

異文化間リテラシーと感度の測定と評価に関する研究*

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A Study on Measuring and Assessing Cross-cultural Literacy and Sensitivity

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1. Introduction: The Importance of Diversity

The author, seeking to find a quantifiable measure for assessing cross-cultural literacy and sensitivity, has perused through multiple anthropological and educational journals to find that research on the subject is somewhat limited and inconclusive. Although cross-cultural awareness and globalization appear often in research, a definitive measurement for society members' sensitivity and awareness is somewhat lacking. With this said, the author found value in Robert G. Hanvey's 1976 research titled "An Attainable Global Perspective" and Peter S. Adler's 1972 research titled "Culture Shock and the Cross-Cultural Learning Experience" to promote thought on the subject of cultural awareness and sensitivity. Although these articles from the 1970s might be considered by some academics as being dated, the author found prodigious value in the research and would like to focus on the specific points discussed in these articles while sharing personal examples and further thoughts based on experience and research.

2. Cultural Diversity: The Key to Increased Knowledge

Throughout history, human society has benefited through the sharing of knowledge for the advancement of our species. In recent years, as the world population has expanded in combination with the technological advances in transportation and communication, humanity has become more conscious than ever of cultural

differences. The development of different cultures brings not only variety but also perspective on truth and knowledge. Diversity is viewed by some bigoted individuals as a nuisance of "us" versus "them" but this separatist view merely breeds discrimination.

Let us use as an analogy the light passing through a prism. Our eyes can see but a small range of the spectrum of the light, and with a naked eye we see visible light as white. The prism breaks the light into its several component wavelengths, or colors, thus enabling us to see the red, green, and blue, and the orange, yellow, and violet. Because of our different cultural backgrounds, we can see several aspects of life somewhat differently from each other, as if each cultural background could see a few colors but never all of them. The sharing of discoveries and experiences by individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds might enable them to more fully comprehend the diverse aspects of truth and knowledge. In this sense, diversity is a necessity, for wherever we find diversity we might find greater knowledge and wisdom.

The diversity of culture one can find on this planet speaks volumes as to how knowledge has been gained over the centuries through the sharing of ideas. Roman influences on architecture and art, Indian influences on mathematics, Asian influence on philosophy and hygiene, European influence on music and medicine. Cultural diversity complements the pursuit of knowledge — it is through differences that one compares and learns. The influence of cultural diversity can be seen in music, dance, drama, painting, sculpture, poetry, and prose as well as medicine,

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science, mathematics, physics and philosophy. All these influences have made the world richer in ideas and in knowledge. That same diversity continues to make the world richer in potential.

Linguistic diversity is also important. In every language we will find words that are unique; they have no parallel or exact translation in other languages. These words can act on the minds of the people of each particular cultural environment in a unique way, triggering different thoughts and feelings, depending on the local culture or subculture. These thoughts and feelings will have distinct flavors due to local cultural experiences, the interpretation and details vary from one culture to another. For this reason, linguistic diversity promotes expression and variety. The knowledge of another language enables one to understand how diversity benefits humanity through insight and reflection.

3. Overview of Cross-Cultural Awareness

As stated by Dr. Hanvey (1976), cross-cultural awareness may be one of the more dimensions to attain. Having knowledge of world conditions is very much different from having a comprehension and an acceptance of the basic human capacity for creating unique cultures. The differences in outlook and practices between world societies are known at the levels of tourist impressions, but true attainment of cross-cultural awareness and empathy requires a deeper level of experience and commitment to comprehending a foreign culture.

It is a misconception that contact between societies leads to understanding. Thousands of years of documented evidence suggests that contact between societies leads to conflict and war. Most native people of any continent or island have experienced colonialism and slavery as a result of contact. Modern examples of contact between societies are riddled with conflict imposed through forced social systems, religious principles, and language.

In this age of enlightenment, cross-societal contact still maintains a covert purpose such as marketing promotion or for political gain. This can be seen through the Chinese Communist

Party (CCP) influence in the Western countries and in Africa. Censoring of movies, soft propaganda in the news and media riddle the free press of countries outside China with the poisonous ideology of communism. The establishment of Confucian Institutes in various countries with the covert purpose of spreading the nationalist ideology of the CCP under the pretense of academia has until recently been unchallenged. The CCP Virus (COVID-19) and the government cover-up in the deliberate spreading of the coronavirus while not allowing for the source of the virus to be investigated has put the nation under scrutiny of countries throughout the world.

Of course, the West is also guilty of using its influence for capitalistic gain as McDonald's® and CocaCola® permeate the entire planet. Advertising's role in the socialization of the world and the cultural implications for advertising was the topic covered in detail by researchers Jefferey K. Johnson and Carrie La Ferle in their writing of "Raising the Golden Arches". The authors correlate the fast food industry advertising campaign and its role in the socialization of the world has made the golden arches of McDonald's® a more recognizable symbol worldwide than the Christian cross (Okazaki, 2012). Figure 1 below provides the reader with a reference of the "Raising the Golden Arches" image.



Figure 1. Raising the Golden Arches
[Source: inciclopedia.wikia.com/wiki, n.d.]

Cross-cultural awareness refers to knowledge or level of acceptance achieved for another culture. The author believes that there are four quantifiable levels of cross-cultural awareness

roughly based on criteria presented in Dr. Hanvey's 1976 research that can be sequenced as described in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Four Levels of Cross-Cultural Awareness

Rank	Description
Level 1	Initial willingness to respect local ways and viewpoints
Level 2	Participation as evidence of respect
Level 3	Advanced participation: Living in the culture
Level 4	In-depth understanding of the host society

[Source: Dr. Robert G. Hanvey, *An Attainable Global Perspective*, 1976]

Dr. Hanvey states that cross-cultural awareness or a global perspective is not a quantum or something that you either possess or do not possess. It is a mixture of cognitive skills that any given individual may be in possession of or lacking. The goal for achieving cross-cultural awareness is seen through the socialized significant of collectivities of people in a society which supports important elements of global perspectives represented by a group. Hanvey further states that “every individual does not have to be brought to the same level of intellectual and moral development in order for a population to be moving in the direction of a more global perspective” (Hanvey, 1976). Hanvey further explains by introducing the five dimensions of a global perspective essential for cross-cultural awareness are: 1. Perspective Consciousness, 2. A “State of the Planet” Awareness, 3. Cross-Cultural Awareness, 4. Knowledge of Global Dynamics, 5. Awareness of Human Choices.

The first of the five dimensions is labeled as “Perspective Consciousness” which is defined by as being the recognition or awareness on the part of the individual that he or she has a view of the world that is not universally shared, that this view of the world has been and continues to be shaped by influences that often escape conscious detection, and that others have views of the world that are profoundly different from one's own (Hanvey, 1976). Unfortunately, very few society members are able to transcend the viewpoint presented by the cognitive mapping

presented by the culture in which one grew up. However, the effort to at least develop a dim sense that as individuals we possess biases and our beliefs are able to have a subtle influence on the perspectives of others. This author believes that it is the recognition of the existence of the diversity of perspectives that we should consider the main element of a cross-cultural perspective consciousness. Acknowledgement is an important step for the development of a perspective that can be considered global. However, one must make a distinction between opinion and perspective. Opinion is superficial—the conscious portion of perspective that influences one's world view.

4. Levels of Cross-Cultural Awareness

Cross-cultural awareness can be measured quantifiably. Cross-cultural awareness can be divided into four levels or stages. Level 1 is superficial and potentially based on stereotypes and information gained through media and entertainment. Level 2 is more aware of contrasting differences without the intellectual analysis of Level 3. Level 4 is the immersive knowledge of another culture with the familiarity of the host culture.

At level 1, a person might know that Japanese are exaggerated in their politeness and gestures of deference. At level 2 are those who know, that either direct or secondhand experience, of cultural traits that significantly contrast with one's own practices (Hanvey, 1976). At level 3, are those who might know, for example, that

the really distinctive aspect of the Japanese social hierarchy has nothing to do with the forms of politeness but rather exists in the keen sense of mutual obligation between superior and inferior. The level 3 person accepts this cultural trait intellectually as it has come to make sense to that person. However, it is possible

for one of level 3 to slip to level 2 without attaining level 4 understanding. As multi-cultural citizens, we should try to attain at least some aspects of level 4 awareness—especially when considering making decisions on policy or authority.

Levels of cross-cultural awareness can be described through Table 2.

Table 2. Levels of Cross-Cultural Awareness

Level	Information	Mode	Interpretation
Level 1	Awareness of superficial or very visible culture traits and stereotypes	tourism, textbooks magazines, Internet	unbelievable, exotic bizarre
Level 2	Awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own	culture conflict situations	unbelievable, frustrating irrational
Level 3	Awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own	intellectual analysis	believable, cognitive
Level 4	Awareness of how another culture feels from the standpoint of the insider	cultural immersion: living and participating in the host culture	believability because of subjective familiarity

[Source: Dr. Robert G. Hanvey, *An Attainable Global Perspective*, 1976]

Evolutionary experience that seems to freeze us into a small-group psychology, anxious and suspicious of those who were not “us” also made us the most adaptive creature alive (Hanvey, 1976). That flexibility is the power to make vast psychic shifts is an integral part of us and its manifestations is the modern capacity for empathy.

Empathy is the capacity to see oneself in another individual's situation. This is an indispensable skill for people moving out of traditional settings. Ability to empathize may make the difference when we must meet new individuals, recognize new roles, and learn new relationships involving oneself.

High empathic capacity is the predominant personal style only in modern society, which is distinctively industrial, urban, literate and participant. Traditional society is nonparticipant as it deploys people by kinship into communities isolated from each other and from a determined center (Lerner, 1959).

Isolated communities of traditional society functioned well on the basis of a highly constrictive personality, the interdependent sections of modern society require widespread participation. This in turn requires an expansive and adaptive self-system, ready to incorporate new roles and to identify personal values with public issues. This is why modernization of any society has involved the great transformation called psychic mobility (Lerner, 1959).

If the latent capacity for empathy can be learned and activated, then it may not be too much to work toward a psychic condition that reaches a step beyond empathy. This next step is described by anthropologist-philosopher Magoro Maruyama as “transspeciation”.

Transspeciation is an effort to put oneself in the head of another person. One makes an active effort to believe what the other person believes, and assumes what the other person assumes. Transspeciation differs from analytical understanding in that it is a projection of feelings of empathy

between two persons with one epistemology (Maruyama, 1972). Transsppection is a trans-epistemological process which tries to learn a foreign belief, a foreign assumption, a foreign perspective, feelings in a foreign context and consequences of such feeling in a foreign context. In transsppection a person temporarily believes whatever the other person believes (Maruyama,

1972). It is an understanding by practice.

Transsppection refers to one's capacity to imagine others in a role within the context of a foreign culture. Combining the definition of "empathy" by Learner (1959) and "transsppection" by Maruyama (1972), the following table explains the psychic development of humanity.

Table 3: Combining Empathy and Transsppection

Society Member	Perspective/Attributes
Traditional	Local perspective (low empathic capacity) Unable to imagine a viewpoint other than that associated with fixed roles in the context of a local culture
Modern	National perspective (high empathic capacity) Able to imagine and learn a variety of roles in the context of a national culture
Postmodern	Global perspective(transsppection capacity) Able to imagine the viewpoint of roles in foreign cultures

[Source: author]

The sequence of development in the above table might be inclusive for the versatility of modern heterogeneous national societies involving movement from the constrictions of local perspectives through the expanded psychological flexibility necessary for role learning in a larger population. The modern personality type did not develop because it was planned; rather, it emerged in the context of ever-changing social conditions.

If more individuals reach the vantage point of level 4 awareness, there will be another kind of gain. Dispelling the strangeness of the foreign and admitting the humanness of all humanity is vitally important. However, looking at ourselves from outside our own culture is a possibility for those who can also see through the eyes of the foreigner. Native social analysts can probe the deep layers of their own culture, but the outside eye has a special sharpness if the native can achieve the vision of the foreigner (Hanvey, 1976). This way, one will be rewarded with a degree of self-knowledge not otherwise obtainable.

Examples of lack of empathic capacity can be seen permeating popular culture and world news events. National conflicts involving,

political, social, and religious ideology has resulted in a never-ending plague on humanity.

The entertainment industry serves to perpetuate the lack of empathic capacity in its heroes and stories. As an example, Superman, once a comic book superhero and a traditional model to youth represents the lack of transsppection in that Superman battles for "truth, justice, and the American way". The very wording of the "American way" is xenophobic and fails to imagine or achieve empathic capacity beyond a national perspective.

Likewise, the original Star Trek series and its introduction narration of "...boldly go where no man has gone before" is also not inclusive to all genders and lacks transsppection capacity in its narrative.

5. Levels of Culture Shock

A set of social and psychological mechanisms are activated by the experience of intensively living or working within a different cultural context. A reaction takes place within the individual in which the outward experiences of places, faces, and situations are internalized in a different way. Such reactions are called culture shock, and are associated primarily with individuals

who have spent a good deal of time outside their own national boundaries.

Descriptions of culture shock by those who have experienced it reflect everything from mild irritability to psychological panic and crisis. The individual undergoing culture shock is thought to reflect feelings of estrangement, anger, hostility, indecision, frustration, unhappiness, and illness. The person experiencing culture shock may simply be bewildered and confused.

Culture shock can be further described as a form of anxiety that results from the loss of commonly perceived and understood signs and symbols of social intercourse. It could also be described as a “mental illness” and as true of much mental illness, the victim usually does not know he is afflicted. The development of culture shock takes place in stages.

The first stage begins with the excitement and euphoria of foreign travel. The individual is captivated by the new cultural surroundings and is excited by the discovery of cultural similarities than by differences, and is concerned with material well-being. This is often referred to as the “honeymoon” stage.

The second development of culture shock takes place as personal, social, and cultural differences intrude more and more into the individual’s image of self-security based on routine, tradition and philosophy. Such a person takes solace in griping about the local customs and habits, and seeks respite and escape from the cultural differences that are glaring.

The third phase marks the recovery stage where one begins to learn more about the local traditions, customs, language and outlook and opinions begin to be tempered with more understanding and sensitivity.

The fourth and final stage comes with a personal understanding of the local culture and ability to cope in most instances. One has the ability to experience the culture in a relatively constructive and meaningful manner.

Culture shock is most often related to the adjustment and readjustment crises that one experiences during the initial and concluding phases of an individual’s experience abroad.

Adjustment to and acceptance of another culture might also introduce reverse-culture shock after one returns to their native culture.

6. Examples of Measuring Cross-cultural Literacy and Sensitivity

When one considers the levels of cross-cultural awareness, many “real world” examples can be considered. In the author’s own experience, the expectation by Japanese that all Caucasians only speak English or only “hear” English from non-Japanese speakers endeavoring to converse in Japanese is an example of Level 1 competence or the superficial awareness of visible cultural traits and acceptance of stereotypes. The understanding by Japanese that ethnicity and language skill have no correlation is an example of Level 2 competence or the awareness of significant and subtle culture traits that contrast one’s own. The belief that some Western foreigners speak languages other than English and initially greet and speak to Western foreigners in Japanese is an example of Level 3 competence that an awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast their own as well as the potential awareness of how another culture feels from the standpoint of the insider.

The author has also experienced cultural insensitivity concerning paper size and the assumption that the 8.5 inch x 11 inch U.S. letter paper size in the United States is a universal standard. The author, upon completing study abroad programs at universities in Japan and South Korea published a portion of his graduate thesis at universities while abroad. When presenting the publication to the author’s alma mater, the author was quickly reproached for lacking “common sense” to present reports on the “correct” size of paper. The standard size of paper in most countries is the “A4” which is taller and slightly narrower than the American 8.5 inch x 11 inch letter paper size. Refer to the figure 2 illustration for reference.

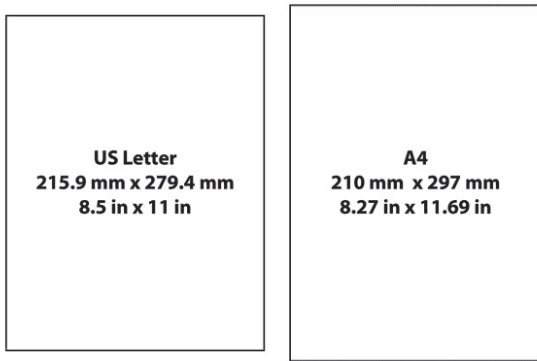


Figure 2. The differences between US letter and A4 paper sheets.

[source: <https://uk.onlinelabels.com>]

To assume that the 8.5 inch x 11 inch U.S. letter paper size is universal and the “correct” size for paper is a Level 1 cultural awareness of a traditional mindset that reflects one unable to imagine a viewpoint other than that associated with context of one’s own local culture. Low empathetic capacity was reflected by the demand for the thesis printed on A4 paper size to be reprinted on 8.5 inch x 11 inch U.S. letter paper size. With greater empathy one would consider that the paper was printed while attending universities in Japan and South Korea where the A4 paper size is standard and to obtain 8.5 inch x 11 inch U.S. letter paper size in those countries is almost unheard of as A4 is the assumed standard. Moreover, when considering that the A4 paper size is more universally adapted than any other paper size, it is the United States that is non-conforming in its practices while maintaining that the rest of the world is awkward to not adhere to the American standard. This lack of perspective, ignorance, and outright hostility toward another standard while not making any effort to be introspective and empathic is an example of pure tribalism and one’s inability to imagine and learn of other viewpoints or roles in the context of world culture.

The Western world generalizes the swastika with the fascist and racist policies of Nazi Germany. However, the Western world is ignorant about the swastika history and origins

as a symbol of peace and fortune in many cultures. Ancient India used the swastika as a cultural symbol as well as Native American cultures. In Asian countries, such as Japan, China, and South Korea, the swastika, known as the *manji* character (卍) can be found on maps to represent Buddhist temples. In 1999, a lawsuit was raised against Nintendo over perceived discrimination based on the image of the swastika on Pokemon trading cards. Figure 3 illustrates the original Pokemon trading card with the *manji* character and the censored version.



Figure 3. Pokemon trading card with and without *manji* character.

[Source: apnews.com]

The perceived Nazi imagery was a heated issue as members of the Jewish community in the United States accused Nintendo of using the swastika for offensive purposes while lacking the cultural awareness that the swastika was merely the “manji” character symbolizing Buddhism (Fitzgerald, 1999).

In Japan, where the *manji* symbol predates the Nazis by centuries, it is a symbol for good fortune and represents Buddhists temples on street maps—just as a cross stands for a church on maps in the United States.

Such examples of Level 1 awareness are cancerous for international relations and in the case of the lawsuit against Nintendo, can be problematic for business.

A final example comes from the education institute Kumon. Kumon can be found in Japan

and abroad in various communities. Among the teaching materials published by Kumon are thematic vocabulary cards covering topics such as transportation, animals, fruits, and plants. The vocabulary cards consist of an image, the Japanese and English translation as well as a brief description of the vocabulary. The author would like to call attention to the standardized Kumon description of “gobo” or burdock roots as included in Figure 4.

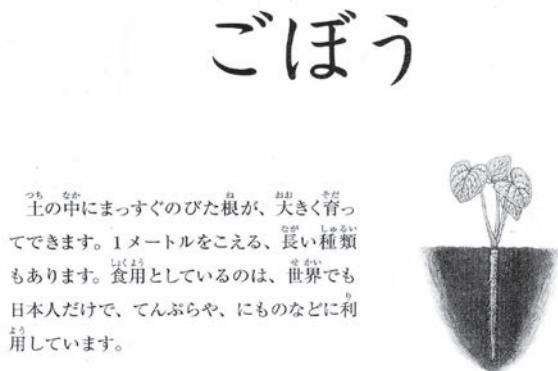


Figure 4. Description of burdock root (ごぼう) according to Kumon vocabulary card. [Source: Kumon vegetable vocabulary card #18]

According to the description, “of all the countries, it is only the Japanese that consume the *gobo* plant”. This assumption is not only incorrect, it perpetuates misunderstanding since it is stated on educational material being used on impressionable youth.

Burdock root known scientifically as *arctium lappa*, is widely consumed in Korea, Taiwan, and China. Many tradition recipes include Burdock root as a main ingredient in soups, pickled dishes and as a side dish for rice. Burdock root is also used in Italian and even in modern Cajun cuisine. Japan does not have a monopoly on *gobo* nor is it a plant only known and consumed by the Japanese.

The kanji characters for *gobo* is 牛蒡 which can be pronounced as both ごぼう and ごんぼ are also recognized in Chinese. *Gobo* is pronounced niúbàng in Chinese and the simplified version of the characters in Chinese is 图案 which is pronounced tú'àn. Moreover, the obsolete reading for *gobo* in Japanese is *umafubuki* うま

ふぶき.

In Korean, burdock root is known as *ueong* 우엉 and is very popular in stir-fry dishes and as an ingredient in *ginpap* and *bibimbap*. Recipes using the burdock root are common knowledge in Korea as can be seen in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Burdock root recipes (Part 2) authored by Chad Meyer and Moonjung Kim. [Source: The Korea Times, Wednesday, August 5, 2015. Also available at <http://easytolearnkorean.com>]

The author is familiar with and fond of burdock root being used as a traditional tea in Korea. The cold bottled version of the tea is available in most stores and can also be found being sold by vending machines. The tea is commonly known and consumed as a hot tea. Figure 6 is the illustration from a burdock root tea bag box which the author purchased as a souvenir during his last visit to the peninsula.



Figure 6. Burdock root tea bags box illustration.
[Source: Kkoh Shaem Burdock Tea 우영차]

7. Conclusion

The recognition of the existence of the diversity of perspectives should be considered the main element of a cross-cultural perspective consciousness. Acknowledgement is an important step for the development of a perspective that can be considered global. One must discern between opinion and perspective and be knowledgeable of personal bias. Perspective and bias influences one's world view.

The knowledge dimension of intercultural competence includes not only knowledge about other world cultures, but of one's own culture as well. Although we tend to think that we know our own culture, this knowledge is often proven limited. A major part of developing intercultural competence is re-evaluating and expanding knowledge of one's own culture. This applies at the level of national culture as well as regional culture and other relevant domains.

The skills dimension of intercultural competence contains four main interrelated skills: communication, acknowledging, reflecting, and comparing. Communication is a key skill to intercultural competence. Communication refers to expressing oneself in a comfortable way while considering the context and cultural backgrounds of other conversational participants. It is important to be able to compare what one

observes during communication with what one already knows about other cultures. This includes considering one's own biases and stereotypes. In this way, the process of acknowledging, reflecting and comparing become linked to promote harmonious communication and further develop intercultural competence.

Open-mindedness is also essential for one's capacity to see value in new things. Willingness to suspend judgment means that one does not simply label the unfamiliar as "strange" or "rude" but instead makes a conscious effort to see the behavior from the perspective of an insider.

To have knowledge and understanding of oneself is not as simple as it sounds since one is never fully aware of their own biases. Likewise, one is never fully aware of the lens one uses to judge others. Educators, as individuals are filled with personal biases, opinions and dispositions that affect how they perceive others and how they in turn are perceived. Thought has a direct influence upon behavior. Personal values and personal perceptions of the teacher are all manifested through the teacher's philosophy. The standards one creates for others are first based upon the standards that one has made for oneself. How an instructor teaches therefore, is based upon standards that the instructor has made for themselves.

Cross-cultural knowledge is the direction education is proceeding and the author feels that his institute of tenure, Chinzei Gakuin University, has unique demographics featuring international students currently from a variety of different countries that supports a cross-cultural environment for students and educators alike to experience. Cross-cultural knowledge is necessary for one to preserve membership in the global community. Cross-cultural knowledge helps break down cultural barriers as stereotypes and discrimination result from lack of knowledge.

In the current world, much intercultural communication involves multilingual individuals who come from a wide variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Intercultural competence is a necessary base for effectively building

relationship with individuals from other cultures.

Knowledge, wisdom, and common sense are different. Differences exist in how each are learned. Instructors should acknowledge that “knowledge” can be fallible. New discoveries alter the sciences. What was once held as truth may be fiction in the future. Weather patterns, natural disasters, diseases, and past theories evolving around such phenomena—often based in superstition and religious dogma, have been proven to be incorrect. Our place in the universe and the belief that the universe was created for us is also amply challenged.

Preconceptions and the subjective understanding of past events also raises potential problems of cultural and individual bias. As specific events and facts concerning history and war fade from the minds of the public, a form of selective amnesia takes place and the aggressor that started a conflict views itself as being the victim and not the cause. Stronger nations continue to re-write the history of weaker nations. Cultural biases are sometimes used to alter and manipulate knowledge and information. Certainly even with the modern knowledge that exists, people are still the same capricious variable that prevents any system or standard from being an absolute. People are complicated with variables that are difficult to single out. The author believes that people everywhere are essentially superstitious and paranoid about what we hold to be “knowledge.”

Truth is debatable different from knowledge. To have knowledge of truth should be the pursuit of both the teacher and the student. It is important for the teacher to nurture the students to discover information for themselves. The author encourages students to think critically and study to discover knowledge of truth for themselves. The author, in the sociolinguistics (社会言語学) and cross-cultural communication (異文化コミュニケーションスキル) courses at Chinzei Gakuin University introduces students to various cultural issues that have evolved around language. Students are exposed to various cultural viewpoints and opinions concerning ethnicity, gender, identity and its correlation to language. Students discuss

the use of language as a tool for conveying ethnicity, gender, and identity how cultural and cross-cultural interpretations may differ and also serve as a potential source for discrimination. The author believes that education is a chance for both the student and teacher to be enlightened and find self-worth in the pursuit of the knowledge of truth. This author sincerely believes that diversity is a strength for humanity and cross-cultural literacy plays an important role in the understanding of diversity.

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