

THE "I" IN...



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A Correct Typo

When we entered ICU, we had the image of the school being truly "International". However, when we actually got into ICU, it was not as international as we expected it to be, which brought us to the question of...

"WHERE is the 'I' in ICU?"

Based on the dictionary definition of "International", the ICU student body does contain people from more than one nation, with multi-cultural backgrounds. At a glance, ICU looks international with the OYRs from various countries, and by the existence of english courses offered by the school.

ICU also emphasizes on its internationalism by giving the students a chance to study abroad. However, if we compare to the systems of the other universities, ICU may not be very much different from them.

Let's see where the "I" in ICU is.

"Where is the 'I' in ICU?" is generated by Hiroataka Kurosu (071219), Sereeroj Jayaphorn (081709) Sayako Suetsugu (081738) and Asami Nonaka (081718) as the final project of CL103: Intercultural Communication and Relations, a course of the International Studies division at International Christian University. Copyright 2004 International Christian University, Tokyo Japan. All Rights Reserved.

The "I" in ELP

Almost all of the freshman students who entered ICU in April, called "April" in ICU, are suffering English leaning class, ELP. ELP is most foundation class for freshman April students. And ELP is famous because of its study system, such as English speaking policy, or lots of discussion etc. Therefore, many new April students are looking forward to study English in ELP, such a good environment to study English. And they expected ELP would be "international". However, after they experiences actual ELP class, some students were often disappointed about that class because ELP is not so international as they expected. In this section, we will analyze the reasons for that and where is "I" in ELP class.

The meaning of "International" in dictionary

Dictionary says that the meaning of "International" is the situation that some states or citizens are related with each other. From this aspect of "International", we can say that ELP is "international". That is because Japanese students study English, a language of different countries. Addition to this, many teachers are non-Japanese. This means the relation between teachers and students are "international". However, if we focus on students themselves, they are not international because they are all Japanese.

Environment of class

How about the class environment? It seems "international". One reason is because we use desk-chairs which are popular in Western countries. Desk-chairs cannot be found in Japanese high school.

Language

Also, if we focus on the language, it is "international" because Japanese students must use English which is not their mother language in the class. However, even if we use English in the class, the discussion is not so "international" because students' English is not so fluent. Many students image international class as active English discussion between students from various countries.

When we are asked what international classes are, we would answer as various international students study together and English are used ordinarily. Therefore, new April students might have same images for ELP. However, actually it is full of Japanese students and very slow English, sometimes even teachers are Japanese. Some new April students would be surprised at ELP because it is different from their image of "international". Meanwhile there are factors to be "international" in ELP too. For example, to use English, class environment, discussions, etc. if we compare with English classes of other universities, ELP looks so "international" because such classes often have few reading, no discussion. Also, we might be able to think that "international" is not just as

dictionary says. For example, even if our teacher is Japanese, he or she has various cultural backgrounds. Students have also different cultural and national backgrounds. Therefore if we grasp ?gInternational?h more widely, it seems that ELP can say ?gInternational.?h

The "I" in JLP

Mostly all of the September students, One Year Regular (OYR) students, and transfer students are required to take the Japanese Language Program (JLP) during their first year at ICU. The JLP program, specifically conducted for the students who enter in September, also is contained in a wide range of levels, same with the ELP program. Students who enter ICU, in the bigger picture, all have the same goal, which is to maintain and enrich their skills as a bilingual. Therefore, the JLP program is an essential step to reach that goal. Even so, are the JLP courses considered ?ginternational?h? This page is a focus on if the JLP programs are international.

What we consider to be ?gInternational?h

Everyone has a different opinion of what ?ginternational?h is considered to be. So, as a starting point, our group looked up the word ?ginternational?h on the dictionary. On the dictionary, "international" means; different states, as well as the citizens of different states, are having a relation with one another.

The Class Environment

From the dictionary definition, the JLP program (especially the beginning levels) is definitely international. Students from different countries sitting in the same class room, working together and learning from each other. However, the ?gSpecial Japanese?h classes for example, will not be ?ginternational?h because most of the students are Japanese. Even if the students are Japanese nationality wise, they have different backgrounds, lived in different places, so aside from the dictionary definition, they are ?ginternational?h as well.

Since I wanted to get more opinions of what others thought about the JLP courses, I conducted a discussion about the ?ginternationalism?fs in class?h with a group of friends who all take JLP. Many of them thought that the classes weren?ft international for them, especially because they aren?ft learning a completely ?gnew?h language. This is because they are all enrolled in one of the ?gSpecial Japanese?h leveled classes, however they all did agree that the beginning levels of JLP (such as Intensive Japanese) is international because people are learning a completely new language. Even so, one of the JLP instructors, Ozawa-sensei commented that the upper levels of JLP classes are international as well. These students who are enrolled in these upper levels of JLP have completely different backgrounds; they could have come from other American or International schools. Therefore, the atmosphere naturally becomes ?ginternational?h since everyone is a mixture of different cultures and languages (of course, this is true for students who are in the Intensive Japanese classes as well).

What many people call the "international" students; know that "internationalism" is a difficult thing to capture in the mind. It is not something that can be thought of, but is something that is live by. Even if it is a relation between people who are from the same nationality, they have different backgrounds, and their own history. Therefore, I can conclude that all of the JLP courses contain their own "international-ness."

The "I" in General Education

ICU is a liberal arts college, and the General Education program fulfills this mission. Students are required to take courses from different categories each term. Categories include: Introduction to Christianity, Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, and College-wide Programs which covers contemporary topics.

?gWhat is international about GE courses in general??h

According to the 2005 edition of the Outlines of General Education Courses, 10-15% of the G.E courses at ICU are conducted in English. This encourages those who are not fluent in Japanese to enroll in the course with students enrolled in April.

?gWhat is international about the environment of the G.E classes??h

Because many of the courses offered in the G.E programs are conducted in English, this gives the strongest essence to the internationality of the environment. English is the common language spoken at ICU, and hence, makes G.E courses open to all students. G.E courses address variety of topics, and thus broaden the students?f international perspective and understanding.

The courses students thought was the most international

Majority of the students indicate that ?gLanguage and Cultures of the World?h conducted by Professor Hirose, Professor Koto, Professor Bedell, and staff, is the course that had the strongest international flavor of all. They were satisfied with how the class took up on languages every class and were taught about its culture. Some other courses that were mentioned were ?gInternational Perspective on Education?h conducted by Professor Langager, which addresses international issues, and ?gThinking about Language in East and West?h conducted by Professor Bedell. In the case of the latter, the context of the course does not focus on internationalism, but students point out that it is international in the sense that Professor Bedell conducts the in English the field he has specialized in.

The "I" in ICU at a Glance

The term "international" simply means an interaction involving more than one nation. In this day and age virtually everything is "international" whether it is school, company or even a small kiosk on the corner your street can be considered as international if it has product produced overseas in its inventory. So if the term "international" can be use to describe any minor thing that involves more than one nation, what makes the "I" in ICU different from a mere international interaction with other educational institutions? If no, then is it greater than other universities in the world, or even in Japan where ICU is known for being international? Does ICU really deserve the "I" in their name? In this section we are going explore ICU on its surface, its students, its faculties and its courses, to see in which areas does ICU truly standouts as international, and where it is not quite that international in comparison to others.

The Students

ICU's student bodies are made up of three types of students; April Students, September Students and One Year Regular Students. According to the "ICU Fact Book", as of April 2003 the ICU student body is composed of 96.3% Japanese and 3.7% non-Japanese.

April Students are the students who entered ICU through entrance exam; contribute up to roughly 95% of ICU entire student body. Typically these are students who attended Japanese high schools before ICU. From my own estimation the number of non-Japanese who belong in this category is less than 0.1%.

September Students are the students who enrolled for four years in ICU through their high school transcripts. Generally, September students are those who graduated from a non-Japanese high school. They are the smallest number of student types which contribute to no more than 3% of the student body of the entire College of Liberal Art. Moreover, most of the students in this category are returnees or Japanese who were overseas, and the number of non-Japanese in this group of student is approximately 10%.

OYRs are exchange students from universities overseas who will only attend ICU for a year. There are roughly 100 of them and almost all are non-Japanese.

Criticism

Due to the present of students from more than one nationality in ICU, ICU could be qualified as international. However at this day and age there are virtually no major universities on the globe which has a homogenous student body. So what makes ICU more international than any other universities?

Each year no more than 20 non-Japanese students graduate from ICU and non-exchange international students totaled up to less than 50 or approximately 1.5% of ICU entire student body. On the other hand other Japanese university such as Waseda has roughly 1400 non-exchange international students which are approximately 2.8% of its entire student body. According to the chart representing the top ten universities in terms of the number of International students in Japan, all the universities on the list has a greater international student population than ICU.

Moreover, though OYRs may seem like a factor that makes ICU international but which university does not have OYRs? Though other universities might not refer to them as OYRs but instead as ?gexchange students?h, all other major universities in Japan have OYRs. One reason that ICU has OYRs is because many ICU students become OYRs in other universities oversea, hence OYRs is not exactly an ICU exclusive thing. So when ICU is looked at in terms the composition of the student body, ICU is no more International than other major Japanese universities.

Top10 Universities in Terms of the No. of International Students in Japan

(as of May 2002)

National Universities			Private Universities	
1	Tokyo	2,000	Josai International	1,371
2	Kyoto	1,175	Waseda	1,368
3	Nagoya	1,130	Ritsumeikan Asia-Pacific	1,120
4	Tsukuba	1,041	Takushoku	946
5	Osaka	964	Nihon	909
6	Tohoku	956	Ryutsu Keizai	679
7	Kyushu	940	Tokyo Kokusai	666
8	Tokyo Institute of Technology	803	Osaka Sangyo	665
9	Kobe	797	Meikai	646
10	Hiroshima	763	Chuo	599

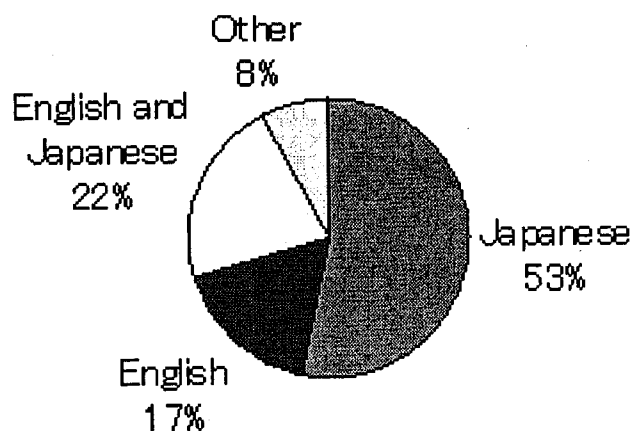
The Faculty

According to the ?glCU Fact Book?h, ICU?fs faculty body composed of 68.9% Japanese faculty and 31.1% non-Japanese. Compare to other universities in Japan or any other universities in the world for that matter, ICU has quite a high percentage of foreign faculty. Hence it is fair to say that ICU is relatively international institution when it comes to its staff body.

Courses

According to the course offering 2005-2006, in the Spring Term of 2005 ICU offers 291 courses for the College of Liberal Art (excluding PE). Out of all courses, 155 courses are in Japanese, 50 in English, 63 are in both English and Japanese, and 23 are in languages other than English or Japanese. When calculated, the courses in ICU which involve other languages other than Japanese is approximately half of all the courses offered. That is a very high percentage compare to most Japanese universities where the only courses that are conducted in foreign languages are language courses, hence in its course offering is where ICU truly stands out as International.

Pie Chart Showing the Distribution of Courses Offered in ICU for Spring 2005 by the Languages that the Courses are Conducted in:



APPENDIX G:

POTENTIAL

ICU WEBSITE

Orientation to ICU

- Tips for Prospective Students
- Your First Day In ICU (Website-Takeshi Odaira)
<http://www.geocities.jp/i071329/ICL103grp2website/index.html>
- Transportation
- How to Visit a Professor's Office
- How to Survive ELP
- About JLP
- Hidden Opportunities (Website-Mari Aoyagi)
<http://www.geocities.jp/long4iccgr19/solution.html>
- How to Enjoy Interaction in a Circle
- Dorm Initiations – Pandora's Box
- Apartment Living
- Part Time Jobs at ICU (Website-Ayumi Goto)
n071050@yamata.icu.ac.jp
- Isakaya Rules
- Japanese New Year

Analysis

- Finding the "I" in ICU (Website – Hirotake Kurosu)
http://geocities.com/i_in_icu/index3.html
- Internationalism at ICU
- International Communication Among April, September & OYR Students at ICU from a Critical Perspective
- How Bilingual is ICU?
- The Way We Get Along*

Improvements At ICU

- An ELP/JLP Joint Class
- ICU's New, Improved Tutor System
- A Proposal to Improve the Current Situation of Exempted Students-The @home Project
- Bakayama as a Place of International Communication
- Shin-D Lounge as a Communication Facilitator – Setting an International Café in the Shin-D Lounge
- Towards the Establishment of an International Café (this group consulted with George Yu)
- Sports as Part of the Curriculum to Improve Intercultural Interaction (Website-Hironae Fujimura)
<http://www.geocities.jp/sportsproject4/>

* REPORT INCLUDED

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