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## **Citizenship and language education in Japanese high schools**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper reports on research carried out in Japan to investigate the contribution of high school English teachers to education for citizenship. It begins with a brief overview of the current state of citizenship education in Japan. A wide range of initiatives have been undertaken in Japanese schools which reflect very different understandings of citizenship and some tension between those wishing to nurture citizens with a strong 'Japanese' identity and those emphasising a more global or cosmopolitan citizenship. Theoretical work in the areas of content-based language instruction, intercultural communicative competence and dialogic education suggests that Japanese teachers of English could have an important role to play in shaping young people's citizen identities in a more cosmopolitan direction. The paper presents findings from a recent empirical study in which Japanese English teachers were asked to assess the opportunities for incorporating citizenship teaching objectives into their language classes. A purposive sample of 46 teachers, each identified as having an interest in teaching about citizenship-related issues, completed a questionnaire in which they reflected on their understandings of 'good citizenship' and the extent to which citizenship teaching objectives can be furthered through high school English lessons. Participants agreed strongly that as English teachers they do have a role to play as citizenship educators, particularly in promoting tolerance, respect for human rights, and critical thinking. The main obstacles they face in trying to pursue this role are the continuing preoccupation of Japanese schools with entrance exam preparation and the lack of sympathetic colleagues with whom to collaborate.*

**Keywords:** *citizenship, language education, Japan*

### **Japanese citizenship in transition**

There is growing interest in citizenship education in Japan and, as in other countries, to a large extent this has been prompted by concerns about profound changes in society. In 2006, the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade & Industry (METI) published its *Declaration on Citizenship Education (Keizai Sangyousho, 2006)*, in which it outlined the need for new efforts in teaching for citizenship. It referred to rapid changes in the structure of Japan's economy, technological development, the country's aging demography, the emergence of a 'borderless' world, and shifting personal values, all of which have produced an increasingly unequal society that "can no longer be understood in terms of our previous ways of thinking" (p. 2, my translation). There is a sense of crisis and insecurity underlying the document: it refers to growing disparities in income, education, employment and health which it suggests are contributing to high levels of public anxiety, particularly among parents, many of whom are worried about their children growing up in such a society.

As yet there have been no moves by Japan's Ministry of Education (MEXT) to introduce citizenship as a distinct subject within the national curriculum. In the majority of schools, formal teaching for citizenship remains under the umbrella of social studies, which includes a 'civics' component (*koumin*) in which students study modern society, politics and economics, and moral education (*doutoku*) which aims to nurture such values as diligence, sincerity, respect for self and others, and a sense of public responsibility (McCullough, 2008). It is often argued, however, that real training for Japanese citizenship occurs not so much in these classroom subjects, as in the many ways in which children are expected to become actively involved in the running of their schools, in everything from cleaning the school buildings and serving meals at lunchtime, to participating in student council meetings, or planning committees for special school events (e.g. McCullough, 2008; Parmenter, Mizuyama, & Taniguchi, 2008).

There are currently numerous experiments in citizenship education being conducted in schools around Japan, notably in Shinagawa and Ochanomizu in the Tokyo area. A recent review by Mizuyama (2010) illustrates the breadth of thinking on citizenship education in Japan, revealing whole-school approaches to citizenship, as well as programmes that continue to locate teaching for citizenship within social studies. Some schools view citizenship education more in terms of personal moral development (Shinagawa), whereas others put greater emphasis on political literacy (Ochanomizu), or on participation in local community projects. Mizuyama acknowledges the lack of consensus, but he sees a steady evolution in Japanese thinking towards more active, participatory conceptions of citizenship. At the same time, as Karaki (2007) observes, the discourse in Japan continues to be shaped by tensions between traditional notions of citizenship, which emphasise a strong national identity and loyalty to the state, and newer, 'post-national' views of citizenship, which stress active engagement in civil society at the transnational as well as local level. Karaki sees evidence of the latter in METI's *Declaration on Citizenship Education*, but acknowledges that national views of citizenship still dominate. There have been well-publicised efforts by conservative administrations to promote patriotism in Japanese schools. It is now a requirement that the national flag (*hinomaru*) is displayed at school ceremonies, for instance, and steps have been taken by some local authorities to discipline teachers who refuse to stand and sing the national anthem when it is played. There is also continued official adherence to the idea of Japanese mono-ethnicity, despite the fact that Japan is increasingly multicultural and has distinct minority groups, such as ethnic Chinese and Koreans, and the indigenous Ainu and Okinawan peoples, as well as a growing community of foreign residents, including an increasing number of 'newcomers' from South America. As Ryoko Tsuneyoshi (2011) points out, this diversity is hardly reflected in the officially approved textbooks used in Japanese schools.

### **Foreign language teaching and citizenship**

Currently, then, citizenship education in Japan is in a period of transition and it is not yet clear which direction it will move in. My research looks at whether English teachers in Japanese high schools have a role to play in shaping the form that citizenship education

takes. In Europe, foreign language teachers have been recognized as important players in teaching for citizenship. According to the Council of Europe, for example, language teaching “has aims which are convergent with those of education for democratic citizenship: both are concerned with intercultural interaction and communication, the promotion of mutual understanding and the development of individual responsibility” (Beacco & Byram, 2003, cited in Starkey, 2005, p. 28). As teachers of culture as well as language, foreign language teachers have an important role to play in what Michael Byram (2008) refers to as ‘intercultural citizenship’. They can help raise awareness of diversity, promote tolerance, and also encourage students to adopt a critical perspective on their own culture. Byram (2003) goes as far as to argue that the main task of language educators is not to teach language *per se* but rather “to introduce young people to experience of other ways of thinking, valuing and behaving” (p. 127).

Foreign language teachers can also help students develop an ability to engage in democratic dialogue. Where instructors adopt a communicative approach to teaching, typical classroom activities include regular group discussions that allow students to express opinions, listen and respond to other students’ ideas, identify points of agreement and difference, and negotiate collective decisions. In enabling students to engage in this sort of interaction, foreign language teachers are helping to nurture a dialogic competence that Alexander (2008) views as “among the core skills of citizenship” (p.33). As Hugh Starkey (2005) argues, “In many respects communicative methodology is in itself democratic. The skills developed in language classes are thus directly transferable to citizenship education” (p.32).

A third area in which foreign language teachers can contribute to citizenship education is by addressing content that is relevant to citizenship. In principle there are few restrictions on the sort of content that foreign language teachers can work with, which makes it possible for them to engage with a whole range of important social and cultural issues in the classroom. At the university level in Japan, it is now common for English language teachers to base their courses on content that addresses controversial social topics and global issues. In recent years, a growing number of Japanese publishers have produced EFL textbooks which combine language skills work with learning about such topics as human rights, the environment, refugees and gender equality, and which include research and discussion activities that encourage students to reflect, and even act, upon their rights and responsibilities as citizens (e.g. Peaty, 2007, 2010; Summerville, 2006).

### **The study**

The current study focuses on secondary education in Japan, which comprises two stages – junior high school, for students aged 12 to 15, and senior high school for ages 15 to 18. Compared to most university teachers, teachers at the high school level face many more restrictions on what they can and cannot do in the classroom. They are obliged, for example, to follow the curriculum specified by MEXT in its Course of Study for English. Although this is updated every ten years and recent versions have put an increasing emphasis on communication skills, it is principally a list of grammar and vocabulary that teachers are expected to cover with their students. Teachers are also

restricted in their choice of teaching materials since they must use textbooks that have been authorised by the ministry. Finally, another factor that limits what high school teachers can do is the expectation of school administrators, parents and the students themselves that teachers' first priority should be preparing students for university entrance examinations, which, in the case of English, are essentially tests of students' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.

Despite these kinds of curricular constraints, even at the high school level it appears likely that English teachers who wish to address issues of citizenship with their students will look for opportunities to do so. Such teachers could be in a position to exert an influence on the direction that citizenship education takes in Japanese schools. They could, for example, encourage a more global, cosmopolitan type of citizenship than Japan's conservatives would wish to promote. On the other hand, it is possible that language teachers could conceive their role in more 'national' terms as helping to nurture Japanese citizens with English abilities who can function in the international community *as Japanese*.

### ***Research questions***

What I hope to do through this research is provide insights into how some teachers of English in Japanese high schools are trying to include aspects of teaching for citizenship in their language lessons. The study aims to address the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What role, if any, do Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) see for themselves in teaching for citizenship?

Sub-questions: i) What do JTEs understand by 'good citizenship'?  
ii) What links, if any, do they see between citizenship education and foreign language education?

Research Question 2: How are some JTEs combining citizenship teaching objectives with language teaching?

Sub-questions: i) What citizenship teaching objectives do they have?  
ii) What resources are they using to help them achieve those objectives?  
iii) What pedagogical practices are they adopting?  
iv) Have recent reforms to Japanese education – for example, the introduction of Integrated Studies – presented new opportunities for JTEs to pursue citizenship education?

The study involves two main stages of data collection – an initial questionnaire survey, followed by a lengthier round of semi-structured interviews and classroom observation. This paper reports on the questionnaire survey, which was carried out in Japan between November 2011 and March 2012.

### ***Sampling***

Since the study is concerned with the work of high school English teachers who are trying to teach for citizenship, participants were recruited using a purposive approach to sampling. Following Evans (2006), I began by drawing up a profile of the kind of respondent I was looking for. Teachers would be i) Japanese, ii) currently teaching at the junior or senior high school level, and iii) demonstrate an interest in some aspect of citizenship education, which was defined very broadly to include such areas as global education, moral education, intercultural communication, media literacy and critical thinking.

Various strategies were employed to identify teachers who had an interest in citizenship education. For instance, I placed appeals for help in the newsletters of professional networks, such as Global Issues in Language Education (GILE), a special interest group within the Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT). I attended teachers' conferences, looked for sessions that were addressing citizenship themes, and then introduced myself to teachers there. Another effective method of finding participants was searching professional journals for articles that teachers had written about citizenship-related topics, and then writing directly to the author inviting them to take part in the survey. Using these and other purposive sampling techniques, data was gathered from 46 teachers in all.

### *The questionnaire*

The survey aimed to find out what teachers understand by 'citizenship' and how, in their role as foreign language instructors, they think they might contribute to educating 'good citizens'. The questionnaire was first produced in English then translated into Japanese, and piloted with 6 Japanese high school teachers, all of whom offered feedback on the content and structure of the questionnaire, as well as helping to polish the Japanese.

The final draft of the questionnaire included four main sections. Section I aimed to get some idea of what teachers understand by citizenship. It included a list of 30 personal attributes – skills, values and areas of knowledge – and asked teachers to indicate how important they judged each one to be to Japanese citizenship. They did this using a five-point Likert scale, which ranged from 1, 'completely unnecessary' to 5, 'absolutely essential'. Together the 30 items (attributes) were intended to represent a wide range of perspectives on citizenship. Some items, such as 'being patriotic' and 'wishing to promote Japan's interests in the world', would suggest a more 'national' view of citizenship, while other items, such as 'feeling a sense of responsibility as a member of the global community', and 'showing respect and tolerance towards people from other cultures', might suggest a more 'post-national' or 'cosmopolitan' point of view. Other items covered moral dimensions of citizenship, and different views on what the rights and responsibilities of citizens should be.

Section II of the questionnaire focused on the potential links between citizenship and language teaching. Teachers were asked to consider the extent to which the attributes of good citizenship listed in Section I could be promoted through English classes. Once again they responded using a five-point Likert scale, this time ranging from 1, 'not at all' to 5, 'to a great extent'.

Section III encouraged teachers to reflect more generally on the themes of the survey, asking them how far they agreed with statements such as, ‘Some skills that students acquire in English language classes are important for good citizenship’, and, ‘English teachers have too many other things to do to worry about citizenship education’.

Finally, Section IV of the questionnaire was an open-ended item that gave teachers the chance to express their views more freely, and invited them to provide details of ways in which they themselves had tried to incorporate citizenship teaching into their language lessons.

### **Results**

Completed questionnaires were received from 46 teachers. As Tables 1 and 2 indicate, the participants comprised a highly experienced group. 85% fell within the upper two age brackets, and three-quarters had at least 16 years’ teaching experience.

**Table 1. Age profile of participants**

<b>Under 29 yrs</b>	<b>30-39 yrs</b>	<b>40-49 yrs</b>	<b>50+ yrs</b>
1 (2%)	6 (13%)	20 (44%)	19 (41%)

**Table 2. Length of participants’ teaching experience**

<b>1-5 yrs</b>	<b>6-10 yrs</b>	<b>11-15 yrs</b>	<b>16-20 yrs</b>	<b>21+ yrs</b>
3 (7%)	5 (11%)	4 (9%)	9 (20%)	25 (54%)

What values and skills did teachers judge to be most important to Japanese citizenship? As the data presented in Table 3 illustrates, responses to Section I of the survey reveal a very clear consensus that Japanese citizens need to develop a sense of responsibility that extends beyond the nation.

**Table 3. How important is each of the following attributes to Japanese citizenship?**

<b>Good citizenship attributes</b>	<b>Mean (n=46)</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
<b>Respect for human rights</b>	4.63	.609
<b>Recognizing the importance of democratic values</b>	4.50	.658
<b>Voting in elections</b>	4.46	.622
<b>Respect &amp; tolerance for other cultures</b>	4.46	.585
<b>Awareness of gender equality</b>	4.43	.655
<b>Viewing things critically from multiple perspectives</b>	4.39	.682
<b>Awareness of and respect for diversity in Japan</b>	4.35	.737
<b>Understanding one’s rights</b>	4.35	.706
<b>Awareness of need to preserve / live in harmony with the</b>	4.35	.640

<b>environment</b>		
<b>Knowledge of global issues</b>	4.28	.720
<b>Willingness to resolve problems through discussion</b>	4.22	.696
<b>Behaving morally and ethically</b>	4.22	.696
<b>Ability to communicate with people from other cultures</b>	4.20	.687
<b>Ability to form and express opinions on social issues</b>	4.20	.654
<b>Sense of responsibility as a member of the global community</b>	4.15	.868
<b>Ability to gather and analyse information from various media</b>	4.11	.706
<b>Interest in current affairs</b>	4.09	.694
<b>Fulfilling one's responsibility to support one's family</b>	4.09	.865
<b>Willingness to take on assigned responsibilities</b>	4.07	.742
<b>Considering the welfare of others</b>	4.02	.715
<b>Willingness to critically evaluate the Japanese government</b>	4.00	.826
<b>Knowing how Japan's activities affect other countries</b>	3.96	.729
<b>Wish to preserve Japanese culture</b>	3.87	.749
<b>Sense of being 'Asian'</b>	3.61	.930
<b>Participating in activities to benefit the community</b>	3.61	.614
<b>Putting public interest over private interest</b>	3.43	.779
<b>Being politically active other than voting</b>	3.24	.821
<b>Wishing to promote Japan's interests in the world</b>	2.98	.830
<b>Patriotism</b>	2.98	.977
<b>Willing to obey those in authority</b>	2.53	.919

1 = Completely unnecessary 2 = Not very important 3 = Quite important  
4 = Very important 5 = Essential

The four attributes that participants ranked as most important to good citizenship were 'respect for human rights' (mean 4.63), 'recognizing the importance of democratic values' (mean 4.5), 'voting in elections' (mean 4.46) and 'showing respect and tolerance for other cultures' (mean 4.46).

For some teachers this 'global' orientation appears to take precedence over 'national' priorities and about a third of teachers considered 'patriotism' and 'a wish to promote Japan's interests' to be either 'not very important' or 'completely unnecessary' for Japanese citizenship. On the other hand, more than a quarter felt these 'national' attributes were either 'very important' or 'essential', and did not see them as being inconsistent with nurturing respect for human rights and cultural diversity. One final point to note here is that teachers were virtually unanimous on the importance to good citizenship of preserving Japanese culture (mean 3.9); only one teacher considered this to be unimportant.

**Table 4. To what extent can citizenship-teaching objectives be furthered in high school English classes?**

<b>Citizenship-teaching objective</b>	<b>Mean (n=46)</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
<b>Improving students' ability to communicate with people from other cultures</b>	3.71	.935
<b>Encouraging students' respect for human rights</b>	3.63	.997
<b>Developing tolerance &amp; respect for people from other cultures</b>	3.65	.849



<b>Learning about global issues</b>	3.50	.837
<b>Learning about the society and culture of English-speaking countries</b>	3.50	.810
<b>Encouraging students to think about the environment</b>	3.43	.834
<b>Developing students' ability to view things critically</b>	3.41	.979
<b>Developing students' ability to express opinions in front of others</b>	3.37	1.04
<b>Learning about democratic values</b>	3.35	0.90
<b>Helping students become conscious of being 'global citizens'</b>	3.35	.924
<b>Learning about current affairs</b>	3.33	1.06
<b>Learning about the society &amp; culture of non-English-speaking countries</b>	3.31	.793
<b>Encouraging students to think critically about Japanese culture &amp; society</b>	3.26	1.02
<b>Developing students' commitment to gender equality</b>	3.28	1.07
<b>Encouraging a deeper understanding and appreciation of Japanese culture</b>	3.22	.841
<b>Developing students' ability to take part in debate / discussion</b>	3.17	1.12
<b>Encouraging students to live ethically and morally</b>	3.07	.998
<b>Learning about ethnic &amp; cultural diversity in Japan</b>	3.00	.966
<b>Learning how to gather &amp; organize information about a topic</b>	3.00	1.03
<b>Helping students become conscious of being 'Asian'</b>	2.93	.952
<b>Developing students' awareness of their rights as citizens</b>	2.91	.962
<b>Developing students' awareness of Japan's international activities</b>	2.87	1.02
<b>Encouraging students to put the public interest ahead of their private interests</b>	2.78	.814
<b>Developing an increased willingness to participate in the community</b>	2.74	.953
<b>Nurturing patriotic feelings towards Japan</b>	2.61	.856

1 = Not at all 2 = Not much 3 = To some extent 4 = To a large extent 5 = To a very large extent

To what extent did teachers think values and skills of citizenship could be promoted through high school English classes? Of course, since I had deliberately set out to identify teachers with an interest in citizenship teaching, I had expected that participants would be largely positive about English teachers' role. In fact, in response to Section III of the survey, 84% agreed that Japanese English teachers can contribute to teaching for citizenship, and 80% felt that they personally had a role to play.

The data from Section II is presented in Table 4, and suggests that teachers see the greatest potential for promoting global or post-national notions of citizenship. 95% of teachers thought English classes could help students develop greater tolerance and respect for different cultures. About 90% thought students could gain practical, cross-cultural communication skills and also develop greater respect for human rights. 85% thought that through English classes students could gain a greater sense of responsibility as global citizens, and 87% thought they could develop critical thinking skills. Although most teachers (82%) agreed that English classes provide some opportunity for students to deepen their understanding and appreciation of Japanese culture, most did not appear

to see this in terms of instilling patriotism. Half the teachers saw little or no possibility of promoting patriotic feelings through English teaching.

Section IV of the questionnaire was an open-ended item that gave teachers the opportunity to express their views more freely. 37 participants wrote answers to this section, providing valuable insights into the potential they see for citizenship-through-language-teaching in Japanese high schools, the ways they have tried to teach for citizenship, and the problems they have encountered in doing so. All these areas will be investigated in more detail in the forthcoming interviews.

The teachers' comments fall into two broad categories – *opportunities* for teaching for citizenship, and *obstacles* they face in trying to do so.

### ***Opportunities***

It was suggested earlier that Japanese high school teachers face numerous constraints on their teaching, in having to follow MEXT's Course of Study and use only authorised textbooks, for example. Nevertheless, teachers who took part in the survey appear to have found opportunities within this curriculum to address citizenship issues. One teacher pointed to a section in the Course of Study that offers guidelines on choosing supplementary teaching materials, encouraging teachers to look for materials that help students understand "various ways of viewing and thinking", and "the ways of life and cultures of foreign countries and Japan", and that heighten students' awareness of being "Japanese citizens living in a global community." She argued that while many teachers have little time for supplementing textbooks, anyone with an interest in global issues, issues of cultural diversity or critical thinking can point to this section of the Course of Study as giving them licence to incorporate these themes into their teaching.

Authorised textbooks also provide opportunities for dealing with these sorts of issues. 61% of teachers agreed that textbooks are increasingly touching on global topics; chapters on Martin Luther King and the US civil rights movement, and the destruction of Amazonian rainforests were among the examples they gave. Some teachers indicated that they use this kind of textbook material as a 'way in' to topics that relate specifically to Japan, some of which are highly controversial. One teacher described how a chapter on the US civil rights movement had provided an opportunity to talk about discrimination in Japan, in particular against the Japanese *buraku* community (descendants of outcast communities in feudal Japan), an issue that is still considered a taboo subject by many Japanese (Gordon, 2006). Another teacher described how his textbook had given him the chance to raise the issue of human rights, which he had then been able to apply to the Japanese context, teaching lessons on Minamata disease and the experience of Okinawans during the war.

While many teachers acknowledged that increasingly textbooks include topics that can be related to citizenship, some suggested that their colleagues might not be making the best use of these opportunities. They argued that many teachers are using this kind of textbook content purely for language teaching purposes, as examples of target grammar, or as material for translation exercises, without trying to engage students with the

underlying issues. One thing these participants called for was more professional development for teachers focusing on activities to promote discussion and ways of getting students to reflect more critically on textbook content.

Several teachers referred to visits by native English-speaking Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) as important opportunities for raising students' awareness of cultural diversity. They see ALTs not only as a source of information about life in their home countries, but also as providing an opportunity for students to reflect on their own Japanese culture as they try to explain aspects of Japan to the ALT in English. Some teachers have also collaborated with ALTs to organise extracurricular 'international exchange' events, and run special projects such as letter exchanges with children in the ALT's home country.

Another opportunity that some English teachers are using to teach for citizenship is the Integrated Studies (IS) period, which was introduced to schools in 2002 as part of MEXT's *yutori kyouiku* or 'relaxed education' initiative. IS is unique in the Japanese school curriculum in not having a prescribed Course of Study, the intention being that teachers and schools should develop their own cross-curricular lesson plans, with an emphasis on student-generated projects. In its guidelines for IS, however, MEXT referred specifically to 'international understanding' as one area that could be promoted in the new period. Some scholars, like Yoko Motani (2005), have welcomed IS as a significant, progressive step in Japanese education, opening up possibilities for students to develop citizenship skills, through projects in the local community, for example. In fact, there appears to be great variation in the way that schools have interpreted IS and there is evidence that some schools have been using the new period for extra teacher-fronted lessons in maths, science, and English rather than for student-centred projects (Bjork, 2009). Responses to my survey also suggest variations in the ways schools have approached IS. Just 50% of teachers agreed that 'Integrated Studies has provided opportunities for English teachers to address citizenship issues in school', and more than a quarter strongly disagreed with this statement.

For some Japanese English teachers at least, it seems Integrated Studies has provided opportunities to combine language learning and citizenship education in student-centred projects. One teacher described how she had used IS for student projects on development issues, which included an exchange of letters with high school students in Ghana. Another teacher used IS for a student project on landmines. Students created posters to publicise the problem of landmines in South East Asia, and then organised fundraising activities in support of the Japan Campaign to Ban Landmines.

In addition to indicating opportunities for citizenship education *within* the school curriculum, survey responses also suggest that some English teachers are looking *outside* school for support in teaching for citizenship. For instance, some teachers are making connections with NGOs and either adopting teaching materials that these groups have produced, or inviting their representatives to visit their classes as guest speakers. One teacher from northern Japan described how he has been working with members of the Japan Red Cross to organise international exchange activities conducted in English. Another teacher wanted to build upon a textbook chapter about life for children in Nepal

and invited members of a Japanese NGO to come and talk to her students about the literacy programmes they are running there (Shimizu, 2009).

### ***Obstacles***

As well as highlighting citizenship-teaching opportunities both inside and outside the school curriculum, responses to Section IV of the questionnaire also point to some of the obstacles teachers face in trying to incorporate citizenship education into their language teaching.

Many teachers referred to what they see as schools' overwhelming preoccupation with preparing students for university entrance exams and an overemphasis on 'cramming' and maximizing students' test scores. As one teacher put it (in her own English), "Now in Japan we must teach the textbook. Everybody, parents, educational board, cultural ministry, headmasters all expect us to teach for the entrance examination. So we must teach grammar centred English and translation. It is very difficult to teach citizenship in every day classes." Several teachers described how when their schools had reorganised teaching schedules to put more emphasis on exam preparation, they had reluctantly had to give up teaching about such topics as human rights, gender issues and foreign cultures.

These sorts of constraints may explain why, judging from responses to Section IV, there appear to be relatively few Japanese English teachers who are actively trying to address citizenship issues in their language classes. A number of survey respondents referred to the lack of sympathetic colleagues with whom they could collaborate. One teacher described how he had tried to get other teachers at his school to adopt his practice of having students write English *haiku* poems on environmental issues, and how they had rejected the idea out of hand, saying they thought it would "have a negative effect on progress." This sort of comment suggests that some teachers may feel themselves to be adopting an approach to language teaching that is quite different from their colleagues. We can speculate that access to professional support from like-minded teachers via networks such as GILE might be especially important for such teachers.

To sum up, then, citizenship education in Japan is currently in a state of flux and as one recent study notes, "there is a marked struggle for the particular form of citizenship education that will eventually emerge" (Davies, Mizuyama, & Hampden Thompson, 2010, p. 175). What role might Japanese English teachers have to play in this struggle? Given the various constraints upon their work, it would appear that English teachers who in addition to meeting their responsibilities as language instructors also wish to incorporate aspects of citizenship education into their teaching, will need to be both highly motivated and resourceful. The data provided by the questionnaire survey has confirmed that some English teachers are finding opportunities within the curriculum to promote skills and values of citizenship, and shown that some of them are looking outside the school for resources and support. Through interviews with individual Japanese teachers and classroom observation, the next stage of the project aims to flesh out these initial findings and provide a clearer understanding of what these teachers' citizenship teaching objectives are and how they go about achieving them.

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