			22.2%	
I improved my English ability	55.6%			44.4%	
	<b>Very Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Very High</b>
Preference in hypothesis development	0.0%	0.0%	44.4%	44.4%	11.2%
Preference in conducting fieldwork	0.0%	11.2%	33.3%	22.4%	33.3%
Preference in writing up results	0.0%	22.4%	33.3%	33.3%	11.2%
Preference in classroom presentation	0.0%	0.0%	66.6%	33.3%	0.0%
Preference in classroom discussions	0.0%	0.0%	22.4%	11.2%	66.6%
Difficulty in hypothesis development	0.0%	0.0%	44.4%	44.4%	11.2%
Difficulty in conducting fieldwork	0.0%	22.4%	11.2%	44.4%	22.4%
Difficulty in writing up results	0.0%	13.8%	13.8%	44.4%	33.3%
Difficulty in classroom presentation	0.0%	11.2%	33.3%	11.2%	44.4%
Difficulty in classroom discussions	22.4%	0.0%	55.5%	22.4%	0.0%
Ability in hypothesis development	0.0%	33.3%	44.4%	22.4%	0.0%
Ability in conducting fieldwork	0.0%	22.4%	44.4%	33.3%	0.0%
Ability in writing up results	22.4%	0.0%	22.4%	55.5%	0.0%
Ability in classroom presentation	33.3%	33.3%	11.2%	22.4%	0.0%
Ability in classroom discussions	0.0%	33.3%	22.4%	33.3%	11.2%
Overall research activity ranking	0.0%	0.0%	22.4%	44.4%	33.3%

N=75

**Intercultural Communicative Competence Survey Results**

<b>Category</b> <b>(Advanced, Intermediate, Low, Foreign)</b>	<b>Adv</b> <b>(N=77)</b>	<b>Int</b> <b>(N=88)</b>	<b>Low</b> <b>(N=61)</b>	<b>For</b> <b>(N=32)</b>
Gender (1=male, 2= female)	1.69	1.7	1.51	1.8
Do you have good communication skills? (1=yes, 2= no)	1.44	1.38	1.56	1.4
Have you ever traveled or lived abroad? (1=yes, 2= no)	1.3	1.36	1.61	1.0
Travel experience (0=none,1=tourist, 2=repeated, 3= extensive)	1.32	0.98	0.52	3.0
How well do you understand foreigners? (0=no ability, 5=strong ability)	2.51	2.4	1.92	2.9
How well do you understand Japanese culture?	2.94	2.91	2.9	2.3
How well can you describe your culture?	2.56	2.6	2.48	3.2
How well do you understand other cultures?	2.1	1.75	1.62	2.4
How well do you understand yourself?	3.68	3.47	3.36	3.5
How well do you understand the influences in your life?	3.32	3.07	2.98	3.2
How well do you understand the origin of your "World View"?	2.57	2.83	2.77	3.5
How well do you tolerate differences?	3.58	3.5	3.41	3.4
How well can you cope with ambiguity?	2.88	2.8	2.48	2.8
How well do you adapt to new situations.	3.47	3.26	2.95	3.9
How well do you accept others who are different from you?	3.57	3.47	3.33	3.6
How well do you deal with culture shock?	3.43	3.24	2.93	3.1
How well do you deal with change?	3.4	3.27	3.11	3.4
How well do you deal with discrimination?	2.96	2.92	2.93	3.1
How well do you understand stereotypes?	2.56	2.7	2.11	2.2
How flexible are you in changing your plans?	3.18	3.09	3.3	3.6
How well do you communicate in Japanese?	4.1	4.09	3.85	3.4
How well do you communicate in English?	2.25	1.9	1.43	2.5
How well do you learn language?	2.97	2.59	2.07	2.4
How well do you understand hidden meaning?	2.88	2.89	2.38	2.5
How well can you understand non verbal communication?	2.62	2.82	2.2	2.5
How well do you listen to others?	3.62	3.61	3.62	3.4
How well do you communicate your opinion to others?	3.04	2.91	2.79	2.9
How well do you communicate with people you don't know?	3.01	3.01	2.77	2.7
How well do you communicate with members of the opposite sex?	3.16	3	2.62	3.2
How patient are you in trying to understand others?	3.47	3.35	3.25	3.0
How well do you work in groups?	3.36	3.06	3	3.4
How well do you work on your own?	3.69	3.69	3.38	3.5

### Communication Skills Analysis

Question	Yes	No	Mean*	Sd.
Do you feel that you have good communication skills?	37.5%	62.5%	1.62	.489
Do you feel confident that you could live/travel in a foreign country?	57.1%	42.9%	1.43	.499
Do you feel confident that you could communicate with foreigners?	58.9%	41.1%	1.41	.496
Do you feel comfortable communicating in Japanese with people you don't know?	63.6%	36.4%	1.36	.485
Do you feel you know what is needed for successful communication?	85.7%	14.3%	1.14	.353
Could you teach yourself communication skills?	40.7%	59.3%	1.59	.496
Have your English classes until now been helpful?	83.6%	16.4%	1.16	.373
Do you want your teacher to teach you communication tricks and strategies?	85.7%	14.3%	1.14	.353
Do you use any tricks or strategies to learn English?	58.9%	41.1%	1.41	.496
Do you use your Japanese communication skills to help you in English?	80.0%	20.0%	1.20	.404
Are you satisfied with your English Education until now?	49.1%	50.9%	1.51	.505
Would you like to have more control over what you learn in class?	64.8%	35.2%	1.35	.482
Do you feel confident speaking in front of other people?	33.9%	66.1%	1.66	.478

### Ethnographic Research – Student Guidelines

Ethnography is the process of describing a culture. It means creating a portrait of a people. An ethnography is a written description of a particular culture including communities, perspectives, people, products and practices. This type of research is based on information collected through fieldwork which usually involves a process known as triangulation. Triangulation is a way of getting accurate and unbiased data by using at least three different sources or methods, typically these are: interviews, observation, surveys or documents.

The goal of ethnographic research is to get an insider perspective and understanding of another way of life. Rather than studying people ethnography focuses on learning from them in order to better understand how we perceive others and social differences.

There are many situations and ways in which ethnographic research can be done. In fact each one of us unconsciously does ethnographic research everyday. Whenever we enter a new environment, try something new or meet new people, we automatically try to get as much information as we can by observing the situation and others behavior, asking questions, participating, listening or reading.

Ethnographic research is a cycle with no real beginning or end. Since social behavior is unique and unpredictable it is impossible to make any final conclusions which can be generalized to all people of particular group. There are however some important steps which make getting started easier.

- 1) Identify a problem, observe some interesting behavior, something you don't understand or would like to know more about.
- 2) Create some research questions, brainstorm ideas, try to develop a hypothesis by identifying possible causes, reasons or explanations for what you have observed.
- 3) Think about the best way or method to answer your questions or prove/test whether your hypothesis is true or false.