CULTURES and LANGUAGES

UN Global Seminar – HOKKAIDO 2008

Cultures and Languages in the Era of Globalization

GROUP 1

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Multiculturalism and its Transformation: from Multicultural Cooperation to Multicultural Competition (Masami SEKINE)

Mr. Sekine proved to be a very entertaining speaker, and we appreciated the effort to do the slides in both languages. Still, he ran a bit too quickly through the English version of the slides so sometimes,

In his lecture he touched the issue of MULTICULTURALISM, taking as example the case of Australia. He presented the history of Multiculturalism in Australia, with the benefits and the dangers of such society and emphasized the economical aspect of Multiculturalism, a new idea for some in our group, as we often think as such
system from the point of view of the cultural, lingual problems it raises.

After admitting and giving few examples of other Multicultural states like Canada or UK, he pointed out that the movement went from embracing enthusiastically the idea to forming an anti-Multiculturalism wave in Australia.

His key point was that from, an Australia seen as a **multicultural corporation**, the state transformed to a stage for **multicultural competition**. While the presentation was well structured, we felt that a small note, comment of the perspective of Multiculturalism in Japan would have given us some point for debating. He also didn’t raise any type of issue, question in the end regarding this Multicultural Corporation vs Multicultural Competition which left us wondering as we were not familiar with such a profound issue.

Trying to ask ourselves research questions, we agreed that some countries are more open to Multiculturalism as they see the immigrant population like a strong labor force or a solution to a ever growing old population.

An example provided was an article about the fact that in the USA in future the Hispanic population will have a bigger % versus the Caucasian population.

Some question:
1) Is Rumania a multicultural society because of it has well established minorities (Hungarians or Germans) living and working, or the multiculturalism issues are raised by society accepting new wave of immigrants?

2) What is multiculturalism?
3) Was the anti-M wave in Australia generated by the fear of losing the local culture under the new influences or due to the fear of losing the jobs of the well established population.

We discussed examples in history when a culture like the Spanish one, imposed and erased in the end the local cultures, traditions and economies of the Pre-Columbians cultures.

What is exactly Competitive Diversity? Is the term related to economical aspect of multiculturalism, the cultural one or both? Some of us suggested that: Competitive Diversity makes the country stronger→individual competes against each other
Some countries are trying to control the immigration wave in order to bring is the best from the economical point of view, in the country. Like Japan according Monbusho people to elite students and granting in a faster process the right to work to foreigners with 1 kyu Proficiency of Japanese language.

4) We agreed that the graphic representing the winners and the losers at the bottom of society fighting with each other is a poor picture and a poor perspective for Multicultural states, but in the end seems like a perspective difficult to avoid.

1. Educating Citizens in a Multicultural Democracy (Audrey OSLER)

   Mrs. Osler, had a translator helping with the presentation which it was a really good idea as the academic English and issues would have been difficult to grasp for our group, as all of us are non-native English speakers.

   She started her lecture by presenting the idea of diversity in today’s global society and talked about having common problems, worries, reactions in different parts of the world (UK citizens being happy for Nelson Mandela’s freedom, South African kids being amazed by such reaction and by foreigner interest in their country’s issues.)

   As she experienced the culture and issues of South Africa by teaching at a school there she was relating her lecture to a movie about the life in a small village in South Africa.

   - talked about kindness to strangers entering our community and about the reward of such actions
   - talked about intolerance to strangers, AIDS victims and about the importance of teaching community to cease being discriminative
   - talked about the right of all children to be educated (AIDS orphans)
   - talked about drop-out in SA and UK, a big percent being represented by girls

   Q 1: we teach the children to be good citizen, meaning wanting them to follow the rules and obey?
   Q 2 Is Japan / Romania / China / Indonesia teaching the children to be concerned about fellow citizens elsewhere in the world?
   Q 3 What is citizenship education?
   Q 4 Are Citizenship education and Human Rights education two separate subjects?

   - Explained what is Human Rights Education
- She asked for a bigger segment focusing in teaching HR education in schools
Global citizens = are citizens preoccupied of their entire citizens elsewhere in the world
- She explained about the project in UK allowing teacher to see what should they include in the citizenship education curriculum
- Civic education became in many countries a good opportunity to teach Human Rights education – IS it necessary a HR separate class?
- Many civic programs went beyond simple “patriotic” models asking the citizens to love and obey unconditionally the nation state to programs with strong HR value base and clear reference to existence and important of diversity and the necessity to respect the minority rights

1. **On the International Diffusion and Multicultural Diversification of English**
   (Nobuyuki HONNA)

   ![Diagram](image)

   - Before globalization, English was for nations like Canada, UK, US, and NZ. But now English had been transformed and localized, for example in Singapore.
   - English is for everybody. People who are native English speakers accept new vocabularies easily unlike Spanish and French.
   - The ownership belongs to the natives through media. English is inclusive.
   - But why English? Foreign language in Japanese should be expanded. Children should be more exposed to many other foreign languages.
   - English is a practical tool. There was an international efforts of creating international language like Esperanto. English has many dynamics and advantages.
   - Language is one part of our identities. Unless there are still other characteristics remained to show your identity other than language, you can still retain the identity although the language had been lost.
Lecture 2: Ainu: Promotion of Language/Culture and Suppression of History

The problem is that majority Japanese have stereotypical images of Ainu. It’s an important concept of multiculturalism.

Professor criticizes the act of promoting Ainu culture because it does not promote political and social rights. Then what should Japanese do for them if they don’t need such act?

Wajin should recognize that they are not the master of the country. Ainu people’s claims are not fixed yet so Japanese people have not found out what Ainu people want.

Japanese should reconstruct the recognition with how many people the country is consisted. It needs to recognize Japan as a multiethnic country in every aspect.

Government efforts are important in keeping the ethnic identity. If Japan recognized Ainu then the land should be returned (?), Ainu people should acknowledge their own history first.

Identity and education of Koreans in Japan

The emotional speaker presented different aspects about the history of Korean population as a minority in Japan. In USA a Chinese can be and fell American, but in Japan a Korean cannot get Japanese citizenship so they cannot introduce themselves as Japanese. Americans, among many people in different nations, can have the right of having 2 or more passports, while in Japan one has the right to have just one. For Chinese American is easy to switch the citizenship form American to Chinese. After the world many Koreans wanted to go back to their country, but they were not accepted back by Korea.

It was argued that some Korean might be reluctant to become Japanese citizens as Japan ask their becoming citizens to speak, act and fell perfectly Japanese and give away that feeling of “I AM Korean!” The Korean diasporas have schools, but some are oriented more on N Korea and S Korea. “Our School”, a movie that tells the story of Koreans living in Sapporo, Japan, is an example of this complicated relation.

The problem with Japan is probably its education system, as Japanese cannot understand and don’t care to understand the history and problems of Korean community, as they also were not educated about the history of Ainu, a current minority in Japan. Regarding minorities, nations should be educated in the world regarding minorities, discriminated minorities.

Globalization of Human Rights in a multicultural world

This presentation could be defined as an explanation of an international legislation approach of Human Rights (HRs). The HRs are a social contract and is a guideline not something IMPOSED on a nation. HRs covers “civil and political right”, coming to cover in the recent years economic and
cultural rights also.

About the Universalism of HRs, it was addressed the question, can they be applied to cultural issues? It was understood that as a global citizen one should promote the HRs as universal, and at the same time they should promote HRs as a guideline to act and be applied according to a certain region issues. HRs should be adapted to local cultures. Today in the world became aware there is a clash between HR and cultural communities. Some issues were left out of Basic HRs. It was suggested that some current actions in this present could be defined as violations of Human Rights in the future. HRs are not so different from other agreements (environment, Kyoto protocol for instance), but some countries take a rigid posture about developing as a Globalization aspects. International laws are limited regarding the way these acts can be imposed on nations.

It was talked the case of Myanmar: after the taifun international community wanted to go in there and help the citizens, but that government stopped them from entering the country, and closed help for its people. UN itself cannot freely moved inside as it has to respect the state sovereignty.

EU has the power, economical power to attract new members with rewards, but in UN doesn’t have the capacity to deal with global issues. Still many countries are trying to look good in the international community and give access to UN.

But definitely the way to impose international HR we don’t need to go to restrictions. The 5 countries in Security Council can veto and if one is exercising this right from economical point of view, the debate stops there. So the blame should go to Security council not directly to UN. It was understood as well that families values could be seen as moral issues.

About the question if a culture should be superior to any other. It was understood that the concept “superior” and “inferior” are not just not useful, but could carry diplomatic problems among the countries that don’t respect the Human Rights. Then it was address the role of the values of the leaders.
About comparing cultural notes, it was understood the differences among Canadian’s, African’s feminism denoting that even in developed countries the human rights could be high, but the level of happiness among women could not be, becoming the opposite in African countries.

It was a talk about civilization, and the use of “savage”, “civilized”, and other adjective that cognate making inferiority certain cultures. About identifying if the world today is complex, no one have only one identity:
Touching the term of Globalization, many groups are joining hands to help the global challenges. As a global citizen one carries certain responsibilities that could or not be assumed, depending of the willing power of each individual
Multicultural Education As Education for Human Right
A very well done lecture, from a Harvard graduate, current professor in Osaka University, addressed that the majority of people are somewhat prejudiced. Also, that mutual recognition, and empowering minorities means freeing majority from prejudice. He indicated 3 levels of relationship: individual (supporting oneself), relating with the others (one is majority and one is working with the minority near one); and, as member of a community.

It was questioned if someone could know something (i.e. culture) without knowing ourselves. There were two different answers, both having a valid response. Also, it was understood the importance of Human Rights education as part of the curriculum in schools. Human beings are impossible not to fell discrimination about other, but we could try. It should be tried first to change ourselves before trying to change others.

Finally, we understood the meaning of “The more identities one has, the more people one can understand, and the more environments one can interact”.