

ILTLP CLASSROOM-BASED INVESTIGATION REPORT

TEACHER'S NAME	SCHOOL	LANGUAGE	YEAR LEVEL
Ms Gaelle HOMMA	Lucas Heights Community School	Japanese	Year 8

CONTEXT

Lucas Heights Community School is a K-12 co-educational State school in southern Sydney. The school is located in the Sutherland Shire which is renowned for being a predominantly "anglo" area and now infamous because of the Cronulla riots a couple of years ago. The school population (staff and students) is predominantly Anglo/European. The dominant religion of most students is Christian. As a teacher currently trying to teach Japanese and French to reluctant year 7 and 8 students I am constantly frustrated by their apparent lack of interest in the subject. The area is quite affluent, the students have everything money can buy and are relatively well travelled. Many of my students have been to countries such as Thailand, Bali, China, Europe or America but still don't seem to value speaking a second language. Students have told me on numerous occasions that everyone (in other countries) learns to speak English so there is no need for them to learn a second language!! Many of the staff members seem to share this opinion and I find few staff members that express the opinion that LOTE is a valuable subject. I have found their attitude frustrating and I have felt unable to cross the chasm between us.

Due to my up-bringing by a French mother and English father in a house where "franglais" was the language of communication I believe I have grown up with a multi lingual and multi cultural perspective. I grew up knowing that although the two countries are only separated by the English Channel they consider themselves very different. My parents became close friends with a Turkish family and a Dutch/Australian family. As we had no other family in Australia, they became our extended family and we spent many special occasions with them thereby introducing me to other cultures, languages and religions from an early age. I chose to study Japanese in high school and went to Japan as an exchange student for 12 months after year 12. I later married a Japanese man, lived in Japan for another two years and for 10 years spoke Japanese and English at home in Australia. I worked in tourism for a few years in a Japanese company before going to University to become a teacher where I studied Japanese, French and Spanish. The path my life has taken continues to introduce people from various cultural backgrounds into my life.

I am fascinated by people from cultural backgrounds different from my own and their experiences growing up in Australia.

However, from the first day of the conference I was horrified to realise that I took for granted the "Anglo-Saxon" Australians as the majority, "the norm" and therefore not interesting.

Even though I know that there are many aspects to a person's "culture" other than nationality or ethnicity. For example, I have lived in Australia since the age of 2 years old. Despite having an English father and

having been educated here there is still the odd Australian expression that I hear for the first time and don't immediately understand.

At Lucas Heights Community School there are 4 classes in Year 7 studying French and 4 classes in Year 8 studying Japanese. After Year 7 and 8 LOTE is an elective and students can choose French or Japanese if they wish to study a second language. Although I have taught Japanese up to year 12 at this school, much to my despair we currently have no elective classes. As I am now the only language teacher I fear that this is due to something I am doing (or not doing) which is turning students off the subject. My concerns were echoed by a staff member who commented (when I complained that I did not "get a class" for Year 9) that I obviously had not inspired the students to want to continue with the subject!

I applied to participate in the ILTLP programme in the hope that I would find a way to reach my students and stimulate their interest in, not only the target language but also languages and other cultures in general. I soon realized that as my first step I needed to acknowledge the experiences of all my students and find out if my assumptions about their lack of interest were founded or not.

Our Year 7 and 8 classes are made up of 3 mixed ability classes and 1 extension class. The students in the extension classes are generally very co-operative and have a good work ethic so they make good progress in the subject. Every year a few of them become very passionate about French or Japanese and are bitterly disappointed when the class does not "run" (a class of 10 is the minimum required).

This year 8G, which I consider the most capable of the 3 mixed ability classes, seems to be the least receptive to my lessons. I decided to challenge myself by trying to increase their interest in LOTE by using them as the subject of my investigation....

The school has a long standing exchange program with a high school in Ono City of Hyogo Prefecture Japan (the students stay for two weeks) and they were due to visit us this year during the time I would be conducting my investigation.

I decided to deviate from my original plan slightly to take advantage of their visit.

AREA OF INVESTIGATION

I found it difficult to define and refine my area of investigation however I believe it fits best into

Exploring Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning.

There were multiple aspects to my interest and motivation in conducting this investigation and this complicated my approach....

- I felt there was a need to change my approach to teaching Japanese because what I was doing was not working and I was failing to inspire my students to want to continue with the subject beyond the compulsory years.
- I wanted to find out more about my students and where they were coming from in a cultural sense as well as whether my perception of their lack of interest in languages and culture was true.
- I wanted to observe my students interacting with the Japanese exchange students to see if their attitude (lack of interest) was reflected in the way they interacted and communicated.
- We were working towards an assessment task where students were to create a photo album about their family (PowerPoint or on paper) and write short descriptions of their family members in Japanese. One aspect of the description was to write about nationality. I wanted to use this as an opportunity to find out/reveal the diversity of cultures in the classroom and encourage students to think about their identity as "an Australian".

CLASSROOM PRACTICE

Component one:

I discussed the ILTLP project with the students in 8G and I asked for their co-operation in being my target group. They wanted to know why I chose them and not the “extension class” and I answered honestly (not sure if that was a good idea or not though) that I chose them because I found it difficult to engage them and I really wanted to increase their interest in the subject. I told them that as part of the project I might change the way I approach some lessons, we would have more discussions and I would be asking them questions about their opinions and experiences.

Component two:

I asked the students to fill in an individual questionnaire entitled Student Profile to gauge their interest in languages and culture in general, their interest in Japanese culture and learning the Japanese language, their interest in French culture and learning the French language. I encouraged them to be honest.

Component three:

Before starting my usual lesson on “how to say what nationality you are” (yes I know....yawn!) I asked the question ‘What does it mean to be “Australian”?’ Students brainstormed the different characteristics required to be “Australian”. As I expected I was presented with stereotypical descriptions of blonde-blue-eyed-sport loving (yet pot bellied)-beach going-beer drinking- English speaking-meat pie eating men and women who were born in Australia! I expressed disappointment that I was therefore not Australian by their criteria (but my brother was....?)

I asked a student, who draws well, to draw our “Australian” on the board and then asked the class if anyone thought the picture represented them....no takers! A conversation ensued as to what then was an Australianthe students seemed confused...especially when I told them that although I was born in France I was now an Australian citizen and considered myself Australian (not French). We concluded that the concept was complicated.

Unfortunately, we were unable to go into a discussion of stereotypes of other nationalities as we ran out of time. However, I was very happy with the level of involvement of the students. *Everyone* had something to say and I think they got the point as students were already starting to mumble comments about “stereotypes”.

Component four:

I decided to arrange for my Year 8 students to interview the Japanese exchange students (in English as their level of Japanese is by no means up to it yet). I prepared a lesson in which the students were instructed to come up with questions in groups to ask the exchange students. They were encouraged to find out things about the students and their lives that they could not just look up on the internet or read in a textbook. They were given some topics as suggestions but given the freedom to come up with their own questions as well. The groups then had to nominate a representative to work with other group representatives on compiling a class set of questions that they would all ask the exchange students. I was absent that day but the task was completed reasonably well. If present, I may have had more input into the types of questions they came up with. As it was, although I thought some of the questions were silly and even inappropriate (e.g. “do gays stand out in Japan?”), I decided not to censor them but let the students “deal with it” as they saw fit. As I was planning to video the interaction I was interested to see what they would do when and if they realised a couple of the questions were awkward/inappropriate. For example, “What do you think of whaling?” “Do you eat whale?” (Attachment 2 Task Description & Attachment 3 Class Questions)

Component five:

I recorded the interview on video so that I could observe:

- how the students interacted with the exchange students (given that they have told me they are only *slightly interested* in learning about Japanese culture)
- how they overcame communication difficulties

Component six:

I asked the students to write a reflection about "The Ono Experience". I told them I wanted them to reflect on the experience not just give a recount. I said writing a reflection would involve them writing from the heart as well as from the head. I told them I wanted to know how they felt as well as what they observed/noticed. I gave them a few leading questions such as;

- Were the Japanese exchange students as they imagined they would be?
- Did they try to speak to the Japanese students in Japanese? How successful were they?
- What do they think the Ono students thought of them?
- What difficulties did they have communicating and how did they overcome this?
- Did the interaction increase their interest in learning Japanese or learning about Japan?

I told the students that I did not want them to limit themselves to answering my questions. However, after reading their responses some of which were quite superficial I wondered if I should have put more thought into my questions and insisted that they answer them before writing other comments.

DATA OR INFORMATION GATHERED

Data was collected from Component two the Student Profile, Component five the Video of the Intercultural Experience between the Japanese students from Ono High School and my Year 8G students and Component six the reflections of my students on "The Ono Experience". Some information was gathered from observations made when students were writing about their families in Component three and the type of questions the students came up with to ask the exchange students in Component four.

from Component two:

I collected the questionnaires and made a simple graph showing the degree of interest my students in 8G have towards LOTE, other cultures, Japanese and French Language and Japanese and French Culture (I also collected the same data from one of the other Year 8 classes to compare)

(Attachment 1)

I read and took note of the students' answers to other sections in the questionnaire such as what aspects of culture they are interested in. Which language they would study if they could choose any language and any comments they would like to make to the teacher.

from Component three

(Observation)

When the students were writing their drafts of descriptions about their families I had many students ask me how to express mixed nationalities, for example, half Indonesian/half Australian. I noticed many students started telling me about the nationality of their grandparents or in-laws and cousin's spouses.... My students suddenly seemed keen to discuss the multicultural nature of their families and the various

languages they speak. It was interesting to discover the diversity in the seemingly “Anglo” dominant classroom.

from Component four

(Observation and Reflection after looking at students’ work)

Left to their own devices my students came up with *some* good questions to ask the Japanese exchange students but other questions were inappropriate and superficial. When asked later if “given another opportunity to interview the students would they change the questions”, some students said they would. “I now look back and think that I could have asked some better questions but I wasn’t aware of how well they could communicate with us...”, Ashlee.

from Component five

Watched the video and made a table of observations and notes as to the significance of what I observed.

from Component six

I collected and read my students’ reflections looking at their observations and impressions for some signs of intercultural awareness or understanding. I highlighted and transcribed sections of their text that seemed interesting and intuitive. Attachment five

FINDINGS

Component two:

Student Profile

The questionnaire about my students revealed that, as I thought, the students were not very interested in learning another language or learning about another culture. Out of the choices rating their interest as *not at all interested, slightly interested, quite interested, very interested*. Most students reported that they were *slightly interested*. Only a few indicated that they are *very interested* in Japanese culture or Japanese language!! (At least no one indicated that they were *not interested at all* in the Japanese language)

Another question required the students to select an area of culture they were most interested in learning about. Many students selected Daily Life and History, some wrote Fashion and Trends only one student indicated interest in Festivals or Traditions and Customs.

When given the opportunity to write a message to the teacher a few students wrote that they wanted more “hands on stuff”, “more excursions”, “make language fun”, “...fun stuff like games that test your memory”, “cook some of their food” and my favourite message....“learning a second language is awesome because I may like to go to that country and could talk to them” (bless his heart.....!)

Component five:

Video of the intercultural experience

Watching the video of the intercultural experience of my year 8 students with the visitors from Ono city Japan, I was delighted to see my students completely engrossed in their interviews. The students were constantly smiling and nodding, leaning forward to listen to the answers of the visitors. I noticed my students sometimes changed the wording of the questions if they thought the Japanese students did not understand. The electronic dictionaries were also used frequently to translate words. My students also pointed to questions written on their handouts so that the students could read the question and

overcome problems with understanding the Australian accent. They nodded far more frequently than they would normally to show they understood and watched the Japanese students' faces intently. I also noticed that they were speaking in a quiet and gentle way that was not usual for them. They were on their best behaviour too!

A few students realized some of the questions were inappropriate and did not want to ask them. One of my students though seemed oblivious to the sensitive nature of some questions and asked "Do you like whaling" while smiling at the Japanese student she was interviewing (thereby giving a false visual cue to the girl she was speaking to who would not have realized the person asking the question thought it was a bad thing!). The Japanese girl in question smiled and said "yes!" confirming for my student that Japanese people support whaling (even though I doubt she understood the question as more capable students had to resort to the dictionary to translate the word "whaling").

Component six:

"The Ono Experience" Reflection

All my students seem to have enjoyed and valued the experience of meeting the Japanese students from Ono High School but the quality and depth of their answers varied greatly. Some only wrote a paragraph and others a whole page. Some students seemed to concentrate on how the Japanese students acted while others were concerned about how they were perceived by the visitors. It was clear that their expectations of the Japanese students before meeting them varied greatly as did their opinion of whether or not the Japanese spoke English well. Few students seemed to compare the Japanese students' command of the English language to their own ability to speak Japanese. Reading the original scripts of my students' reflections it was ironic to note the many grammatical and orthographic errors the students made in English, their first language.

A couple of students showed they had observed some of the students mannerisms such as "...one other unusual thing was when they didn't get a question they would tilt their head to the side....."Anthony

And "...They were all very light hearted and found humour in things Australians usually wouldn't for example, they would laugh when they didn't understand a word or had a translation error...."

With barely an exception, the students mentioned that the Japanese students were polite, shy and quiet. Most students also commented on the fact that the girls laughed and giggled a lot but no one seemed to consider that the laughter could have been embarrassment rather than amusement!

Disappointingly, one student wrote that, "they all looked the same..." so I guess he has not gone beyond very superficial observation....

One student wrote a lovely "reflection" openly expressing his feelings about the interaction..."I thought they were scared of me because I was acting weird around them because I was too excited...I didn't try to speak Japanese because I didn't want to pronounce something wrong and it might be offensive to them. The "Ono Experience" was very interesting because I had met a person from Hong Kong but no-one from Japan before. So I liked the experience. It did interest me in speaking another language because it sounds cool and I like to let my tongue loose sometimes just pronouncing a letter or word." Jared

It was fascinating reading, I learnt a lot about my students and realize I have underestimated them because of the difficulty I have had in engaging them in the subject. I also realized that though they indicated in their profiles that they are not interested in "learning" about another culture in perhaps a "textbook" sense, in the video and in their "reflections they demonstrated that they were indeed very curious about the Ono students. I also realised what a big deal it was to them to meet these students from Japan. It was clear that each student had a unique perspective on the experience depending on their expectations before hand and their interpretation of what took place. From watching the video alone it is not possible to know what the students are thinking so the Reflection gave me a lot more

information.

INTERPRETING THE INFORMATION

As I thought in the *Personal Profile*, the class in general indicated that they were not that interested in learning about other cultures or learning another language and not interested in Japanese in particular. I was surprised that when asked, "If given the choice to learn any language which language would you like to learn?" no-one wrote that they did not want to learn *any* language. Most of them wanted to learn a language that seemed relevant or important to them. So I guess it is up to me to make Japanese and French relevant or important to them.

The *Profile* also revealed that the aspects of culture they were interested in were not so much the topics commonly taught, festivals and traditions etc (which often reflect the differences between cultures) but contemporary culture such as daily life, fashion, music and technology. My students seem to be interested in looking for things they have in common (connections) with youth in other countries so that they can relate to them. With the internet these days, this information is readily available so I will find ways to incorporate this into my programs more often. Many textbooks we use do touch on these topics but they quickly become out of date. Japanese advertisements have long been a source of amusement for many students but with my new "stance" I can see their value as a source of cultural information.

With the *Interview*, I was disappointed in some of the questions my students came up with as an information gathering exercise. However, the interview served its purpose in enabling my students to talk to the Japanese exchange students for an extended period of time. The inappropriate questions allowed me to see how they would react when and if they realised it would be awkward to ask a real person they might offend. I was pleasantly surprised that the majority of the students *did* realise and actually questioned whether or not they should ask some of the questions. A couple of students decided not to ask "I wouldn't change any questions because like I said I only asked them sensible questions", Jared.

Watching the *video*, I could not stop smiling at how intently the students were concentrating on their conversations. They were friendly and attentive. Everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves. One small problem with the task was that there was a football game on at school and the students wanted to watch the game (they were not allowed by order of the Principal anyway). To make matters worse the Japanese teacher (male) accompanying the Ono students had gone to watch the game instead of coming to our lesson!! When the students got to the end of their questions, I tried to encourage the Japanese students to ask my students some questions. However, it appears that the boys had already convinced the Japanese students that they wanted to see the game too! So we went to watch the game for the last 15 minutes of the lesson. So the interaction ended sooner than I had intended and once we got to the football field the boys in the class completely forgot about our visitors!!!

An interesting outcome from watching the video was listening to myself speak to the students and not liking how I sounded or how I answered some of their questions.

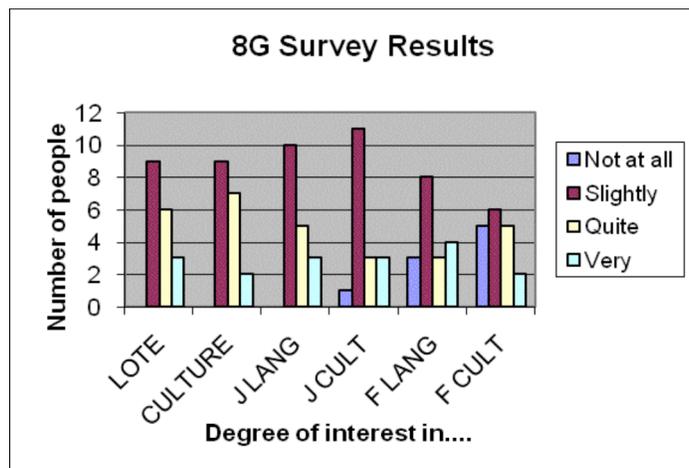
Their personal *reflections* showed me that I should not assume to know what my students are or are not thinking. They are very observant and thoughtful and they have opinions. I need to give them an opportunity to learn to form and express their own ideas. Since students at that age are not always willing or able to verbalise their thoughts in front of the class it is beneficial to also provide opportunities for expression in other forms. It takes a lot of digging on the teacher's behalf to get students thinking on a deeper level. Students want to know where they can find "the answers" they are not used to coming up with the answers themselves.

The main problem with my investigation was that it was largely unrelated to the language aspect of my lessons. However I believe in my ability to teach the language when I have the attention and interest of my students. I know how to play games and cook and sing songs in Japanese etc all the activities the students say they want to do. I have tended not to do those things lately though because the class did

not seem interested. By taking an intercultural stance and demonstrating the belief that they all have knowledge and experiences relevant to discussions about culture I hope to capture all the students' interest.

MATERIALS AND EXEMPLARS

Attachment one results of *Students Profile*



Attachment two

Ono High School Students Interviews

While the Ono High School students are visiting our school, I think we should take the opportunity to find out as much as we can about them to develop an idea about life in Japan for an adolescent. This is much better than watching videos (which are usually out of date) don't you think?

The students from Ono might also like to ask you some questions as well!

Your task this lesson is to come up with the questions we will ask the girls during their stay.

In groups of about 4 or 5 students, make a list of possible questions...these are the topics I thought of but you might think of other topics that interest you more.....Each group can either think of a few questions for each topic or the group can concentrate on one topic and go into more detail.

- School Life
- Family Life and Family Relations
- Casual work
- Leisure (weekends, school holidays and after school)
- Sport they play or like to watch
- Hobbies and Interests
- Youth Issues
- Friends and relationships

To help the process run smoothly each group should nominate:

1. a "captain" who makes sure every one has the opportunity to participate
2. a scribe to take notes and write down the questions
3. a spokesperson to present your questions to the rest of the class
4. a publisher who will be responsible for typing up the questions to bring to class next lesson
5. a group representative who will work with other group representative to create the class's final list of questions.

☺On your published list of questions make sure you state who was in the group and which job they had!!

Attachment three

8G Interview Questions for the Ono Students

1. What sports are you into?
2. Do you have any pets? If so what are their names?
3. What city in Japan are you from?
4. Do you have surf brands like Billabong, Roxy, Ripcurl in Japan?
5. Do you have strict parents?
6. How many hours of study do you do per day?
7. How old do you have to be to get a license in Japan?
8. What is the legal drinking age in Japan?
9. Are you nervous about meeting new people in Australia?
10. What types of music do you listen to?
11. What is the latest fashion in Japan?
12. Are there many houses with paper walls and doors?
13. Are you already using I-phones in Japan
14. What festivals and celebrations do you have?
15. Do many people dress gothic?
16. Do gays stand out?
17. What are your hobbies?
18. What subjects do you like at school?
19. Do you have set times for eating and do you always use chopsticks?
20. What are your opinions on whaling?
21. Have you ever eaten whale?

22. Have you ever tried vegemite?
23. Do you have a boyfriend, if so what is his name?
24. What is your biggest fear?
25. Have you ever seen a koala or a kangaroo?

Attachment five:

Quotes from 8G's "reflections"

"When you were talking to them you had to talk in simple words and that made it harder to communicate with them but it was still a great experience" Caitlin

I found it hard to communicate with them, they didn't understand English very well. I think I behaved differently because they were visitors in our country.

I was surprised that they knew English so good because I know if I went to their country I wouldn't know how to speak Japanese very good..... Michael

...one other unusual thing was when they didn't get a question they would tilt their head to the side.....When I met them I sort've wanted to learn more about their language, I tried to speak their language, I ended up saying something really weird that they didn't know what language I was speaking. So it was really hard for us to communicate to them. Anthony

When we met them I could understand what they said but when they got into more complex conversations I just nodded or shook my head....I really enjoyed speaking to them in Japanese and in English.

Having the Ono students at our school was a great way to learn about the Japanese culture and the way they act and what sorts of things they eat.....they have made a big difference to the way I think about and the way I want to learn Japanese both the language and the culture.....I think that the Japanese students have made a big influence on wanting to learn a second language and I thank them for it very much. Ashley

I was excited on meeting someone that wasn't Australian and that didn't speak 100% English....Victoria

When the Ono girls arrived they were totally different to what I would expect. I thought they would not be so shy. We were all interested and were asking a lot of questions and the girls were giving short and quick answers...Mai sat with us most lunches and I became quite good friends with her....I tried to speak Japanese but it did not work so well and I had to go back to using English...they have influenced me to want to go over to Japan and see their beautiful country.... Ashleigh Jade

Before the girls came I thought that Japanese students were totally different to us and that they weren't like Aussie kids. But when they came I found out they were just like us in the things they like and do...

I found that speaking Japanese to an actual Japanese person is harder than just talking in Japanese to your friends.....Jessica

I thought they would be how they were which is nice, shy, fun, friendly etc...they talked good English.....next time they come I'm going to let one of them stay at my house. I didn't have that much trouble communicating with them.. I found it very interesting...I did think they enjoyed themselves because they were always laughing....Kayla

I selected these quotes because they give an insight into how the students understood the interaction

with the students from Japan. It shows that the experience had a big impact on my students and that each student could come to a different conclusion from the same experience. I also think the irony of some of the statements is very funny...such as “they talked good English..”

EVALUATION

I am not sure that my investigation will be of use to anyone else. However, it has been educational for me to observe my students more closely and find out more about them and how they think. By limiting ourselves to teaching content (vocabulary, sentence structures and expressions) we as language teachers can miss out on being part of developing the students' minds on a deeper level. In terms of Quality Teaching, I must admit I have found it difficult to translate the concept of Deeper Knowledge into LOTE terms. We all know there are words and expressions in other languages that can't be translated easily because of the cultural knowledge necessary to understand the concept. It is not easy to explain that to someone who does not speak another language. I remember my mother's frustration when she would have a funny memory, a joke or silly song from her childhood in France that she would try to share with us but it would usually fall flat because there was so much filler information necessary for understanding the point, that the moment would be lost.

The proforma I have been using for my programs has a section at the beginning where we write “What concept we want the students to learn” and “Why is that important”. I have always regarded that as meaning what concept about the Japanese/French culture do I want them to learn, and I have found it difficult to answer why it is important. However, I now see that section in a much broader educational sense meaning why is it important to understand this concept in becoming an intercultural person. It is still the most difficult part of the program to fill in. I now see how important it is.

I need to think more about what is important for students to understand about their own and other cultures, as well as what is important for them to know.

It was valuable for my students to have the interaction with the students from Ono High School but that would have happened regardless of this project. However, I believe the experience was enhanced by the students being asked to reflect and write about it. I am considering showing the students the video I took of the interviews to discuss their body language and that of the students from Japan, and how it could add or detract from understanding each other. E.g. Japanese students laughing when they are embarrassed or rubbing the back of their head when they are in an awkward position and don't know what to do.....or our students smiling when they ask a question and therefore masking their feelings about the issue...

REFLECTION

I am happy with what I have learned from my investigation but I am annoyed with myself that I did not know it already. Then I could have spent the time coming up with an intercultural activity or re-writing some programs. I would like to throw out everything I do and start all over again. In reality I will probably only be able to change things a little at a time. (It is like knowing exactly what you need to do to lose weight but not actually getting round to doing it!!)

Instead of feeling like I am going off the track when I share some of my experiences with students I will use it to illustrate a point of discussion and call on my students to tell us about their relevant experiences.

It is important to me that if nothing else I ignite in my students a curiosity about the world and their place in it.

Attachment four:

OBSERVATIONS	SIGNIFICANCE
<p>A student asked me if I had come up with the questions....because he did not like some of the questions</p> <p>Students not comfortable asking certain questions</p> <p>Despite the fact the class had come up with the questions</p> <p>Eg what do you think of whaling?</p> <p>Which way does the water go when you flush the toilet</p>	<p>They realized it was inappropriate given the social situation One student can be heard saying "I don't think that is a really appropriate question" and laughing nervously</p> <p>They were afraid to appear stupid in front of the Ono students with some questions they thought were silly</p> <p>They were afraid that if the Ono students said they liked whaling it would make the conversation very awkward or even perhaps start an argument/disagreement</p> <p>The students wanted the interaction to go well</p>
<p>A couple of students asked what an Ono student thought about "whaling" and said do you think it is good or bad.</p> <p>The Ono student immediately nodded and smiled saying it was good.</p>	<p>It is probable that she did not understand the question as none of the more capable students understood the question without referring to the dictionary. A significant misunderstanding of values/opinions probably occurred because of the Ono student misunderstanding or pretending to understand the question. She may have thought they asked if she liked whales....</p>
<p>Some Aus students speaking loudly and slowly but not changing the vocabulary or sentence structure to help comprehension</p> <p>"How much longer will you be here for?"</p> <p>"Do you have gothics (Goths) in Japan?"</p> <p>"Is soccer big over there?"</p>	<p>Lacked awareness of the need for cultural knowledge for the student to be able to understand the question.</p> <p>Lacked awareness of words that we use often that are in fact slang. Or that a certain turn of phrase can make comprehension difficult.</p>
<p>Aus students smiling</p>	<p>Trying to look friendly</p>
<p>Aus students nodding and shaking head</p> <p>Aus students usually patient while Ono students figuring out what they were asking</p> <p>Eg looking at the sheet to read the questions</p> <p>Using the dictionary to understand words</p> <p>Aus students leaning forward completely engaged in the task</p>	<p>To show they understand and without prompting automatically using body language to help with comprehension (in so doing wrongly assuming that body language is universal!!)</p> <p>My students showed goodwill towards the visitors in many ways. Despite saying they are only slightly interested in other cultures they appeared very interested</p>
<p>Ono students touching the back of their heads when confused or uncomfortable</p> <p>Ono students waving hand back and forward to say no or don't know instead of shaking their head</p> <p>My students may not have understood the meaning of that gesture</p> <p>Head tilted to the side to show they don't understand</p>	<p>Not being aware of body language and gestures can hamper communication because the cues are missed by the other person</p> <p>The same question might be repeated because it has not been answered and the body language indicating discomfort or inability to answer has not been understood</p>

