Improving International Relations at the Grass Roots: Japanese Student Attitudes to Japanese - Korean relations

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ABSTRACT
In late 2012, when international relations had deteriorated in NE Asia, 295 Japanese students at ten universities were surveyed. In response to various questions about the region, opinions varied in five arenas: travel, foreign language, history, current affairs and popular culture. Over 100 raised questions themselves, wanting to learn more about Korea, Japan or the relationship. We make two suggestions, as additions to existing education programs, to deepen Korean-Japanese mutual understanding.

KEYWORDS: Japan, Korea, Student Attitudes, Citizen Diplomacy, Populism

JEL CLASSIFICATION: I21, Z10

1. INTRODUCTION
As 2012 was coming to an end, significant international tensions flared involving all the nations in NE Asia. Conflicts over the control of islands between China and Japan and between Japan and South Korea, tensions over North Korea’s plans to launch a missile, and initiatives by Chinese military forces to establish control over territories off their southern coast made the entire Western Pacific a volatile region. While none of these tensions was arising for the first time, by late 2012 they had all heated up simultaneously. Media coverage one place or another appeared almost every day, while sizable citizen demonstrations in the streets in China and Korea made it clear that these were disputes well-endowed with populist energies, energies which could make them harder to control peacefully (Meyer-Knapp 2011).

It was in this context that we conducted the research reported here. Interested in how these tensions might be manifest in student attitudes, we surveyed nearly 300 students at a number of different Japanese universities about their knowledge of history, language, popular culture, and current international conflicts. They also told us in more detail, in both structured and open-ended questions, what they thought about relations between Japan and Korea. Well over 150 questions or marked comments from respondents showed that these students wanted to learn more. From the specific remarks in these surveys, we have developed proposals for innovative approaches to “citizen diplomacy,” making current a 1980s action program which played a useful role in defusing some of the everyday tensions in the Soviet/American Cold War. From the vantage point of this strategy, it is clear that there are important roles for individuals and NGOs in foreign relations, a world which often appears to be the exclusive domain of government professionals and military leaders.

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1 Active populism was on display both before and after our surveys were conducted. August and September 2012 saw intense anti-Japanese protests in China (Jiji News Service 2012, China Anti-Japanese Protests (2012)), while in early 2013 Korean anti-Japanese protestors were once again in the news (Yonhap 2013, Choe 2013).
2. METHODS

2.1 The Surveys

The surveys were distributed (in Japanese) and collected in November and early December 2012 at ten different universities, all but one in the Osaka/Kobe region of Japan. In all, there were 295 respondents, only 26 of whom were older than the classic undergraduate, 18 - 22. While most respondents came from Hyogo, Osaka, Nara or Kyoto prefectures, other regions of origin covered a much wider area of Japan, and ten came from other countries, mostly China. The surveys were distributed at the beginning of classes, introduced by the professor teaching the class. It was emphasized that their answers were confidential, and indeed, there was no way to identify the respondent from the questionnaire itself. It was further emphasized that this was not an academic “test” of their knowledge, although the rate of response, at 80% was higher in the “opinion” sections of the survey than in the “factual” sections. A few respondents avoided answering all or most of the factual questions and some wrote answers they then erased or crossed out, even for factual questions about Japan. The overall response rate to the factual questions about historical events and recent relations between Japan and Korea and between Japan and China was about 60%.

The questionnaire consisted of five sections: the first on travel experiences and on language proficiencies and interests; the second on likes, dislikes and knowledge of popular culture; the third on their knowledge and classes where they studied about Japan-China-Korea relations; the fourth, based on maps, covered knowledge of current island disputes from the Japanese perspective and from that of the other countries. The last section was an open-ended invitation to mention what interested them in relations between Japan and Korea. The rationale behind the design was two-fold: (1) to understand how well-informed these students were on basic facts of history and current affairs, and on a few elements of popular culture and sport both in Japan and in neighboring countries and (2) to determine both from structured and unstructured questions whether, and in what arenas, Japanese students’ attitudes to Korea were diﬀident or hostile or curious. From both the factual and attitudinal answers, we were intending to develop strategies to enable some Japanese students to contribute more actively to peace in NE Asia.

The survey sites were chosen for convenience and in no way can be seen as representative of Japanese college students more generally. Specifically, the responses to questions on language skills and interests must be considered in light of the fact that we chose to distribute a significant percentage of these surveys in classes taught in English, or taught by English language specialists. The numerical data presented here is preliminary, and includes nothing beyond frequency counts. We have not completed more detailed analysis of the relationship between the various questions. Even when that work is done, the results will still be purely descriptive of these particular groups of students. One cannot draw inferences from them to Japanese students in general. The innovations suggested in the discussion and conclusion must be evaluated with these limitations in mind.

2.2 School Field Trips

In addition to surveys, we conducted a brief review of the norms and the current state of school field trips. Some Japanese high schools go overseas on these trips and Korea has been a popular

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2 We are including all of the respondents in the analysis including the ten non-Japanese college students and the 26 who are older than conventional aged students.

3 Questions referring to relations between China and Korea or SE Asian nations but did not include Japanese history or culture received minimal response. These Japanese students seemed to be focused virtually entirely on matters Japanese, ignoring tensions which could have serious consequences for Japan, even if their homeland is not a major actor in either the history or current disputes. This topic will be developed further in another paper in which it will also be possible to examine the relationship among answers to the different questions.

4 A copy of the questionnaire is available from Prof. Helena Meyer-Knapp: meyerknh@evergreen.edu. Because of a printing error one group of over 50 respondents did not answer the questions on the islands.
destination country. In 2010, 141 high schools went to Korea, 77 public schools and 64 private schools, with 18,336 students in total.\(^5\) This amounts to 14% of the total overseas trips. The length of stay was mostly 4-6 days. (Educational Tour Institute, 2011). According to handouts from two major Kobe area travel agents, suggested places for visits in Korea fall into four categories.

a) **Traditional cultural study (palaces, museums and other buildings):**
   Gyeongbokgung Palace, Changdeokgung Palace, National Folk Museum, Namdaemun Gate, Korea House (Korean traditional dance and culture, pottery, Taekwondo, etc.).

b) **Modern city culture/ Entertainment:**
   Seoul Tower, Lotte World (a shopping and entertainment complex), NANTA Theatre (non-verbal comedy performance), Myeongdong (Shopping area), Dongdaemun market.

c) **Peace related study:**
   Seoul War Memorial and Museum, Seodaemun Prison History Hall, Panmunjeom Tour (DMZ area), Odusan-tonglichonmangdae/Odusan North-South Unification Observatory.

d) **School visit / Student exchange activity:**
   Students’ dance/music performance, sports, city tour in small group with Korean students, exchange with Korean university students studying Japanese. (These are arranged by the tour company.)

3. **FINDINGS**

3.1 **The Wider Context**

In three sections of the survey, the first about language and travel, the second about popular culture and the fourth about the islands under dispute across the Western Pacific, we learned about student skills, knowledge, and experience of other countries in the region. From both the travel and the language section, it is clear that English speaking is by far the most highly prized skill, and the single greatest arena for further ambitions. English learners comprised virtually everyone in the group. Chinese learners were half that number and Korean half again (84 out of 295).\(^6\) More striking were the numbers about wanting to learn more: 65% of English learners wanted more English, 15% wanted more Chinese while only 11% of the Korean learners wanted to know more Korean.\(^7\) In the popular culture section, they were asked to choose likes/dislikes and ‘wants to know more or not’. To the questions comparing their interest in Samsung smart phones vs. i-phone smart phones, the i-phone received more responses indicating further interest in knowing more, double the further interest in any other element of popular culture, even J-Pop and Miyazaki anime. Alongside these indicators about interests are three salient facts: Korea was the most visited among the ten destinations we listed, K-pop was attractive to nearly half of the students, and among disputed islands, the respondents were much more likely to know the Korean name Dokto (for the island they call Takeshima) than they were to know either the Chinese or Russian names for disputed territories. Despite these facts, it is clear that contact and familiarity have not combined to make Korea as interesting as either the English speaking or the Chinese speaking worlds.

The data revealed two other important elements of the wider context. With respect to the island disputes, almost half the students could give the Japanese name for each of the three main disputed island groups: Senkaku, Takeshima, and the Northern Territories/Hoppo Ryodo. Sadly, their knowledge did not extend to being able to give the name for the islands as seen by the other sides. The most startling discrepancy here was with Russia. Only a handful even tried to answer that question, and not one of the students from Japan had visited the country. While the Japanese sense of

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5 That year, Korea was the most popular destination and Australia was the second most popular.
6 This reflects the reality that many fewer Japanese universities teach Korean language than teach Chinese.
7 It is widely acknowledged that young Japanese looking for a job in the 21st century are all required to demonstrate significant English competence, almost regardless of the job description.
proprietorship seems to be equally strong with respect to all three island groups, the distance from the Russian perspective is startlingly large. And the distance from other Pacific region disputes not involving the Japanese was just as great. Only students native to the affected countries even tried to name the islands in dispute between China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia. With the exception of a few comments about the Korean War, this psychological distance was evident yet again in the students’ relative silence about any history in the relationship between China and Korea. While there is much in the responses to this survey which suggests that these students cared, and often cared deeply about relationships which involved Japan intimately, in those arenas where the relationship is small, their interest seemed non-existent.

3.2 Japan and Korea

We designed this project to supply detailed information about the relationship between Japan and Korea. The open-ended opinion questions at the end of the survey, which were addressed by 80% of the respondents, were exclusively focused on that relationship.

a) Pop Culture

All the questions in the popular culture section connected to Korean issues, either directly or comparatively. Japan has a long held fascination with Korean television soap opera-style dramas (such as ‘Winter Sonata’), and in recent years with K-pop as well as young Korean singers, particularly groups, which have experienced wave after wave of success. We were interested in seeing whether attitudes would show much less support for Korean icons than for Japanese ones. We included both dramas and K-pop in the survey, expecting that the dramas would be less popular because their intended audience is older. We also included, “Gangnam Style,” a Korean rap which happened to be a huge global hit song current at the very moment the survey was being distributed. Nearly 80% of the respondents told us they liked J-pop but only about 30% (all pop music fans) liked K-pop and only about 12% liked the Gangnam-style song. We were correct that most students were not interested in the TV dramas. (They are, of course, in class or at work during the key broadcast times.) Korean ice skater Kim Yuna was relatively less popular than her Japanese rival Mao Asada. Half the students “liked” the 2010 World Cup (a neutral event), but only 122 were interested in joint World Cup sponsorship in 2002 and even fewer were pleased by the 2012 Olympics soccer medal ceremony, an event at which a Korean player expressed political hostility to Japan.

In the open-ended questions it was clear that interest in pop culture and everyday life was quite widely distributed -- K-pop surfaced again, as well as music more generally, along with TV dramas and celebrities including specific actors and bands. Some made extended comments about popular culture’s influence on the tenor of the international relationship: “In Japan, K-pop is popular. In Korea is J-pop popular?” “Many people [in Japan] don’t accept Koreans but K-pop is popular in Japan.” The students recognize that there is “influence of subcultures (dramas, songs, make up, fashion etc.).” This last student had visited Korea, and a number of those who had done so continued to express particular interest in local customs like food, beauty, fashion, and even cosmetic surgery. But the popular culture connection was not uncontroversial. One student commented: “Why do the Korean media aggressively promote the Hanryu style music, Korean movies etc.? The media in Japan, the mainstream news and particularly digital sources, also report signs of negative responses to the pervasiveness of Korean popular culture. During the autumn of 2011, the Japan Times, the main source of news for English language speakers in Japan, noted that: “On Aug. 7, several hundred people marched outside of the headquarters of Fuji Television Network Inc. in Tokyo’s

8 Almost all will have been too young to appreciate the international relations issues in 2002, though they could well have wondered in 2010 what the implications were.

9 Furthermore, given the distribution of responses among different groups it was clear that in one community of students the politics at the medal ceremony was a quite widely shared topic of concern. In other groups, anything to do with soccer was desirable. In Japan, soccer appreciation is not a gendered activity. Indeed the person most explicit about following a particular star was female.
Odaiba district, complaining that Fuji TV was betraying its country and should broadcast more Japanese dramas. About 5,000 people rallied against South Korean dramas and music at a second protest on Aug. 21.” (Takaku, 2011). Just as our survey was being distributed, NHK, the national broadcaster in Japan, announced it would not be inviting any Korean artists to appear on the annual New Year’s Eve Kohaku broadcast in contrast to having included the most popular groups the year before. (Kyodo 2012a). Among our Japanese students, there was interest in today’s Korean culture, but the survey confirmed that it remained a challenge for the respondents to visualize how to transform that interest into a positive international relationship.

b) Territorial Tensions
A preponderance of respondents was clearly aware of and often concerned about territorial tensions between the two countries. The Takeshima (just occasionally also described as Dokto) “problem” was mentioned one place or another in 66 of the surveys. A few of the respondents spelled out specifics: “about Takeshima. The issue has not appeared in the International Court of Justice,” and “Territory issue is a difficult problem, but I want to get along with them because Korea is a nearby country” and “with regard to the Takeshima issue there seems to be a gap in awareness between the Japanese and the Koreans. Although I don’t take the Takeshima issue so seriously, the whole of Korea seems to consider it a very serious problem.” Most students were much less detailed, usually using just the word mondai which refers loosely (according to the Breen dictionary) to “(1) question (e.g. on a test); problem; (2) problem (e.g. societal, political); question; issue; subject (e.g. of research); case; matter; (3) question (i.e. doubt); (4) public discussion; controversy; (5) trouble; problem; inconvenience; difficulty.” (WWWJDIC)

c) Relations between the Two Nationalities
Indeed, one of the clear distinctions in this survey was between the students whose answers were general, brief, and therefore ambiguous and those who spelled out a detailed point of view. Almost no one gave details in the history sections, but the opinion section at the end was more diverse, ranging from single word answers to detailed and impassioned comments. Significant numbers of respondents to these surveys were wondering about what Koreans and Japanese people really think about each other. Some even pointed with irritation to the media, arguing that the media inflame conflicts which would not otherwise exist between ordinary Japanese and Koreans. It is noticeable how little most Japanese students revealed about what they think at the very moment that they were wondering what Koreans really think. Furthermore those questions were posed alongside equally vague comments/concerns about differences in “national characteristics,” “national culture,” and “national common values.” It seems reasonable to assume that some of the “thinking about” which concerns the students falls into the national characteristics arena. Since a comment by one student that “Japanese and Koreans look like each other but they are totally different. Japanese are reserved, Koreans are bold,” appears to hold true more widely (Kono and Hara 2011), any attempt to carry out a direct discussion about national characteristics would have to be carefully facilitated so as to foster friendship rather than prejudice. Our suggestions at the end of the paper are guided by this assumption.

d) History
History was clearly seen as a powerful factor in the relationship between Japan and Korea. A significant group of students identified Hideyoshi’s invasion in the 1590s and/or the period of Japanese rule in Korea in the 20th century as important elements in the relationship between the two countries. Twenty-five mentioned Hideyoshi explicitly, and others mentioned the battle at Baekgang-gu or other events. That is likely a much, much smaller percentage than the equivalent number would be on a survey of Korean students -- the recent NHK/KBS survey explicitly finds that while Japanese people can identify celebrities and politicians from Korea, Koreans are more likely to name athletes and historical figures from Japan (Kono and Hara 2011) -- but these Japanese recognized

10 For readers interested in up-to-date information about differences and similarities between Koreans and Japanese and what they think about each other, NHK and KBS have completed their third decennial survey (Kono and Hara 2011).
Hideyoshi as carrying out assault and violence. Describing the Japanese power over Korean life in the twentieth century, language became ambiguous in just the way Koreans often find disturbing. 42 respondents used the term *heigogo* (indicating annexation or integration) while only 26 used a term indicating colonization *shokuminchika*. The first of these two terms which is the formal, conventional language applied to that period, can seem to a third party to evade the oppressive overtones in the term colonization. In this survey, it was the respondents who used the word colonization were most likely to be specific about the consequences of the Japanese policies in Korea: “Colonization, such as the policy of forcing Japanese customs, culture etc.,” and “Japanese colonization of Korea. Forcing culture and building infrastructure” and “Invasion and colonization of Korea. Assassination of Japanese leader of Korea.” Meetings across these two cultures will have to deal carefully with intricate questions of language and usage.

If the Japanese rule in Korea still creates significant distance between Japanese and Koreans, even more so does the issue of “comfort women”.11 A dozen respondents to the survey mentioned the issue, all but one leaving it unexplained.12 Many of the students concerned about comfort women also explicitly mentioned being concerned about whether Koreans carried “anti-Japanese feelings.” Meanwhile in Japan, in the immediate aftermath of the 2012 elections, the new Prime Minister Shinzo Abe “and his conservative government [announced they] may revise Japan’s 1993 apology for forcing thousands of women to be sex slaves in the service of Japanese soldiers during World War II.” (New York Times 2012). A contentious issue finally brought into full view in the 1980s, and “settled” in the 1990s, keeps reawakening. Making relations more peaceful in NE Asia seems vulnerable again to the reemergence of conflicts once thought to have been resolved.

4. DISCUSSION

A considerable number of respondents to the survey found ways to say that they wanted to learn more about Korea but were not sure it was possible to do so in a constructive way. Some were concerned about economic rivalries that could potentially impede contact. Others were concerned that Korean history education, or politics or media reports were fostering a nebulous problem: anti-Japanese feelings and barriers to contact. There was not one respondent who described history, current relations, or their opinions about Korea without mentioning hostilities or conflicts. Furthermore, a noticeable number of respondents seemed generally pessimistic about Japanese and Korean economic connections even though each country ranks very high in the other’s trade relationships. Rivalries in appliance industries, competitive relationships in sports, the power of Korean companies like Samsung were each mentioned by students, along with concern about the fairness of Korean economic policies. The challenges in building successful strategies for citizen diplomacy are real, and yet it is important to note that among nearly 300 respondents only two could be described as hostile. Acknowledging that these are not “representative” of the Japanese student population, it remains the case that two out of 295 means less than 1% of the respondents were utterly opposed to improved relations.

Our respondents like many teachers and students before them mentioned history education as a likely impediment to improved relations, and the track record of the Japan/Korea history collaborative research commission gives strong support to their suspicions. Despite years of work, the commission in 2010 reported that it had failed to develop a shared narrative about events except

11 This euphemism seems to disguise the experience of the Korean and other women coerced into prostitution by the Japanese officials during The War -- the events of 1931-45 which have a different name in virtually every country in Asia.

12 His (a strong but isolated opinion) exemplified nonetheless the tangles within tangles of trying to develop peaceful relations between Japan and Korea: “comfort women (prostitution was not compulsory) -- they erected a statue even in the States. I wonder if they feel shame when they scrounge money by exposing the dishonor of their country.” When he refers to “dishonor”, he refers to the very factor that prevented these women from receiving even a modicum of support for their claims from the Korean government for decades after the collapse of Japanese power in Korea. Even now, in Korea itself older people sometimes resist continuing pressure for compensation, believing the women to have shamed Korea by their actions.
in the ancient period. (Japan Korea Collaborative History Research Committee) The surveys did not comment on the value of school field trips, about which we collected only basic information. Prior research by Meyer-Knapp (Meyer-Knapp 2006-10) suggests that in general such travel makes students value their homeland more than it builds appreciation for other countries. Furthermore, field trips, like new editions of history textbooks have proven vulnerable to political and other domestic upheavals. The Fukushima disaster of 2011 saw school field trips into Japan canceled by the hundreds, and in the last year Japanese schools, alarmed by demonstrations and political conflict, have been canceling trips to both Korea and China. In other words, two standard educational strategies for improving relationships, classes and educational travel -- have some weaknesses, as well as strengths, as sources for improved relations between young people in Japan and Korea.

The conclusion summarizes the results and highlights the significance of the study focusing on the need to address and analyze the important issues involved.

5. SOCIAL INNOVATION: Reimagining Citizen Diplomacy for the 21st Century in a Triad of Sister Cities

Our two suggestions, developed in light of more than 150 student comments in search of more knowledge, would see Japanese and Korean young people taking on the role of Citizen Diplomat, doing work themselves that builds understanding and connection. Further, we suggest that they do so facilitated by existing Sister City relationships in Japan, in Korea and in English speaking countries as well.13 The idea of the “sister city,” so well established now in Japan, gave a significant boost to improved Soviet/American relations in the 1980’s. These days the number of sister city relations between Korea and Japan is rapidly growing. In 2011, there were about 140 sister city connections among local governments (prefectures, cities, towns, and districts.) (CLAIR Seoul 2012). We suggest shifting from diadic sister connections to triads, for example getting people from Kobe and Incheon (which are paired) connected also with Seattle, or Brisbane, Australia, both of which are sister cities of Kobe’s already. We do this because we want to build on the strong desire of students in Japan, and also we know in Korea, to improve their skills speaking English, while doing the work that improves international relations. This triad notion is particularly relevant to the second of our two suggestions.

5.1 Student Project and Internships

Reimagining civic diplomacy suggests one innovation: the design of undergraduate educational projects appropriate to students’ major studies and interests, such as business and economics for the students in schools of Economics/ Business. Many Japanese universities already do exchanges with sister schools in Korea. An exchange which connected Kobe, Incheon, and Seattle would build on existing ties among the three trade and export oriented cities, creating opportunities particularly well suited to students in business and economics. Incorporating schools from all three cities to work together would immediately widen all of their horizons. Furthermore, increasingly, students looking for work are expected to engage in internship and applied experiences with corporate and government interactions which are international, not merely domestic. The trade orientation in the proposed triad provides an obvious starting point, where students speaking all three languages could be useful in many sites, from airports and shipping, to city trade offices, to corporate settings. While city jurisdictions offer one natural link, since Cold War days we have learned that NGOs in the arts, the environment and historical research can also create significant bonds. Just one example from 2012: the Mayors of Osakasayama (Japan) and Gimje (South Korea) signed an agreement to work jointly on securing UNESCO World Heritage status for their similarly ancient reservoir ponds and

13 For organizations with a long-standing interest in international affairs, with for example, affiliate status at the United Nations, the jargon term “Track 2” diplomacy is often used. Our suggestion is for activities that more informal and project oriented and locally directed.
irrigation systems.\(^{14}\) (Kyodo 2012b). Attaching students interested in UN organizations to this kind of project is natural both to improve their skills and to increase the cities’ likelihood of success with the UNESCO application. Three-way inter-university internships in government and business would connect students with important trends in global economics, while helping institutions in all three countries deepen their contact with their colleagues in other places.

5.2 Dialogue

The surveys however, indicate a specific arena in which innovation and effort to find new ways of working may be needed: the careful facilitation of Japanese-Korean student conversations in which each group can ask and answer questions from the others about what they “really think.” For Japanese people used to being reticent about how directly they state their views, this could be a particular challenge. And yet if these students want to be granted the right to hear “what ordinary people in Korea think of Japan” they ought probably to reciprocate, to share honestly what they, as ordinary people in Japan think of Korea. One could organize Japanese students from Kobe and Korean students from Incheon who are brought together in Seattle with Americans, officially to practice English conversation with each other, and to develop their skills in multi-cultural life, and they could at the same time be learning to exchange frank views of each other’s country. Furthermore, Japanese and Korean students would find Asian identities they share in the US, and find common ground as well as differences in comparison with the Western culture. Two examples from other settings suggest that making conversations possible in another language and/or in another place can truly facilitate improved communication. (1) Malcolm Gladwell (2011) tells us that Korean Airlines pilots now speak only in English when flying, because the hierarchical nature of their native language prevented effective communication in crisis during a flight. Making English the language of Japanese/Korean dialogue might make it possible to actually ask and answer those questions the survey respondents posed, by avoiding the particular Korean and Japanese terms and language usage already known to cause communication barriers. (2) Young Israeli and Arab musicians, in a program started by Israeli conductor Daniel Barenboim and Palestinian scholar Edward Said (West-Eastern Divan Orchestra), meet and practice in Spain where their common language is English. The participants recognize that being far away from the lands in dispute and speaking a completely different language is essential to working well on making music.

It might in fact be best if our two suggestions, joint internship programs and carefully facilitated conversations occur at the same time and in the same place. Certainly the nearly 300 respondents to our survey convey a widespread interest in opportunities for further learning, a desire perhaps for an “oasis of peace” in which to try to become real friends, to share their favorite music and anime, to watch soccer and to admire skill of ice skaters, while empathizing with each other about struggles with the demands of education and the search for gainful, post graduate employment.

6. CONCLUSION

The research described here demonstrates that most of these 295 people, surveyed in late 2012, were aware of, concerned about and interested in developing a deeper understanding of Korean/Japanese relations. They were also demonstrably uneasy about whether and how to go about deepening their understanding. Relatively few (under 25%) had any understanding of the Korean language, at any level. Neither travel nor formal education had endowed them with confidence in their ability to understand either the history of the relationship or how to contribute to its stability in these times. Quite a number of these particular respondents even merged the threats posed by North Korea and the threats posed by South Korea into a single amorphous web of anxiety. Given the intensity of the conflict about the islands called Dokto/Takeshima, the high pressure populist responses in Korea to recent events relating to the islands, to colonization, and even to Yasukuni shrine, (Choe 2013) new

\(^{14}\) Environmentally oriented local officials, students and businesses met for a number of years to share expertise at meetings in Kobe and Seattle on the preservation of the inland seas onto which these two cities face.
strategies are needed to ease relations at the grass roots level. Citizen diplomacy has contributed more than once to easing international conflict and building international bridges; perhaps the time has come to step away from education in the abstract in NE Asia, and towards bringing people face to face to learn ‘what they really think.’

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