Education for International Understanding in English Teaching

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Introduction

One of the most important movements in English teaching in Japan for the past few years is a shift to communication-oriented English teaching. According to a new course of study (學習指導要領) revised in 1989, the aim of foreign language teaching in junior high school is stated as follows:

To develop students' ability to understand a foreign language and express themselves in that language, and to foster the attitude to communicate in it positively, and to deepen their interest in that language and its culture, and to develop the basis for international understanding (emphasis added).
(Ministry of Education, Science and Culture 1989: 96)

Compared to the old course of study, the italicized part is mainly added.

Furthermore in high school, "oral communication" to foster the attitude to communicate positively was introduced in April of 1994.

There is one more important movement related to communication-oriented English teaching. The Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has experimentally started to introduce English teaching into the elementary school curriculum at two schools in Osaka since September in 1992. Such experimental schools increased to sixteen schools in 1994, and the results of the research are reported every year.

Before moving on to the main subject, the point which must be clarified is that English is taught in Japan not as a second language but as a foreign language. In other words, we teach a language which we do not need immediately in order to live in the society. What, then, is the aim of teaching English as a foreign language in school education? We
can say that it is very important for students in the process of growing to have an experience of understanding and sympathizing about not only the language but also the culture and society of foreign countries through learning a different language from ours, such as English. The aim of English teaching, that is to say, is to give the students an experience of international understanding or intercultural understanding as well as to develop the students’ ability to understand English and to cultivate basic skills to express themselves in English.

Recently, a considerable number of studies have been made on how we can promote international understanding. In this paper, I shall attempt to deal with two issues. First, what should education for international understanding be? And I shall also refer to ‘development education’ and ‘global education’ which are used as synonym to ‘education for international understanding’, and make clear what they are and how they relate to English teaching in Japan. Second, I shall analyze the English teaching in Japanese elementary schools. To promote international understanding is stated one of its important aims. Then I am going to consider the possibility of English teaching as education for international understanding in public elementary schools in Japan.

Chapter 1: What is Education for International Understanding?
1.1. Education for International Understanding

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) was started in 1946 as a special organization of the United Nations, and Japan became a member of it in 1951. According to Encyclopedia of the United Nations, in the Preamble to the Charter of the UNESCO which is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the United Nations, there is the sentence: “That since wars began in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed” (827). And it has been thought that this represents the philosophy of education for international understanding in Japan.

The practice of education for international understanding in the
postwar Japan was mainly developed by the UNESCO Association in the field of social education and the UNESCO Club in the field of school education. Afterwards UNESCO organized the 'Programme for Coordinate Experimental Activities in Education for International Understanding and Co-operation' (at 33 secondary schools in 15 countries) all over the world in 1953, and Japan also joined it. These experimental schools were named UNESCO Associated Schools later. Three themes, 'the study of human rights,' 'understanding of the foreign countries and foreigners,' and 'the study of the United Nations and its special organization' were studied in UNESCO Associated Schools.

In 1974, 'Recommendation Concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education Relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms' was adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth Session.

Considering this UNESCO Recommendation, the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO published A Guidebook to Education for International Understanding in 1982 and tried to structurize education for international understanding. The basic three goals are ①respect of human rights ②understanding foreign cultures ③fostering a sense of solidarity of the world. Especially in understandign foreign cultures, it is said that an attitude of generosity and sympathy which accept diversity of the world's culture and sense of values is very important.

Next let us see the educational policy for international understanding in Japan.

The National Council on Educational Reform (臨時教育審議会) which started in 1984 reported four times, and in the final report in August in 1987, they expressed clearly a global point of view and emphasized the contribution and responsibility for the internationalized society as follows:

Japan is going to be involved in greater inter-dependence with other nations than ever before. If Japan is to survive as a member of the international community, it is important for us to develop those Japanese who can contribute, with a global perspective, to the world community in various
fields and who are truly trusted in the international community.


In this way, the importance of educating students with a global perspective is politically supported, but in fact, education for international understanding in Japan treats only understanding of other countries and cultures, especially the United States and England. I shall refer to this point and how education for international understanding is applied in English teaching in Chapter 2.

1.2. Development Education

In the 1960's, the North-South problem which means the developing countries' poverty, underdevelopment, and their economic subordination to the industrially advanced countries got a great deal of attention. Therefore the NGO (Non-governmental Organizations) of the Western countries started their systematization and educational operation. In those days, the main goal for development education was to stimulate the support for a rescue operation by stirring up compassion for the people living in the third world.

From the middle of the 1970s, however, it was clarified that the various severe problems which emerged in the developing countries were caused not only by the developing countries themselves but also by the developed countries. In these days, therefore, development education is carried out from a viewpoint of interdependence between the third world and developed nations.

O. G. Thomas, Oxford University, explained development education in his article in 1986 as follows:

Development education begins by helping children and adults to be aware of change, near and far; goes on to produce an understanding of how changes occur and of the degree of control we have over them; goes on further to add questions of choice and responsibility; and includes always an element of
action, reaction or behaviour …
(Thomas 1986: 158)

The practice of development education in Japan has been done by the Development Education Council of Japan (開発教育協議会) which was organized in 1982. A summary of the definition of development education by it is as follows:

Development Education is based on understanding the causes of underdevelopment and interdependency. As we approach the 21st century there are a number of issues which we must all take seriously. We must strive to learn about the various efforts and attempts that try to solve the problems. For this purpose we need to instill through our school systems and societies the will to actively participate in a global development.
(Tanaka 1994: 14)

As the definition says, it can be said that development education is an education aimed understanding and resolution of the North-South problem.

However, in spite of the effort of the Development Education Council of Japan, it is hard to say that development education has been widely accepted in Japan. That is why it is difficult to find the examples of development education applied to English teaching, but Naoko Itoh introduced her practice titled by From the Class of English” in World Studies.

Itoh worked in Sri Lanka for two years as a member of JOCV (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers), and she taught English to third-year students in a private junior high school when she came back to Japan.

Itoh set the next four stages as a target.

First stage: To feel as though the world involves yourselves.
Second stage: The recognition of multi-culture (It is not true that those who are different from us are inferior to us.)
Third stage: To know the various problems around the world.
Fourth stage: To think about how they connect with us and what we can do for them.
(Itoh 1993: 14–15)

Based on these stages, she practiced ‘learning by English,’ to be
more precise, to see various things through English by using amusing stories from Asian countries, apartheid, Gandhi, the destruction of forests, Mother Teresa, and so on.

And also she tried a 'Timetable Quiz'. This quiz means that students have to answer the question like, "What time should we leave Paris to arrive at Nice by 18:00?" by using an index map and timetables of Thomas Cook European Time Table which Itoh copied for them. In addition, she often made use of video materials and songs.

There maybe a question whether it is possible to manage such a big content in third-year students' classes which meet only once a week, but this private junior high school's students start to learn English from second grade of elementary school; therefore, they have fairly good competence in English.

Some students wrote their impressions about this English class after a year in the following way. "My reading ability improved because we read many materials unconsciously. / To write my opinion in English is very difficult, but I improve my proficiency in English composition." (Itoh 1993 : 22)

They seemed to develop their reading skills and power of expression in English.

Now Itoh teaches English at a public junior high school, and she continues to grapple with the big theme of thinking positively about the world and the people through English learning, even though the circumstances are limited compared with those of a private school.

1.3. Global Education

According to John J. Cogan, a professor of the Global Education Center at Indiana University, James M. Becker created the word 'global education' in 1986. He generated this new word because he thought the word 'international education' was not suitable for the world situation which changes rapidly and needs a multinational point of view.

For example, the environmental problems like global warming or desertification cannot be solved by one country—they are global tasks
which the human race faces. To resolve such problems, we need international cooperation. In the existing school education, however, little attention is paid to the system of interdependence and larger responsibility for global society. Therefore, Cogan defined global education as follows:

Global education, in short, is an educational process that make youth and adult understand how our life has a complicated connection to other societies on the earth.
(Cogan 1993 : 6)

It can be said that global education is a wide-ranging education which includes education for international understanding, development education, peace education, human rights education, and environment education.

Global education expanded in the United States from the end of the 1970s through the 1980s. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) which made an effort to promote it emphasized:

- that the human experience is an increasingly globalized phenomenon in which people are constantly being influenced by transnational, cross-cultural, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic interactions
- the variety of actors on the world stage
- that humankind is an integral part of the world environment
- the linkages between present social, political, and ecological realities and alternative futures
- citizen participation in world affairs
(NCSS 1982 : 37–38)

These are the five points for the design and development of global education.

As for the content of global education, Willard M. Kniep mentioned next four factors as an essential research field. “①the study of human values ②the study of global systems ③the study of global problems ④the study of the history of contacts and interdependence among people, culture, and nations” (Kniep 1986a : 437)

Next let us see how this global education is applied in English teaching.

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Mayumi Matsuda, a professor of Obirin University, adopts it in English teaching of the university’s general education curriculum as education for raising students’ critical mind and finding the way of learning how to discover oneself.

The Faculty of Economics at Obirin University aims at ‘learner-centered English teaching, focused on output’. The subjects which she treats are environmental problems, racial problems, myths about food, and so on. She asked students to read books on these kinds of subjects in advance in Japanese and to hand in a paper. In the first semester, there were practice of listening by using video materials, vocabulary quizzes, essay writing, lecture time by foreign guests (e. g. the history of a Jew and Judaism). In the second semester, group presentations on a topic which they are interested in had been done in English, and the students had to write some comments about it.

According to the papers evaluated by the students, most of them had a good impression of that class. Some students said, “I don’t want to study [dead English] anymore which is written on paper for the examination, but I would like to study [living English] which is generated in people.” (Matsuda 1993 : 170)

To consider global issues through English is very challenging for the students, but Matsuda’s practice is to make us realize the process by which the students begin to be conscious of ‘Japan in the world’ and ‘oneself in the world,’ and to concentrate on English learning again.

Chapter 2: English Teaching as Education for International Understanding

In this chapter, I shall examine English teaching from a viewpoint of education for international understanding in public elementary schools in Japan.

I attempt to divide them into two types: one is for the students who desire to learn English, such as the case of Chiba Prefecture and Shinjuku Ward in Tokyo, and the other is for all elementary school students, such as the case of the elementary schools in Osaka which was began
under the guidance of Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

First, I try to report on English teaching in each school, then analyze it, and finally consider the problems and tasks in the future.

2.1. English Teaching for Students who desire to learn English

2.1.1. The Case of Chiba Prefecture

The Office of Education in Chiba Prefecture set up ‘Eigo Kyoushitsu (English Class)’ in fifteen elementary schools in 1972. According to the essential points of the establishment in 1987, the objective is, “To be intimate with and get accustomed to English, and to let the students obtain the basic understanding of ways of life and points of view of foreigners through listening and speaking English in elementary level.” And this is kept consistently in teaching materials, in the method of instruction, and by teachers. ‘Yuutori No Jikan’ which is the school’s discretion time is allotted for it.

In respect of curriculum and guidebook, they were made by the cooperation of AETs (Assistant English Teachers) and the Office of Education in Chiba. The guidebook is called “Eigo Kyoushitsu curriculum Elementary Level English Language Program,” and it goes by the name of “A Survival Handbook.” There are examples of one-year curriculum, basic vocabulary list, games, races, songs and classroom Japanese for native speakers of English in that handbook.

There is also a handbook for students which collects greetings, songs, the nouns, how to ask questions and answer by using pictures.

In the class, teachers place great importance on listening and speaking easy English which is used in daily life, and they do not teach writing and reading because “English education in elementary school is not preparatory education for junior high school,” as it is mentioned in the essential points of the establishment. Therefore they rather concentrate on enjoying English.

I observed three schools’ Eigo Kyoushitsu. All of them aimed to communicate in English, and team-teaching by Japanese teachers and AETs was used. In the lesson, teachers used handmade picture cards.
Students learned counting numbers, how to ask and answer questions, sang several songs and enjoyed games and races. At one school, an AET tried to get students to pronounce 'b' and 'p' sounds until a piece of paper placed in front of the student vibrates strongly in order to make them master plosive consonants. The average lesson time was about 50 minutes and the average class size was 28 students.

2.1.2. The Case of Shinjuku Ward

The Board of Education of Shinjuku Ward inaugurated 'Hello Kyoushitsu (Hello Class)' in 1987. Its objective is to give students the chance to enjoy foreign culture, language and customs, and to develop the skills and positive attitude to contribute to international friendship in the future. This project is intended for sixth graders who desire to learn English, and the class is held on Saturday afternoon. The average number of the class is 20 children, and the rate of participation is about 20% of all the sixth graders in Shinjuku Ward.

The twelve instructors who are selected by an interview are ALTs (Associate Language Teachers) or people with working visas. There is a variety of their nationality: English, Canadian, American, Australian and Filipino. The method of instruction is direct method, and by the cooperation of parents called 'Hojoin (an assistant)', Japanese explanation is sometimes added for the complicated parts.

I observed five Hello Kyoushitsu. The lesson began with greetings, then review, and presentation of new materials. Students seemed to enjoy English lessons using many picture cards and games. In some classes, letters were introduced and not in others. It is certain that sixth graders have a strong desire for writing, but actually students only copied the letters written on the blackboard by the instructors; therefore, it seemed that there was no educational effect.

According to Taní who has been in charge of this Hello Kyoushitsu from the beginning, the students who experienced this class are not shy about communicating with foreigners and have good listening comprehension. And also he pointed out that education for international
understanding should be conducted not only in English classes but also in all the subjects in the elementary school curriculum.

2.2. Teaching English for All Elementary School Students
2.2.1. Ajihara Elementary School in Osaka

Ajihara Elementary School conducts English teaching focused on output to foster the willingness to convey one’s feelings and opinions to foreigners. It tries to proceed centering on the activities of listening and speaking, and sometimes introducing non-language communication.

A special room called ‘a room for English,’ where teaching materials, instruments, and English books are available is used for the lesson. Fifth and sixth graders receive two hours per week, or a total of 70 hours per school year, while fourth graders receive lessons once a week. Yutori No Jikan is allotted for it. (First, second and third graders also take lessons once a month, and Japanese or music class is allotted for it.)

Each class is taught by three teachers, the Japanese homeroom teacher (HT), an associate language teacher (ALT) and a Japanese teacher of English (JTE).

In May 1993, I observed a class of sixth graders (22 students), who have taken lessons twice a week for eight months. Students sat in a circle with their name cards on their chests. First they exchanged greetings cheerfully and then reviewed how to ask and answer questions about time. (What time is it?—It’s in the morning/afternoon.) The ALT who took the initiative in that class explained the time difference in the United States using a map on a blackboard, then asked students, “What time is it in New York/Hawaii?” It was very impressive that students calculated in Japanese and answered in English. Another review point was adjectives. They learned adjectives,—dry, wet, hot and cold—by seeing a dry towel, a wet towel, a body warmer and an ice pack which the teachers had prepared. The ALT checked students’ pronunciation one by one.

Next, they learned some differences in gestures between Japan and the United States which was the main subject on that day. First of all,
they had to guess what the ALT’s gesture meant. They learned several gestures which are different from ours, and some gestures which are the same as ours but have different meanings.

The 45-minute lesson closed with words of farewell. My overall impression was that all the students concentrated on the lesson very much and participated in it very actively. Especially, learning gestures seemed to be enjoyable for them.

After the class, I interviewed the teachers and they said that the tasks were: ① how to assign the roles of the three teachers (HT, ALT and JTE) ② how to train teachers ③ administration and ④ curriculum.

2.2.2. Sanadayama Elementary School in Osaka

Sanadayama Elementary School in Osaka sets the goal for English teaching to let students have interest in English and to foster communicating actively with foreigners. The allotted hours and three teachers’ cooperative system are the same as Ajihara, but there was no special room, so English is taught in each classroom.

It was the second lesson of first graders’ class which I observed in May 1993. It began with very cheerful greetings, “Hello!” and the HT introduced the students whose birthday is in May, and everyone sang “Happy Birthday to You” for them. Next they reviewed how to introduce oneself which they had learned one month before.

The main subject on that day was to learn how to use “How are you?” Before coming into that lesson, the HT had to explain in Japanese what ‘Gokigen Ikaga Desuka? (How are you?)’ meant, because most of the first graders were not familiar with this greeting. After they understood its meaning, the HT and the JTE demonstrated this English greeting. Next, the ALT talked to each student one by one, and students greeted the one next to them as a pair work to be firmly established in them. Lastly, they enjoyed a gesture game. First, the ALT explained how to use the fingers meaning, ‘fine/bad/so-so.’ After that, students walked around the classroom and asked friends, “Hello. How are you?” And the other answered by using gestures of fingers. Those who
greeted the most number of people won the game. Students romped about the room merrily, and they greeted six to eight people on average.

After the lesson, I interviewed the teacher. The problems which he pointed out were: ① the roles of the three teachers ② taking too much time to make curriculum and ③ the arrangement of the class.

2.3. Analysis

I have reported the result of the observation on English teaching for the students who desire to learn it and that for all the students in elementary school in 2.1. and 2.2. In this 2.3., I shall try to analyze those practices on the following thirteen points: ① competent authority for instruction ② objective ③ target grade ④ class hours per week and allotted time ⑤ class size ⑥ teaching place ⑦ instructor ⑧ teaching methods and flow of instruction ⑨ main teaching materials ⑩ evaluation ⑪ training for instructors ⑫ changes seen in students ⑬ problems.

In each cases, I analyze mainly by my observation of the class and interviewing teachers. In addition to these, I refer to a handbook for instructors in the case of Chiba Prefecture, and a report handed to the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture in the case of Osaka.

The result of analysis is presented in Table I.

First, with regard to the objective, all state creating students' interest in English and to fostering a basis for international understanding. After beginning the lesson, however, teachers are inclined to put much focus on teaching English as it was pointed out in Table I-⑬ problems. In the whole year curriculum of elementary school in Osaka, there are not only American events, such as Halloween, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas and St. Valentine's Day, but also Japanese events, such as Children's Day, the Star Festival and New Year's Day. Although they try to aim for English teaching focused on output, it seems that a greater importance is attached to teaching English.

Second, most of the instructors take the same style of flow of instruction: greeting → review → introduction → expansion → greeting, which are focused on listening and speaking skills. As for reading and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>items of comparing</th>
<th>Chiba Prefecture</th>
<th>Shinjuku Ward</th>
<th>Aijihara E. S. in Osaka</th>
<th>Sanadayama E. S. in Osaka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>② objective</td>
<td>To be intimate with and get accustomed with English, and to let the students obtain the basic understanding of way of life and point of view of foreigners through listening and speaking English in elementary level.</td>
<td>To give students the chance to enjoy foreign culture, language and customs, and develop the skills and positive attitude to contribute international friendship in the future.</td>
<td>English teaching focused on output to foster the attitude to convey one's feeling and opinions to foreigners through activities of listening and speaking</td>
<td>To let the students have interest in English and to foster to communicate actively with foreigners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>③ target grade</td>
<td>above fourth graders who desire to learn</td>
<td>only sixth graders who desire to learn</td>
<td>all students</td>
<td>all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>④ class hours per week and allotted time</td>
<td>• once a week • 40~50 minutes • club activity</td>
<td>• once a week • one hour • after school on Saturdays</td>
<td>• first graders to third graders; once a month, music or Japanese class • fourth graders: once a week, Yutori No Jikan • fifth and sixth graders: twice a week, Yutori No Jikan</td>
<td>(as same as Aijihara Elementary School)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⑤ class size</td>
<td>approximately 30 students</td>
<td>approximately 20 students</td>
<td>approximately 20 students</td>
<td>approximately 20 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⑥ teaching place</td>
<td>classroom or all-purpose classroom</td>
<td>library or special classroom</td>
<td>'room for English' (special classroom)</td>
<td>each classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⑦ instructor</td>
<td>AET and a Japanese teacher in charge of a club activity</td>
<td>native speaker of English</td>
<td>HT, ALT and JTE</td>
<td>HT, ALT and JTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⑧ teaching methods and flow of instruction</td>
<td>basically direct method (sometimes explanation added by a Japanese teacher) greeting→review→introduction→expansion→song→greeting</td>
<td>basically direct method (sometimes explanation added by an assistant) greeting→review→introduction→expansion→greeting</td>
<td>team teaching by three teachers</td>
<td>team teaching by three teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table I. Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>items of comparing</th>
<th>Chiba Prefecture</th>
<th>Shinjuku Ward</th>
<th>Ajihara E. S. in Osaka</th>
<th>Sanadayama E. S. in Osaka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>① main teaching materials</td>
<td>handout and picture cards made by instructors/handbook for students</td>
<td>picture cards made by an instructor</td>
<td>picture cards, games and number cards made by teachers/video/textbook for students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>② evaluation</td>
<td>nothing</td>
<td>nothing special, but at the end of the academic year, everyone gets certification.</td>
<td>• periodical self-evaluation by students • overall evaluation by checkcard done by teachers • year-end certification</td>
<td>• self-evaluation by students • overall evaluation by checkcard done by teachers • evaluation of sample students by checkcard • year-end certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>③ training for instructors</td>
<td>distribution of handbook to AET and Japanese teachers</td>
<td>(nothing stated)</td>
<td>(nothing stated)</td>
<td>• training of team-teaching • acquisition of class-room English • opening mini English school cooperated by ALT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>④ changes seen in students</td>
<td>• 90% of the students are enjoying English. • After entering junior high school, they do not necessarily get high grades, but teachers said that their listening comprehension is very good and they participate in the class actively.</td>
<td>• improvement in listening comprehension • active communication with foreigners • energetic attitude in everything</td>
<td>• improvement in listening comprehension • having interests in English learning after they get textbook • trying to use learned English in school and at home • having interests in different cultures in other subjects</td>
<td>• trying to listen to English carefully and speaking without fearing making mistakes • asking ALT or JTE about unclear expression of English (seen in fifth and sixth graders) • trying to use learned English in school and at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⑤ problems</td>
<td>AET sometimes changes in September, therefore students have trouble getting accustomed to a new teacher • communication gap between AET and Japanese teacher • not making good use of team-teaching very much</td>
<td>• target only sixth graders • luck of the factors of education for international understanding • necessity of training for PTA</td>
<td>• too much focus on teaching English, not international understanding • impossible to make long-term plan, because of being pressed for time for preparation • viewpoints of evaluation are vague • some students are behind in learning already</td>
<td>• some students are behind in learning already, even though taking enjoyable activities such as games and songs • the merit of team-teaching sometimes disappeared depending on the class • luck of time for analysis of evaluation • being pressed for time for preparation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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writing skills, there are differences among them. For example, schools in Chiba Prefecture do not introduce those skills; in Shinjuku Ward some instructors do; Ajihara Elementary School introduces them from sixth grade; and Sanadayama Elementary School from fifth and sixth grade. According to my investigation by questionnaire to the students in Chiba Prefecture, they have a great interest in the alphabet. (Maeda 1993: 24) However, as it was seen in the case of Shinjuku Ward, it is useless when the students copy the letters written on the blackboard by an instructor. Therefore, teaching English to those who desire to learn it in a short period should focus on listening and speaking English, and teaching English to all the students like schools in Osaka in a long term can introduce elementary level reading and writing from the upper grade.

Third, there are many teaching materials made by instructors for financial reasons. They say that teachers can make picture cards easily by using color-copy machines in schools in Osaka. For all that, it takes much time to prepare hand-made materials. We need to develop teaching materials which can be made cheaply, easily, and are usable repeatedly.

Fourth, regarding evaluation, it has not been done in Chiba Prefecture and Shinjuku Ward; however, instructors often correct students' pronunciation and praise them if they can do well which motivates them. At Sanadayama Elementary School, the HT tries to see students changes by continuously evaluating six students' interest and attitude in communication activities and the skills of expression and understanding of English by grading according three ranks. The six students are selected by twos from each top, middle and low level in the class with reference to their records of Japanese and other subjects. However, it is impossible to catch students' changes in a short period, therefore we cannot see a great result from this evaluation. Moreover, it is too heavy a burden for the HT to evaluate six students continuously. This is a point to be discussed next time.

Fifth, training for instructors was poorer than expected. AETs and
ALTs had training after they were hired, but training for Japanese teachers is not enough, and most of them are not satisfied with this situation. The importance of training in English with the cooperating of ALTs like that seen in Sanadayama Elementary School and training in evaluation or international understanding will increase in the future.

Sixth, the improvement of listening comprehension and active attitude toward learning English are seen in common in changes of students. Furthermore, it is reported that their interest in different cultures is seen in other subjects in Ajihara Elementary School. This is one of the great results. We need a follow-up survey of the changes in students after they enter junior and senior high school in the future.

Finally, the biggest problems seemed to be how to incorporate education for international understanding into English teaching, how to save time for preparation for the lesson and how to teach students who are behind in learning.

Conclusion

In this paper, I began to investigate what 'education for international understanding' is, which is often seen in the objectives of English teaching. In Japan, education for international understanding should have been developed to be connected with the movement of UNESCO's 'international education' and it aimed at rearing 'Japanese in the world' in the context of our international interdependence relationship. In reality, however, we often hear the criticism that education for international understanding in Japan still keeps within the understanding of foreign cultures, especially those of Western countries, and it has not yet reached the understanding of Asian and other developing countries. From the reflection on this, some English teachers make an effort to incorporate 'development education' which aims understanding and resolution of the North-South problems and 'global education' which cultivates 'coexistence-consciousness' for the global society in their English teaching as we have seen in Chapter 1.

Furthermore, English teaching in public elementary school which
has been experimentally started since 1992 by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture was mainly considered in the viewpoint of education for international understanding in Chapter 2. This English teaching states the improvement of listening and speaking skills and fostering the basis of international understanding as its purposes. In fact, students' phonetic skills are improved to some extent even in a short period; however, it is found to be very difficult to reach the goal of international understanding because most of the teachers focused on teaching English so much. Moreover, there remain many problems in English teaching in elementary school, such as training for instructors, how to use team-teaching and how to evaluate students' interests and attitude.

As a further problem for consideration, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has to embody the 'basis of international understanding' stated in a course of study. We found that teachers are in confusion because the meaning of 'basis of international understanding' has been kept vague. Therefore, we must argue whether English teaching should take responsibility of all three goals—①respect of human rights ②understanding foreign cultures ③fostering a sense of solidarity of the world—which were mentioned by the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO or it should take a main role of the understanding of foreign cultures through language. And also we need to clarify the role of English teaching as education for international understanding in reference to other subjects; otherwise, we cannot avoid the criticism that English teaching in public elementary school is a preparatory activity for English classes in junior high school.

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