三カ国の異文化コミュニケーションの授業における概念理解

Concepts and Perceptions of Communication, Culture, and Intercultural in the Teaching of ICC in Three Countries

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A comparative study was conducted, in which professors in charge of ICC classes at universities in Japan, Germany, and the U.S. were interviewed and questionnaires were distributed to their students at the end of the course asking them about their understanding of the basic concepts of *intercultural, culture, and communication*. By analyzing the collected data, the current status quo regarding ICC education in the three countries were scrutinized and problems concerning ICC education in Japan became apparent. Having assessed our findings, we propose the following: a) the necessity for comparative investigation of manifold perspectives regarding ICC education, as well as the incentive for an active debate about such perspectives, b) to establish teaching methods concerning communication that take the perspectives of students into account, c) the application of critical theory in teaching, d) the necessity to develop an active attitude in students regarding culture.

Key words: Concepts, Intercultural, Communication, Culture, Japan

1 INTRODUCTION

For about 40 years now intercultural communication (hereafter: ICC) has been taught at universities in many countries. Starting out in the U.S. and Canada, the fields of psychology, sociology and pedagogy were the first to develop courses for this subject (Asante/Gudykunst 1989). The late Edward T. Hall coined the term 'intercultural communication' in his book *The Silent Language* (1959).

Contrary to North-America, in Europe and especially in Germany the focuses were put on a) intercultural business communication (management, HR, advertising, marketing) and on b) intercultural pedagogy (Luesebrink, 2005). Maletzke (1996) shows that the term *interkulturelle Kommunikation* was officially documented in a title for a symposium at the latest in 1966. Since the year 2000, the number of ICC-courses increased in Germany substantially, especially at universities of applied sciences (Bolten, 2007).

In Japan, many initiatives to introduce intercultural communication started at the International Christian University in Tokyo in the 1970s (Condon & Saito,

1974). The initial fields were descriptive linguistics and sociolinguistics. When Hall's book was translated into Japanese by Masao Kunihiro in 1966, the term *ibunka communication* (*ibunka* meaning 'different cultures' in Japanese) came into existence. It is used as an equivalent to *intercultural communication*, and only later, the Chinese character *kan* in *ibunkakan* was added by some, which means 'between different cultures'.

Nowadays, intercultural communication can be found at many universities: a survey from the year 2002, revealed more than 250 universities (Abe et al., 2002) and there are probably many more today. However, in recent years some authors have pointed out several problems, such as the lack of training for ICC lecturers (Sueda, 1999) and ICC's rare full integration into a faculty or department.

Still, many courses on intercultural understanding – as they are also sometimes called - are treated as an extension of foreign language courses and taught as such (Takai, 2003). In addition, there has been a growing debate in Japan about the basic definitions underlying the teaching of intercultural communication (Hatakeyama, 2001). One of the concerns is that some definitions might enforce students' stereotypes and bias towards people of different cultures (Hatakeyama 2001, Guest, 2006), as many lecturers seem to equate different cultures with foreign countries (Abe et al.,

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2002). At the SIETAR Japan conference in 2009, Asai, Sueda and Koike, all long-term ICC scholars in Japan, voiced a similar concern in the panel discussion and proposed to redefine the term culture in order to avoid further trouble.

To ascertain these claims and see where potential problems may be, the understanding of the basic concepts of *culture, communication*, and *intercultural* in Japan, in Germany, and in the U.S. were investigated by using a sample of instructors and their students. These countries were chosen because a) the historical and social backgrounds of Japan and Germany are similar in many ways; and b) the teaching of ICC started in the U.S. (Rogers, Hart & Miike, 2002) and spread to Germany and Japan. Therefore, by comparing the basic concepts of ICC education in these three countries at present, it will become clear which concepts are lacking or are different within Japan's ICC education.

In our last paper (Krause-Ono & Ishikawa, 2010), we focused on professors' conceptions of *communication, culture* and *intercultural*. In this paper we will concentrate on students' perceptions of the three terms and compare them with the professors' concepts. We will also refer to the professors' goals regarding this course, which are expressed in their written answers to the question: "What do you want students to retain from this course?"

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature on ICC and related themes, such as on communication, culture, intercultural etc., are prevalent in all three countries discussed here. However, this neither gives us an account of the way teachers actually use those terms in their teaching of ICC nor how the students perceive them. Furthermore, the differences and similarities between the countries are not clear, and it is uncertain what the outcome may suggest for Japan. Nevertheless, we will present some of the theories which can commonly be found in publications in the three countries.

2.1   Definition of Culture

In the U.S., E.T. Hall (1959), who coined the term *intercultural communication*, divides cultures into high-context and low-context. Geertz (1973) proposes a different approach by seeing culture as a system of symbols interacting. Many authors offer to define culture as shared values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, which are generated and transmitted (Brislin, 1981, Triandis, 1995). Other authors see culture simply as the rules for living and functioning in society (Yamada, 1997, Gudykunst, 2004). European authors, such as Hofstede (1984) with his Cultural Dimensions, which divide cultures according to four categories, or Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1997) are also widely known.

In Germany, the sociologist Beck (1999) advocates a wide concept of culture, which does not stop at national borders, by proclaiming that cultures are not closed boxes. Other well known authors are Schütz & Luckmann (1979), who see culture as the unquestioned given. Thomas (2003-2005), a psychologist, developed *Kulturstandards*, (translated as "cultural personality structures" in Brück, 2002, p.17) for trainings in order to explain different national cultures more concisely. Hofstede's (1980) more rigid cultural dimensions and his definition of culture as software of the mind are also widely known. Assmann, a historian and sociologist, (2002) defines culture as collective memory. In this memory, values, beliefs and norms are stored and at the same time their meaning is constantly made and remade. Dülfer (1999) developed a model of the different layers or components of culture, such as natural environment, perception of reality, level of technology, construction of meaning (e.g.religion), social relations, juridical system, and the acting individual. All components are constantly interacting making a culture.

In Japan, in many publications (Ishii, Kume, Tohyama, Hirai, Matsumoto & Midooka,, 1997; Yashiro, Machi, Koike, & Isogai,, 1998; Ishii, Kume & Toyama, 2001; Ikeda & Kramer, 2008), the notion of culture is introduced as daily life style, as mental activities, such as having a set of values and thinking, as communication behaviors and/or shared knowledge, which are learned through socialization processes, shared, transmitted and accumulated. Most of these texts view each social group as having its own culture, and individuals belong to different social groups. Sueda and Fukuda (2003) present various definitions of culture, from Edward Tylor to Clyde Kluckhohn and Gary Ferraro. In addition, they show and explain various perspectives of culture by using various theories, such as the mechanistic, the psychological, the interactionist, and the systems theory. On the other hand, Ikeda et al. (2007) refrain from presenting definitions of culture, communication and intercultural. Instead, they identify the problems thereof and question the common notion of the terms to cultivate learners' critical thinking ability.

2.2   Definitions of Communication

As for American definitions and concepts, again Hall (1959) has to be cited, he equated culture with communication. In fact, many theories integrate culture and communication. Applegate and Sypher (1988) see communication in the light of constructivist theory, which construes reality by means of communication. Geertz (1973), again, proposed the symbolic interaction theory. He sees people communicating by the means of symbolic forms. Griffin (2005), cited in Samovar et al. (2006/2009, p.8), proposes the following definition: "Communication is the management of messages with the objective of creating

meaning."

In Germany, several authors give definitions of or deal with communication as in intercultural communication. Psychologists like Watzlawick, Beavin & Jackson (1969/2003) emphasize the impossibility of not communicating (p.50) and stress the acting and interacting of individuals. Bolten (2007) goes further and emphasizes the creation of culture by interaction/communication. Luhmann (1992) views communication under aspects of systems theory, where communication engenders communication and so forth.

Schulz von Thun (1998/2007), on the other hand, proposes the four-sides-model of communication, which gives a more tangible and practically useful explanation of the different facets within interactional communication. Linguists, such as Müller-Jacquier (2007) see communication mainly under the heading of intercultural discourse analysis.

In Japan, Ishii et al. (1997) define communication as a process in which humans interact with and/or influence one another by giving and receiving messages in a certain context, noting that the definitions of communication are complicated and diverse. In their book, a model similar to the interaction model is introduced to explain communication. Yashiro et al. (1998) present a model by Shannon and Weaver – the interaction and transaction model. Ikeda & Kramer (2008) present several definitions of communication focusing on meaning and interpretation. They introduce the models mentioned above as well as CMM theory. Sueda & Fukuda (2003) present views from the mechanistic, the psychological, the interactionist, and the systems theory perspective. Ikeda et al. (2007) again attempt to question the transactional model that excludes the communicators' roles in the creation and the transformation of meanings.

2.3 Definitions of Intercultural

In the U.S., definitions of the term *intercultural* can hardly be found, except in the term *intercultural communication*. M. Bennett (1998, p.2) defines the term as "communication between people of different cultures with different values". R. Gibson (2002, p.9) defines the term as "the exchange of meaning…. between sender and receiver from different cultures". Samovar, Porter & McDaniel (2007, p.10) define intercultural communication as "…interaction between people whose cultural perceptions and symbols systems are distinct enough to alter the communication event". In all cases, the essence is that *intercultural* is seen as "between", an exchange or interaction of cultures.

In Germany, the original Latin meaning of the word intercultural (between cultures) is usually stressed as well as the implied action between two cultures, whatever this action consists of. Beside the adjective intercultural, the noun *interculturality* has also become

more frequently used. Bolten (2007) sees the term *intercultural* as describing something new and in-between, which is neither of the two or more cultures interacting. Lüsebrink (2005) interprets *intercultural* as all phenomena, which are results of the contact between different cultures. Thomas (2003/2005) too, sees intercultural as the crossing of at least two cultures (in communication).

In Japan, compared to the amount of information regarding *culture* and *communication* in text books, explanations of *intercultural* are narrow. Ishii et al (1997) state that intercultural communication is a process in which humans who have different cultural backgrounds interact with and/or influence one another by giving and receiving messages. Yashiro et al. (1998) point out that *intercultural communication* overemphasizes differences and ignores similarities and that the differences are relative rather than absolute. On the other hand, Ikeda et al. (2007) stress that a notion of *intercultural communication* as a catch-ball of messages overly emphasizes many of the practical and effective aspects of communication and that it ignores and discourages individuals' proactive involvement in the creation of culture.

2.4 Prior Research

Despite our search for comparative research projects or studies, which deal with the conceptualization of basic concepts in ICC teaching, our success in finding some was limited. In Japan, we found Abe et al.'s study/survey (2002) about teaching methods and materials used in ICC. Most other studies deal with culturally differing values, unfortunately rarely with concepts as such.

Although there is a large quantity of articles which include the definitions of the term *culture, communication* and *intercultural*, there has been no study found investigating concepts held by university professors nor by university students within a country. In Japan, some articles, which state the importance of investigating the terms used in the field of ICC, have been published; without any further research into this theme though. However, in the panel discussion at the SIETAR Japan conference 2009 well-known scholars in the field, such as Asai, Sueda and Koike claimed exactly such studies, thus emphasizing the necessity to review especially the conceptualization of the term culture.

3 METHODS

For this comparative study the qualitative analysis was chosen to: a) explore and present complex and deep concepts of the terms held by professors in the three countries, and b) find out about the perceptions of the same terms by the students. 1

Twelve educational institutions from each of the

three countries were selected at random and professors teaching ICC at those institutions were interviewed, regarding their definitions of the terms *communication, culture,* and *intercultural*, which make up ICC. We already wrote in detail about the concepts held by the professors in Krause-Ono & Ishikawa (2010). Beside the interview, the professors were also given questionnaires asking for more detailed background information.

In most cases, the professors consented to give questionnaires to their students at the end of their respective courses. The latter were given a one-page questionnaire, which a) fulfills the simplicity criteria for a good questionnaire, and b) …"secured without the bias of an interviewer more truthful responses" (Burns, 2000, p.581). Because it was impossible to interview hundreds of the students who take ICC courses, we decided to have the students answer a questionnaire with open ended questions, asking for their perceptions of the terms *communication, culture*, and *intercultural*. In total, 470 students in 10 courses in Japan, 211 students in Germany (12 courses) and 229 students in the U.S. (9 courses) answered the questionnaire.

The interviews and the questionnaires of both professors and the students were transcribed in their entirety.

3.1 Analysis

The conceptualizations and interpretations of the terms *communication, culture*, and *intercultural* in the interviews of the 36 professors (12 from each country) were already sorted and analyzed (Krause-Ono & Ishikawa, 2010) by using the KJ-method of Jiro Kawakita (1986). The same was now done with the answers of all the students about the terms *communication, culture*, and *intercultural*. Kawakita (1986) claims that identifying categories before the sorting of information leads to the exclusion of important data, whereas the KJ method lets all the data "speak" for itself through letting the data sorting 'itself' into related groups first. Kawakita's holistic and data-based inductive approach, which allows for the researcher's understanding of large quantities of data, is suited to our research which investigates professors' and students' nuanced and partly complex conceptions of abstract terms.

In using the KJ method, all students' explanations of each term were written on separate strips of paper, cut up and put on a big table or on the floor. Expressions which were similar in content were gradually grouped and eventually similarities and differences between the groups emerged. This was done for all the three terms *communication, culture*, and *intercultural* for all the students from all three countries.

4 PROFESSORS' CONCEPTS AND GOALS

The majority of German professors have been teaching ICC for less than ten years, whereas 80% of the Japanese and the American professors have between ten and twenty years or more (American) of teaching experience. In the U.S., at least half of the professors have a background in communication or communication studies; however the others did not provide any information about their academic background. In Germany, the professors' backgrounds are too various to be classified, ranging from sinology, sociology, anthropology, Romance languages, linguistics, to communication and/or cultural studies. In Japan the professors' fields of expertise are mainly communication and linguistics/language education.

In our samples, 8 out of 10 classes in the U.S. were in the categories 16-25 or 26-35 students per class. In Germany the balance is 7 out of 12. However, in Japan only 2 out of 11 classes fit into the afore mentioned categories. On the contrary, 7 out of 11 classes are filled with more than 70 students, 4 of which surpass even the number of 100.

Teaching methods seem to be similar at first sight. In all samples lecture is nearly the most prevalent method. However, when looking closely differences can be detected. For the American professors, discussion is the most used teaching tool (10 out of 10), followed by lecture (9 out of 10). For the German professors, discussion is mentioned by 9 out of 12, whereas only 7 out of 11 Japanese mention this tool. Half of the German professors utilize role-plays, and 4 out of 11 U.S. professors do so too. However, only 3 out of 11 Japanese professors use that tool. The biggest difference appears in the category "other methods". In all three countries, case-studies and the usage of videos are mentioned by the professors. Group-activities, however, are only mentioned in the U.S. and in Germany. Class sizes, different teaching and learning styles should be also kept in mind, when looking at the results of students' answers.

4.1 Goals

Between September 2007 and June 2008, 12 professors from each country (altogether 36) were interviewed about the three terms *communication, culture*, and *intercultural* and were given a questionnaire to find out about the teaching framework as well as about their goals of teaching, e.g. what they want students to learn in the course.

Many American professors emphasize the understanding of the complex cultural factors and a deeper self-awareness, in the sense of how one's behavior and thoughts are influenced by various cultural factors. Several also opt to acquire a critical perspective and to develop a deeper understanding of social conflicts.

For many German professors the goals of the ICC course are as follows: to transmit or convey knowledge of methods and techniques as well as theories in

intercultural communication which are linked to practice. Another important point is to develop sensitivity for perceiving cultural differences as well as to deepen the ability to analyze the same. Also, many professors mention the development of intercultural skills necessary for international business in a globalized world.

In Japan, most professors opt for awareness of the diversity within Japan and the cultural diversity within one's daily life and reach. At the same time, many of them stress the importance of understanding and respecting this diversity. Also, many wish for the students to see the relation between what is usually called common sense and culture and to come into contact with and experience other cultures (ibunka).

Many American and German professors mention a need to acquire knowledge of theories in intercultural studies; however, none of the Japanese professors mention such.

4.2 Concepts

In Krause-Ono & Ishikawa (2010), we wrote in detail about the concepts held by the professors in the three countries. In this paper, we will only give a short summary of their concepts of *communication, culture*, and *intercultural* gained in the interviews, such as to be able to compare them with the students' perceptions of those terms.

Concerning the term *communication*, many professors in all three countries viewed communication either from transaction theory or symbolic interaction theory or from both of them. A few other professors introduced the model by Shannon and Weaver. Other professors saw communication from the perspectives of CMM theory, media theory, ethnography or attribution theory or others. German professors especially stressed the common creation of meaning, and the impossibility of not communicating. Most Japanese professors further explained communication as between individuals and its process, describing an act of creating a meaning, the making of a relationship through interaction and the influence of context on how humans communicate.

In all three countries, however, communication is grasped from the points of view of already existing theories. While teaching these to their students, a small group of Japanese professors said, that, before teaching students about communication theory, it will be necessary to let the students reflect about the meaning and the function of living beings to communicate, and about the development of the ability to communicate.

Concerning the term *culture*, in all three countries most of the professors saw culture as something learned, shared, and transmitted with a set of beliefs and values, a view which is very similar to what is written in many books about ICC. Many German professors further explained that culture is an orientation system, a network of reciprocities, and, by

mentioning Hall's theory, that it is construed by communication. Hofstede's theory was introduced by some as something rather doubtful. In Japan, the view of culture as family, area, generation, gender, organization etc., as well as something that is shared within and between groups was the most prevalent. A small number of professors also stated that all information is culture, culture with a capital "C" and culture with a small "c", as well as visible and invisible culture. Quite a number of professors point out that their students see culture strongly as national culture. They also felt that it would be difficult to challenge or destroy the fixed image that they held. In the U.S., some of the professors saw culture as a system of power and concentrated on the issues of privileged and unprivileged within a culture and on the results of the relation between the two.

When comparing the three countries, the German professors most often stated that culture is not static but changing over time. This view was very rare among the Japanese professors. Also, that culture is created via communication was often mentioned by American and German professors, a view which was also scarce among Japanese professors. In all three countries, however, the perspective on culture from a critical theory viewpoint was extremely rare; in the U.S. and in Japan only one professor from each country mentioned it.

The last term *intercultural* was seen by most of the German professors as encounter, a crossing-point, an experience of more than two cultures, something new, third or hybrid-like. Also, many professors saw cultural exchange as a process of change. In Japan, more than half of the professors saw *ibunka* as something that happens between different groups or generations, gender, work, region etc. As everybody belongs to many cultural groups, *ibunka* is static. A few professors mentioned that *ibunka* communication equals interpersonal communication or that *ibunka* is generated when one finds a difference between oneself and another. Thus, *ibunka* is not static, it is volatile. Also, nearly all Japanese professors voiced their opinions about the often seen term *ibunka* in Japanese society. Most of them expressed their being uncomfortable when using the translation *ibunka* for the term intercultural. There were also a few who did not use the Japanese name *ibunka(kan)* for their ICC course. On the other hand, there were others who stressed that the term *ibunka* has already penetrated society and is normal and that the 'i' of *ibunka* is positive and beneficial. In order to express the meaning of 'inter' and mutual respect, three professors prefer to add *kan* after *ibunka*. Two-thirds of the U.S. professors saw *intercultural* as between different cultures and/or identities. A minority saw differences as a continuum of similarities and differences, or they commented that intercultural emerges when differences are highlighted. A majority of the professors focused on discrimination,

on privileged and unprivileged, and on social justice issues. When comparing the three countries, only very few professors saw the term *intercultural* from the perspective of critical theory. Only two professors, one from Japan and one from the U.S., stressed the necessity of looking into the intention of drawing a line between cultures.

5 OF STUDENTS' DEFINITIONS

The students in all three countries were given questionnaires between January 2008 and March 2009, always at the end of their ICC courses. 470 students in Japan, 229 in the U.S. and 211 in Germany answered them. Beside some questions concerning their study environment, we mainly asked them about their perceptions of the three terms *communication, culture*, and *intercultural*.

As already mentioned, all answers were analyzed using the KJ-Method. No conceptions, variables or patterns were decided beforehand. Everything was gradually put into groups, always looking for the inner meaning of the content of the answers.

5.1 Results of the students' answers concerning *communication*
5.1.1 Japanese students
The courses were mostly part of the general studies programs and/or elective and all were held in Japanese. Although the same number of classes as in Germany answered the questionnaire, the number of students was more than double.

141 or 30.5% of the Japanese students focused in detail on communication as building and maintaining human relationships, using words such as "*nakayoku*", "*tsukiau*" and others. They described human relations in detail and used very everyday expressions. Also, 82 or 17.5% of the students perceived communication as "*to understand the feelings of the other*" or "*mutual understanding*". Those students also tried to express human relations or relationships. There were 11 students or 2.3% who saw communication as "interesting and enjoyable". Contrary to that, 8 students or 1.7% pointed out that communication can be "*tedious, tiring, or difficult*". Another 94 or close to 20% of the students saw communication as sending/transmitting/ information or as an exchange of information. 71 students or 15.2% focused on communication as 'necessary, most important, can't do without it in life'.

5.1.2 American students
In the U.S., nearly all of the courses were part of the general studies program. Many courses were offered by the departments of communication. 67 students or 29% answered that communication is about exchange, interaction and that it is shared. Another 66 or close to 29% of the students saw it rather as transferring/

transmitting/ conveying/ and partly receiving information via (non)-verbal cues, describing only the basic elements of message structure. 34 students or 14.7% saw communication solely as language and its usage. 31 students or 13.5% stressed that communication is about how people express themselves (non)-verbally. Their focus was on the individual, rather than on reciprocity. In contrast, only 6 students or 2.6% described communication as link, bond, as a connection between humans

5.1.3 German students
It should be noted that ICC-courses are taught in various departments, such as in economics, anthropology, psychology, sociology, linguistics and others. Some courses are open to students from all other departments and students of science and/or engineering attend them as part of their general studies. Also, three courses were held in English.

In Germany, 69 students or 33% stressed that communication equals interaction between people via various means. These students focused more on humans in action. Another 63 students or 30.4% stressed that communication is exchange of info/ ideas via various (non)-verbal means. 28 students or 13.5% saw communication as transferring/ transmitting/ conveying/ receiving messages/ideas via (non)-verbal cues.

There were no students who saw communication as language and its usage. Instead, there were 16 students or 7.7% who emphasized that it is impossible not to communicate by quoting Watzlawick, or stressed that everything is communication. However, only 6 students or 2.9% could be found, who saw communication as 'the way we express ourselves'. These students' focus was on the individual, not on reciprocity.

By comparing the results concerning the term *communication* from the three countries the following becomes apparent: the Japanese students' very strong tendency to view communication extremely close to or nearly identical with human relations or relationships. The U.S. students put the emphasis on the action of communication with a tendency to see it as human acts or behavior. Many of the German students saw communication as exchange and interaction.

5.2 Results of the students' answers concerning *culture*
5.2.1 Japanese students
131 students or about 28% focused on context, surrounding and society, on an area, a country, or bluntly on Japan. These students clearly concentrated on place. 64 students or 13.6% focused on group and on the values, beliefs, customs a group has. Their emphasis was clearly on group. In contrast, 85 students or 18% of all the students stressed custom, practice, tradition, values, and history. Their focus was on basic

cultural elements. 79 students or 16.8% saw culture as something personal. They stressed the individual, and that culture influences the individual and is part of his/her personality. Many also mentioned that culture is about identity. It should be added that this relatively high percentage is only due to the definitions given by students of only two of the professors. The students of the other 9 professors, hardly never ever mentioned this aspect. It should be added though, that among the numbers mentioned so far, 12% of the students described culture as society or environment. However, only a mere 6% stressed that culture is handed down as well as shared. Another 5% wrote definitions such as: culture is important, it has to be defended, it is a kind of understanding, and it makes life colorful.

Not one student viewed culture as a system or tried to describe culture as an all entangled complexity.

5.2.2 American students

80 students or 35.7% stressed that culture influences the individual and it is at the same time part of his/her personality. 62 or 27.6% of the students focused on values, believes, customs which are handed down or concentrate on culture as a complicated collection of beliefs, values etc. A different focus was displayed by 41 students or 18.3% who emphasized culture as group, who shares values, norms and beliefs. Another 16 students or 7.1% explained culture as context, society, area, surrounding, in sum their emphasis was on culture as place, which is quite in contrast to the Japanese. 7 students or 3.1% saw culture as differences and/or way of others.

5.2.3 German students

62 students or 30.8% saw culture as something more personal. They stressed the individual, and that culture influences the individual and is part of his/her personality. 37 students or 18.4% focused on culture strongly as a group with shared beliefs, norms, and values. Another 49 students or 24.3% focused more on the totality of culture, on the systemic network it represents. Included in this group are 5.5% who saw culture as interaction, collective memory, phenomenon, etc. 21 students or 10.4% emphasized learned customs, beliefs, and values, traditions which have grown and are handed down. 4 students or 2% saw culture as differences and/or way of others. A smaller number of 6 students or 3%, viewed culture as context, society, surrounding. Those students' focus was on place.

The above results show that Japanese students, in comparison to U.S. and German students, have a strong tendency to view culture as place. Also, it became clear, that if not taught or learned otherwise, it is not in the Japanese students' conscience to link culture with individual or with personality. It was also not possible to observe a clear proactive attitude in the students' view of culture that would comprise sharing, developing, learning and the handing down of culture.

5.3 Results of the students' answers concerning *intercultural*

As mentioned in 1, the term *intercultural* is used in German as *interkulturell*, same meaning with a slightly different spelling to English. In Japanese, the term we used in the questionnaire is *ibunka (different culture(s))*, as it was first introduced in the translation of Hall's *The Silent Language*, and not *ibunkakan (between different culture(s))*. However, given the fact that only in three of the twelve Japanese ICC-courses the term *ibunkakan* was used, and that students had spent one entire semester learning about intercultural communication, we found it appropriate to use the original term, which is also the most widespread (Google search engine, 2,900,000 entries for *ibunka*, 1,340,000 for *ibunkakan*, May 29th , 2010).

5.3.1 Japanese students

256 students or 56% saw *intercultural* as a different culture than their own culture, as different values and a different way of thinking. Among those students 24 or 5% stated clearly that they viewed intercultural as foreign countries' cultures or as foreigners and 18 or nearly 4% perceived it as a different culture to 'the Japanese'. On the other hand, there were 22 students or nearly 5% who pointed out diversity within one's own culture, as well as exchange and communication with others. 50 students or close to 11% saw *intercultural* as something of interest, as stimulating and worth learning about. In contrast, 33 students or 7% saw it as something that disturbs, annoys or is tedious to deal with. Another 33 students or 7% saw *intercultural* as something unknown or as an unknown world.

5.3.2 American students

Two groups of students alone made up for more than 50%. They were the following: 59 students or about 28% saw *intercultural* as interaction/communication of or between different cultures, while 55 students or 26.4% stressed the mixing and combining of two or more cultures. 25 students or 12% emphasized that *intercultural* means the awareness and the understanding of other cultures. 15 students or 7% simply stated "between cultures", giving only a synonym of the term *intercultural* and 14 students or 6.8% stressed the relations or what is going on within a given culture. Only 13 students or 6.3% saw *intercultural* as different cultures.

5.3.3 German students

The largest group, 91 students or 44%, saw intercultural as some kind of exchange, encounter, meeting or contact of two or more cultures, be it in person or representing nations or others. They were followed by 59 students or 29% who emphasized that *intercultural* is the result of two or more cultures meeting, a 'between-culture', something 'different'

from the original cultures, something 'new'. 14 students or close to 7% stressed that *intercultural* means awareness, tolerance and competence in ICC matters. 9 students or slightly more than 4% emphasized that two or more cultures work together and 7 students or a strong 3% concentrated on what happens when at least two cultures meet – the focus being more on the action.

When comparing the results of the students' answer from Japan, Germany and the U.S. the following becomes apparent: a large number of the Japanese students viewed *intercultural* as the other or as other cultures, different or in contrast to themselves or their own culture. A perspective, which looks at the changeability or volatility of culture could hardly be detected.

6   SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSION

The study shows that a number of Japanese professors and many of the students still have a strong tendency to link 'culture' with place (which includes areas within as well as outside of the country) and/or a society. For a long time, generally culture has been seen solely as national culture by society, however, there are now also signs which indicate that culture is being seen from a more pluralistic viewpoint. On the other hand though, it became apparent that although each individual has a diverse cultural background, subject to the instability and changeability of culture, and given that culture is mutually created and shared, these factors are rarely held in focus when culture is viewed as a whole. In the teaching of ICC, it is necessary to not only look at the diverse cultures of different areas and /or groups, but also at the variety and diversity of individuals within those areas or groups, and to show the links and complexity between the two. Also, it is necessary to teach students to not only see culture from a passive perspective such as being learned or handed down, but to also teach culture as mutually shared and created and by this to develop a more proactive and participating attitude towards culture.

Our study also found that in the teaching of ICC in the three countries critical theory has hardly been introduced into any of the courses investigated. Neither were there many professors who stressed the importance of profoundly studying global culture. However, in order to improve or tackle problems of oppressive relations within society and to tackle the bordering character of culture, and in order to understand and solve or improve problems which are prevalent worldwide, it will be necessary to introduce critical perspectives into the teaching method. The focus of teaching should not only be on group-culture on a micro-level, but also on the shifting of

perspectives to global culture.

The result of the students' questionnaire showed clearly that Japanese students strongly linked *communication* with human relations. Concerning the term *communication*, there was a wide gap between the concepts held by the interviewed professors and how students actually saw this term. This is either due to the lack of time allocated at Japanese universities for the teaching of communication theory within the education of ICC, or the views or perspective held by the professors about communication are not transmitted or do not reach the students. Therefore, it is indispensable to reexamine the position of communication within the teaching of ICC. The following should be considered for an improved teaching method: The fact that Japanese students view communication as an indispensable element for building human relations should be taken into account. By linking into the teaching the experience students have made in human relations so far with various communication theories would possibly contribute to improving students' understanding of communication.

In all three countries, nearly all professors based their understanding of the term communication on already existing theories. Also, in their teaching they have the tendency to start by presenting theories. Only two Japanese professors referred to the importance of starting the teaching of communication by: a) thinking about the roots or origin of the human action to communicate, b) pursuing what it means for living beings to communicate, and c) studying the process that took mankind over a long period of time to discover methods of coexistence in social groups while repeating mutually shared and created/construed daily experience. As a teaching method this approach can be expected to allow students to understand the human action of communication more comprehensively and from different perspectives.

Among the Japanese professors who were interviewed only very few professors saw *intercultural* as something that occurs when a difference between two sides is felt, for instance, as something that is volatile and unsettled. Also, only very few professors held a critical perspective and questioned the political intention of drawing a line between cultures. From the results of the Japanese students' questionnaire it became apparent that they have a strong tendency to think that within ICC-courses the focus is placed on the differences between oneself / one's own culture and the other / other cultures. This tendency had already been pointed out by many professors in the interview. Therefore, it is necessary to further promote discussions and exchange of information between researchers in Japan and abroad. It is also necessary to increase trials and further the development of new ideas.

The concepts of the terms *intercultural* and *culture* held by the professors of the three countries were, in

comparison to their concepts of the term *communication*, quite different between the countries. Especially, concerning the term *intercultural*, where a great variety of views could be found. This present situation shows us that the studies of intercultural communication are still at a stage of development or developing. Therefore, it is necessary to promote discussion and exchange of opinions between researchers in Japan and abroad about the above mentioned terms and to create a place where awareness of the differences can be shared.

In addition, it would be most important, at least in the field of academic education, to change the term *inbunka communication*, as used at present within ICC teaching in Japan. This term is easily misunderstood, and would be better, or understood more clearly written as *bunkakan communication*, or *bunkakan rikai* (understanding), which is a truer translation of the meaning of intercultural. This would prevent students from the danger of focusing solely on other cultures, and would at the same time introduce more diversity and flexibility into the teaching of ICC in Japan.

Furthermore, it is also necessary to: a) teach students clearly, that the studies of intercultural communication are still developing, and b) by allowing the students to compare the various concepts of the terms held by researchers worldwide, to make them more conscious of the multifarious perspectives within the field of ICC, including the relativity of their own position.

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三カ国の異文化コミュニケーションの授業における概念理解

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日・米・独の４年制大学において、異文化コミュニケーション授業を担当している教員にインタビューを行うとともに、その授業履修者にアンケート調査を実施し、彼等の「Intercultural（異文化〔間〕）」「文化」「コミュニケーション」等の基礎概念理解について比較調査を行った。これらの分析を通じ、3 カ国における異文化教育の現状を把握し、そこから鮮明化した日本の異文化教育に関する問題点に言及するとともに、異文化コミュニケーション学に纏わる多様な視点の比較検証と活発な議論喚起の必要性、学習者の視点に配慮したコミュニケーションに関する教授法の確立、授業における批判的理論の適用、学生の文化に対する能動的姿勢を育成する必要性等について指摘・提言を行った。日・米・独の４年制大学において、異文化コミュニケーション授業を担当している教員にインタビューを行うとともに、その授業履修者にアンケート調査を実施し、彼等の「Intercultural（異文化〔間〕）」「文化」「コミュニケーション」等の基礎概念理解について比較調査を行った。これらの分析を通じ、3 カ国における異文化教育の現状を把握し、そこから鮮明化した日本の異文化教育に関する問題点に言及するとともに、異文化コミュニケーション学に纏わる多様な視点の比較検証と活発な議論喚起の必要性、学習者の視点に配慮したコミュニケーションに関する教授法の確立、授業における批判的理論の適用、学生の文化に対する能動的姿勢を育成する必要性等について指摘・提言を行った。

キーワード: 基本概念、異文化、文化、コミュニケーション、日本

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