

原 著

## English Language Education for Sustainable Development: Fostering Global Citizenship

Miki Tsukamoto

### <Abstract>

“Globalization” and “sustainability” are some of the most important concepts when we think about our modern world. Technologies have strengthened our ability to connect to the rest of the world and it is no longer possible to only focus on the local community to which we belong. There is more and more need for global human resources which can contribute to the development of the world. When we think about “development”, we should also think about “sustainability” at the same time. Otherwise, it is impossible for our world to continue to develop forever. To give students such a perspective, the concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) has been introduced into the school curriculum. In order to foster global citizenship and an attitude toward sustainable development, English language teaching is an important key. In this paper, English language education is discussed from the viewpoint of fostering global citizenship and education for sustainable development.

Keywords: CLT, EFL, EIL, ESD, global citizenship

### I. Introduction

The world where we live faces many problems which require global solutions. People and things move around more easily than ever before and we are connected to each other both physically and electronically. In such a world, people are expected to have a global perspective. More global human resources are expected, however, recently young people in Japan are said to be “domestically-oriented.” At the same time, English language education is expected to produce more competent speakers of English, but criticism of English language education in Japan is often heard.

become popular and from this term we can understand that it is required for us to make this world sustainable. When we think about “sustainability”, we need to have a global perspective. Learning a foreign language gives us a different way of thinking and when we use a foreign language, we can communicate with more people. So, a foreign language education contributes to fostering global citizenship and sustainable development.

This paper examines what global citizenship is and shows how important education is in fostering global citizenship. Then, it explains the concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), shows the history of ESD and how ESD is introduced into schools in Japan.

Recently, the term “sustainability” has

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Lecturer in the Department of English, Faculty of Humanities, Seinan Jo Gakuin University

Lastly, it explains English language education in terms of ESD.

## II. Fostering Global Citizenship

### 1. What is global citizenship?

The term “citizenship” refers to the position or status of being a citizen of a particular country and the term “global” means relating to the whole world (Oxford Dictionaries, 2002). When the term “citizenship” is combined with the term “global”, it refers to a person who places his/her identity with a “global community” rather than his/her nation or local area. Israel (2012) states that “a global citizen is someone who identifies with being part of an emerging world community and whose actions contribute to building this community’s values and practices” (p.79). The forces of modern information, communications and transportation technologies are facilitating some people to identify as global citizens (Israel, 2012). He also claims that the world’s community values include human rights, environmental protection, religious pluralism, gender equity, sustainable worldwide economic growth, poverty alleviation, prevention of conflicts between countries, elimination of weapons of mass destruction, humanitarian assistance, and preservation of cultural diversity. These values are critical to solve the big problems we have in the world. However, it could be said that the concept of global citizenship has just begun and it is necessary to bring this concept into education.

### 2. Needs for global human resources development

Globalization has spread in many areas, such as politics and economics in the world. The Committee of Academic-Industrial Alliance for Global Human Resources Development (2011) which was assembled by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and

Technology (MEXT) in Japan and the Committee for Global Human Resources Development (2012) which was assembled by the chief cabinet secretary of Japan announced strategies for global human resources development. “Globalization” is the situation in which many things should be treated globally because humans, goods, money, and information move rapidly across borders (Committee for Global Human Resources Development, 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to see things on a global scale, to cooperate with each and every people on the earth and to pursue global-level peace and happiness (Committee of Academic-Industrial Alliance for Global Human Resources Development, 2011). The Committee for Global Human Resources Development (2012) defines global human resources as people who have sufficient language competence, communicative competence, and cross-cultural experience, and can act internationally.

However, the number of Japanese students who study abroad and the number of young business people in Japan who are willing to work abroad are decreasing and it is said that this generation of young people in Japan are “domestically-oriented” (Committee of Academic-Industrial Alliance for Global Human Resources Development, 2011). Sanno University has conducted a survey on the global attitude of new employees once every three years since 2001. The most recent survey shows that new employees’ attitudes toward working abroad were polarized (Sanno University, 2013). The percentage of new employees who would like to work abroad was 27.0 in 2010, but it was 29.5 in 2013. At the same time, the percentage of new employees who would not like to work abroad was 49.0 in 2010, but it was 58.3 in 2013. Those who do not want to work abroad say it is because they do not have confidence in their foreign language ability.

To improve this situation, each stakeholder, such as educators at high schools and universities,

people directly related to companies, government officials, and parents, should take concrete action. As a nation, it is necessary to produce a positive growth cycle which could propel the young generation (Committee for Global Human Resources Development, 2012). The Committee for Global Human Resources Development (2012) announced their “Strategies for Global Human Resources Development” that show the concept of “global human resources” includes three elements: the first is foreign language ability and communicative competence, the second is independence, activeness, spirit of challenge, cooperativeness, flexibility, and responsibility, and the third is cross-cultural understanding and identity as a Japanese. As for foreign language ability, it presents five levels: (1) conversation for foreign travels, (2) conversation for daily life, (3) documents and conversation for business, (4) negotiation between two people, and (5) negotiation among more people. It states that the level of (1), (2) and (3) has been improving, but that of (4) and (5) needs to be continuously improved in order to produce a certain number of people who attain these levels.

### 3. Education for fostering global citizenship

Ban (2012), the secretary general of the United Nations, states that education is a major driving force for human development and announced the Global Education First Initiative. The Initiative focuses on three priorities: “putting every child in school”, “improving the quality of learning”, and “fostering global citizenship.” As for fostering global citizenship, he states education has the power to shape a sustainable future and better world, and education policies should promote peace, mutual respect, and environmental care (Ban, 2012).

In the United Kingdom, World Studies gained popularity in the 1970s and 1980s and some aspects of global citizenship were introduced into the school curriculum (Fisher &

Hicks, 1985). The Department for International Development of the United Kingdom (2005) released “Developing the Global Dimension in the School Curriculum” and refers to global citizenship as one of the key concepts in the school curriculum.

## III. Education for Sustainable Development

### 1. The history of ESD

Words like “sustainable” or “sustainability” are often seen recently. This might be because it is difficult for the world to continue developing as it is now and we should think about sustainability in order to ensure future development. The term, “sustainable development”, was first used officially in the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development at the United Nations General Assembly in 1987 (United Nations, 1987). This report emphasizes the need to conceptualize sustainable development that would “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations, 1987).

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which came to be known later as the “Earth Summit”, was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 to discuss the limited resources of the earth and equal development for all humankind (McKeown, 2002). The countries which attended this conference agreed to the Rio Declaration and adopted “Agenda 21”, an action plan of the United Nations with regard to sustainable development, in which initial thoughts concerning Education for Sustainable Development were captured. Agenda 21 viewed education as a crucial tool for achieving sustainable development.

UNESCO Bangkok defines Education for Sustainable Development as:

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a learning process (or approach to

teaching) based on the ideals and principles that underlie sustainability and is concerned with all levels and types of learning to provide quality education and foster sustainable human development – learning to know, learning to be, learning to live together, learning to do, and learning to transform oneself and society.

In 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development was held in Johannesburg, South Africa and revealed that there were many things to do in order to make the world sustainable, and education would play an important role in order to realize it (UNESCO Bangkok). In the same year, the United Nations declared 2005 to 2014 to be the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. Since then, UNESCO, other international organizations, civic organizations, and governments have conducted in educational fields various activities toward developing a sustainable society (Nagata, 2010).

## 2. ESD at schools in Japan

The Liaison Committee among Ministries on “United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development” (2006) shows “intergenerational equity”, “interzonal equity”, “equality between men and women”, “social generosity”, “poverty reduction”, “environmental conservation and recovery”, “natural resource conservation”, and “a fair and peaceful society” as the base for sustainability and states that it is necessary to deal with them in each school, as well as the whole of society.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) revised the guidelines for elementary schools and junior high schools in 2008 and those for high schools in 2009 and they include the concept of building a sustainable society. In the whole guidelines, however, the term, “sustainable development”, can be seen especially in the areas of “social studies” and “science” in junior high school and “world history”, “geography”, “modern society”,

“politics and economics”, “science”, “health and physical education”, and “domestic science” in senior high school.

## 3. ESD and global citizenship

Ishimori (2010) studied various areas of research on global citizenship and found some common key concepts: attitudes toward global issues, such as environmental problems, human rights and conflicts, the relationship between local issues and global issues, respect for and acceptance of diversity, and cultural differences. These concepts are related to the concepts of ESD.

While Education for International Understanding (EIU), which has been introduced into the policies of many countries, has a long history of more than half a century, ESD is a new concept which has just emerged. This has caused confusion especially in countries where EIU has been established as one of the key concepts in education (Nagata, 2012). APCEIU and UNESCO Bangkok (2006) published “Designing Training Programmers for EIU and ESD: A Trainer’s Guide” and specified EIU and ESD as areas which should be addressed quickly through education in order to deal with the social, economical, environmental, and cultural problems that the world faces. EIU and ESD are concepts which cover all the above problems (APCEIU & UNESCO, Bangkok, 2007). Everything is related to each other in this globalized world and problems should be solved from a global perspective because injustice or discrimination in one area will influence another area (APCEIU, 2008).

## IV. English Language Education for Sustainable Development

### 1. Fostering global citizenship through English classes

The Prime Minister’s Commission on Japan’s Goals in the 21st Century (2000) states

the Japanese should enhance global literacy in order to achieve world-class excellence. The knowledge of English as the international lingua franca is a key skill for knowing and accessing the world. To achieve this, it is necessary to set the objective of all citizens acquiring a working knowledge of English (The Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century, 2000).

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) (2003) developed "Regarding the Establishment of an Action Plan to Cultivate 'Japanese with English Abilities'" and this shows the concrete objective for all citizens to acquire knowledge of English. The Commission on the Development of Foreign Language Proficiency (2011) suggested "Five Proposals and Specific Measures for Developing Proficiency in English for International Communication" and the five proposals are: (1) English ability required of students — assessment and verification of attainment level, (2) Promoting students' awareness of the necessity of English in global society, and stimulating motivation for English learning, (3) Providing students with more opportunities to use English through effective utilization of ALTs, ICT, and other means, (4) Reinforcement of English skills and instruction abilities of English teachers, strategic improvement of English education at the level of schools and communities, and (5) Modification of university entrance exams toward a global society.

## 2. The new Course of Study

The Course of Study, educational guidelines for all schools in Japan, is revised about once every ten years and the main features of the latest version are to increase class hours in many subjects, including foreign languages, with an emphasis on balancing the attainment of knowledge and skill with thinking capacity and expressiveness.

"Foreign Language Activities" became compulsory for fifth and sixth grade students (MEXT, 2008) and all elementary students came to learn a foreign language at school. It is required to teach the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in an integrated way and to give more "language activities" in English classes in junior high schools (MEXT, 2008) and senior high schools (MEXT 2009). Senior high school teachers are encouraged to teach English through English in order to give students more exposure to the target language (MEXT 2009). It can be said that the new course of study puts more emphasis on enhancing communicative competence in English classes.

## 3. Communicative Language Teaching in Japan

English language education in Japan has been criticized because it has not produced many competent speakers of English, even though teachers have been required to enhance students' communicative competence since 1989 when the course of study for junior and senior high schools was revised. Nishino (2011) conducted research on Japanese high school teachers and found that many of them approved of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), but few of them implemented it in their lessons. Researchers state that introducing CLT into English as a foreign language (EFL) situations is difficult (Chick, 1996; Ellis, 1996; Li, 1998; Sano, Takahashi & Yoneyama, 1984; Shamin, 1996). CLT is a concept developed in western countries and is difficult to introduce into EFL settings (Li, 1998).

The author conducted a survey to investigate Japanese high school teachers' practices and beliefs regarding teaching English through English (Tsukamoto & Tsujioka, 2013). In "Oral Communication I", 12 out of 64 teachers (18.8%) used English most of the time in class and 18 teachers (28.1%) in more than half of the class. In "English I", none of 79 teachers (0.0%) used



English most of the time in class and 8 teachers (10.1%) used it in more than half of the class. These results are similar to those found by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) (2010). Six out of 94 teachers (6.3%) strongly approve of MEXT's policy of "teaching English through English" and 52 teachers (55.3%) somewhat agree with the policy. One out of 95 teachers (1.1%) strongly agrees that it is easy to conduct English classes in English in their school setting, 26 teachers (27.4%) somewhat agree, 51 teachers (53.7%) somewhat disagree and 17 teachers (17.9%) strongly disagree. Most of the teachers have not been taught English using communicative activities, so they are not accustomed to CLT. EFL countries should establish their own communicative approaches, which their teachers can easily introduce into their lessons (Daoud, 1996; Li, 1998; Nishino, 2011; Tomlinson, 1990).

#### 4. Teaching English as an international language or as a lingua franca

There has never been a time when a more urgent need for a global language existed because people have become more mobile, both physically and electronically (Crystal, 1997). McKay (2002) states the teaching and learning of an international language must be different from the teaching and learning of any other second or foreign language. She also states, "To be considered an international language, a language cannot be linked to any one country or culture; rather it must belong to those who use it" and advocates teaching English as an international language (EIL) (McKay, 2002). EIL should be taught in a way that respects the local culture of learning, and there are two reasons for this: one is that the local culture can help learners understand their identity, and the other is that teachers are not placed in the difficult position of trying to teach someone else's culture when they use the local culture in their lessons (McKay, 2002). If students gain a

deeper understanding of their culture, they can share it with people who come from a different culture when they use EIL. The concept of thinking globally but acting locally is relevant to the teaching of EIL.

Jenkins (2007) regards English as a lingua franca and states that ELF is different from both ESL and EFL and also states that teachers should: "use action research and their own judgment to replace traditional NS targets with the NNS-NNS criterion". McKay (2002) adds, "teachers must be given the right and the responsibility to employ methods that are culturally sensitive and productive". Teachers are expected to employ a teaching method which is relevant to their local situation.

#### V. Conclusion

In order to accommodate the increased demand for producing competent speakers of English, it is necessary to rethink English language education in Japan. To foster global citizenship, it is required to teach the knowledge of English as lingua franca and enhance the students' communicative competence (The Prime Minister's Commission on Japan's Goals in the 21st Century, 2000).

ELF does not belong only to native speakers of English, but also to those who use it, and it is free from any certain culture (McKay, 2002). So, local teachers, especially bilingual teachers who speak both English and their local language, will play an important role in developing their own teaching style which is relevant to their context.

The new course of study has just been revised and teachers are trying to find better ways of teaching in each school. Further study will be necessary in order to find the way of teaching English as a lingua franca in Japan and what kind of English can be a model for teachers and students so that English language

education can contribute to fostering global citizens and ESD.

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## 持続可能な発展のための英語教育 ーグローバル市民意識を育てるためにー

塚本 美紀

### <要 旨>

現代社会について考える時、「グローバリゼーション」と「持続可能性」は最も大切な概念の一つだ。技術によって我々が世界とより繋がりやすくなり、我々が所属しているコミュニティにだけ注目することは許されない。世界の発展に貢献できるグローバル人材への要求はますます高まっている。「発展」について考える時、我々は同時に「持続可能性」についても考えるべきである。そうでなければ、我々の世界が永遠に発展することが不可能になってしまう。そのような視点を生徒に与えるため、持続発展教育（ESD）という概念が教育課程に導入されている。グローバル市民を育成し、持続可能な発展についての態度を育成するために、英語教育は大切な鍵を握っている。本稿では、グローバル市民意識と持続発展教育の観点から英語教育について論ずる。

キーワード：CLT, EFL, EIL, ESD, グローバル市民意識