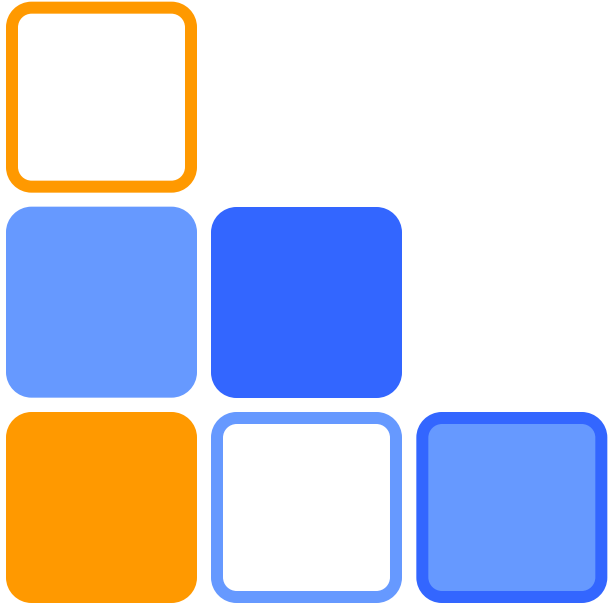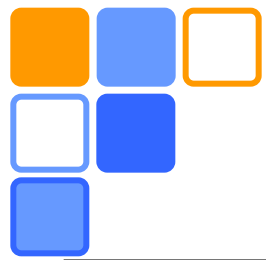# Developing a Framework and Instructional Models for Teaching Intercultural Communication to Japanese University Students

BAAL 2014
September 6, 2014
Kahoko Matsumoto
(Tokai University)
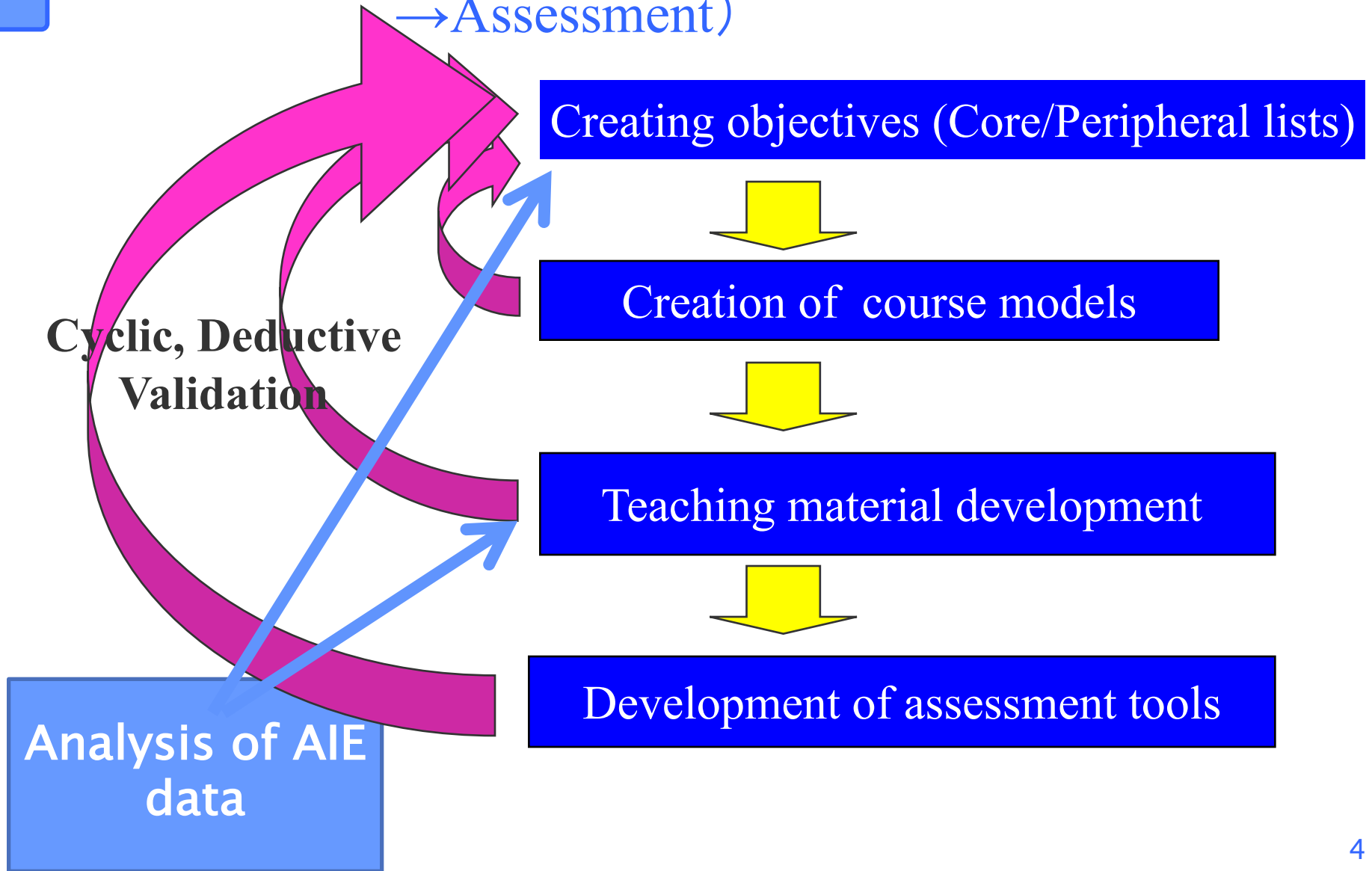
Contents

1. Backgroud

Purpose of our grant-in-aid project:
    To create clear objectives and criteria
    for Intercultural Competence (incl. Critical
    Thinking) to be incorporated into Foreign
    Language (esp. English) Learning in Japan.

    Learning English as a foreign language (EFL)
    has been too language-skill oriented to
    produce young generation who can function
    in the globalizing, multicultural world.

1.1. Overall Experimental Design （Objectives→Teaching Material →Assessment）

Cyclic, Deductive Validation

Creating objectives (Core/Peripheral lists)

Creation of course models

Teaching material development

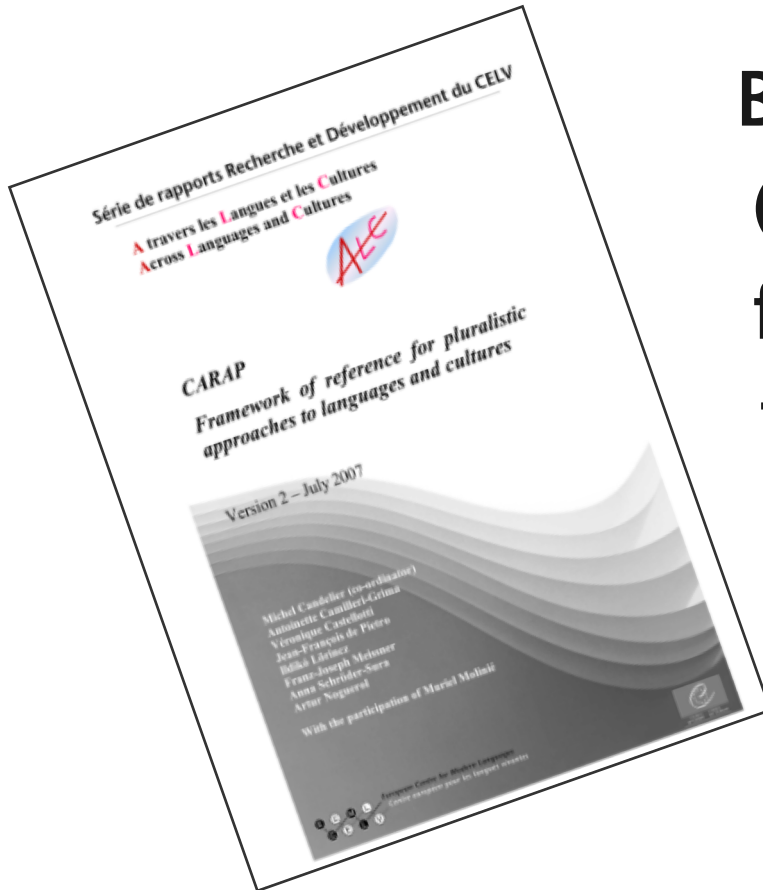Development of assessment tools

Analysis of AIE data

1.2. Development of the CDSs (=Can-do Statements)

Based on ECML's FREPA (Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures)

\+

Existing Critical Thinking measures

1.2. Development of the CDSs

1. **Knowledge** of language and culture (Items 1–12)
2. **Attitudes** toward intercultural communication (Items 13–21)
3. **Thinking Skills** for learning language and culture, and intercultural communication (Items 22–29)

CT Measurement

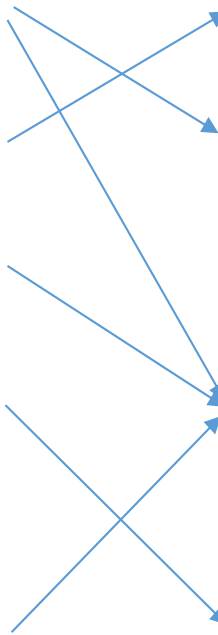▢Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to languages and cultures (FREPA)

▢US framework

　　↓

≫California Critical Thinking Skill Test （CCTST）

≫California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI)

FREPA	CCTDI
• observe, analyse	• Interpretation
• recognise, identify	• Analysis
• compare	• Evaluation
• talk about …	• Inference
• use what one knows in A to understand and communicate in another one	• Explanation
• interact	• Self-Regulation
• ability to learn	

FREPA

CCTDI

● Attention/Sensivity/Curiosity (interest)/Positive acceptance/Receptiveness/Respect/Valuing languages, cultures, linguistic and cultural diversity

● Readiness / Motivation / Willingness / Desire to be involved in action related to languages and linguistic and cultural diversity

● Attitudes / conduct of questioning - distancing - decentring – relativising

● Willingness to adapt / Self assurance / Feelings of familiarity

● Identity

● Attitudes towards learning

● Truth-Seeking

● Open-mindedness

● Analyticity

● Systemacity

● Critical Thinking Confidence

● Inquisitveness

● Cognitive Maturity

1.2. Development of the CDSs

1. **Knowledge** of language and culture (Items 1-12)
2. **Attitudes** toward intercultural communication (Items 13-21)
3. **Thinking Skills** for learning language and culture, and intercultural communication (Items 22-29)
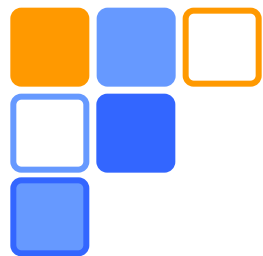
1.2. CDSs

\<Knowledge\>

1. (A student) Knows the basic rules of the foreign language being studied incl. prosodic, lexical, syntactic aspects.
2. Has sufficient background knowledge (=historical, social and cultural background) of the foreign language, and knows that sociolinguistic appropriateness is necessary according to contexts and situations.
3. Knows the ways/strategies to use for the acquisition of the foreign language, and the fact that positive attitude toward the language makes them more effective.
5. Knows that language deeply relates to culture and one's identity, so being communicative doesn't only consist of linguistic skills.
6. Knows that each language has its own rules and systems with both similarities and differences among them, thus literal translation doesn't always yield the same meaning.
7. Knows that each culture has complex values and norms, which influence and reflect on people's world view and ways of thinking.

\<Knowledge-continued\>

8. Knows that a culture consists of various subcultures representing different groups' values, and a single person often belongs to several of them.

9. Knows that misunderstandings may happen in intercultural communication because the interpretations of an action or phenomenon can vary between people with different cultural backgrounds.

10. Knows that culture is not static and is constantly changing by frequent contacts, especially under the present globalization.

11. Knows that intercultural communication is not something special., happening almost every day even in domestic environments so the understanding of different cultures have increasingly become necessary to everyone.

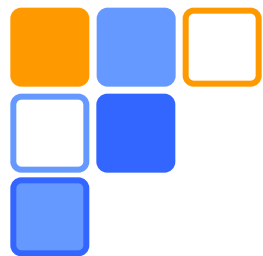12. Knows that there is no superiority or inferiority among cultures though some may have more power and expansion.

<Attitudes>

13. (A student) Can pay attention to the similarities and differences of different languages and cultures and accept them as they are.
14. Can accept different values and ways of thinking without resistance and prejudice, including ambiguities and intermediacies deriving from different languages and cultures.
15. Can willingly get involved in the situations with intercultural communication in and outside one's school, having keen interests in other languages and cultures.
16. Can find value and significance in contacts with various languages and cultures.
17. Can try to solve problems encountered in intercultural communication with persistence and strong will to explain one's opinion at the same time understand different ways of thinking.
18. Can view and discuss both one's own and other cultures critically, avoiding preconceptions and overgeneralizations.

<Attitudes – continued>

19. Can make objective and fair judgments on the issues related to both one's own and other cultures, knowing the relativistic quality of cultural values.
20. Can deal with new and unfamiliar intercultural situations with confidence and flexibility, having learned from the sufficient "trial and error" experience in the past.
21. Can build a close relationship with people having different cultures, embracing their identities as equal to one's own.

\<Thinking Skills\>

22. Can <u>observe, understand and analyze</u> the components of different languages and cultures <u>objectively.</u>
23. Can <u>systematically classify</u> the components of different languages and cultures <u>based on categories and genres</u>.
24. Can <u>compare</u> the similarities and differences of various languages and cultures <u>by consistent, objective procedures</u>
25. Can <u>explain</u> one's own language and culture <u>fully and objectively,</u> and also <u>express</u> opinions and views on other cultures <u>appropriately and objectively.</u>
26 .Can learn a new language <u>by creating hypotheses</u> based on either the first language or other languages acquired, <u>and comparing and verifying</u> the rules and characteristics in light of them.
27. Can build constructive intercultural communication <u>by constantly tuning into and considering</u> the possible linguistic and cultural differences.

\<Thinking Skills – continued\>

28. Can <u>establish one's own ways of learning,</u> making the best use of one's accumulated knowledge and experience with learning a new language and culture.

29. Can <u>continue to improve one's ways of learning</u> throughout lifetime by constantly reflecting upon their effectiveness in real- life practice.

1.2. Development of the CDSs

<A Questionnaire about Intercultural Competence>

Each Item = objective = Can-do Statement (CDS)

For teachers: 1. not necessary (to teach our students)   2. not so necessary
3. necessary   4.very much necessary

For students: 1. can do (apply) very well   2. can do (apply) mostly
3. cannot do (doesn't apply) so well
4. cannot do (doesn't apply) .

<Knowledge about language/culture>	1	2	3	4
1	(A student) Knows the basic rules of the foreign language being studied incl. prosodic, lexical, syntactic aspects.	○	○	○	○
2	Has sufficient background knowledge (=historical, social and cultural background) of the foreign language, and knows that sociolinguistic appropriateness is necessary according to contexts and situations.	○	○	○	○
3	Knows the ways/strategies to use for the acquisition of the foreign language, and the fact that positive attitude toward the language makes them more effective.	○	○	○	○
4	Knows that language deeply relates to culture and one's identity, so being communicative doesn't only consist of linguistic skills.	○	○	○	○
5	Knows the fact that there are various multi-lingual and multi-cultural situations in many countries/areas in the world.	○	○	○	○
6	Knows that each language has its own rules and systems with both similarities and differences among them, thus literal translation doesn't always yield the same meaning.	○	○	○	○
7	Knows that each culture has complex values and norms, which influence and reflect on people's world view and ways of thinking.	○	○	○	○
8	Knows that a culture consists of various subcultures representing different groups' values, and a single person often belongs to several of them.	○	○	○	○
9	Knows that misunderstandings may happen in intercultural communication because the interpretations of an action or phenomenon can vary between people with different cultural backgrounds.	○	○	○	○
10	Knows that culture is not static and is constantly changing by frequent contacts, especially under the present globalization.	○	○	○	○
11	Knows that intercultural communication is not something special, happening almost every day even in domestic environments so the understanding of different cultures have increasingly become necessary to everyone.	○	○	○	○
12	Knows that there is no superiority or inferiority among cultures though some may have more power and expansion.	○	○	○	○

<Attitudes>	1	2	3	4
13	(A student) Can pay attention to the similarities and differences of different languages and cultures and accept them as they are.	○	○	○	○
14	Can accept different values and ways of thinking without resistance and prejudice, including ambiguities and intermediacies deriving from different languages and cultures.	○	○	○	○
15	Can willingly get involved in the situations with intercultural communication in and outside one's school, having keen interests in other languages and cultures.	○	○	○	○
16	Can find value and significance in contacts with various languages and cultures.	○	○	○	○
17	Can try to solve problems encountered in intercultural communication with persistence and strong will to explain one's opinion at the same time understand different ways of thinking.	○	○	○	○
18	Can view and discuss both one's own and other cultures critically, avoiding preconceptions and overgeneralizations.	○	○	○	○
19	Can make objective and fair judgments on the issues related to both one's own and other cultures, knowing the relativistic quality of cultural values.	○	○	○	○
20	Can deal with new and unfamiliar intercultural situations with confidence and flexibility, having learned from the sufficient "trial and error" experience in the past.	○	○	○	○
21	Can build a close relationship with people having different cultures, embracing their identities as equal to one's own.	○	○	○	○

<Skills including critical thinking>				
22	Can observe, understand and analyze the components of different languages and cultures objectively.	○	○	○	○
23	Can systematically classify the components of different languages and cultures based on categories and genres.	○	○	○	○
24	Can compare the similarities and differences of various languages and cultures by consistent, objective procedures	○	○	○	○
25	Can explain one's own language and culture fully and objectively, and also express opinions and views on other cultures appropriately and objectively.	○	○	○	○
26	Can learn a new language by creating hypotheses based on either the first language or other languages acquired, and comparing and verifying the rules and characteristics in light of them.	○	○	○	○
27	Can build constructive intercultural communication by constantly tuning into and considering the possible linguistic and cultural differences.	○	○	○	○
28	Can establish one's own ways of learning, making the best use of one's accumulated knowledge and experience with learning a new language and culture.	○	○	○	○
29	Can continue to improve one's ways of learning throughout lifetime by constantly reflecting upon their effectiveness in real-life practice.	○	○	○	○

1.3. Validation of CDSs

1. Subjects:

    Approx. 100 university teachers

    Approx. 1000 university students

 2. Procedure

    1) questionnaire analysis (4-point scale)

    – to students (their self-evaluation)

    – to teachers (necessity to teach=their

    students' weaknesses)

    2) free comments and interviews

2. Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE)

Complementary teaching tool to help students exercise independent critical faculties in solving problems in intercultural encounters, by making them reflect critically on their own responses and attitudes to experiences of other cultures
(White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, 2008, p.43)

2.1. A Moodle–based Experiment with Japanese University Students

80 students answered 53 (9 sections) Qs related to their IC experiences →text analysis

<Summary of Initial Qualitative Analysis>
- **Students are generally positive about AIE and feel they have learned a new perspective.**
- **The awareness of "others" were clearly observed, but they tend to evaluate the encounters by "we" vs. "others" dichotomy, based on what they know about other cultures and their own values.**
- **Motivation toward English study seems to have been raised by positive evaluation of encounters as well as by the act of reflection itself.**
- **Awareness has been raised about what they don't usually think about, especially religions and different ways of approaching social/cultural issues.**

Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters

Language Policy Division

2.2. Text Analysis

●The type of intercultural encounters
1. Encounters in Japan: 58
    Encounters outside Japan: 22
2. Countries: Asia (10 different countries) (23),
    North America. (16), Europe (9), Oceania (incl.
    Micronesia) (8), Latin America (6),
    Middle East (5), Russia (4), Africa (3),
    Japan (6)
3. Gender: Male (56), Female (24)
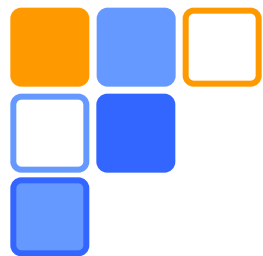4. Age: Children (4), Adults (52),
    Older Adults over 60 (24)

2.3. Network Analysis (63 students by KH Coder)

（5）Similarities, differences

- 5. Thinking about the similarities and differences between the ways in which you thought and felt about the situation and the ways in which they thought and felt about it…

- 5－1 *were you aware at the time of any similarities and, if so, what were they?*

- 5－2 *were you aware at the time of any differences and, if so, what were they?*

Similarities & differences– vocabulary used

◻ Similarities   total 239 tokens

Japanese people 7   like 5

Japan 4   think 7

◻ Differences   total 306 tokens

I (myself) 7   Japanese people 6

English, foreign country, others 4

Language 3

Differences

2.4 Overall Analysis

1. As students went through 53 questions, the positive comments increased from approx. 50% to 80%, which could be a testimony for the power of self-reflection.
2. The "we, Japanese" vs. "others=outsiders=foreigners" dichotomy was observed in many of their comments, though more positive attitudes towards differences were seen toward the end.
3. One puzzling fact is that some students who successfully solved intercultural conflicts ended up strengthening the parochial view of their being Japanese.

3. Teaching Material Development

1. Selection of core and peripheral objectives to cover→model creation→material development
    - discrete material to be inserted into regular language-skill courses and subject courses
    - comprehensive material to support language study courses (sociolinguistics, communication theories, cross-cultural communication, etc.)
2. Planning and creating material for ESP/EAP courses
    - ESP material for engineering, media studies, teacher education courses, etc.
    - EAP material for graduate courses: presentation skills and academic writing
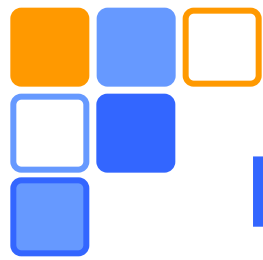
Examples of Teaching Material

1) How Japanese pop culture is perceived in the world
2) How politeness is shown differently in different cultures
3) Images/representations of Japan: what stereotypes are acceptable and what are not
4) Learning about Discrimination: from the South African example (related to a student volunteer program there) to ones that happen in Japan
5) Different perceptions of plagiarism between the West and the East
6) Importance of cultural preservation: the case of Pocahontas →A Japanese Ainu tribe
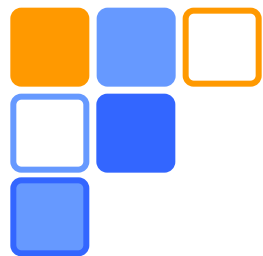
Example: Images of Japan

– Reading/Listening activities about the positive and negative images (representations) of Japan (CDS:1,2,7,9,10,13,16,22,26)
– Class discussion about what images are true and what are not with reasons (CDS: 2,6,17,18,22,23,24)
– Watching a video clip about various foreigners talking about Japan and the Japanese (with scaffolded note-taking activities) . Make students choose one point s/he agrees most and disagrees most to present/share their opinions in a group (CDS: 1,5,8,11,19,24,26)
– Make students do research about a particular image of Japan they have become interested through discussion and write a short paper (CDS: 1,7,11,15,18,23,25,26)

4. Development of Assessment Tools

1. Development of a rubric consisting of constructs covered by CDSs for each model/category of classes/courses.
2. Development of both discrete and integrative test items in different formats (multiple-choice, essay-type, cloze-type, etc.)
3. Both statistical and qualitative validations have been conducted .

Example: Images of Japan

\<Multiple-Choice Test\>
ex. What are the good images of Japan does the writer refer to? Why does the writer say "it is ironical…." in Line 3 of Paragraph 4? What does the news reporter wanted to convey most in this report? What does the reporter mean by "a generation gap in perception"?

\<Cloze Test\> = doesn't quite work

\<Essay Test\>
ex. What image of Japan do you think most close to the reality? Answer with the comparisons with other examples. Discuss one representation of Japan you consider either wrong or too stereotypical with concrete reasons. Explain one case when a certain image can be positive for some people but negative for others.

Creation of more general tests

1. Use of general situations of intercultural misunderstandings/conflicts and ask students to analyze them and find solutions.
   → we had to create the well-defined grading criteria.

2. Correlations with other CT tests (on-going)
   - Ennis-Weir Test
   - Insight Assessment Test
   - ETS's i-skills Test

Creation of more general tests

Example: after teaching different perceptions of time, responsibility and work habits

One Latin American student always comes late for club meetings. When the leader told him to be more responsible, he said, "I do all the work with more responsibility than my Japanese friends. On top of that, why do we have to have so many meetings? Once we create a clear plan with assignment of roles, I don't see much meaning in these meetings.

* Analyze where are the sources of misunderstanding/conflict?
* Propose a solution

Creation of more general tests

Example: after teaching the importance of keeping the cultural tradition

Our school dancing team will be competing in a big local contest, and members created a unique costume for it. However, a girl from an Islamic country, a very good dancer and indispensable member, didn't want to wear it because it exposes too much of the upper body and a special hairdo with a big, red ribbon. She said, "I can't wear such an outrageous costume. If my friends show pictures or videos to my family, I'll be scolded.

* Analyze where are the sources of misunderstanding/conflict?
* Propose a solution

33

Testing Method

1. Open essay questions
   - limited evaluation criteria
2. Interviews with varied questions
   - various factors can be measured, but with feasibility problem
3. Student role play
   - dependent on individuality

→ **Collaborative assessment activities with a self-rating checklist, class/group discussion and teacher feedback can provide meaningful learning opportunities**

Evaluation Criteria

1. **Knowledge**
   Understanding of the situation
   Knowledge of the culture(s) involved
   Knowledge of sociopragmatic factors
   Sufficient explanatory skill
2. **Attitude**
   impartiality/objectivity
   acceptance/tolerance of difference
   willingness to communicate/cooperate
   patience and flexibility in finding a solution
3. **Thinking Skill**
   categorization/factoring
   objective comparison
   analysis
   integration and synthesis

Tentative Results

- There have been different improvements observed in 22 classes. Naturally, the student improvement in terms of test scores is proportionate to the time spent on intercultural competence-raising exercises, but it was found that learner characteristics is also a strong factor.
- Critical thinking abilities are the hardest to raise over a short period of time. The largest improvement was observed in academic writing classes.

5. Summary and Future Tasks

1. We should incorporate the contents in the teaching material that will make students notice and reduce the tendency to overgeneralize the differences between the Japanese and "others".
2. We are trying to create several general tests of intercultural competence tailored to the different course types.
3. We will continue to seek better ways to assess improvements of intercultural competence, especially critical thinking skills
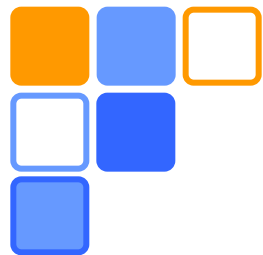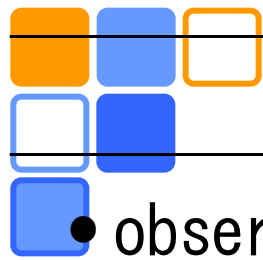
Thank you so much for listening!

email address: mkahoko@tsc.u-tokai.ac.jp

CT Measurement

▫ Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to languages and cultures (FREPA)

▫ US framework

　　↓

≫ California Critical Thinking Skill Test
　（CCTST）

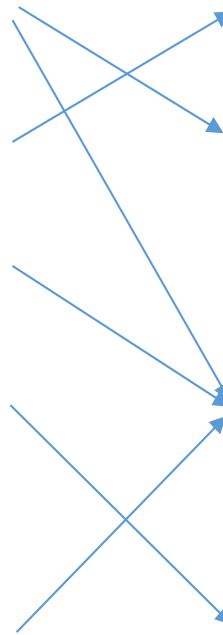≫ California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI)

FREPA	CCTDI
• observe, analyse	• Interpretation
• recognise, identify	• Analysis
• compare	• Evaluation
• talk about …	• Inference
• use what one knows in A to understand and communicate in another one	• Explanation
• interact	• Self-Regulation
• ability to learn	

CCTDI

Skill/Attribute Name	N	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	SE Mean
Truth-seeking	193	33.3	33	6.0	0.4
Open-mindedness	193	41.8	41	4.9	0.4
Inquisitiveness	193	42.5	42	6.5	0.5
Analyticity	193	38.3	38	4.8	0.3
Systematicity	193	35.2	35	6.6	0.5
Confidence in Reasoning	193	33.3	33	8.4	0.6
Maturity of Judgment	193	40.1	40	6.8	0.5

Skill/Attribute Name	Minimum	Maximum	Quartile 1	Quartile 3
Truth-seeking	17	52	30	38
Open-mindedness	30	56	38	45
Inquisitiveness	16	57	39	47
Analyticity	25	53	35	42
Systematicity	16	55	32	39
Confidence in Reasoning	10	54	28	39
Maturity of Judgment	17	55	36	46