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The methodological differences between Japanese and British research on citizenship education

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Abstract

This paper aims to compare research methods in the UK and Japan. Citizenship education research in Japan is divided into two areas "research about content" and "research about method," both of which are then further subdivided. In "research about contents," for example, there are two components, one theoretical the other practical. Where the former analyses the philosophy or sociology of citizenship education, the latter analyses the curriculum, textbooks and classroom activities of citizenship education, including developing the curriculum and new teaching materials. The "research about method" area is divided into two methodologies, with one focusing on purpose, the other means. With regards to the former the researcher aims to clarify what citizenship education is, and with the latter at contributing to Japanese educational practice. The purpose of the paper will be to clarify and examine the differences between the Japanese and British approaches to citizenship education research.

Keywords: *citizenship education, culture, methodology, comparative research, Japan*

1. Research methods based on cultural characteristics

The following is a summary of Dr. Augustin Berques' discussion¹:

Each society organises space according to its cultural perspective. As a result, each society creates original extensity, and even if this extensity is multifaceted, it has unity.

He points out that the characteristics of a country or culture give it unique values and ways of thinking. Indeed, cultural traits appear in the areas of education and research through different approaches to research, teaching, and learning. Many studies in Japan and the UK have addressed the topic of citizenship education, but scholars from the two nations differ greatly in their use of research methodologies. A distinct form of logic and research methodology is seen in Japanese academia. However, the Japanese methodology has been criticised by researchers from other nations. For example, it is often noted that Japanese studies do not clearly state whether they have used a qualitative or quantitative research method. Therefore, this paper investigates research methods used in Japanese and British studies on citizenship education.

This paper examines the following six articles on citizenship, selected as representative

¹ Augustin Berque, "Vivre L'espace au Japon" Chikumashobo, 1994, p.3

examples of articles on citizenship education published by scholars in Japan and the UK, in order to clarify the research question and procedure of each and in so doing identify the main characteristics of Japanese versus British research methods:

- Kotaro Yoshimura, 'A study on the construction of citizenship textbook in England: focusing on the strand of "Political Literacy"', Miyazaki University, No. 25, 2011, pp. 77–92.
- Mitsuharu Mizuyama, 'A social studies lesson aimed for critical citizenship: through geographical citizenship', *Journal of Educational Research on Social Studies*, Japan Social Studies Research Association, vol. 64, 2006, pp. 11–20.
- Hanai Hirotaka and Okubo Masahiro, 'Citizenship education in high school civics: a class on policy making in Saitama city based on educational mode of social issues solving', *The journal of Social Studies*, Japanese Association for the Social Studies, No. 115, 2012, pp. 39–52.
- Alistair Ross, 'Multiple Identities and Education for Active Citizenship', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, vol55. No.3, September 2007, pp.286-303.
- David Kerr, "Promoting Active Citizenship In Schools And Communities in England: Emerging Lessons From Policy, Practice and Research", *Different Faces of Citizenship: Development of Citizenship education in European Countries*, Cidree, 2005, pp.93-126.
- Liz Craft, 'Recognising progress in citizenship: Assessment and using the new level descriptions in citizenship', *Citized international conference 2008*.

2. Citizenship education research methodology in Japan

To begin, I will provide a brief overview of the research on social studies education before moving on to a specific discussion of the works focused on citizenship education. The figures 1 and 2 show the tendency of Japanese social studies educational research as given in the *Journal of Educational Research on Social Studies*, published by the Japanese Educational Research Association for the Social Studies².

²Masanobu Kiritani, *Trends of Social Studies Education Research: Analysis of Journal of Educational Research on Social Studies*, "Bulletin of Japanese Educational Research Association For the Social Studies", Japanese Educational Research Association for the Social Studies, Vol.48, pp.67-76, 2012.

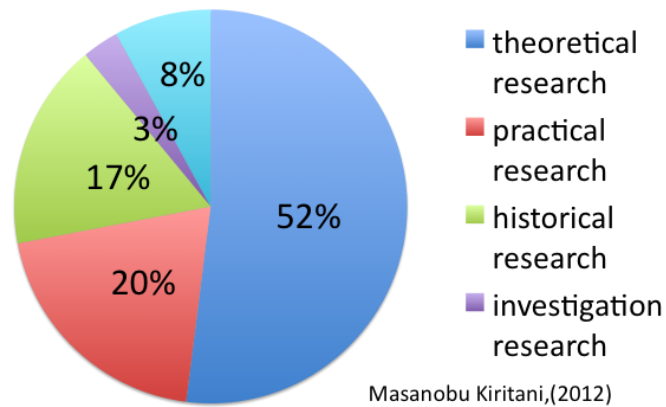


Figure1: Tendency of Japanese Social Studies educational research

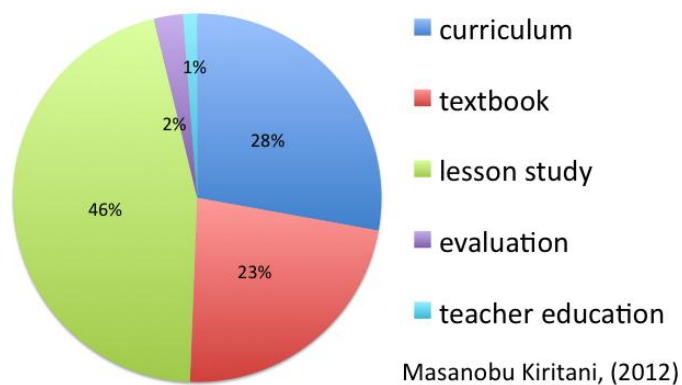


Figure2: Contents of theoretical research

Theoretical research accounts for a majority (52%) of studies on social studies education. Practical, historical, and investigative studies constitute 20%, 17%, and 3% of the total, respectively. Studies that fall under theoretical research have the following breakdown: curriculum, 28%; textbook, 23%; lesson study, 46%; and evaluation research, 2%. These numbers represent general social studies educational research; they do not directly represent research on citizenship education. However, they serve to demonstrate the trend within the field. In addition, research methodology on social studies education can be classified into the following types.

2.1 Methodology of textbook analysis

Firstly, I analyse the following article by Yoshimura³. His Research Question is “How can we design the curriculum about political literacy teaching?” His article is structured as follows. He begins by describing the history of the British educational system to demonstrate the national background against which citizenship education was born. Then, he analyses citizenship education itself. To do so, he presents a case study of KS3 and positions the school within the wider context of citizenship education in the national curriculum. Secondly, he points out that the nucleus of citizenship education includes political literacy, and he proceeds to discuss the definition of political literacy as well as its relationship with education. Yoshimura defines political literacy as the ‘general ability, including knowledge, skills, and manner, to solve various social problems, to be independent, and to participate in the better solution of the problems of society through appropriate judgments and actions’. Essentially, it is how to resolve social disputes. Thirdly, Yoshimura provides a concrete analysis of the textbook ‘This is citizenship 1 & 2’. He analyses the book in terms of its scope, sequence, and the order of contents, focusing on the lesson plan on ‘access privileges to society’. In other words, his article aims at clarifying the teaching of political literacy by analysing textbook contents and structure. The purpose, contents, and method of the article are as shown below.

- Purpose: Clarify the teaching of political literacy
- Contents: Analysis of scope, sequence, and order of contents in the textbook
- Method: Textbook analysis

2.2 Methodology of lesson planning as the means

Secondly, I examine the following article by Mizuyama⁴. His Research Question is “How do we practice the citizenship education in lesson?” The structure of Mizuyama’s article is as follows. It begins with a conceptual analysis of citizenship. Mizuyama then surveys the flow of British education policy in and after the 1970s and examines its current state. He argues that the definition of citizenship varies across contexts and situations.

Moreover, the nature of citizenship education includes liberalism, nationalism, and communitarianism. Mizuyama points out that education is a part of each of these three concepts. Third, he assumes that the principles method of citizenship education teaches criticism based on the perspective of democracy. He further asserts that there are three levels to consider (i.e. regional, national, and global) regarding a fourth perspective, concrete education content. He discusses policy making and alternative plan formulation at each level. Finally, Mizuyama designs an example lesson plan in which students learn about an environmental problem posed by bin liners. Thus, the article proposes a model of citizenship education through a suggested lesson plan. I identify the purpose, contents, and method of this article as follows.

³ Kotaro Yoshimura, ‘A study on the construction of citizenship textbook in England: focusing on the strand of “Political Literacy”’, Miyazaki University, No. 25, 2011, pp. 77–92.

⁴ Mitsuharu Mizuyama, ‘A social studies lesson aimed for critical citizenship: through geographical citizenship’, Journal of Educational Research on Social Studies, Japan Social Studies Research Association, vol. 64, 2006, pp. 11–20.

- Purpose: Give suggestions for the practice of citizenship education
- Content: Analysis of the educational principle and method of teaching citizenship, suggestion for a lesson
- Method: Proposing a lesson plan

2.3 Methodology in which lesson planning is the purpose

Thirdly, I examine the following article by Hirotaka and Masahiro⁵. His Research Question is “How is my lesson plan based on the advocacy?” His RQ is not sophisticated is as follows. The structure of this article is as follows. First, Hirotaka and Masahiro point out that the political awareness of youth has deteriorated. Therefore, they argue for citizenship education as political education. Second, the authors advocate an educational model, developed by a local government, in which the solutions to social problems are the primary aim of political education. Third, Hirotaka and Masahiro describe a year-long curriculum and example lesson plan that they created and introduce lesson contents that they have already implemented. Finally, they present the finding that the political awareness of children rose following a lesson on the topic, as measured by their responses to a questionnaire survey. Overall, the article may be viewed as a study on lesson plans that strongly advocates citizenship education.

- Purpose: Lesson planning for citizenship education
- Contents: Discussion of the importance of political education, creation of a lesson plan to raise political awareness
- Method: Presenting a lesson plan

It should be noted that the characteristics of the three studies as listed above cannot be generalised to all Japanese studies on citizenship education. They are merely examples selected by the author. However, the characteristics identified are typical of educational research in Japan.

3. Overview of research method on citizenship education in Japan

Japanese research methodology is well grounded. Regarding studies on social studies education, which is the core of citizenship education, many criticisms of the existing research methodologies were raised by Professor Takaharu Moriwake of Hiroshima University after the 1980s. With this in mind, I decided to analyse the research articles according to the characteristics ‘purpose’, ‘contents’, and ‘method’ based on previous researches⁶.

⁵ Hanai Hirotaka and Okubo Masahiro, ‘Citizenship education in high school civics: a class on policy making in Saitama city based on educational mode of social issues solving’, *The Journal of Social Studies*, Japanese Association for the Social Studies, No. 115, 2012, pp. 39–52.

⁶ Noboru Tanaka, *Multiformity and nature of educational practice in citizenship education: through the analysis of citizenship awareness underpins their learning environment*, “*Research Journal of Educational Methods*”, National Association for the Study of Educational Method,

Table 1.

| | | | contents of research | | |
|---|-----------------|--------------------|---|---|--|
| | | | theoretical research | analysis research | development research |
| m e t h o d o f r e s e a r c h | 'for a purpose' | deductive research | Perform the inherent criticism of the concept and definition of citizenship | to clarify the logical structure extracting the "theory" and "principle" from the curriculum and textbooks | (Research and development of learning materials in order to clarify the theory of citizenship education) |
| | | inductive research | To clarify the definition and concept of citizenship through academic background, educational background and social background | Research to clarify the principle of construction of curriculum and textbooks, such as through a survey of field work | (Elucidation of the principle of education through the development of citizenship learning materials) |
| | 'for a means' | deductive research | To clarify the structure of the Japanese education policy and administrative theory from Citizenship Education | To examine the relationship between citizen and Japan's education was extracted from the logical structure, such as "theory" or "principle" | To develop learning materials based on the logic was extracted, such as "theory" or "principle" |
| | | inductive research | Conducted a survey of educational theory of consciousness and civic survey of citizenship, to consider the contribution to the education of Japan | To analyze the direction of the development of education in Japan on the basis of survey | Learning material development research based on data collected empirical |
| typological arrangement in previous research on the area of citizenship educational research in Japan | | | | | |

'Contents' refers to theoretical research, analysis research, and development research. Theoretical research analyses the social background of the implementation of citizenship education; such studies position educational theory within the viewpoints of sociology and philosophy. Analysis research examines teaching curricula, materials, textbooks, and classes. Development research refers to studies aimed at developing new lesson plans, curricula, and teaching materials; this research area represents the educational front of our country.

A study's research method can be classified as either 'for a purpose' or 'for a means'. Studies that are designed 'for a purpose' aim to clarify theories and methods of citizenship education (e.g. analysis of a theory of citizenship education). Those designed 'for a means' investigate ways to improve citizenship education and new directionality (e.g. studies advocating citizenship teaching or rational decision making as an aim of social studies education). A classification system has been developed for describing research domains and methodologies in works on citizenship education.

Japanese research on citizenship education varies widely in terms of the study purposes, contents, methods, and means. However, I analyse them here based on the characteristics of the three research articles described above.

4. Characteristics of the British research methodology for citizenship education

British researchers have analysed a variety of topics on citizenship education using several methods. Their approaches can be classified into three main types: (1) descriptive reasoning, (2) causal reasoning, and (3) experiential reasoning. The descriptive reasoning approach is a process of understanding ‘the other’ phenomena that are not observed based on a described concept. For example, it can be used to understand many concepts and phenomena related to citizenship. The causal reasoning approach seeks to identify causation based on observed data. For example, to analyse citizenship education, one might measure approval of the citizenship education process or evaluate student achievement in this area. In the experiential reasoning approach, problems are approached inductively based on the experiences of the observer. For example, in an experiential procedure to design a teaching plan, an evaluation model would be created to help analyse the concept of citizenship education as well as its purpose and contents. In this paper, I will examine British articles on citizenship education according to their ‘purpose’, ‘contents’, and ‘means’. I will clarify the methodology of each article while showing its concrete procedure and contents⁷.

4.1 The descriptive reasoning approach and its logic: Methodology as the research concept

The work of Alistair Ross provides the first example of the descriptive reasoning approach⁸. Ross analyses citizenship from the viewpoint of identity. His Research Question is “What is citizenship?” In the introduction, he describes a method of considering identity in terms of how youths learn citizenship. Next, he points out the ambiguity of the concept of identity. He also describes levels of identity (i.e., local, national, and supranational) and points out that identity is formed based on one’s location in space, history, and time.

Third, Ross discusses the relationship between identity and citizenship, followed by the role and function of school in the nation. For example, youth can object tacitly to mainstream identities by forming their own societies with distinct identities in public education. According to Ross, youths belong to various community spaces in which they are required to participate as active citizens; they must carry out certain duties and responsibilities according to their position within the community. Finally, Ross addresses the definition of citizenship in a community. He identifies three notions within the changing definition: 1) the rights of the citizen, social rights, what Marshal (1950) called political rights, 2) freedom and wealth, which, in Vasack’s (1979) classification, are the security of political participation, and 3) culture, minority, environment, a cosmopolitan, consumption, and change, six new types proposed by Alley (1995) to be kinetic. Finally,

⁷ I already cleared the characteristics about the research method in UK. This part is mainly translated from the following my article. Noboru Tanaka, Characteristics of Research Methods on Citizenship Education in England: Possibilities and Limitations of Purposes, Results and Methods in the Three Approaches, “Bulletin of Japanese Educational Research Association For the Social Studies”, Japanese Educational Research Association for the Social Studies, Vol.48, pp.87-96, 2012.

⁸ Alistair Ross, “Multiple Identities and Education for Active Citizenship”, British Journal of Educational Studies, vol55. No.3, September 2007, pp.286-303.

Ross writes that citizenship, identity and rights are formed in communities and the nation through three mediums: a portrait (i.e. symbolic icon), abstract concept, and participation in the situation. Schools have all three elements and therefore provide a great contribution to children's formation of the concept of citizenship. Ross argues that it is necessary to discuss the third form of citizenship (Alley's six types: culture, minority, environment, cosmopolitan, consumption, and change) in schools and society at large in order to encourage active citizenship. Thus, Ross conceptually analyses citizenship from the viewpoint of identity.

The article attempts to answer the question of what citizenship is. First, Ross analyses the definition of the citizenship. He discusses identity as a perspective from which to analyse citizenship, positing three levels of identity: local, national, and supranationality (global). Second, his analysis assumes that identity is jointly determined by consciousness and thought. Then, where is identity formed? The answer is, at school. Therefore, identity citizenship can be achieved through school education.

Overall, Ross defines citizenship and identity in answer the main question, 'What is citizenship?' using an approach of philosophical sociology. He also analyses the role that schools play in citizenship. I identify the characteristics of the article as follows.

- Purpose: Clarify the concept of citizenship
- Contents: Analysis of the concept of citizenship
- Method: Analysis of identity (including national identity) and citizenship, analysis of the relations between identity and citizenship in the community

Ross approaches citizenship education theory as social science research. The purpose of his approach is to clarify the concept of citizenship. How should we think about citizenship? Ross employs notions from philosophy and sociology, including in identity, variety, democracy, equality, and justice, to understand citizenship. Therefore, the content of his article is analysis of the concepts, and his method uses a sociological background to compare relations between key concepts and the notion of citizenship.

However, a problem with the descriptive reasoning approach is that it may easily become a purely theoretical dispute. Although Ross offers a detailed examination of the concept of citizenship, he does not provide insight into research methodologies for further study or recommendations for implementing citizenship education. Such an approach may be called 'research for the sake of research'; it is not directly applicable to the creation of an educational curriculum, teaching materials, learning activities, or pedagogy.

4.2 The causal reasoning approach and its logic: Research methodology as the investigation

As the second example of research from the UK, I examine 'Promoting active citizenship in schools and communities in England' by David Kerr⁹. His Research

⁹ David Kerr, "Promoting Active Citizenship In Schools And Communities in England:

Question is “How citizenship education is developed?”

This research analyses citizenship education through an investigation. In the introduction Kerr establishes the definition and perspective of citizenship education. He then summarises the historic development of citizenship education in the UK. He analyses KS3/KS4, a compulsory subject of citizenship education implemented in September 2002 from ‘Excellence in the school’, which began in November 1997, based on the background of British educational policy. Next, he analyses three levels (policy level, education level, and study level) of citizenship education. He claims the purpose of the citizenship education is for youth to learn to cooperate in groups and within society.

Therefore, Kerr argues that it is necessary for citizenship education to be implemented effectively in the school curriculum. In other words, Kerr’s article is an investigation into the practice of citizenship education. It answers the question ‘What is citizenship education?’ based on plural research. The research procedure is to investigate the history and progress of educational policies related to citizenship education. The first part of the studies provides a background based largely on a view of policy: It describes historic events such as the click report of 1998 or citizenship education being designated as a compulsory subject in 2002. Kerr also investigates ‘the position consciousness’ of the child and the sociological significance of citizenship education. Finally, the article answers the question ‘What is citizenship education?’ with the conclusion that citizenship education promotes children’s social collaboration. Thus, I identify the characteristics of Kerr’s methodology as follows.

- Purpose: Apply the concept of citizenship to an educational practice
- Contents: Research on citizenship education
- Method: Policy background of citizenship education, policy realization process, investigation of ‘the position consciousness’ of the child

Kerr’s article aims at defining citizenship education based on an investigation into the history and current status of research policy and education. In this way, it exhibits the premise of the reasoning approach: The study is based on an investigation and description of the topic, rather than a philosophical concept. Kerr approaches citizenship education by examining the approval process of policies on citizenship education and students’ academic abilities.

In addition, the study seeks to clarify what problems exist and how to resolve them. The purpose of this approach is to switch the topic from social science to pedagogy by discussing citizenship education in terms of its practical application. The research contents assume Kerr’s work as a base. The research method is to investigate the process of how citizenship education formed and changed over time, the background into which citizenship education was introduced when it was implemented in schools, and how these relate to the current situation in real classrooms.

A drawback to the reasoning approach and its cause-and-effect theory is that it does not

Emerging Lessons From Policy, Practice and Research”, *Different Faces of Citizenship: Development of Citizenship education in European Countries*, Cidree, 2005, pp.93-126.

relate directly to daily educational practice or theory. The approach is based on historical data; it does not require philosophical arguments. However, the creation of a unit on citizenship education cannot measure contents, methods, or class evaluation. Thus, the approach can widen the scope of the investigation, but it does not cover all the important areas.

4.3 The experiential reasoning approach and its logic: Research methodology as functional research

As the third example, I analyse Liz Craft's 'Recognizing progress in citizenship: promoting active citizenship in schools and communities in England'¹⁰. Her Research Question is "How can citizenship skills be increased?"

Craft analyses citizenship education from the viewpoint of evaluation. Her study takes up citizenship education from the level of the class lesson. First, she clarifies the concept of evaluation. She then describes three strategies of evaluation: isolated, continuous, and transient. Following this, in a section titled 'evaluation for whom', Craft discusses the purpose of evaluation. She then proceeds to describe the framework of evaluation in terms of the purpose, act, and results. After arguing for the contents and criteria of evaluation, she provides two examples of the evaluation of citizenship education. Finally, she points out that evaluation can take the form of a 'description' or 'count' type, and various methods exist.

Thus, Craft's article analyses citizenship education from the perspective of evaluation, with the aim of updating lesson plans. It considers citizenship education from the functional side of the education, namely, evaluation. The research approach is to answer the question, 'How can citizenship skills be increased?' I identify the characteristics of Craft's methodology as follows.

- Purpose: Clarifying upbringing stratagem of the citizenship (redefining citizenship from the viewpoint of evaluation)
- Contents: Framework of evaluation in citizenship education, class contents, analysis of the evaluation itself
- Method: Creating a teaching plan and new evaluation model

The problem with the experiential reasoning approach is that it depends on changes as solution or guideline to fixing an urgent education problem. The approach contributes to the development of educational practice in three ways: It helps to create plans for class and teaching and provides a starting point to think about citizenship teaching through the development of the evaluation model. However, the method does not perform a conceptual examination of the citizenship education. Therefore, there is a time lag between the new interpretations of citizenship and critical examinations of it. In addition, what cannot consider them depending on a case at all is possible. There are a study to crawl about it at the point where each teacher original 'theory' and research based on 'a way of thinking' may be performed.

¹⁰ Liz Craft, "Recognising progress in citizenship: Assessment and using the new level descriptions in citizenship", Cited international conference present paper, 2008.

5. Methodological differences in research by Japanese and British researchers

The following figure3 summarise the characteristics of research methodologies used by researchers from Japan and the UK in the area of citizenship education.

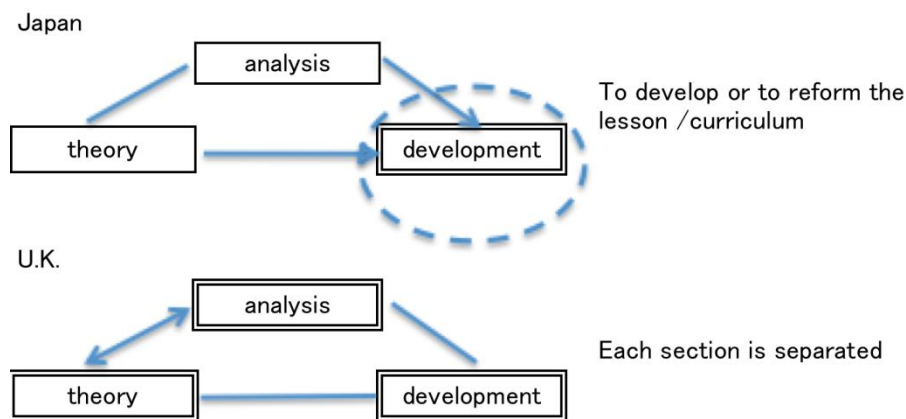


Figure3: Tendency in research methods: Research Question based

Researchers in the UK have produced many functional studies based on conceptual analyses or questionnaire surveys. The purpose of these kinds of research is to analyse the concept of citizenship or to clear the educational situation. It is not connected to build new program or lesson plan about citizenship education. It means the tendency of research in UK is separated to three research fields. The researcher who focused on “theory” do not commit to the area of “development”. Of course, it is relatively tendency. This perspective could not adapt to all kind of research¹¹. Whereas researchers in Japan have focused on curriculum analysis and lesson development based on an established concept. Almost researchers in Japan try to develop or reform the lesson and curriculum about citizenship education. It means the purpose of their research is to reform some sort of education, for example, educational practice, educational policy and the theory of education. In the UK, the purpose of citizenship educational research is to elucidate the logic of citizenship education and describe its current state. In contrast, in Japan, researches are aimed at reforming lesson plans or educational theory.

Their difference in the research approach can be attributed to the course of study background and the nature of citizenship in each country. Japanese education consists of a course of study, curriculum, and lessons. The course of study typically consists of stating the educational contents and outlining the method. The teacher can understand

¹¹ Some researcher tries to apply the own educational theory to educational practice in schools. Some researcher making the textbook based on own educational theory. So, it is just tendency of research.

the large frames of the lesson and contents by reading the guidelines. Moreover, the curriculum is normally specified through a textbook. Textbooks used in schools are those authorised by the government. The teacher designs a daily lesson by teaching the textbook contents in the specified order. These two points are characteristic of Japanese educational practice and can be said to give rise to the Japanese citizenship educational research method.

In this paper, I described and compared typical research methods used in studies on citizenship education in Japan and the UK. It should be noted that the articles analysed here are only a few of many in the field, and the findings of this study do not apply to all studies on citizenship education or the social sciences. This paper merely describes tendencies within the field, i.e. the typical approaches used.

The difference in research methodology is directly connected with the difference in educational practice, which varies widely between the two countries. For example, for Japanese education tends to focus on analysis, whereas education in the UK is often focused on activity, as shown in the article analysis. This difference can be attributed to the individual background of citizenship education in each country. That is, educational practices differ according to the purpose of citizenship education in the country or area.

I investigated Japanese citizenship educational practice and relations of the citizenship awareness using Associative Group Analysis (AGA). As a result, I clarified that Japanese children's citizenship awareness affected the Japanese educational curriculum, education contents, and unit contents. However, this point needed to be hardly clarified by a comparison of Japanese and UK research methodologies. There is no the global methodology for studies on citizenship education. Rather, logic and methodologies are unique to the country or area of research.

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