

# Designing International Exchange Activities between Turkish and Japanese Elementary Schools Using Video Clips

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*The purpose of this research is to describe the exchange study in 2022, which is mainly based on exchange of video images in elementary schools between Japan and Turkey. The authors would like to clarify the role of video media in the exchange and how children are learning. Because the school calendar differs from country to country, we began by using video to understand the other country. 4 months of data from March to June 2022 were analyzed to discuss the importance of video in the exchange learning process. The videos used included NHK for School teaching materials, YouTube videos, and videos filmed at the schools. The authors will examine how these videos were used and how the students engaged in the program and report on the progress of the program.*

*Keywords: Video Clips, International Exchange. Learning Doughnuts, NHK, YouTube*

## Introduction

### International Exchange Program

With the advent of globalization in the 21st century, the number of Japanese going abroad and foreigners coming to Japan has increased dramatically, and international exchange activities have flourished in school education as well. However, from 2020 to the present, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face exchanges have become difficult not only with foreign countries but also within Japan. On the other hand, instead of face-to-face education, online education using the Internet has had to be implemented, which was puzzling at first, but online education has become the norm, and both teachers and children have become less resistant to education via the Internet. With the increased use of the Internet, exchanges with people outside the school through the Internet have become more active. In international exchange as well, greater use of the Internet will enable exchange with children in other countries. Viewed in this way, the hurdles to international exchange via the Internet have become lower than they were before the Corona Disaster. In this presentation, we will report on a case study of exchanges between Japanese and Turkish children via the Internet. In particular, we will focus on video clips and report on how Japanese children learn about the other country, culture, and school through the practice of international exchange using video clips.

### Theory of Learning Doughnuts

International exchange is practiced through relationships with a variety of people and tools. How do the people and tools surrounding the learner affect international exchange? Based on Saeki's "Donut Theory of Learning," we will examine learning in international exchange. The "doughnut theory of learning" describes the process of learning while interacting with the external world. When a learner (I) deepens her awareness of the external world (THEY world), she inevitably goes through an engagement with the YOU world. Figure 1 is a diagrammatic representation of the overall structure of the interrelationship between the ego and the other.

The world in which the ego = I interacts with others who nurture the second ego is the YOU world; the THEY world is the world of anonymous, the site of real social and cultural practices.

The YOU world is a world in which a second ego expands among diverse and intimate others. Thus, although it might be more appropriate to call it, WE world, we have named it YOU world in the sense of merging with the intimate others. the ego expands within the YOU world, incorporating and expanding into the WE, and meeting new THEY (see Figure. 1).

This theory illustrates two points. The first is that the I/YOU/THEY relationship not only indicates the relationship between “I” and others and the world, but also between me and artifacts. The second is to focus on the structure of the first and second interfaces and to discuss the interactions there.

When we learn something, it is mediated by some artifacts. Focusing on video clips, this study examines how artifacts such as video clips mediate when children engage with a subject through the “Donut Theory of Learning.

Artifacts are cultural media and include non-physical objects such as words and symbols as well as literal tools. There are specific rules and promises that must be followed and successfully used. When we first meet it, it is truly the “outer world” (THEY). We call it a third-person tool. We do not know how to deal with the strange tool. We need to learn itself. At the stage when we can fully master it, it becomes a part of our body, and we find ourselves using it. When that happens, we become more conscious of the external world itself that unfolds with the tool rather than the tool itself. In other words, when the “material” is first presented to us, we learn the material, and it is THEY tool, but after we have learned it to some extent, it is now transformed into a YOU tool that we use to explore the target world.

How can a video clip be transformed into a YOU tool? The YOU tool is a resource to produce rich dialogue. Through we internalize use of YOU tool, we can expand our world maximumly. Through the video clips, children raise many questions, and interested in what is going on in the world. It is the intimate interaction between YOU and YOU others, and YOU tools that expands our learning and is the source of rich “dialogue. This is how the ego expands, changes, and becomes more deeply involved in society. The first aspect of artifacts is that the materials themselves should be easy to understand and familiar to learners. This is the aspect that learners can understand the material as something “familiar” and relate it to their own surroundings. It is an aspect that each child can understand in her own way and can “stick to” in her own way. However, if we focus only on the first aspect, we will lose the breadth of the world. By learning about diverse perspectives and positions, you will develop critical thinking skills. It is important to consider the “Donut Theory of Learning” from the perspective of how to connect this first and second interfaces.

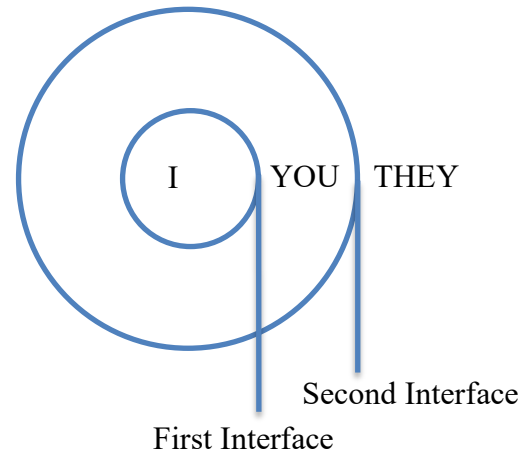


Figure 1: Doughnut Theory of Learning

## Research Methodology

This study is a collaborative action research between the researcher (Kubota), the teacher (Miyake), and the support organization (Ito). Case study methodology was used, and data was obtained from participant observation and interviews. This presentation will focus on the learning process of Japanese children.

### Overview of the Exchange

The exchange program will last one year, from April 2022 to March 2023, and this presentation is an interim report with analysis based on the records of activities from April to June, the introductory part of the program. The Japanese exchange was with Seto Solan Elementary School (SSES) in Aichi Prefecture, Japan, and the Turkish exchange was with Renkli Orman Elementary School (ROES) in Izmir Province, Turkey. Both schools are private elementary schools established in recent years. Compared to education at public elementary schools, they have a more flexible curriculum and strongly emphasize a policy of fostering children's thinking skills and democracy. The children participating in the exchange study are second graders (7 or 8 years old), and neither has much knowledge about the other's country. For this reason, both include an activity to learn about the other's country at the beginning of the program prior to the exchange.

Since this presentation will focus on SSES, I will explain the SSES lesson plan.

1. Project Title: Let's collaborate with our Turkish friends!

## 2. Target Grade: 2nd Grade

### 3. Objectives

The Children will be able to:

- ① Discover the relationship between oneself and familiar places in the community through activities such as visiting and using various places in the community. (Life Studies: thinking, judging, expressing, etc.)
- ② Find something to write about based on experiences and clarify what they want to convey. (Japanese language: thinking, judgment, expression, etc.)
- ③ Concentrate on what they want to hear and try to talk to each other in accordance with the learning task. (Japanese language: ability to learn, human nature, etc.)
- ④ Through activities to visit and use various places in the community, they try to interact appropriately with local people and live with safety in mind. (Life Studies: ability to learn, human nature, etc.)
- ⑤ Even though they come from different countries and cultures, they are able to find differences and similarities in culture and lifestyle and think about the meaning of understanding each other. (Moral studies: ability to think, judge, express, etc.)

### 4. Related subjects

Japanese Language, Life Study, Moral Education

### 5. Purpose of the unit

This unit is a cross-curricular project study. The theme of the unit is international understanding, and covers two study periods during the year. From April to June, Unit 1 will be “Learn about Turkey” activities, and from September onward, Unit 2 “Let's make books with Turkish friends” activities are scheduled. Due to the different school calendars in Turkey and Japan, we decided not to have online face-to-face exchanges between the children in Unit 1.

The final goal of this activity is to create a book and to express their thoughts and feelings about the other country and what it means to be connected with it. This cycle of first learning about Turkey, then thinking about it, and then expressing it will deepen the children's knowledge and thoughts about the other country, and they will discover the meaning of making connections in their own unique way.

The children are in the second grade, and considering their developmental stage, this is the first time for them to participate in an international exchange. In addition, because of the six-hour time difference between Turkey and Japan, it was difficult to conduct a live online exchange, so we needed to find a way to make the children feel closer to Turkey. Therefore, we designed a lesson plan that included activities such as sending each other a video introducing the school and watching a video of the other country, using visual materials as the main means of learning about the other country.

### 6. Use of video materials

The following three points can be raised as the effects of video clips.

The use of video clips can:

- (1) arouse children's interest and leave a lasting impression.
- (2) present realistic scenes.
- (3) create synergistic effects with class activities.

## Results

### The Process of Exchange

#### 1. Introduction to the Unit

To begin the exchange with ROES, we searched for and watched a video about Turkey from the Internet. The exchange between the second-grade children of SSES and ROES. Both of them must start by learning about the other's country. Even online, real-time exchanges are difficult because of the six-hour time zone. For Japanese children, the Turkish children are in THEIR world. They need to be brought into YOUR world in order that Japanese children should relate their lives with Turkish children.

#### Three types of video clips

(1) Video clips on the Internet

There are video clips on the NHK for school website. However, there are not many of them when the topic is Turkey. A keyword search for “Turkey” returns 28 clips. For some reason, some clips are not related to Turkey at all. There are only 3 clips that deal directly with Turkey. So, we watched a video on YouTube that explains the relationship between Turkey and Japan.



(2) Children's self-introduction and school introduction videos

Children filmed a video in which children from both countries introduced themselves one by one. Next, they filmed a video of the children introducing their schools.

(3) Video introducing life in Turkey

When Kubota went to Turkey on May, he filmed some videos. The videos he shot in Turkey were local, and he sent them as 30-second to 1-minute video clips of what he experienced as a Japanese person. Since they were filmed by Japanese and contain a Japanese point of view, they are easily familiar to children.

Because the video could be viewed multiple times and the children could view only the parts they wanted to see, the video prompted new insights that they may not have noticed on a single viewing. The children who participated in the video were in the lower grades and had a limited amount of knowledge, so it was easy for them to create images by combining visual information as well as textual information when acquiring the necessary knowledge. When watching a video, children try to grasp the subject by comparing and relating what is being shown to their own experiences. For this reason, the use of video materials was effective in the situation of first international exchange in the early grades.

**1. Project Practice**

(1) Introduction

Children do not know anything about Turkey. The teacher explained the relationship between Japan and Turkey and developed a lesson in which the children learned that Turkey has many pro-Japanese people. The children were taught using Google Earth, a YouTube version of an online picture book, and photographs.

The children's reflections

Child A: *Today, we had a lesson to learn about the country of Turkey. What I learned was that I could find the connection that Japan helped Turkey and Turkey helped Japan. Next time, in the project class, I would like to learn more about the country of Turkey.*

Child B: *What we did today was to learn more about the country of Turkey. What I was able to do was to learn more about Turkey. What I didn't do today is nothing in particular. The next thing I want to do is to learn more about Turkey online. I thought Japan is a better country than I expected. The reason for this is that "I thought that Japan helped Turkey and in return Turkey helped Japan and is a good country."*

The children's reflections revealed descriptions of their interest in Turkey.

(2) Viewing the school introduction video

The children listed and categorized what they wanted to know about Turkey in the previous lesson. By doing so, the children would like to learn about the exchange and introduce themselves. First, they watched a video sent by their exchange partners. The teacher explained that it was important to clarify what to focus on when watching the video. The children concentrated on the children from the schools with which they would be interacting. Afterward, the children commented, "I thought it was nice because of the playground equipment." and "The school is in a place like a forest." The children actively commented on what they had noticed. From the children's comments, it was clear that they were comparing and relating to their own schools as they watched the video.

After watching the video, they used thinking tools to summarize what they noticed and what they wanted to introduce.

[Description of children's reflections]

Child C: *I found out the differences between Turkey and Japan. Unlike SSES, there were a lot of playground equipment. The same part was the white board. I found many things I want to introduce to Turkey' children. Next time I want to try my best to find out how to introduce them in a video.*

Child D: *I was happy to learn a lot about the ROES in Turkey. I was also able to gather a lot of information. Next time I want to know more about Turkey and ROES. I want to introduce the biotope the most.*

(3) Make a video introducing Seto Solan elementary school.

The children wrote down what they wanted to convey to others and worked on the video production. After seeing ROES's introduction video, they felt that they would like to introduce their own school. After confirming that it is important to memorize the script, face the camera, and explain with gestures in order to properly convey the message to others, they shot the video.



Child E: *I couldn't take a video of my friend today, so I want to do it next time. I want to learn a little more English and be able to look at a piece of paper and say it clearly. Next time, I want to finish the video. I want to send it to my Turkish friends and make them happy. It was a little difficult to remember, but it was a lot of fun.*

Child F: *I made a video of the bus to introduce our school to Turkey. The camera worked well, but the gestures were not enough. I want to make a better video in the next activity.*

(4) Let's learn about the lives of our Turkish friends

Focusing on the lives of Turkish children, the teacher let the children explore what their lives are like. They used books and the Internet to research what they were interested in. However, although they were asked to research what they were interested in, they ended up only describing the fact that \_\_\_\_\_ existed. They were not able to deepen the content beyond that.

Child G: *I wrote what I found out about Turkey on my card. I researched Turkish sweets on the Internet and in books. I was able to find many Japanese and Turkish sweets. I could not understand why they are different. Next time, I would like to continue writing on the information card.*

Child H: *Today I wrote about sweets on my information card. There were different kinds of non-sweet, salty yogurt drinks called ayran, Turkish ice cream like chewing gum called dondurma, and so on.*

(5) What is Izmir's charm?

One of the authors (Kubota) went to Turkey for a month in May, and he became a local reporter and sent the children a video with commentary. The videos were categorized and uploaded to a drive shared with the children. The children watched them at home with their parents or at school in the morning. Occasionally, Kubota would quiz them, and they became interested in the Turkish way of life. The quizzes included questions such as "Izmir cheese, it's huge! and "Meat is sold on skewers in the street." Many children were surprised at the differences by comparing and relating their own experiences. They listened carefully to not only the images but also the Kubota's explanations. The combination of video and audio seemed to deepen the children's understanding and facilitate their questioning.

Since each child had an iPad, they were able to freely watch the videos at school or at home whenever they wanted to, and they were also able to watch the videos repeatedly if they wanted to watch more. The fact that each child has her own device also makes the video materials more useful. The teacher designed a series of activities that did not end with the investigation of Izmir's attractions, but rather involved compiling them into a keynote file and presenting them to Kubota. As a result, the children made a strong effort to interpret the video material, and through the online presentation and dialogue with Kubota, they gained new insights.

The child's reflections on the online presentation are as follows.

Child I: *Today, I presented to Prof. Kubota what I found attractive about Turkey. Prof. Kubota told us that there are many trains in Turkey. It seems that they also have subways. I would like to ask Prof. Kubota to speak to us again.*

Child J: *Today, I gave a presentation to Prof. Kubota. I was a little nervous, but I succeeded. I was surprised that there were some things that were different. Prof. Kubota said, "It would be interesting to look into it more."*

Child K: *I presented my charm statement in front of Prof. Kubota. I noticed many things. I noticed that the cheese I presented was made from cow's milk in Japan, but goat's milk in Turkey. Prof. Kubota told me that I should look up the ingredients of various cheeses. Next time, I would like to find new information while doing more.*

Child L: (*What I did*) I was able to go online with Prof. Kubota and gather information. Prof. Kubota told us about the meat in it. It was lamb. (*What I'm going to do next*) I want to look into that.

## Discussion

The doughnut theory of learning explains that it is important to go back and forth between the first interface and the second interface. In other words, if you stay in the I/YOU relationship, you are comfortable, but learning will not be expansive. However, in the I/THEY relationship, it is difficult to find a relationship between oneself and the other party. Therefore, by moving back and forth between the first and second interface many times, it becomes possible to create an expansion of learning as one's own affair. Through connecting with the outside world and making it their own, children are able to learn deeply. It is important to design a learning environment that values the familiar first interface while connecting to the second interface that leads to a new world.

This case study is an exchange project with a school in Turkey. We will examine a design that creates an environment in which children become interested in Turkey and are actively involved in learning more about the country. First, we consider the relationship between children and tools. Each child has a tablet, which they actively use for learning activities. As part of their stationery, they collect information on the Internet. They also watch videos with friends and family, which creates a dialogue. They discuss terms they don't understand and watch different video clips. The videos are able to show specific Turkish situations, which has generated a variety of questions among the children.

Second, the doughnut theory of learning also explains the relationship between children and those around them. The children of the Turkish exchange partners initially appear as THEY; it is the teacher in charge, who has a relationship with THEY as YOU, who connects them. The teacher first shows the children a video about Turkey, and then the teacher herself tells them that Turkey is a fascinating country. At first, the children have no knowledge about Turkey, but they are attracted by the teacher's attitude and find it interesting to learn about Turkey.

Furthermore, when they made the self-introduction video, they did as they were told by their teachers, but when they saw the Turkish children introduce themselves, they shared the feeling that there are children in the outside (THEY) world who are also looking forward to interacting with them. In addition, Turkey comes even closer to YOU position through the viewing and dialogue with friends and family. In July, the principal of the exchange school will visit SSES and interact with the children, thus fulfilling the goal of the first half of the program, "getting to know Turkey".

## Conclusion

This presentation is a case research of exchange activities which are a year-long from March 2022 to March 2023, and here we present a participant observation of the first half of the exchange in a Japanese school. The children, who knew nothing about Turkey, gradually became interested in and gained knowledge about the country through watching videos and researching on the Internet.

The second half of the exchange program will be scheduled to begin in September, with a specific exchange with the children of ROES in Turkey. The output of the learning activity will be the joint production of a book about Turkey and Japan, and the key to the back-and-forth between the first and second interface will be the kind of relationship that artifact and people create with the children as a learning environment.

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