

“Adaptation to Cultural Differences –Focus on Chinese International Students’ Image
towards Japan, and Japanese International Students’ Image towards China-

Abstract

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1. Research Background

The author for this graduation thesis studied abroad in China from September 2011 to August 2012. In this particular period, because of the Island territory problem between Japan and China, most of the Japanese Media were ongoing about anti-Japanese sentiment in China. Therefore after deciding to go to China for going abroad, the author was prepared for what was easy to expect; anti-Japanese sentiments towards Japanese international students. However, as soon as I got to China, I realized that there were no such anti-Japanese sentiments broadcasted on Japanese Media. ‘China seen from Japan’ and the actual place was completely different. Thus the author strongly believes that people who have experienced International Movement, such as studying abroad especially between Japan and China have the responsibility to think about the future Japan-China relations.

2. Research Purpose/Research Hypothesis

The purpose of this study is to figure out why is the international relation between Japan and China is still in a difficult situation, even though International Movement of people, goods etc. between these two countries are currently increasing?

To research this topic the author framed 2 hypotheses.

1. International Movement=International Exchange do lead to mutual understandings between countries, however there is also a negative effect as in revealing differences of one’s mother country and the host country, leading to have a negative image towards the host country.

2. If one’s mother country has a negative image towards the host country, it will be difficult for the International Mover to feel adapted to the host country.

Making it more difficult for the person to become future pro-○○.

3. Existing Research under this Theme

1. 第9回日中共同世論調査 Japan-China Opinion Poll, JASSO Statistics

This public opinion poll was collected from May 2013 to July 2013. It was collected between ordinary citizens in Japan and China so it can be said that this poll's results reflect the Japan-China international relations in this period. The results of the polls showed that negative impressions towards each other's countries affected the will for nongovernmental exchange. Although such results were collected, nongovernmental exchange=going abroad has not been influenced as thought it would be. Japanese students studying abroad in China are increasing from the year 2004. As for the Chinese students studying in Japan the number still remains around 80,000 students a year, which is also not affected by the severe international relations.

2. Yoshiki Kobayashi's Research

Yoshiki Kobayashi (2008) researched about whether or not anti-Japan sentiment in China would ease if there were experiences of exchanges between Japan. He gave a sample of an opinion poll that was collected in China, which showed that 交流経験者 (have an experience of exchange between Japan) and 在日中国人(a Chinese resident in Japan)'s anti-Japan sentiment was lower than that of the average Chinese. Thus he concluded that to ease the tension between Japan and China, increasing the amount of the international exchange is very important.

3. International students studying in Japan's change in Japanese image before visiting to Japan and after studying in Japan; focus on Chinese international students

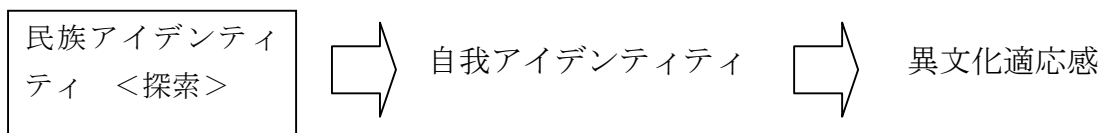
According to opinion polls collected by Shinshu University (Nagai 2000) and 姜, international students studying in Japan tends to have a positive image towards Japan before arriving, but this positive image change to a negative image after actually studying in Japan. Moreover, polls collected from international students from China revealed that Chinese students would not advise other Chinese students to study in Japan. According to 姜's research, 「あまり勧めない(do not advise)」 「絶対勧めない(strongly do not advise)」's percentage was 51.7%, which can be said that half of the Chinese international students do not advise the others to study in Japan. This is a lamentable situation for Japan.

So why does these negative changes take place? The author researched whether or not this change has anything related to change in National Identity.

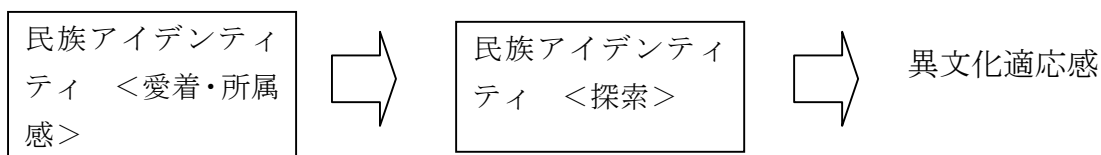
4. National Identity under Intercultural Situation

According to Atuko Uematsu's (2010) research, there are two kinds of national identity. One is 'National Identity Exploration,' which involve the will to research about what it is to be a Japanese or Japan's history and culture. The other is 'National Identity Love and Sense of Belonging.' This involves positive understanding of being Japanese and its culture and history. Using these 2 aspects of National Identity, Uematsu (2010) concluded that Japanese university students who studied abroad scored higher than that of university students who studied in Japan for 4 years in both of the National Identity aspects. This is because, Uematsu claims that since Japan can be said to be a racially homogeneous nation, Japanese rarely have experiences of oneself being a minority. However, under intercultural situations such as going abroad, this makes one to be in the minority, which arises ones National Identity. In addition, Uematsu also discovered that 'National Identity Exploration' had a positive effect to ones identity, since studying about ones mother nation's culture or history enables to figure out how one should act under intercultural situation. On the other hand, 'National Identity Love and Sense of Belonging' had negative impact to personal identity. As 'National Identity Love and Sense of Belonging' arouses ones love or sense of belonging to ones mother nation, this can invite exclusionary behavior towards other cultures or one to feel that culture of mother nation is the best and others inferior. Hence according to this theory, I have made a graph to explain this clearly;

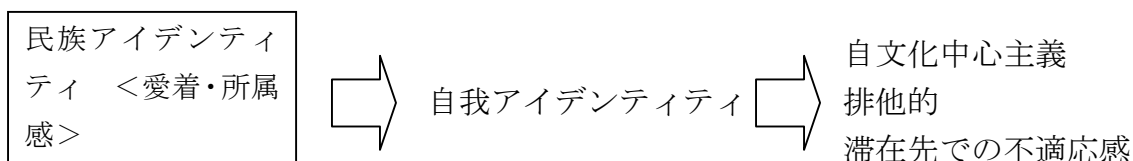
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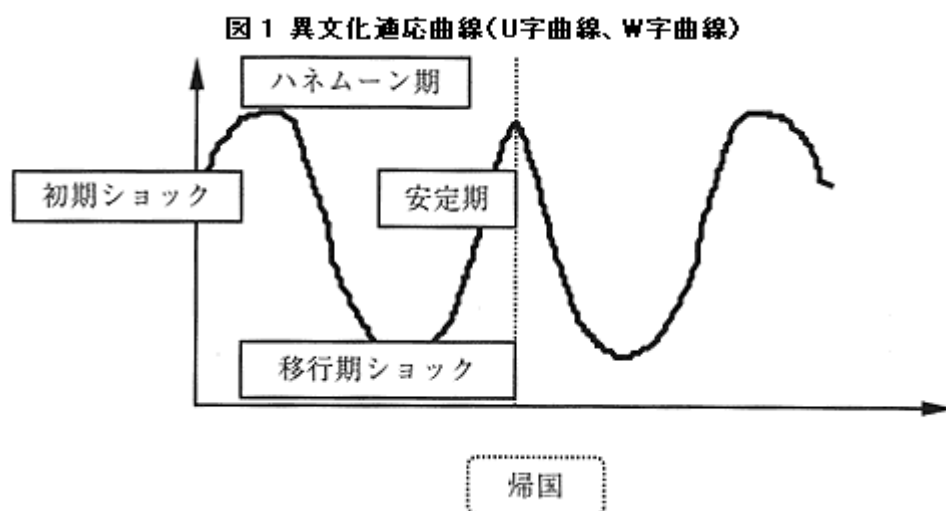
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So what are the outcomes of #3? The author mentioned about Mohamed Atta who was

one of the hijacker of 9/11. He once was an international student in Germany. It is said that in his studying abroad period, he devoted himself into radical Islamic belief. (Seikei University 2005)

5. Motives for Going Abroad, the length of the stay, and Cultural Adjustment Diagram
To research more deeply, the author considers the motives for going abroad, the length of the stay, and the Cultural Adjustment Diagram was important. Cultural Adjustment Diagram has two theories; Lysgaard's (1955) U curve theory and Gullahorn's W curve theory. This cultural adjustment diagram describes the ups and downs of the person's mental state.



The author thinks that this diagram best describes the contradiction to Kobayashi's results and 姜's. There are 4 types of Chinese described in this graduation thesis; 1. Has a Japanese acquaintance 2. Short term Chinese international students (less than a year) 3. Chinese international students (3-4, 4 years or more) 4. Chinese living in Japan. Also the author would like to mention the results for Mizuki Yamazaki's (1993) research. He concluded that Asian international students to their second years in Japan, majority of them seem to have a positive image of Japan, however, after that it gradually becomes negative and in their fourth year of stay, the image becomes worse. After that it gradually becomes positive again. Moreover, in 姜's cross over research, he compared the length of the stay and the will to stay in Japan, and claimed that the longer the stay, the stronger the will to stay in Japan. Thus it can be said that the results of the change of positive image of Japan changing to negative ones after studying in Japan can be explained by this cultural adjustment diagram. As for the Japanese international students, a survey which was conducted to Japanese students who chose China for their going

abroad destination showed an opposite results to that of the Chinese international students. For the Japanese students who studied in China, the longer their stay, the less satisfaction they felt for their going abroad program (JASSO).

4. Research Outline

Research Motive and the Method

This research was conducted in November 20th, 2013 to December 8th, 2013. Targeted Japanese students who studied in China (1 year program), mostly Waseda University students. Its motive was to investigate Chinese images changes that occurred before and after their studies. Also their thoughts on Japan, which is directly related to National Identity. This research paper was spread on the SNS site (facebook), and in the end there were 21 surveys that were collected and analyzed.

Research Hypothesis and the Results and Analysis

Hypothesis:

1. Japanese international students' image towards the Chinese would become negative compared to that of the images that they had before studying in China.
2. After studying in China, their sentiments towards Japan would become stronger.
3. Ones that chose 'do not advise going to China to study' would also have chosen 'National Identity Love and Sense of Belonging' but would not choose 'National Identity Exploration.'

As for the results:

1. Most of the Japanese students' answer after studying in China became positive.
2. Studying in China made the Japanese students to be in a minority group, which aroused their National Identity.
3. Although there were clear signs of National Identity, the author could not prove the ones who chose 'do not advise going to China to study' were also the ones who traced the pattern 3. (There were only 2 people who chose 'do not advise,' so it was difficult to analyze.)

Investigation of the Results/ 2 Hypotheses

1. 2 people who choose 'Do not advise going to China to study'= They could not adapt to China; Pattern 3

Although this result of the survey was difficult to connect to the identity aspect, but it indicates that according to Cultural Adjustment Diagram, it can be said that since this research targeted 1 year going abroad program, Japanese international students did not face the difficulty that they must have faced if the program was longer. In other words,

they did not go through the 移行期ショック・自己崩壊 period shown in the diagram. Thus majority of the Japanese international students answered positively to the question, “Do you advise your juniors to study in China?”

2. The question ‘Do not advise going to China to study’ has nothing to do with adaptation to China

(This hypothesis is according to one respondent.) The results of the 5/21 people who choose ‘Strongly advise going to China to study,’ their image change towards the Chinese after studying in China was bigger than that of the other 16 people. Moreover, their image towards the Chinese became negative or remained negative. So why do they still advise other people to study in China? The author thinks that this image ‘change’ is important. Whether this is a positive or negative change, this means that after they have experienced the real China, they became free from the images that were created by media. In other words, they became the true 「理解者」 of China.

The author thinks that Research Hypothesis 2 is more valid, so would also change the Thesis Hypothesis 2’s wording of pro-○○ into 「理解者」.

5. Japanese Specific Images towards China vice versa

To research this thesis’s hypothesis 2, the author analyzed specific images that Japanese people have towards China and vice versa.

1. Ratio of Negative Images

Japan: “Senkaku Island Disputes” 34.1%, “Air Pollution” 34%

Most of the images were negative ones. Their ratio seems to be low, but it is just dispersed.

China: “Diaoyu Island” 57.5%, “Nanjing Massacre” 50.3%

2 images mentioned above scored higher than 50%. Negative images inclined towards history aspects. Compared to Japan’s images, although the ratios are not that high, there were positive images such as ‘Sakura’ and ‘Fujisan’.

However, could not verify Thesis hypothesis 2, because from the author’s questionnaire and the previous studies show that both of the international students were able to change their images towards the host country, whether it is a positive or negative change.

6. Conclusion

Response to 2 Hypotheses

1. International Movement=International Exchange do lead to mutual understandings between countries, however there is also a negative effect as in revealing differences of one's mother country and the host country, lead to have a negative image towards the host country.

It can be said that according to the previous studies, “留日反日” phenomenon do happen, but it does not apply to every Chinese international students. For the Japanese international students, the questionnaire results do verify that after studying in China, their National Identity do exist. However, since the authors questionnaire was limited to 1 year studying abroad students, it was difficult to verify the hypothesis.

2. If one's mother country have a negative image towards the host country, it will be difficult for the International Mover to feel adapted to the host country.

Making it more difficult for the person to become true 「理解者」.

Could not verify.

According to the author's questionnaire, 'change' of images means that the studying abroad students experienced the real China. Whether this is a positive or negative change that took place, it can be said that they became the true 「理解者」 of the host country. Thus since the change also happened among the Chinese international students, the author believes that in order to achieve mutual understanding between Japan and China, it is important to increase the number of these 「理解者」. In conclusion, international movement, especially among the international students between Japan and China is very important as to improve the Japan-China's present day international relations.

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