

# **Building bridges in multicultural workplaces through collaborative adventure activities**

Phoebe Lyon  
Daniel Hooper

## **Abstract**

This paper summarizes findings on the effects a course designed to promote communication and collaboration through cooperative adventure activities has on staff in a multinational workplace. Half of the participants were non-Japanese English teachers working in a Japanese university; the other half were Japanese teachers and staff working in various other departments within the same organization. With respect to the Japanese government's newly announced plans to attract more foreign workers to Japan to compensate for the declining birth rate (Nikkei Asian Review, 2018), it is essential to assist the incoming workforce in assimilating into Japanese society (Gottlieb, 2007). Therefore, in order to strengthen staff relations within multicultural organizations, it is important to investigate the viability of new, extra-curricular approaches such as adventure activities.

*Keywords:* international workplace, Japanese higher education, communities of practice, boundaries

Over the last decade in Japan, a marked focus of government educational policy has been the promotion of the “internationalization” of a select number of elite universities. This movement has manifested itself in the form of several sizeable government projects aimed at increasing numbers of both international students and faculty, developing more English-medium courses, and building collaborative partnerships with foreign universities (Rose & McKinley, 2017). However, although the increased presence of foreign faculty on Japanese university campuses is one of the central aims of these government projects, many foreign and Japanese faculty continue to work in virtual isolation (Roloff Rothman, 2020; Stewart & Miyahara, 2010). Within a given educational institution, Japanese and non-Japanese professional communities of practice - groups of people with a shared endeavor and who learn together and interact regularly (Wenger, 2008) - may work in “parallel universes” (Stewart & Miyahara, 2010), with little communication or collaboration existing between them. A fractured relationship between two communities of practice operating in relative isolation is not necessarily inherently problematic but does, however, deny their members the opportunities for learning afforded when members engage in collaborative activities at community boundaries (Wenger-Trayner, Fenton O’Creevy, Hutchinson, Kubiak, & Wenger-Trayner, 2014). Boundary crossing between communities of practice has been utilized in the business sector in Japan as it provides opportunities for growth in terms of professional skill sets and identities (Ishiyama, 2016). In Japan, programs such as Project Adventure Japan and Canyons Japan have run cooperative adventure programs conducted with company employees. Courses of this nature aim to foster team building and promote interpersonal skills (Ewert & Garvey, 2007) To explore the potential viability of an adventure communication program (ACP) as a location for boundary crossing activities, an informal survey of both Japanese and foreign participants was carried out. In this paper, two researchers present preliminary findings from the survey,

situate ACP within a communities of practice framework, and discuss future implications.

## **An evolving landscape: Japanese higher education**

At the time of writing this paper, tertiary education in Japan is arguably in a state of flux. Pressure for universities in Japan to adapt as a result of increasing globalization has been slowly mounting and is evident in policies such as the Top Global University Project and The Project for Promotion of Global Human Resource Development that aim to increase numbers of international students and faculty (MEXT, 2019). These policy changes can also be linked to a wider trend of prioritizing English in global higher education where “internationalization of higher education remains a priority for universities worldwide, and movements are inextricably linked with increasing the role of English in the university setting” (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 230).

In Japan, a more prominent role for English in tertiary education was further reflected in a push for more English Mediated Instruction (EMI) courses where, within an EFL context, subject content is taught entirely in English (Rose & McKinley, 2017). The provision of more EMI courses, the establishment of greater links with foreign universities, and the increased hiring of foreign faculty all point to the growing internationalization of Japanese university campuses. All of these changes are also framed against declining student numbers due to a current demographic crisis in Japan. With the number of 15-64 years olds projected to decline from 73 million in 2020 to 44 million in 2060 (National Institution of Population and Social Security Research, 2012, cited in Tsuya, 2014), the resulting drop in potential domestic university enrolments is expected to lead to the closure of a significant percentage of higher education institutions (Recruit, 2018). Therefore, for many universities, the push to internationalize may simply be based on institutional survival. In addition to the need to draw more international students to EMI courses in order to offset dwindling domestic student

numbers, internationalization also functions as a recruitment strategy to appeal to the shrinking Japanese “market.” In order to draw future enrollees to their campuses in what has become a “buyers market” for Japanese students (Nagatomo, 2016), cultivating the image of a progressive global institution with a visible foreign workforce is one self-promotion avenue for universities (Nagatomo, 2016; Whitsed & Wright, 2011).

Although internationalization represents a means of mitigating the impact caused by Japan’s ongoing demographic crisis, several studies have highlighted a range of enduring and problematic issues related to foreign faculty integration in Japanese tertiary education (Aspinall, 2013; Nagatomo, 2015; Roloff Rothman, 2020; Stewart & Miyahara, 2010; Whitsed & Wright, 2011, 2013). A marked distinction continues to exist between Japanese and non-Japanese faculty in terms of their expected professional roles (Huang, 2018). This divide also manifests itself in the relative provision of professional development opportunities for Japanese and foreign faculty. Foreign university teachers are often physically separated from the rest of the university faculty, lack the language proficiency necessary to participate in Japanese events, and as a result are often forced to look to external organizations for professional development (Roloff Rothman, 2020). Stewart and Miyahara (2010), in their narrative study of the professional identities of foreign university faculty, found that Japanese and foreign educators were working in “parallel universes”. The participants in this study stated that they felt that foreign faculty were regarded as invisible and that their professional endeavors were not recognized by other Japanese faculty as “serious academic work” (p. 70). This stemmed in part from a disconnect between what each group’s (Japanese and foreign faculty) professional culture defined as sound principles and practice, leading to “professional-academic schizophrenia” (Holliday, 1994, p. 73, cited in Stewart & Miyahara, 2010). These findings suggest that within an “internationalized” Japanese tertiary education institution, there may exist a number of distinct communities of

practice (Wenger, 1998) operating in relative isolation from each other, with each one exhibiting differing values and varying degrees of legitimization within that organizational setting.

## **Situated learning: communities and boundaries**

Communities of practice are “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015, p. 1). Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) describe communities of practice as including three key prototypical features: the *domain* - a shared interest or competence, the *community* - relationships where members support and learn from each other, and *practice* - a shared repertoire of resources that members utilize. The two professional groups in this study represent communities of practice in that they have a clear shared educational goal (*domain*), include a range of interpersonal relationships based on seniority or professional role (*community*), and have accumulated a range of formal and informal resources to help them achieve their community’s goals (*practice*). Research on communities of practice originally focused on informal groups or apprenticeship relationships (Lave & Wenger, 1991), but has gradually evolved to encompass communities that emerge and sometimes overlap within more formal institutional or organizational structures (Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002; Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014). Analogous to the relative isolation of Japanese and foreign faculty within one institution is Wenger’s (1998) description of the boundary relations between multiple communities within a “constellation of practices” (p. 126). Some indicators of separate communities constituting a constellation of practice include having related enterprises, belonging to a shared institution, and being in geographical proximity to each other.

Boundary crossing (building connections and learning about other forms of

practice) between separate communities within a constellation of practice can be difficult if the communities in question define themselves by contrasting with each other because “membership in one community implies marginalization in another” (Wenger, 1998, p. 168). Arguably, this is especially relevant in the case of foreign faculty in Japanese universities because of the common claim that non-Japanese teaching staff are hired, at least in part, to perform a “foreign” or “international” identity, positioned as a reflection of what “Japaneseness” is not (Hashimoto, 2013; McVeigh, 2002).

While recognizing the potential difficulties in creating connections between disparate communities of practice, Ishiyama (2016) also highlights the potential value in fostering connections between different communities. He argues that one way that community members may benefit from connecting across boundaries is through gaining new knowledge and skills relevant to their professional role, thereby stimulating an evolution of their professional identities. Wenger-Trayner et al. (2014) embrace the potential difficulties of boundary crossing, stating that they should be framed as “learning assets” rather than “assuming or seeking an unproblematic applicability of knowledge across practices” (p. 18). The learning that takes place in being exposed to other communities, if managed effectively, can also provide valuable opportunities for critical reflection on one’s individual practice and that of their whole community.

In the mediation of boundary crossing practices, Wenger (1998) identifies two general categories of potential connection. The first are reified “boundary objects” - buildings, spaces, documents, artifacts, etc. that separate communities of practice and which may be utilized in different ways, but through which the communities can also understand their interconnection to each others’ practices. The other category is “brokering” - “connections provided by people who can introduce elements of one practice into another” (p. 105). Both boundary objects and brokering are described as

being complementary. Without a shared concrete boundary object, the essence of a community's practice may be misrepresented due to the unreliability of a broker's subjective perspective. Conversely, in lacking a broker to negotiate a shared understanding between members of each community, the respective relevance of a boundary object may be ambiguous or misinterpreted (Wenger, 1998). The interplay between shared boundary objects and carefully managed brokering practices can offer spaces for members of different communities to create new, shared knowledge and identities collaboratively. Within the researchers' professional context, one potential future boundary object and site for inter-community brokering between Japanese and foreign staff is an on-site Adventure Communication Program (ACP) course.

## **ACP background**

The ACP course at Kanda University of International Studies (KUIS) is based on the principles of Project Adventure (PA), a non-profit organization founded by an innovative group of educators in Massachusetts in 1971. They conceived a program consisting of a succession of challenging adventure type games designed to develop team-building initiatives (Project Adventure, 2016). Whilst the word adventure might evoke images of daring activities such as bungee jumping or rock climbing, it is important to note that Adventure Programming focuses on the way of doing rather than simply the task at hand (Ryan, 2002). The emphasis is on participants experiencing new and challenging activities, and participating in teamwork to develop trust, partake in healthy risk taking and build on prior successes, all whilst having fun (Ryan, 2002; Panicucci, 2007). Dewey's (1938) theory of experiential learning, which advocates problem solving, making meaning, and building understanding, is one of the foundational theories of adventure programs.

The ACP course design is based on the three fundamental principles of PA which

are ‘Challenge by Choice’, ‘The Full Value Contract’, and ‘The Experiential Learning Cycle’. Challenge by Choice asks that participants look for opportunities to extend themselves whilst completing tasks as a means to grow. However, perhaps of most importance in our context is the Full Value Contract, a shared creation that is unique to each group and which all members in the group understand. Its purpose is to create a physically and emotionally safe environment supported by all members, leading to increased bonding and teamwork and improved communication.

Another important component of PA and courses founded on its principles is the concept of an ‘adventure wave’. This involves ‘framing’ - setting up tasks and helping participants to focus on what they may learn as they complete each one, followed by ‘doing’, which can involve “a full spectrum of actions, emotions, behaviours and interactions” (Ryan, 2002, p. 8) leading to both successes and failures. Finally, the critical ‘reflection’ stage is when participants are given time to reflect upon their experience, focusing on both internal thought and analysis, and on sharing their opinions and ideas with others.

These concepts of team building, reflection, and sharing ideas obviously lend themselves to making workplaces more congenial, especially international, multicultural ones. Consequently, one of the authors wondered how such a program might be used in their own multicultural workplace to encourage and foster workplace communication and collaboration. A reflexive vignette follows, describing the rationale for conducting this research.

## **Reflective vignette by Phoebe Lyon**

### **How I got into ACP**

In 2014, a three day intensive Adventure Communication training course was being offered during the latter part of the summer vacation at KUIS. It sounded



appealing because although it was being hosted by the Sports Education Department, it was being taught by a representative from Project Adventure Japan. Furthermore, we were informed that after completion of the course, participants would receive an official PA teaching certificate which would sufficiently qualify us to implement adventure activities into our lessons. This seemed like a fun activity that would allow me to try something new, meet others working at the university, and gain new skills and qualifications.

The course was conducted in Japanese, and at the time I had only been in Japan for a little over a year. The participants in the course were myself and two other teachers working in the English Language Institute (ELI) and 11 Japanese faculty, only one of whom I had met previously. That particular participant often offered one on one Japanese support to foreign lecturers in the ELI. She had been asked to join the course by university management to translate for us three ELI staff when necessary. Fortunately, she was quite enthusiastic about taking the course.

Within the group, my Japanese was the weakest, and over the three-day training period I often struggled since the medium of instruction was Japanese. However, with the help from our translator, my fellow ELI teachers/friends, non-verbal communication, and the other group members, I did not feel too overwhelmed. Ultimately, the ELI teachers used as much of our limited Japanese as possible and the Japanese members of the group also used English quite often when we completed activities. Completing the tasks, while having to negotiate language, cultural, social, and personality differences, resulted in us forming new friendships.

### **Experience- relationship with other trainees- then and now (5 years later)**

It was inevitable that I would continue having contact with the fellow ELI teachers;

however, what was most satisfying was how even five years later, I still feel a bond when I see the other members from the ACP training course. We always say hi, and if time allows, we stop for a chat. Our chats are sometimes conducted in a mix of Japanese and English (since my Japanese is still far from strong, and they might also lack sufficient English skills), something I would never have imagined myself having the confidence to do before taking the course. Furthermore, upon completion of the course, I, along with the two other ELI teachers began co-teaching a credit bearing ACP course offered to undergraduate students at the university. Having previously only been offered in Japanese, we began co-teaching it in English with a Japanese instructor. The ACP training course provided us with an opportunity to make initial contact with him, and although both his English skills and our Japanese skills were limited, after multiple discussions we decided that offering an ACP class in English would be worth trying. Five years later, he and I are still team teaching the class.

### **Motivation to conduct similar training**

When an opportunity came up to offer a similar training session for university staff in 2018, I decided to heavily promote it within the ELI. I had come to realize the activities can be used as is or adapted in language classrooms as a tool to build students' confidence and to facilitate communication and collaboration. A large number of ELI teachers showed interest and I was asked by my ACP co-teacher to help facilitate the course in English along with the organizer with another facilitator from a nearby university.

### **Reflection on a more recent ACP staff training session which motivated this pilot study**

In the 2018 training course, one of the Japanese participants could speak almost no

English and so I was able to witness, this time as an onlooker, how the members worked to overcome language, social, and cultural barriers. More importantly, I wondered if they too, like me, would go on to form lasting bonds with their group members. Might they also perhaps embark on a collaborative project with other members they met in the group? Was it possible for a course like this to bring staff members together who would otherwise have little or no opportunity to meet, or at most, simply superficially? Could we help build more bridges between the ELI staff, who have little or no contact with staff from other departments, and others?

## **Methodology**

### **Research Questions**

The course was conducted at KUIS over two full days. The researchers were interested in investigating participants' perceptions of how likely they were to communicate and collaborate with staff members within an international institution, as well as to investigate their confidence level with respect to communicating with staff from another language background. As such, the following questions guided their research.

What impact do rapport-building activities have on:

1. communication between staff members working in an international university?
2. collaboration between staff members working in an international university?
3. one's confidence level communicating with staff whose native language is different?

### **Participants**

Participation in the course was voluntary. All 14 participants of the course worked for the same organization, the Sano Foundation. Two of the participants attended for only the first day and a third participant only attended the second. Seven of the

participants worked in the ELI at KUIS and were native speakers of English; the remaining participants were Japanese nationals with varying levels of English conversation ability. Of these seven members, five worked at KUIS; one member worked in the sports center, two from the Academic Success Center, and two from the Department of International Students at KUIS. The remaining two participants worked at Kanda Foreign Language Career College. Although the ELI teachers were the largest homogenous group, all members who attended were present with someone from within their own department.

## **Data collection**

Participants were asked to complete two informal questionnaires anonymously at the end of the course. This involved marking responses on six-point Likert scales and providing open written reflections. There were no negative consequences if they chose not to respond. The first questionnaire (see Appendix A) was to ascertain how they felt about workplace interrelations before embarking on the two day training; due to being administered post training, it was a pseudo pre-course questionnaire. The second questionnaire (see Appendix B) was administered to determine if there were any changes after having completed the training. The questionnaires were presented in English and Japanese and participants could respond in either language.

## **Procedure**

The course was conducted over two days, mostly in English, with two course facilitators: one, a Japanese national with extensive experience teaching ACP courses with high level English communication skills; the other, a native English speaker with more limited ACP teaching experience. They incorporated a range of interpersonal techniques into the course such as idea sharing, goal setting, group discussions, and

personal reflections to foster personal and social growth.

One month after completion of the course, all 14 participants were sent the pseudo pre-course questionnaire to be completed anonymously. The delay was due to the institutional approval request only being submitted after the completion of the course; the decision to make this a research project was only decided upon following the instructor/researcher's observations during the course. A second post-course questionnaire was sent one week after the first in order to help participants separate their thought processes. Ten of the participants completed the first questionnaire whilst 11 completed the second. Since the two data sets cannot be aligned due to the anonymous nature of the research method, it was not possible to compare individual responses between the pseudo pre-course and post-course questionnaires. Furthermore, due to the small sample size, it was not possible to determine significant differences between the two sets of data. Therefore, descriptive statistics have been used to quantitatively analyze the data. There are also excerpts from the questionnaires.

## Findings

Table 1: Summary of results from a six-point Likert scale of how likely participants were to communicate and collaborate pre and post course

How likely participants were to:	Pseudo pre-course questionnaire (N=10) <i>M</i> (sd)	Post-course questionnaire (N=11) <i>M</i> (sd)
communicate with staff from within your own department (who, for the post questionnaire, they had not taken the course with)	4.80 (1.135)	4.81 (1.439)
communicate with staff from another department (who, for the post questionnaire, they had not taken the course with)	2.10 (1.101)	2.82 (0.982)
collaborate with staff within their own department	4.10 (1.595)	4.64 (1.027)
collaborate with staff from another department	1.6 (0.966)	3.273 (1.272)
collaborate with the staff with whom they took this course	N/A	3.91 (1.700)
communicate with someone from a different language background	4.30 (1.494)	4.91 (1.221)

Perhaps, not surprisingly, there was not a noticeable difference in the means between the pre- and post-course questionnaires for intra-departmental communication. However, the relatively high pre-course mean indicates that intra-departmental communication already tended to be high. This was evidenced in comments such as:

*“I already communicate with many people in my department.”*

*“The communication hasn’t changed because my work is the same as before I took the ACP.”*

Considering standard deviation, the results showed a high variance between respondents, more so in the post-course questionnaires. There was, however, a noticeable increase between the pseudo pre-course mean and the post-course mean in relation to communicating with staff from another department, suggesting that after taking the course, participants believed that they would be more likely to communicate with staff outside their own department. However, the high value of the standard deviation showed that there was a large variance between individual members when they considered this question, indicating that there was no real consensus, and that respondents across the board have very different opinions on the matter, this time in relation to their feelings pre-course.

Whilst there was less variation between individuals in their post-course responses, the variance was still quite high. With respect to intra-departmental collaboration, the pre-course questionnaire showed that this was already quite strong as can be seen in the following comments:

*“It is necessary to work with others for my job.”*

*“I collaborated relatively rarely before the course and nothing has changed.”*

However, there was an increase in the mean in the post-course questionnaire, which indicated that at least some participants felt they were now more likely to collaborate with members in their own departments. Some comments that reflected this

were:

*“I am much more likely to collaborate with people with-in my own department.”*

*“I feel much easier to ask help from others or suggest that we work together to complete a project.”*

Once again, the results showed a high variance between respondents, but less so in the post-course questionnaires. For how likely participants felt they were to collaborate with staff from another department, there was a more substantial increase in the means between the pre- and post-course questionnaires. Below are some comments that reflected these changes in feelings.

*“I would like to collaborate more to do a better job.”*

*“I think I would definitely consider collaborating with other staff but I would be more likely to if it included a staff member that I either knew or had been on the course with to help bridge the gap.”*

However, it is important to note that some participants’ responses indicated that this might not happen.

*“It depends on what jobs I work on.”*

*“We don’t tend to study the same thing.”*

Less variability was evident in responses between participants when asked to rate their likelihood to collaborate with staff within the same department in the post-course



versus the pseudo-pre course questionnaire. However, with respect to collaborating with staff from another department, the variance in responses was slightly higher post-course.

Participants were also asked how likely they were to collaborate with the staff with whom they took this course. The mean for this was quite high compared to other results obtained in this study. However, the standard deviation was also the highest observed, suggesting this was an area where there was the least agreement between individuals' responses.

Results for how likely participants were to communicate with someone from a different language background showed an increase in the mean after having taken the course. There was also less variance between responses between the pseudo pre- course and post-course questionnaires.

Other comments bear witness to how the participants valued the experience overall and how the course helped them develop some new relationships they hoped might continue. Many mentioned that they would be more willing (if not necessarily likely) to collaborate with the staff with whom they took the course.

*"To a larger extent than before."*

*"Very much so, because I know them already."*

*"The rapport is built."*

Of course this was not felt as strongly by all.

*"I probably won't collaborate with them in the future unless I am asked to."*

Pre course it was clear that participants had not had many opportunities to interact with staff outside of their own departments.

*“I don’t really know anyone from outside the department by name”*

*“There’s no opportunities [to collaborate]”*

It was encouraging to read responses in the post-course questionnaires showing that connections had been made.

*“The course helped me get to know others”.*

*“I became closer with the staff from my department who took the course, and also remain in contact with some of the staff from other departments.”*

Of course, depending on one’s job, some might have felt that they were just too far removed to be able to communicate with members from other departments. This could have been job related or even due to physical location since the campus is quite spread out.

*“私がいるセクションは、他学科の先生方とほとんどコミュニケーションを取る機会がないため” “The section I am in has few opportunities to communicate with teachers from other departments.”*

The course also made participants more aware of themselves and their language use, their workplace and social-cultural factors.

*“ACP でタスクを達成するためなど、何かを外国語で議論するためには、あらかじめ仲良くなっておき、情意フィルターをできるだけ下げておいた方がよいということ学びました。” “In order to discuss something in a foreign language, such as to accomplish a task in ACP, I learned that it is better to get along well and lower the affective filter as much as possible beforehand.”*

*“people from didn't backgrounds and knowledge bases can come together to complete a task put before them”*

*“Yes, I learned about other departments.”*

Furthermore, the course provided an opportunity for participants to form communities.

*“It has made the campus feel a lot smaller and more familiar as there are more familiar faces that I recognise and with who I can exchange a greeting or few words with which really makes a difference in feeling like you are a part of a group.”*

## Discussion

Overall, the results indicate that there was an increased likelihood of participants communicating and collaborating with other staff in the university based on the reported data in this study. Since the ELI is mainly comprised of non-Japanese nationals, and the other departments mainly of Japanese nationals, results showing an increased likelihood of participants to both communicate and collaborate with staff from other departments was very encouraging. However, the differing linguistic backgrounds of the members of these intercultural communities of practice further complicates the dynamics of boundary crossing involving the ELI and other departments. Careful management of brokering practices is arguably even more crucial in that they will likely need to be implemented in a bilingual setting. Within the ACP course this study is based on, various brokering practices were observed including

bilingual instruction, ice breaking/team building activities, and the provision of peer-teaching opportunities. Furthermore, rather than contending simply with varying community practices and conceptions of professional competence, it is likely that management of the ACP activities will also need to consider sociocultural and ideological influences that may contribute to the “Othering” of Japanese or non-Japanese colleagues (Hashimoto, 2013; Holliday & Aboshiha, 2009; Whitsed & Volet, 2011). Despite these concerns, however, it was promising to see that after the course, participants had indicated an increased likelihood to communicate with staff from another language background. For organizations with a multicultural base, promotion of ACP activities seems a worthwhile use of employees’ time to improve interpersonal relations and increase knowledge sharing across communities of practice.

**Limitations** Whilst the training course was only two days in length, it was not ideal having participants complete both questionnaires post training since responding retrospectively to the pseudo pre-course questions might not have produced accurate reflections. Furthermore, the limited number of participants, and having an uneven number of responses to each of the questionnaires also meant that responses aimed at finding out post-course views may have skewed the data. However, the researchers believe that these results still allow for insights into the general feelings of participants.

Another limitation of the study relates to the design of the pre- and post-course questionnaires. The wording in some of the questions varied slightly; therefore, it is unknown whether this might have impacted how the participants interpreted and responded to those questions.

## **Suggestions for future research**

Although participants seemed open to collaborating with members from other

departments, it was unclear if they actually would. This could be due to different job roles and/or research interests, or even a lack of proximity to others as university offices for staff tend to be segregated based on their departments. It might be useful to include a delayed post-course questionnaire to determine if an increase in communication and collaboration eventuate after such a course concludes and whether these changes are long lasting.

Finding out which elements of the course helped increase participants' willingness to collaborate and communicate with staff from other departments/nationalities would be beneficial in order to improve future courses. The addition of a delayed post-questionnaire to assess whether these effects are sustained long-term would also be a worthwhile addition. Finally, conducting the course bilingually, in both Japanese and English could assess the effects of the instructional language on the likelihood of increased communication and collaboration between participants with different native languages.

Continued research into programs like this may offer further insights into how to improve interdepartmental communication and collaboration in large multinational companies. This will help with not only how new workers assimilate into a Japanese working environment, but also assist Japanese workers in becoming more open to incoming foreign workers.

## References

- Aspinall, R. W. (2013). *International education policy in Japan in an age of globalization and risk*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Global Oriental.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: McMillan.
- Ewert, A., & Garvey, D. (2007). Philosophy and theory of adventure education. *Adventure education: Theory and applications*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Galloway, N., & Rose, H. (2015). *Introducing global Englishes*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Hashimoto, K. (2013). 'English-only', but not a medium-of-instruction policy: The Japanese way of internationalising education for both domestic and overseas students. *Current Issues in Language Planning, 14*(1), 16-33.
- Holliday, A., & Aboshiha, P. (2009). The denial of ideology in perceptions of 'non-native speaker' teachers. *TESOL Quarterly, 43*(4), 669-689.
- Huang, F. (2018). International faculty at Japanese universities: Their demographic characteristics and work roles. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 29*(2), 263-272.
- Ishiyama, N. (2016). Role of knowledge brokers in communities of practice in Japan. *Journal of Knowledge Management, 20*(6). doi: 10.1108/JKM-03-2016-0098
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Eades, J., & Lyon, P. (2018, May). *What we learned: An adventure communication project*. Poster session presented at PANSIG 2018, Tokyo, Japan.
- McVeigh, B. (2002). *Japanese higher education as myth*. New York, NY: M. E. Sharpe.
- MEXT. (2019). *Daigaku kyouin no fakuruti dibeloppumento nitsuite*. [About university teaching staff faculty development.] Retrieved from [http://www.mext.go.jp/b\\_menu/shingi/chukyo/chukyo4/003/gijiroku/06102415/004.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chukyo/chukyo4/003/gijiroku/06102415/004.htm)

- Nagatomo, D. H. (2016). *Identity, gender and teaching English in Japan*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Panicucci, J. (2007). Cornerstones of adventure education. *Adventure education: Theory and applications*. IL, USA: Project Adventure.
- Project Adventure, Inc. (2016) Retrieved from <http://www.pa.org/>
- Stewart, A., & Miyahara, M. (2010). Parallel universes: Globalization and identity in English language teaching at a Japanese university. In P. Seargeant (Ed.), *English in Japan in the era of globalization* (pp. 60-79). Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Recruit (2018, February 22). *Saishin no saisaku doukou to kaikaku no yukue*. [The direction of latest policy trends and university reform]. Paper presented at the workshop of the Kanda University of International Studies Faculty Development Committee.
- Roloff Rothman, J. (2020). Professional teacher development for tertiary EFL educators: The goal versus the reality. *The Kanda Journal*, 32, 303-323.
- Rose, H., & McKinley, J. (2018). Japan's English-medium instruction initiatives and the globalization of higher education. *Higher Education*, 75(1), 111-129.
- Ryan, B. (2002). *Adventure programming training manual*. MA, USA: Project Adventure, Inc.
- Tsuya, N. (2004). The impacts of population decline in Japan: Demographic prospects and policy implications. *Suntory Foundation Research Project, Forum 005 Special Report*, 1-8.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Wenger-Trayner, E., Fenton O'Creevy, M., Hutchinson, S., Kubiak, C., & Wenger-Trayner, B. (2014). *Learning in landscapes of practice: Boundaries, identity and knowledgeability in practice-based learning*. London, UK: Routledge.

- Wenger-Trayner, E., & Wenger-Trayner, B. (2015). *Communities of practice: A brief introduction* [PDF file]. Retrieved from <http://wenger-trayner.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/07-Brief-introduction-to-communities-of-practice.pdf>
- Whitsed, C., & Volet, S. (2011). Fostering the intercultural dimensions of internationalisation in higher education: Metaphors and challenges in the Japanese context. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 15(2), 146-170.
- Whitsed, C., & Wright, P. (2011). Perspectives from within: Adjunct, foreign, English-language teachers in the internationalization of Japanese universities. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 10(1), 28-45.



## Appendix A

### Pseudo pre-course questionnaire

1. How likely were you to communicate with staff within your department?

学部内でどの程度スタッフとコミュニケーションを取っていましたか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

2. How likely were you to communicate with staff from another department?

他の学部からのスタッフとどの程度コミュニケーションを取っていましたか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

3. How likely were you to collaborate with staff within your department?

学部内でどの程度スタッフと共同作業を行いましたか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

4. How likely were you to collaborate with staff from another department?

他の学部からのスタッフとどの程度共同作業を行いましたか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

5. How comfortable were you communicating with someone from a different language background?

異なる言語背景をもつ人とどの程度快適にコミュニケーションできていましたか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

## Appendix B

1. How likely are you now to communicate with staff within your department who didn't take this course?

今現在、このコースに参加しなかった学部内のスタッフとどの程度コミュニケーションを取っていますか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

2. How likely are you now to communicate with staff from another department who didn't take this course?

今現在、このコースに参加しなかった他の学部のスタッフとどの程度コミュニケーションを取っていますか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

Building bridges in multicultural workplaces through  
collaborative adventure activities

3. How likely are you now to communicate with the staff with whom you took this course?

今後、このコースを受講したスタッフとどの程度コミュニケーションを取ろうと思いますか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

4. How likely are you now to collaborate with staff within your department?

今後、学部内でどの程度スタッフと共同作業を行おうと思いますか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

5. How likely are you now to collaborate with staff from another department?

今後、他の学部からのスタッフとどの程度共同作業を行おうと思いますか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

6. How likely are you now to collaborate with the staff with whom you took this course?

今後、このコースを受講したスタッフとどの程度共同作業を行おうと思いますか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

7. How comfortable are you now communicating with someone from a different language background?

今後、異なる言語背景をもつ人との程度快適にコミュニケーションできると思いますか？

Not at all 全然 1 2 3 4 5 6 Extremely とても

Explain 具体的に

8. Please comment if you think there is something other than the course that has contributed to how comfortable you feel communicating with someone from a different language background.

このコース以外に、異なる言語背景をもつ人とのコミュニケーションが容易になった要因で思い当たるものがあればお書きください。

9. What, if anything, did you learn about yourself while taking this course?

このコースを受講中、もし何かご自身について学んだことがあったとすれば、それは何ですか？

10. What did you learn from others while taking this course?

このコースを受講中、他の受講者から何か学びましたか？