

## *Newsletter No. 6*

### **Workshop in October**

**Date:** October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 10:30-14:30

**Venue:** NUFS Meieki Campus (BIZrium Nagoya)

**Title: "Fun Active Learning Activities to Promote Intercultural Learning"**

**Presenter: Tomoko Yoshida** ( Keio University)

Bio: Tomoko Yoshida has been in the intercultural field for more than thirty years. She has also been teaching content-based English classes in the Faculty of Business and Commerce at Keio University since 1998. Prior to her academic career, she was a Training Director at ITT Sheraton Hotels in Hawaii and Project Fellow at the East-



West Center in Hawaii, where she worked with Dr. Richard Brislin. She has numerous publications including *Intercultural Communication Training: An Introduction* (1994, Sage Publications), *Improving Intercultural Interactions* (1994, Sage Publications), *Ibunka Training* (2009, Sanshusha Publications), and *Academic Writing* (2018, Keio Publishing). She has published many articles on various topics such as returnee adjustment, bi-ethnic identity, and raising multicultural children in Japan.

### **Abstract:**

In this highly interactive workshop, I will introduce numerous materials including activities, video clips, children's books, and games to introduce various ways in which culture influences the way we think and behave. The six major themes we will be covering are: How Culture Affects Communication, How Culture Affects our Common Sense, How Culture Affects our Emotions, How Culture Affects the Way we Interpret Things, and Multicultural Japan. Please be prepared to participate, have fun, and think of unique ways in which you can adapt my activities to your classroom!

**The number of participants: 35**

## 1. Interesting activities you might want to use in your class. Why?

- I would like to use the introductory activities, especially ‘How many percent?’, because I think it’s a vague way to tell students we are all equal but not the same.
- I enjoyed common sense awareness exercise. I found that everyone’s idea is very different. For example, when I was asked to imagine that I am in a restaurant and I want to get a waiter’s help, I’d say ‘Excuse me.’, but others had different ideas. Knowing others’ ideas was so interesting.
- To make picture books about cultural diversity. It’s a good chance for students to notice that it’s okay that we’re different.
- Role play – students in groups act out a scenario and other students guess the correct answer.
- Imagining flower & breakfast activity – because there will be many answers among students even in all Japanese class.



## 2. What you learned from today’s workshop

- Learning a language is not only learning vocabulary and grammar, but also trying to understand the culture and the background of the people.
- There are many different cultures, common sense in Japan and there is a way to learn about them.
- It was the first time for all teachers to say opinions or comments at the workshop, so it was a good opportunity to hear everyone’s voice.
- There are ways to promote intercultural awareness without being explicitly told or experiencing foreign cultures.
- Today’s workshop reminded me of the fact that we are always highly affected by the culture we are living in.

## 3. Questions and Answers

### 1) *How can I adapt your activities so that my low-level students can participate while they can maintain their English use in the classroom (usually my students do the activities only in Japanese.)?*

Thank you for this question! I guess it depends on how low the level of your students is. To me, if they are doing part of their work (e.g., reading and presenting) in English, I don’t mind if they do their discussion in Japanese. For example, for critical incidents, even if my students do their discussion and preparation in Japanese, they are at least reading the critical incidents in English and they must perform it in English, so for me, that is fine. In fact, I have noticed that students who discuss in Japanese often understand the content better and often create something more complex, so I don’t necessarily stop them.



Also, in the activity in which I had everyone write key words or draw pictures and stand in two lines, I

have found that even lower-level students are able to do this activity if I encourage them to focus on communication rather than perfect grammar. I usually begin by demonstrating how to do it and then the students are given 1 minute to ask questions about their partner's pictures and another minute to answer their partner's questions. Then, one row rotates so that students can talk to many students.



Finally, we stand in a big circle and each student is asked to share a story. As I mentioned during the workshop, this is a great activity to use at the beginning of every semester. During the workshop we used it to introduce our multicultural selves, but we can also use it to introduce our summer or whatever you like. I have noticed that, like this, if they are given the chance to practice one-on-one first and then asked to present to the group, they can do it. If you have any ideas, I'd love to hear them!

**2) *When you have some diversity projects in your class, how do you evaluate your students?***

Thank you for this question! On the NUFS page, you should see a PDF document entitled "Micro-Aggression at Schools." This is an example of how the students present their projects. When I grade them, I look at their methodology (i.e., how they created their product), how they evaluated the effectiveness of their product, the quality of their final product, and their presentation skills (e.g., how creative they were). You will notice that their final product was in Japanese but since they were creating a training manual for Japanese teachers, I thought that was appropriate.

**3) *What do you suggest teachers do when there is not enough class time for activities?***

Thank you so much for this difficult question! I am not sure how little time you have but I guess one way is to make it part of their homework. For example, they could watch the HSBC commercials for homework and then analyze it or they could create their own advertisement like the HSBC ad about cows, using their slogan, "The more you look at the world, the more you recognize people's different values." Again, if you have any ideas, I'd love to hear them!



**4) *If there is some website, we can take some materials to use in the classrooms, please share the URL.***

Thank you for this question! I usually consult various books I have in my office but thanks to your question, I did a little searching and found lots of sites. This link looks quite good. I am sure you will find more if you look.

<https://intercultural-learning.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ICL@School-Toolbox-final-1.pdf>

## **AR Discussion**

**Date:** October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 14:30-17:00 (Room MW01, 02, 03)

**Title:** Action Research Discussion

**Advisors:** Kazuyoshi Sato, Duane Kindt, Kevin Ottoson (NUFS)

**The number of participants:** 15



*Next Workshop will be held on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024.*

*Detailed information is here:*

<https://www.nufs.ac.jp/workshop/news/>

### **NUFS Workshop**

Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

57 Takenoyama, Iwasaki-cho, Nisshin-shi

Secretary: Chihaya Sugiura