UNDERSTANDING KOREAN-JAPANESE INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate "themes," patterns of accounts related to the lived experiences of interpersonal relationships between Koreans and Japanese living in Japan. The research question was: What is the texture of the voices of Koreans living in Japan and their host Japanese in their interculturally lived experiences of interpersonal relationships? Individual interviews were conducted in Japanese with six Koreans living in Japan. In addition, interviews were held with three Japanese who had interpersonal relationships with three of the Korean interview subjects. The relationships varied from low, to moderate, to high intimacy. Four themes emerged through interpretive analysis of the participants' accounts of their relationships: Japanese attitudes towards Koreans, a sense of commonality, cultural differences, and involvement. In the first three theme categories, two to three subthemes were identified. Japanese discriminatory attitudes towards Koreans seemed to have negative influences on some of the Korean participants. Also, the way the participants perceived cultural differences rather than the differences themselves appeared to be important in developing interpersonal relationships. The educational implication of this study is the implementation of a curriculum of Japanese-as-a-second-language that focuses on cultural awareness and appreciation of cultural difference among cultures as well as those within Japanese culture.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Situating the questions

In part because of Japan's high economic growth and its rapid development of technology, there has been world-wide and increasing interest in Japan from a variety of perspectives such as business, tourism, academic research, and technical skill training. Japanese language learners throughout the world have also been increasing, with the total number of Japanese language learners at educational institutions overseas reaching 981,407 in 78 countries in 1990 (The Japan Foundation Japanese language Institute, 1990). In response to foreigners' needs to learn Japanese, curricula in Japanese-as-a-second-language have been developed and implemented in Japan.

However, it has been debated how and to what extent Japanese culture should be taught in the curriculum of Japanese as a second language (Sakamoto, 1990; Matsui, 1990; S. Hayashi, 1989). Paradoxically, Iwao & Hagiwara (1987) found that the longer the foreign students stayed in Japan and the more they improved their Japanese language skills, the lower their image of Japan tended to be. It is increasingly evident that there are many foreigners who have difficulty adjusting to Japanese society (S. Hayashi, 1991). Furthermore, Kurachi (1988) reported that many non-Japanese Asian students who acquired basic Japanese language skills sufficient enough to communicate with native Japanese experienced isolation and held negative attitudes toward the people and culture of Japan. Kurachi attributed foreign students' adjustment problems in Japan to gaps in perception of interpersonal relationships and attitudes toward intercultural
contact between non-Japanese Asian students and Japanese. What is the nature of these gaps? What are the obstacles to establishing interpersonal relationships between non-Japanese Asians and Japanese?

As a Japanese person and from my experiences of living abroad, I have been able to have opportunities to have both an insider's perspective and an outsider's perspective of the Japanese culture. For me, there seems to be so many differences and diversities within the Japanese culture, and it seems very important for foreigners to avoid having stereotypical perspectives in order to understand the Japanese society and culture. Also from my own experiences of living abroad, I presume that every foreigner in Japan might be discovering various aspects of Japanese culture through interactions with the Japanese. However, in terms of the adjustment problems in non-Japanese Asian students in Japan, I strongly feel that the Japanese sense of discrimination against other Asians has a great influence upon the interactions between non-Japanese Asian students and the Japanese. The discrimination against other Asians in Japanese society has been one of the social issues in Japan (Kanehara et al., 1986; Iesaka, 1986; Iwao & Hagiwara, 1987; Suh, 1987). How do the non-Japanese Asian students perceive and deal with the discrimination against themselves in Japanese society? Is it really an obstacle for their interactions with the Japanese? In order to answer these questions, it would be helpful to listen to the actual voices of both non-Japanese Asians and Japanese who interact with each other in their lived situations.

This research focuses on interpersonal relationships between
Japanese and Korean people living in Japan. "Interpersonal relationship" refers to those relations ranging from casual acquaintances to close friendship; "Korea" refers to the Republic of Korea (South Korea). Korean residents in Japan were excluded as participants in this study, considering the potential complexity of their cultural identities because they have been immersed in the Japanese culture. It was assumed more appropriate to take the Koreans who were raised in the Korean culture and recently came to Japan as the participants, since the cultural differences between Korea and Japan were assumed to be one of the potential important factors in this study.

The Korean people were selected because they comprise the largest minority group in Japan, making up 53.7 percent of all foreign residents in Japan according to the 1992 report of Japan's Ministry of Justice (cited in Asahi Nenkan Data Book, 1994). The issues of the relationship between Korea and Japan including Korean residents in Japan, such as their legal status and Japanese discrimination towards Korean in its society, have been unresolved. Further, the withdrawal of restrictions by the Korean government in terms of traveling abroad, after the Seoul Olympics in 1988, caused a dramatic influx of Koreans as tourists, students, and workers into Japan. In 1987, there were about 360,000 Korean visitors to Japan, while in 1990, the number was about 980,000 (Chung, 1992). These statistics indicate that today more Korean people encounter the Japanese people and culture than before, and their experiences of contact with the Japanese people and culture may have a great influence on their image of Japan and the future relationship between Japan and
Korea.

Therefore, the research question of this study is: "What is the texture of the voices of the Koreans living in Japan and of their host Japanese in their interculturally lived experiences of interpersonal relationships?"

Specifically, the following questions were investigated and discussed.

(1) How do Koreans and Japanese develop their relationships?
(2) How do cultural differences affect the development of their relationships?
(3) If there are problems, what are the obstacles and important factors to overcome in establishing interpersonal relationships between Koreans and Japanese in Japanese society?

1.2 The context of cross cultural studies

Many cross cultural studies have identified differences in communication styles between Japanese and North Americans. These studies have been framed within various perspectives on cross-cultural communication such as the influences of individualism and collectivism (Gudykunst, Yoon & Nishida, 1987), the differences in low-and high-context cultures (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1986), the influences of cultural similarity (Gudykunst, 1985), the influences of masculinity/femininity (Gudykunst, Nishida & Schmidt, 1989), and the influence of power (Wetzel, 1988). However, these studies are largely concerned with the comparison of differences in communication styles between Japanese and North Americans and do not deal with intercultural
communication conflicts or interpersonal relationships between Japanese and people of other ethnic groups. Sudweeks et al. (1990) stated "[t]o date, no study has examined themes in personal relationships between members of different cultures" (p. 211). "Theme" refers to the patterned semantic issue or locus of concern around which interaction is focussed (Owen, 1984). Also, Iesaka (1986) stressed that recognizing only the uniqueness and differences of two ethnic groups not only impedes development of relationships with people from other ethnic groups, but also leads to a sense of superiority/inferiority. Iesaka continues to point out that one also needs to find commonality in two ethnic groups to develop relationships with people from other ethnic groups.

Few studies deal with either communication style differences or conflict between Japanese and other Asian people. In Japan, the existing studies have been limited to demographic surveys of immigrants from other Asian countries and quantitative research of their life styles in Japan and their images of Japan (Kanehara et al., 1986; Iwao & Hagiwara, 1987). Iesaka (1986) discussed a prevailing ignorance and misunderstanding of racial issues among Japanese people; he stated that the Japanese, including researchers, consider racial situations, especially domestic ones such as Korean residents in Japan, as being somehow negative and taboo topics. Many books written by both other Asians and Japanese reveal the reality of racism in Japan and maladjustment of Asian residents in Japan, explaining the historical background and its influence on present Japanese society (Wagner, 1989; Suh, 1987; Tai, 1971; Iesaka, 1986). It is notable that these authors
treat Japanese as a monolithic and homogeneous ethnic group, a homogeneous collectivity of individual entities. Kim (1986) argued the important limitation of "attitude-based" approaches to intergroup behaviour, saying that there is a "tendency to regard intergroup communication as a 'fixed' category" (p. 87). These approaches appear to reinforce the notion of ethnic "collective identity" and promote stereotyped views of people from other cultures. When Korean people are perceived as the minority ethnic group in Japan and traced back to their roots, such a perception occurs within a power relationship of dominate-being dominated. In contemporary Japan, such a perspective prevails as prejudice toward Korean people.

Cui (1986) described the duality in Japanese people: although Japanese, individually, are friendly, kind, and generous, the Japanese as a nation seem sometimes cruel, exclusive, and merciless. This "duality" as a Japanese trait is also pointed out by Benedict (1945) in her book "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword" (cited in Ayabe, 1992). However, although these authors tried to capture Japanese traits by observing from two different lenses, that of the individual and the nation, all of those descriptions could still be seen as group stereotypes.

In this regard, Kondo (1990) stated: "[a]nthropological imperatives to generalize at the cultural level often mean that we construct collective identity through a similar kind of logocentrism or metaphysics of presence, positing the existence of an undifferentiated collective subject." Thus, Kondo criticizes the view in which "identities" are seen as "fixed,
bounded entities containing some essence or substance that is expressed in distinctive attributes (1990)," and emphasizes the multiplicity and mobility of "identity." Gudykunst & Kim (1984) state that although our initial decision to interact with strangers is influenced by our stereotypes of the strangers' culture, stereotypes alone may not account for the majority of variance in our perception of strangers. What other factors would have influences upon our understandings of people from other cultures? How would our perception of strangers change through interactions? This study therefore takes the view that an in-depth study of interpersonal relationships across culture can reveal aspects of culture different from these stereotypical studies of intergroup relationships.

The purpose of this study is to examine the interpersonal level of relationships between Japanese and Korean people in Japan, particularly by using a qualitative research methodology designed to explore the internal world of the subjects and to understand their points of view (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989).

So far, studies on the development of interpersonal relationships have emphasized interpersonal attraction phenomena, impression formulation process, and the descriptions of the stages and pace of the relationship development (Katriel & Phillipsen, 1981; Knapp, Ellis & Williams, 1980; Owen, 1984). Few studies have isolated the specific processes that affect how relationships are created or the processes that move relationships to different levels of intimacy (Sudweeks et al., 1990). Extending this perspective, Duck & Perlman (1985) noted that "the single most important question for research in the
future is to discover how 'relationships' are created, both subjectively and objectively, from strings of interaction, and from the changing beliefs that persons have about them" (p. 5, cited in Sudweeks et al., 1990).

Furthermore, there have been only a few studies regarding the cultural aspects of communication and interpersonal relationships (Sudweeks et al., 1990; Ting-Toomey, 1986; Hecht, Ribeau & Sedano, 1990). Ting-Toomey (1986) studied themes in Japanese patterns of communication from insiders' (Japanese) and outsiders' (sojourners living in Japan) perspectives. She identified four themes underlying Japanese communication: communication style-concealment versus revealment, communication ritual-obligatory versus voluntary reciprocity, relational placement-complementarity versus symmetricality, and relational distance-remoteness versus closeness. All four themes were emphasized repeatedly and forcefully in insiders' and outsiders' interpretive descriptions of the Japanese communication style. However, the approach in Ting-Toomey's (1985) study was conceptual, asking participants how they interpret the systems of Japanese communication style. It might be important to focus on not only participants' interpretation of cultural differences, but also participants' lived experiences including their feelings, impressions, and thoughts in order to understand their interpersonal relationships. Hecht, Ribeau & Sedano (1990) examined Mexican American perspectives on inter-ethnic communication. They combined theme analysis derived from Owen (1984) with a critical analysis of Mexican American poetry, and identified five themes of inter-ethnic communication: worldview,
acceptance, negative stereotyping, relational solidarity, and expressiveness. The purpose of their combined analysis was to increase the validity of the themes that emerged in the participants' descriptions of their inter-ethnic communications. Sudweeks et al. (1990) studied developmental themes in Japanese-North American interpersonal relationships. The researchers interviewed nine partners of Japanese college students (living in U.S.)-North American students, female-female dyads individually in their native languages. Four themes were identified: communication competence, similarity, involvement, and turning point. The researchers concluded by pointing out that "the same relationships in Japan may be different because of environmental factors and because the language in which the participants communicate would be different" (p. 230, Sudweeks et al., 1990).

1.3 Significance of the study

Since the qualitative research methodology was utilized, this study attempts to illuminate the interpersonal relationships between Koreans and Japanese in Japan. The significance of this study lies in its attempt to break the stereotyped views from the past of Korean and Japanese people, even though the outcome of this study will not be generalized because of the small number of respondents. It thus attempts to achieve a description of Korean-Japanese interpersonal relationships in Japan through use of information gathered at the level of individual experiences. It has significance for Japanese individuals, teachers and students who interact with Korean students in Japanese as a second language classes or in mainstream schools. In addition, the
Korean participants’ actual voices of their experiences of living in Japan might be useful for other Koreans who plan to live in Japan, as well as those who are already in Japan and having difficulties adjusting to Japanese society.

Especially, the findings in this study are significant in the realm of Japanese language as a second language education. It is useful in the implementation of curriculum, an appreciation of the differences or diversity within the Japanese society and the psychological effects in encountering different cultures.

Also, this study might be significant for education, cross-cultural counselling and further research in the Pacific Rim countries in North America, where Asian cultures have been falsely considered as unified and monolithic. This particular study could reveal cultural differences and friction, especially difficulties in establishing mutual understanding within increasingly complex Asian cultures.
2.0 CONTEXTUALIZING THE STUDY

2.1 A brief history of the relationship between Korea and Japan

Inquiry into the relationships between Koreans and Japanese must consider the content of the history of the two countries. Even today, the 36 years of Japanese occupation of Korea (from 1910 to 1945) continue to have a great influence on Koreans' postcolonial images of Japan (Iwao & Hagiwara, 1987; Cui, 1986; Kurachi, 1988). Together with the worldwide depression in the late 1920's, the Japanese colonial policy in Korea caused a dramatic increase of Korean immigrants to Japan. During World War II, more Koreans were taken to Japan as forced laborers in order to make up for the loss of Japanese workers who were mobilized for the armed forces. Many Koreans were maltreated and died from poor living and working conditions.

During the colonial period, the Japanese government implemented a policy which tried to eradicate Korean culture. Korean people were prohibited from speaking Korean. They were forced to learn Japanese and change their Korean names to Japanese ones. At the end of World War II, the number of Korean residents had reached 2.36 million, which was 3.2 percent of the total population of Japan at that time. Most of them repatriated to Korea, but the remainder and their descendants became Korean residents in Japan.

Ever since Korea became an independent country, Korean residents in Japan have been treated as foreigners or "alien residents." This means they are not allowed to receive social security and welfare services, despite making their living in Japan and paying taxes. The taking of alien residents'
fingerprints became a contentious issue between Korean residents and the Japanese government, and it was commonly said that "Japan treats foreigners as criminals." Resisting such an inequality surrounding their legal status in Japan, some Koreans conducted illegal activities (Wagner, 1989). In response to such behaviours, the Japanese government took oppressive actions. Consequently, through political events in the past, there has developed a distrust between Koreans and Japanese (Wagner, 1989). In contemporary Japan, behind the scenes of employment, intermarriage, and even school, Korean people still suffer discriminatory treatment. Because of the existing prejudice and discrimination in Japanese society, many Korean residents in Japan tend to use Japanese names in order to hide their nationality. Today, issues with respect to Korean residents in Japan are shifting in focus to the establishment of an ethnic identity among the second and third generation (Kanehara et al., 1986).

2.2 Similarities and differences between the two countries

A Korean scholar, Cui (1985), described Japan as "the country which is closest to Korea (geographically), but farthest from Korea (psychologically)." He explained that historical conflicts and modern economic tension between Korea and Japan are responsible for this psychological distance. In addition, he stated that the similarities in the assumed homogeneity of each of these two countries also foster psychological distance, reflected in the competitive spirit and conflict between the two countries. Anthropologists, however, point that since the Koreans
and the Japanese have the same origin and since both cultures have been influenced by Confucianism and Buddhism and have developed within the Chinese writing culture, one can find many similarities in language, lifestyle, and philosophy between the two countries.

However, Cui (1986) warned of the dangers of believing that the two countries were the same and that Koreans would assimilate readily into Japan. He stressed that the belief in the homogeneity of the two countries could lead to fears of "cultural invasion," which, according to Cui, is what Japan did to Korea in the past. Iesaka (1986) also mentioned that people need to be careful in recognizing the respective characteristics and differences between countries, such as the historical experiences, ethnic complexity, and climatic conditions, in order to establish mutual understanding with other Asian countries.

On the other hand, Chung (1993) warned of the tendencies of academic and journalistic interests that emphasize more heterogeneity than homogeneity, the danger being that such an emphasis would elevate relative differences to absolute differences between the two countries. He was skeptical that the contribution of these comparative cultural theories would be helpful for mutual understanding because of the unified, 'essentialized' view of each culture and the consequent indifference to deviations or differences within each culture. Chung (1993) pointed out that the unified view of each culture would be tied up with stereotypes and prejudice. Advocating suppression of interest in differences between the two countries, he stressed the importance of the global viewpoint toward
culture. According to Chung (1993), although it is a fact that there are differences between Japan and Korea, those differences could not be generalized. In both countries, there are many people who have similar traits and share similar culture, and both cultures are changing in similar ways through modernization. Chung's essential viewpoint is that cultural theories are warranted to the extent that they do not prevent people from discovering those similarities and differences through interaction with others.

2.3 View of race in the two countries

Iwao & Hagiwara (1987) stressed that "exclusiveness" in Japanese society has made it difficult for foreign students to adjust to Japanese society. Where did the "exclusiveness" in Japanese society come from? Iesaka (1986) explained that there has been a peculiar discriminatory custom, which is inherent to Japan rather than philosophical, and that this custom has penetrated the Japanese character. Sakurai (1983) anthropologically inferred such a presumed discriminatory custom in Japanese society from the concept of village-community in ancient Japanese society (cited in Iesaka, 1986).

According to Iesaka, since villages became communities centered around peasants, a social and physical distance had emerged between peasants and non-peasants, and peasants had come to exclude and discriminate against non-peasants as outsiders within their community. This theory seems related to the concept of "insider" and "outsider" pointed out by Nakane (1967) as a trait of the Japanese social structure. According to her theory,
Japanese people tend to put a high value on the "place" where they share their life, such as household, workplace, school, village, and so on. The sense of solidarity deriving from sharing the same place gives rise to the exclusiveness and unsociability toward people from outside their "place." Among outsiders, in ancient Japan, people who brought advanced technical skills and ideas were respected by community members; however, people such as butchers and leather dressers were despised and discriminated against. In the Edo era, a social rank system was established in which discrimination against such people was legitimized. In terms of influences, Iesaka (1986) added elements of the philosophy of Buddhism and caste in India to Sakurai’s (1983) analysis of ancient Japanese society as reasons that people such as slaughterers and leather dressers had come to be despised. In the Indian caste system, people in these professions were considered lower than slaves, because in Buddhism, to kill living things is considered a sin. According to Iesaka (1986), this Buddhist philosophy, together with the principle of village community, promoted a sense of discrimination among the Japanese people.

Another ideology which had a considerable influence on the Japanese view of race (particularly toward other Asians) is derived from the Japanese government’s foreign policy proposed by the educator and journalist Yukichi Fukuzawa, in the Meiji era, which is to "leave" Asia and act like a respectable Western nation. Specifically, in the Meiji and Taisho era, Japanese bureaucrats tended to consider the United States as one of the most important sources of capital for Japanese industrialization.
Also, for generations of Japanese, the existence of the empire confirmed not only Japan's position as a civilised nation but their own superiority vis-a-vis the peoples of East Asia (Weiner, 1994). Iriye (1974) analyzed some factors responsible for such a posture: "the feeling of superiority over Chinese and Koreans, reinforced by the vogue of Social Darwinism..., and the need for Western capital and machines, which necessitated a greater degree of integration of the Japanese economy into the Western economic system...." (p. 413). Lack of material innovation and development was regarded as evidence of the inferior status of the nation. Thus, the Chinese and Korean could be despised for an apparent inability to modernise or resist the encroachment of the West, and this ideology gained sufficient prominence to propel Japan into the Sino-Japan War (1894) and into the colonization and invasion of Asian countries including Korea. Even if this ideology does not exert the influence it used to, it still exerts an influence on today's Japanese attitude toward other Asian people (Tanaka & Tai, 1971).

More recently, it has been noted that some young Japanese people who study English tend to prefer making friends with Caucasians to making friends with Koreans or any other Asian people (Iwao & Hagiwara, 1988). This kind of behavior is claimed to be not an influence of the history or ideology of the past, but to be based on the fact that the Japanese people want to practice their English with native English speakers rather than with those who speak English as a second language (Iwao & Hagiwara, 1988).

With respect to the Korean view of race, Chung (1993)
claimed the influences of homogeneity in Korean society. Chung (1993) stressed that although there is no perfectly homogeneous country in the world, the population of ethnic minorities in Korea is so small (smaller than the one in Japan) that Korea could be very close to being a pure ethnic state. According to Chung (1993), the lack of ethnic diversity has been decreasing social tension and troubles, and has been contributing to modernization, industrialization and social reform in Korea. However, Chung pointed out that, because of homogeneity, Koreans tend to emphasize the peculiarity of their culture and lack the spirit of coexistence and cooperation with different races and cultures. These characteristics could be seen in Korea’s social system, which limits the rights of residence and ownership of land for foreigners. Moreover, foreigners are prohibited from publishing any periodicals such as newspapers and magazines, owning any publishing companies and establishing any credit unions or banking facilities. These institutional forms of discrimination against foreign residents in Korea could impede the prosperity of other ethnic groups in Korea, encouraging a nationalism based on discrimination and chauvinism. Giving some examples of alleged instances of Koreans’ racist behaviours and lack of sensitivity towards other cultures in foreign countries, such as the United States, Thailand, China, and Japan, Chung (1993) stressed the significance of re-examining a generalized notion of Korean self-image, "Korea-victim." Chung assumed that Koreans’ experiences of racial and ethnic tensions outside Korea could be attributed to the educational system and mass- communications that create "conflict" rather than "cooperation"
with other racial or ethnic groups.

Not only the general views of race in Japan and Korea, but also how Japanese and Korean people perceive each other seems important for understanding Korean-Japanese interpersonal relationships. Chung (1992) analyzed "nihon ron", which are theories about Japan in Korea, purveyed through literature, radio and television coverage, and academic dissertations that seemed to have a significant influence on constructing the image of Japan in Korea. First of all, he pointed out that some theories about Japan in Korea tended to describe Japan and Japanese people negatively, considering the Japanese people and culture as unitary, in other words, taking no account of generational differences and regional variation. These theories about Japan seem to emerge especially when there are some tensions and conflicts between Korea and Japan. On the other hand, Chung (1992) also pointed out that when domestic issues were controversial in Korea, favorable theories about Japan, which were sometimes too idealistic, emerged as references, such as advanced technology, organizing ability and Japanese national traits. Chung (1992) stated that this contrast between a sense of superiority and a sense of inferiority, and also a mixture of repulsion and attraction, were characteristics of theories about Japan in Korea; most of these theories emphasized the negative traits rather than the favorable ones, caution rather than trust, and repulsion rather than cooperation. Another characteristic of theories about Japan in Korea is an intense competitive spirit, which exists on the other side of a sense of inferiority towards the Japanese, sometimes leading to intense Korean nationalism.
Chung (1992) concluded that theories about Japan in Korea were based not on real experiences or research, but on idealism, and had a strong tendency to "invent" Japan freely, being concordant with an anti-Japanese ideology. According to Chung, most of the Koreans who visit Japan these days are steeped in these theories about Japan and anti-Japan education, and therefore their image of Japan is generally negative at first. Then when they actually interact with Japanese people, some of them seem to realize the distortions in all theories about Japan in Korea.

Chung (1992) also analyzed the "kankoku ron," that is, theories about Korea in Japan. In the 1970's, Japanese theories about Korea focused on political issues, eliciting sentiments of distrust and suspicion about Korea. As well as the Korean theories about Japan, theories about Korea in those days used to be more idealistic than experiential, emphasizing more negativeness than positiveness, and more suspicion than trust. However, according to Chung (1992), these theories about Korea and the generally dark image of Korea were replaced by new theories and images in the 1980's, especially after the following the Seoul Olympic Games. New theories about Korea in Japan have shifted the focus from political issues to cultural traits; descriptions of Korea and its people were based more on the authors' experiences, fieldwork and observations than on ideology. Many Japanese people developed interests in Korean food, culture and its history much more than in its politics. However, Chung (1992) complained that even the new theories about Korea in Japan tended to view Korea and its people from a unified, homogeneous perspective, lacking reconsideration of
theories linked to stereotypes and prejudices. Also, Chung states that many new theories about Korea developed rapidly with the Korean culture boom at the time of the Seoul Olympic Games. Although these theories were based on fieldwork, these kinds of fieldwork were observational and not deeply analytical. In other words, the viewpoint from the Japanese-Korean relationship that had been quietly developing on business or interpersonal level were seldom reflected in new theories about Korea.
3.0 APPROACH

3.1 Theoretical framework

In order to answer the research questions mentioned earlier, a qualitative research methodology was utilized in this study. Qualitative research provides a framework to enhance and illuminate understandings of the participants' points of view, allowing the characteristics of interpersonal relationships to emerge from spoken and written texts (Hecht, Ribeau & Sedano, 1990). Following Ting-Toomey's (1983) view that the basic task of qualitative studies is to investigate participants' interpretations of their own symbolic activities such as language interactions, verbal rituals, metaphors, and social situations. This study examined participants' interpretations of their intercultural and interpersonal relationships.

In the realm of cross cultural issues such as cultural adjustment, communication, and interpersonal relationships, several different kinds of methodologies have been utilized. It is useful to review and discuss those methodologies in order to clarify the rationale for the selection of the particular methodology this study.

Iwao & Hagiwara's studies about foreign students in Japan were conducted for five years (1975-1980) by the combined use of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies that specifically utilized questionnaires and interviews as data collection methods. By quantitatively analyzing the data collected by closed-form questionnaires, in which the respondents choose between predetermined responses (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989), their main purpose was to generalize an image of Japan
among foreign students. However, in most of their analyses, respondents were considered holistically as 'foreign students in Japan'. In their research, there seemed to be a lack of consideration of variables among respondents, such as nationality, sex, age, social economic status, life style, and so on. Furthermore, in terms of the questionnaire as the method of data collection, there have been numerous criticisms over the years (McGhee, 1987). McGhee (1987) reviewed those criticisms and maintained that self-report attitude scales "are fakeable, that they assume both an attitude-behaviour correlation that is in fact notoriously low and that it is meaningful for subjects to attend to the component parts of their beliefs or attitudes" (p. 290). McGhee also stated that it was doubtful whether researchers and respondents could achieve any great level of mutual comprehensibility, or even if they could, whether it would be in the way desired by the researcher. On the other hand, although Iwao & Hagiwara also conducted some case studies by interviewing several participants, the presentation of those studies appeared to be limited to the summaries of participants' backgrounds and experiences in Japan, and there did not seem to be enough analysis and discussion.

In the study by Hecht, Ribeau & Sedano (1990), a Mexican American perspective on inter-ethnic communication was examined by using the combination of two different kinds of qualitative research methodologies: theme analysis of descriptions of satisfying and dissatisfying conversations and a critical analysis of Mexican American poetry. In their first approach, Hecht, Ribeau & Sedano (1990) chose an open-ended questionnaire,
in which the respondents wrote any response they wanted (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989), and the data was then analyzed qualitatively. It is assumed that the open-ended questionnaire enabled the respondents to report their experiences and perception in greater depth, and in their own words, as compared to the study by Iwao & Hagiwara (1988) discussed earlier. However, since it was still a form of self-report questionnaire, there were no interactions between the researchers and the respondents. In such an approach, there might be a lack of mutual comprehensibility between the researchers and respondents in terms of the questions themselves and statements by the respondents affecting effective data collection. In other words, there might be a danger of the failure to clarify or confirm the respondents' statements by follow-up questions in the case of insufficient responses.

McGhee (1987) stated that "the research questionnaire is a truncated conversation as no further negotiation is allowed" (p. 299). Hecht, Ribeau & Sedano (1990) mentioned the disadvantages of using respondents' descriptions of their experiences, such as lack of training, imprecise description, and a narrow focus on personal experiences. Their purpose in using another data source (Mexican American poetry) was to compensate for those disadvantages by considering the poets' perceptive and expressive characteristics, and developing a more global perspective on the social system. Hecht, Ribeau & Sedano (1990) believed that disadvantages in using poetry (a lack of communication focus and abstractness) could also be compensated by the advantages in the respondents' descriptions (immediacy, specificity, and personal
relevance). However, it seems to be questionable whether such compensation can be achieved when there is a doubt about the respondents' expressive or descriptive abilities.

Considering the disadvantages in data collection methods used in the aforementioned studies, a semi-structured, open-ended interview technique was chosen as the data collection method in this study. In this kind of interview, "the interviewer is normally required to ask specific questions but is free to probe beyond them if necessary" (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992, p. 104). Also, an interview is followed by an "interview guide", by which topics are selected in advance but the interviewer decides the sequence and wording of the questions during the interview (McMillan & Schumacher, 1992). The reason that this type of interview was selected is that it combines, or attempts to combine, the advantages of the two polar types: structured interview and unstructured, open-ended interview. In structured interviews, the same questions and the sequence in which they appear on the schedule would be administered to all respondents by all interviewers in the same way in order to standardise stimuli (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992). However, the disadvantage of this type of interview is evident if the standardised wording of questions constrain the naturalness and relevance of the responses (McMillan & Schumacher, 1992). In contrast, during unstructured interviews, "interviewers are free to ask questions in whatever manner they think appropriate and natural, and in whatever order is felt to be most effective in the circumstances" (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992). However, unstructured interviews are limited in usefulness with a larger number of respondents because of the
high costs in time and money required to gather and to analyze the data (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992). Moreover, unstructured interviews depend on the conversational or interview skill of the interviewer to a greater extent than do standardized interviews (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992). Thus, the advantages of the semi-structured, open-ended interviews are that they allow respondents to speak freely, the researcher retains the control of the topic, and that they do not require the same high level of interview/conversation skills as unstructured interviews do.

In qualitative analysis of participants' discourse, categorizing and ordering data are essential elements of an "inductive process of divergent thinking and logical analysis to refine the researcher's understanding of the emerging patterns and themes" (McMillan, & Schumacher, 1989). Sillars, et al. (1987) identified content themes in marital conversations by coding the discussion transcripts of married couples. The steps for developing such a coding system are: to search through the data for regularities and patterns as well as for topics the data covers, and to write down words and phrases (coding categories) to represent these topics and patterns (Bogdan, & Biklen, 1982). However, this type of content analysis, with its mechanical process of sorting data, has been criticized as representative of quantitative research. Sudweeks et al. (1990) claimed that this kind of analysis is 'quantitative' because data are placed in categories and the resultant categories are 'quantified'. Sillars et al. (1987) mentioned that as one possible indicator of the prominence or salience of a theme, they relied on the frequency of a code.
Sudweeks et al. (1990) attempted to analyze the data (participants' accounts of relationships) in their study qualitatively, using the "theme analysis method" proposed by Owen (1984). This method seems appropriate in order to study the subjective aspects of personal relationships and to go beyond hypothetical, retrospective, and "implicit theories of relationships" (Owen, 1984). It allows the researcher to understand the "discourse participants use in conceptualizing their current, ongoing relational episodes" (Owen, 1984). Isolating 'themes' in participants' descriptions of their relationships is one method for interpreting their personal relationships (Sudweeks et al, 1990). Themes refer to "the patterned semantic issue or locus of concern around which interaction occurs" (Owen, 1984). A theme emerges in relational discourse when three criteria are present: (1) recurrence, (2) repetition, and (3) forcefulness (Owen, 1984; Ting-Toomey, 1986).

In Owen's (1984):

Recurrence was observed when at least two parts of a report had the same thread of meaning, even though different wording indicated such a meaning. Criterion two is an extension of criterion one in that it is an explicit repeated use of the same wording.... The third criterion, forcefulness, refers to vocal inflection, volume, or the dramatic oral reports... (p. 275).

Owen (1984) isolated themes in five different types of relationships: married couples, dating couples, relatives, live-in friends, and non-live-in friends. He found seven themes individuals used to make sense of their relationships: "commitment, involvement, work, unique/special, fragile, consideration/respect, and manipulation" (p. 277)

Basically, Owen's theme analysis method was utilized in this
study, by identifying themes emerging from Korean and Japanese participants' descriptions of their interpersonal relationships, collected by semi-structured open-ended interviews. This study presents the qualitative descriptions and interpretations of characteristics (including obstacles and needs) in interpersonal relationships between Koreans (living in Japan) and Japanese.

3.2 Participants

Participants were selected by the network selection (snowball sampling) technique: a "strategy in which each successive participant or group is named by a preceding group or individual" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p.79, cited in McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). First, in February, 1994, the researcher made contact with a Japanese university student who planned a cultural exchange event at Kwansei Gakuin University in Kobe, Japan. Three female Koreans whom the university student introduced were recruited. Three other Koreans, whom the researcher met at a local event for Korean residents in Mino City (Osaka), Japan, in February, 1994, were directly asked to participate in this study by the researcher. Each Korean participant was oriented and given a copy of the purpose and the procedures of this study (see Appendix A), then they were asked to name one of their Japanese friends or acquaintances and to participate in this study. The purpose and the procedures of this study were briefly explained to the Japanese by the Korean participants. After these Japanese individuals agreed to participate in this study, the researcher made contact with each of the Japanese participants by telephone in order to provide further explanation and to set the interview
schedule. Although three Koreans named Japanese friends who agreed to participate, the other three Koreans could not name any particular Japanese friend. According to them, they hesitated to ask any of their Japanese acquaintances to take part in this study because they felt they did not know those Japanese well enough to ask.

However, since those Koreans who did not introduce their Japanese acquaintances were willing to participate in this study, they were recruited without partners as well. It was assumed that taking the Koreans who did not introduce any Japanese acquaintances as participants would be able to clarify their points of view about the difficulties some Koreans encountered in establishing interpersonal relationships with the Japanese. Since all Korean participants could understand Japanese better than they could English, the purpose and the procedures of this study and the consent letter form were translated into Japanese by the researcher. Each participant signed the consent letter at the beginning of each interview. The participants were six Koreans (five female and one male) and three Japanese (one female and two male) with whom three of the Koreans had formed interpersonal relationships. The mean age of the participants was 25.3 years and the length of the relationships varied from four months to three years. All Korean participants were Korean natives who had lived in Japan from seven months to five years. All Koreans had formally studied Japanese for more than one year. Four Korean participants were going to Japanese universities (third year), and two other Koreans had just finished a one year course of JSL (Japanese as a second language) at a special school in Kobe,
After each interview and prior to the analysis, an intimacy level for each participant’s interpersonal relationship was assigned in order to examine how themes were different depending on the degree of intimacy in their relationships. In the scope of studies of interpersonal relationships, the definition of intimacy has been debated (Register & Henley, 1992; Reis & Shaver, 1988; Planalp & Benson, 1992). In this study, "intimacy," as defined by Clark & Reis (1988), was adopted: "a process in which one person expresses important self-relevant feelings and information to another, and as a result of the other’s response comes to feel known, validated, ... and cared for" (cited in Register & Henley, 1992). The "intimacy level," then, refers to the degree of intimacy in the participants’ interpersonal relationships in this study. Since, as Planalp and Benson (1992) stated, "we do not currently have a detailed account of what behaviors distinguish the interaction of intimates from those of non-intimates" (P. 484), it seems questionable to distinguish intimacy levels. However, since it is assumed that there is a wide range of degrees of intimacy, ranging from the kind of intimacy that might be shown to an acquaintance to that displayed close friends, the participants in this study were divided into three different intimacy levels (low, moderate and high) by their perceptions and descriptions of intimacy in their interpersonal relationships. The rationale for three intimacy levels in this study instead of two (for example, intimate and non-intimate relationships) lies in the assumption of a transitional stage between intimate and non-intimate relationships.
The first classification ('Low') was based upon whether the Korean participant had introduced his/her Japanese friend or not. Those Korean participants who did not name any Japanese acquaintances were classified in the 'low intimacy' level, because although they had Japanese acquaintances, they did not know those Japanese well enough to ask them to participate in this study. Therefore, the degree of intimacy in their relationships with Japanese was assumed to be low. Secondly, with respect to the Korean participants who introduced Japanese friends, the classification was assigned according to the participants' descriptions of the relationship with the Japanese acquaintance whom they introduced. Specifically, the criterion for the distinction between 'high' and 'moderate' intimacy was the degree of self-disclosure, that is, by observing whether the Korean participants enjoyed and were satisfied with their relationships with the Japanese, or whether they were even slightly frustrated and questioning because of the uncertainty and a lack of knowledge about the person. In this way, the participants in the former case were classified in the 'high intimacy' level (High), while those in the latter cases were classified in the 'moderate intimacy' level (Moderate), since their relationships seemed to be in transition from low to high intimacy.

In presenting each participant's account, in order to protect participants' privacy and for the sake of convenience, each participant was numbered and abbreviations were utilized in order to indicate the source of the account (Korean or Japanese) at a particular intimacy level. For example, "K-1, Low" means a
Korean participant at the low intimacy level, and "J-2, Moderate" means a Japanese participant at the Moderate intimacy level. These identifications are indicated the texts of each participant's account. After the classification, there were two (K-6 and J-3) at the high intimacy level, four (K-4, K-5, J-1, and J-2) at the moderate intimacy level, and three (K-1, K-2, K-3) at the low intimacy level in this study (see Table 1). The number of the participants was not of particular concern, because as Lythcott & Duschl (1990) stressed, "sample size is not a criterion of qualitative research beyond the capacity of the researcher to process the voluminous, complex, and rich data." However, data collection was continued until there was at least one participant in each intimacy level.

The details of the participants' backgrounds are as follows:

**Low intimacy level (Low)**

K-1 ...Korean female, 23 years old, one-year stay in Japan, 2 years of Japanese language study. After she graduated from a university in Korea, she came to Japan. She had just finished a one year course of JSL (Japanese as a second language) at a special school in Kobe, Japan, at the time the interview was held. She was staying at a Japanese host family's house, and her own family was in Korea. She mentioned that although she had not necessarily wanted to come to Japan, Japan's geographical closeness to Korea, her financial conditions that made it difficult to travel further than Japan, and a circumstance that one of her relatives had been in Kobe, Japan, had influenced her choice of coming to Japan. Her current host family was introduced to her by her relative. She said that because she had been
## Table 1

### Summary of Participants' Backgrounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intimacy levels</th>
<th>Koreans</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>K-1...23 years old, female special school student, 1 year stay in Japan, 2 years of JSL study</td>
<td>No Japanese introduced by K-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* * *</td>
<td>K-2...25 years old, female university student, 5 year stay in Japan, 5 years of JSL study</td>
<td>No Japanese introduced by K-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* * *</td>
<td>K-3...26 years old, female university student, 5 year stay in Japan, 8-9 years of JSL study</td>
<td>No Japanese introduced by K-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>K-4...21 years old, female university student, 7 month stay in Japan, 3 years of JSL study</td>
<td>J-1...introduced by K-4, 21 years old, female university student majoring in Korean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 4 month of relationship</td>
<td>K-5...35 years old, male JSL student, pastor, 1 year stay with his family in Japan, 1 year JSL study</td>
<td>J-2...introduced by K-5, 33 years old, male, working for a moving company, 5-6 years of Korean language study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 8 month of relationship</td>
<td>K-6...23 years old, female university student, 5 year stay with her family in Japan, 5 year JSL study</td>
<td>J-3...introduced by K-6, 22 years old, male university student, no experiences of Korean language study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>K-6...23 years old, female university student, 5 year stay with her family in Japan, 5 year JSL study</td>
<td>J-3...introduced by K-6, 22 years old, male university student, no experiences of Korean language study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 'JSL' refers to Japanese-as-a-second-language.
concentrating on studying Japanese, she had not involved herself in any other activities, had no part-time jobs, and made no Japanese friends or acquaintances other than her host family and their acquaintances. She was planning to attend another special school (not a language school), so she hoped that she could make many Japanese friends there.

K-2 ... Korean female, 25 years old, 5-year stay in Japan, approximately 5 years of Japanese language study. After she had finished high school in Korea, she came to Japan. She attended a JSL school for about a year and a half, and she had just finished the third year at a university in Nishinomiya, studying mass communication, at the time the interview was held. Her family was in Korea and she was living alone. As for the reason she came to Japan, she mentioned that she had been interested in Japan and in studying mass communication since she was in high school, feeling the important role of mass communication, which might have a great influence on people’s stereotyped views and prejudice both in Korea and Japan. She described herself as one of those people who had stereotypes and a negative image of Japan and its people until she came to Japan. Although she knew many Japanese people, such as classmates at university and people at work (she had a part-time job as a waitress), she said that she could not have close relationships with them, feeling a ‘wall’ or ‘distance’ between those people and herself. Therefore, she had more Korean friends than Japanese friends. Although she intended to go back to Korea someday in the future, she had decided not to stay in Japan after graduation from university.
K-3 ... Korean female, 26 years old, 5-year stay in Japan, approximately 8 to 9 years of Japanese language study. She had been interested in Japan and started to learn Japanese ever since she was in high school in Korea. She had just finished her third year at a university in Nishinomiya, Japan, at the time the interview was held. She was also studying mass communication. Her family was in Korea and she was living alone in Japan. The reason she came to Japan was that she wanted to improve her Japanese speaking ability. She recalled that although she had not intended to go to university in Japan when she first came to Japan, she became interested in proceeding with her study as her Japanese improved. Her prior image of Japan was positive. According to her, her home town in Korea was one of Korea’s famous sightseeing spots where many Japanese tourists visited so she could often interact with Japanese tourists; she felt that they were nice people, different from what she learned about Japan and its people at school. However, since the first day she arrived in Japan, she had developed a different feeling (negative image) of Japanese people from the image she had in Korea. At the time the interview was held, she was having difficulties in dealing with cultural differences and having relationships with Japanese people. She had more Korean friends than Japanese friends.

Moderate intimacy level (Moderate)

K-4 ... Korean female, 21 years old, 7-month stay in Japan, 3 years of Japanese language study. When she was in her third year, majoring in Japanese language at a university in Korea, she passed the examination for a one-year government-subsidized
program of study in Japan. She was studying Japanese language, literature and culture at a university in Osaka at the time the interview was held. Her family was in Korea, and she was staying in a residence. She recalled that she did not intend to study Japanese culture at the time she had to choose which university she would attend in Korea. When she failed the entrance examination for a university which she wanted to attend, her high school teacher recommended the Japanese course at another university, and she enrolled in the course and became interested in Japan and its culture as she learned about them. However, she complained about the current circumstance that her classmates were only foreign students (the course was for foreign students only and separated from the main university curriculum) and it was hard to make Japanese friends. In addition, the Japanese person she introduced in this study was at the same university majoring in Korean, and she met this person in the Korean language class where she was an assistant.

J-1 ... Japanese female, 21 years old, studying the Korean at a university in Osaka, Japan, introduced by K-4. She recalled that although she was interested in learning foreign languages when she was in high school, she was not particularly interested in Korea and its language. She was thinking of selecting a particular language (not Korean) as a major prior to the entrance examination for a university, but since her score on the examination was not very good, she could not take the course that she wanted. Therefore she decided to choose Korean as her major among the other options, considering its practicality and the
potential uses of Korean in the future. She mentioned that she enjoyed learning Korean and about the culture, and she had also visited Korea. In terms of her relationship with K-4, she mentioned that although it was not a long relationship, she had a positive impression of it. She just wished that there would be more time to spend together to develop the relationship. She used to have another Korean female friend before K-4, but they lost contact with each other within a short time. She was afraid of a similar loss of contact happening between her and K-4 in the future.

K-5 ... Korean male, 35 years old, one-year stay in Japan, one year of Japanese language study. He had just finished a one-year JSL course in Kobe, Japan, at the time the interview was held. Besides being a student, he also had a job as a pastor, and he brought his family to Japan. He came to Japan because when he was in a university in Korea, his teacher (a Japanese pastor) recommended that he come to Japan as a pastor. He mentioned that although he had been trying hard to accept and interact with Japanese people he had met (classmates, neighbors, colleagues and people who came to the church) following the teachings of Christianity, it was still hard for him to understand and accept the Japanese way of thinking and behaviors, and to develop relationships with Japanese people. However, he introduced a Japanese male whom he had met at an international community center in Kobe as a participant in this study. He did not describe the Japanese person as his closest friend, but he mentioned that they enjoyed the time spent together and had a
positive attitude towards their relationship.
Since he intended to stay in Japan more than ten years, he wished that he could have more Japanese friends, including the person he introduced.

J-2 ... Japanese male, 33 years old, working for a moving company, introduced by K-5. He recalled that he was not necessarily interested in Korea before. He liked to travel, and after he traveled around all over Japan, he decided to visit Korea because Korea was the closest neighboring country to Japan. About six years prior to the study, he went to Korea, and he liked it. Since then he became so interested in Korea that he started to study Korean by himself. He said that most of time he spoke to K-5 in Korean. He also mentioned that he enjoyed exploring the differences in languages, culture, and the way of thinking between Japan and Korea. He, however, wished to have more time to spend together with K-5. Although he had had a Korean friend in the past, the person had gone back to Korea and he had no contact with the person any more at the time of the interview.

High intimacy level (High)
K-6 ... Korean female, 23 years old, 5-years stay in Japan, 5 years of Japanese language study. After she finished high school in Korea, she came to Japan and attended JSL school for a year and a half. She had just finished her third year at a university in Nishinomiya, studying sociology, when the interview was held. She was living with her family (her mother had remarried a Korean
resident in Japan and had been in Japan before K-6 came). She recalled that she used to enjoy being with other Korean friends more than being with Japanese people at the beginning of her stay in Japan, partly because her Japanese language ability was low. However, considering the significance of her circumstances (studying in Japan), she had been trying to get along with the Japanese, although she felt more comfortable being with other Asian students, such as Taiwanese and Chinese people, than with Japanese people. She had a Japanese boyfriend, and was thinking of marrying him. Although she understood the hardships in an intermarriage, she was quite positive about it (she would be naturalized in Japan as a Japanese citizen), because her mother was supportive. She introduced one of her Japanese friends from the university to the study.

J-3 ... Japanese male, 22 years old, studying sociology and just finished with his third year at a university in Kobe, Japan. He mentioned that he had more foreign student friends than Japanese friends, saying that he had more fun being with foreign students than with Japanese students. Although all his foreign student friends were from Asian countries, such as China and Korea, he said that was because all foreign students around him happened to be Asians. If he had a chance to meet foreign people other than Asians, he was willing to be friends with them. He stressed that he had been trying to be considerate of the feelings of those foreign students. Therefore, he did not mind which countries they were from. He had no experience of traveling or studying abroad. He said that since he could not speak any other foreign language,
when he was with those foreign students, including K-6, they communicated in Japanese. In terms of his relationship with K-6, he mentioned that he met her through his foreign student friend, and that she had been one of his friends with whom he often went out.

3.3 Procedures

As the data collection technique, semi-structured, open-ended interviews were utilized, as mentioned above. Interviews were conducted from the end of February to the end of March, 1994. The interview schedules and places were set by telephone, depending on each respondent’s convenience. All respondents were interviewed separately. All interviews were conducted by the researcher (Japanese) in Japanese.

What was considered prior to the interviews was the use of an interpreter or a Korean interviewer, because of the insufficiency in the Korean participants’ Japanese language ability, and the possible effect of the researcher (interviewer) being from a different ethnic background. 'Ethnicity' has been considered a critical effect of interviewer characteristic (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992; McMillan, & Schumacher, 1989; Patton, 1990). However, Ackroyd & Hughes (1992) continued to point out that assumptions about the effect of racial considerations are often misguided. For example, it is not always assumed that black respondents are more likely to tell the truth to black interviewers than they are to white interviewers, and white respondents might distort their answers in a less racially hostile direction to please white interviewers. Moreover, Patton
(1990) warned of the use of an interpreter during cross-cultural interviews, noting that such interpreter tendencies as summarizing and explaining responses contaminates "the interviewee's actual response" to such an extent that the researcher can no longer be certain whose perceptions he/she has: the interpreter or the interviewee. Since the purpose of this study is to understand participants' lived experiences in interpersonal relationships by listening to the participants' actual 'voices,' and since Korean participants had no difficulty in communicating in Japanese, the interviews were all conducted by the researcher in Japanese.

All interviews were tape-recorded with permission. Each semi-structured open-ended interviews was conducted in a single session and took from 40 minutes to 90 minutes. Respondents were told that the purpose of the study was to solicit information about their relationships, not only with their partners but also with others whom they had actually met and interacted with in Japan. At the opening of each interview, Koreans were asked their ages, the schools they were attending, the length of their stays in Japan, the lengths of Japanese language study, and their general impressions of Japan and the Japanese people. Then they were asked to specifically talk about their Japanese partners or Japanese people they had met. The questions included how they met, subsequent interactions, how often they saw their partners, cultural differences, language problems, the topics they talked about, the perception of historical events involving Japan and Korea, relationship perceptions, any problems they had, any positive experiences they had, and any vision of their
relationships (see Appendix B for the interview guide). For Japanese respondents, the questions were almost the same as those for Koreans except for the opening stage. They were asked about their interests in Korea, their past experiences such as studying abroad or travelling abroad and their intercultural relationships in the past (see Appendix B for the interview guide).

All interviews were transcribed in Japanese. The initial analysis of the interview transcripts was to index all relational references within each account. The transcripts were then examined to identify relational themes. Each utterance referring to interaction was read separately and placed in a stack with other utterances which had similar meaning (Sudweeks et al., 1990). The length of utterances varied from one sentence to an episode. For example, the utterances, which were repeated in response to the researcher's clarifying questions, were included in the first utterance. Also, even though a certain word was repeated several times, the repeated words were regarded as if they were in the same account. At this stage, the sorting developed broad categories. For example, even though details of each topic were different (difference in communication style and difference in the definition of friendliness/kindness), these utterances were placed in the same stack (cultural differences). After this stage of sorting was completed, the utterances within each stack were examined to develop labels for the subthemes. At this stage, the sorting was done in more detail, looking at specific meaning in each utterance. This process of analysis was repeated several times by the researcher, at the time of recording the results for the first time and in several
revisions.

Although themes emerged in the procedures mentioned above, as the research proceeded through the process of interviews, analysis, writing and re-writing, it seemed that themes started to appear at the beginning of the interviews, or even before that, when the researcher had proposed this research topic. Then these themes appeared gradually but more specifically, sometimes changing through a review of the literature, through listening more carefully to participants' lived experiences, through experimenting with 'data' (all participants' "voices"), and through writing/re-writing.
4.0 DISCUSSION

Four themes of intercultural relationships between Koreans and Japanese were identified: (1) Japanese attitudes toward Koreans, including the subthemes of discriminatory attitudes, indifference and understanding from experiences; (2) a sense of commonality, including the subthemes of shared time and topic/interest; (3) cultural differences, including the subthemes of communication directness/indirectness, friendliness/kindness, and perception of cultural differences; and (4) involvement (see Table 2). These four themes appeared repeatedly and recurrently in the participants' accounts of their relationships. In the presentation of the results, each theme and subtheme will be examined separately, together with discussion of their interconnections.

Although the transcripts were all in Japanese at the stage of analysis, some of the participants' accounts were translated into English for presenting in this discussion. For some other examples of the participants' accounts, see Appendix C.

(1) Japanese Attitudes toward Koreans

The theme of Japanese attitudes toward Koreans included three subthemes: discriminatory attitudes, indifference and understanding from experiences. As mentioned in Chapter 1 and as other research suggests, the issues surrounding this theme emerged frequently at all relational intimacy levels. Participants' accounts revealed the existence of discrimination against non-Japanese Asian people in Japanese society. Discriminatory attitudes comprise Japanese stereotypical, racist,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme/Subtheme</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>(1) Japanese Attitudes towards Koreans</em></td>
<td>K: experienced, negatively perceived and affected on their intimacy</td>
<td>K: experienced, and conflicting on their intimacy</td>
<td>K: experienced, but perceived objectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Discriminatory Attitudes</td>
<td>J: not observed</td>
<td>J: not observed</td>
<td>J: not observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Indifference</td>
<td>K: noted, and used as explanation for lack of intimacy</td>
<td>K: not mentioned</td>
<td>K: not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Understanding from experiences</td>
<td>K: mentioned</td>
<td>K: mentioned</td>
<td>K: mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J: not observed</td>
<td>J: not observed</td>
<td>J: observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(2) A Sense of Commonality</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Shared time/experiences</td>
<td>K: mentioned, but not constructive and meaningful</td>
<td>K: considered important, but lack of shared time/experiences were viewed as an obstacle for intimacy</td>
<td>K: considered important, make efforts to make time to interact J: the same as the above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J: the same as the above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Topics/interests</td>
<td>K: hard to find common topics and interests</td>
<td>K: observed</td>
<td>K: observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J: observed</td>
<td>J: observed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The abbreviation "K:" indicates the Korean accounts, and "J:" indicates the Japanese accounts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme/Subtheme</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Communication directness versus indirectness</td>
<td>K: mentioned and used as explanation for lack of intimacy</td>
<td>K: mentioned and used as explanation for lack of intimacy</td>
<td>K: not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J: not mentioned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Friendliness/Kindness</td>
<td>K: mentioned and used as explanation for lack of intimacy</td>
<td>K: mentioned, but relatively perceived objectively</td>
<td>K: not mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J: not mentioned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perception of cultural differences</td>
<td>K: subjectively perceived and considered as an obstacle for intimacy negative accommodation</td>
<td>K: subjectively perceived, but little accommodation observed conflict with the differences</td>
<td>K: respect for the differences displayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J: respect for the differences and positive accommodation displayed</td>
<td>J: the same as the above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Involvement</td>
<td>K: avoided hesitation and reluctance observed</td>
<td>K: mixture of activeness and hesitation observed</td>
<td>K: activeness, patience, and efforts observed</td>
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and exclusive attitudes towards Koreans. Indifference refers to Japanese ignorance and lack of interest in Korea. This subtheme was separated from the first subtheme, 'discriminatory attitudes,' because it is assumed that people do not necessarily discriminate against others whom they are simply not interested in or whom they do not know very well. Understanding from experiences includes Japanese empathic attitudes derived from their international experiences, such as other relationships with foreign people and experiences of traveling and living abroad. These three subthemes indicate that the degree of the Japanese sensitivity toward Koreans seems to affect Koreans' feelings about relationships with Japanese people.

**Discriminatory Attitudes**

Almost all Korean participants at all intimacy levels in this study maintained that they encountered discriminatory treatment living in Japan. This treatment was manifested in various ways, but mostly in Japanese stereotypical and contemptuous attitudes towards Koreans.

I could feel that Japanese people act differently toward American or English people compared to their attitudes toward us. They talk to American people from the bottom of their heart or...they really try to communicate with Western people.... Anyhow, I 've been feeling ‘that is totally different! [from their attitudes towards Koreans]' from the beginning of my stay in Japan. And now I believe that is the general Japanese attitude toward Asian countries. (K-3, Low)

My friend [Korean] cannot speak Japanese very well. One day, he could not explain something in Japanese, so he switched from Japanese to English. As soon as he started to speak English, the Japanese whom he was talking to changed his attitude completely! (K-5, Moderate)
Somehow, Japanese people think Koreans are coming to Japan just to make money. So they treat me so badly. (K-2, Low)

I think Japanese people, because of mass media in Japan, consider other Asian countries to have low living standards and undeveloped cultures. So just because they have developed economically, they...how can I say...have a strong sense of their own superiority. (K-3, Low)

Although most Korean participants had encountered these Japanese discriminatory attitudes or views towards them and are disappointed with Japan and Japanese people, the attribution of Japanese discriminatory attitudes varied in several directions. Some of them thought that mass media and education in Japan were responsible to an extent.

I think that textbooks on history itself were written in an evasive way and sometimes historical events were distorted in Japan. So...I think there are few Japanese people who know the true facts as they are. (K-2, Low)

Well, I think that people are basically influenced by mass media, like TV... and they just believe all of what they see or hear. And even if I told them that what they believe about Korea is wrong, they just wouldn’t believe me at all. (K-3, Low)

Another Korean participant thought that historical events between the two countries are still psychologically affecting both peoples.

Because of the relationship of dominate-being dominated between Japan and Korea a long time ago, I think Japanese people have a sense of superiority and Korean people have a sense of being victims... I’m not sure, though.... (K-5, Moderate)

The other Korean participant attributed Japanese discriminatory attitudes to her country, Korea.

I don’t really care, personally...but, I think that my country should improve more. We should be making efforts to be rich and powerful. So, I always think it’s not that the
Japanese have wrong and distorted views, but that we should work harder.... (K-6, High)

While encountering discriminatory treatment in some way, every person seems to have a different view or interpretation of his/her experiences. The way they interpret experiences appears to have an influence on their way of approaching relationships with Japanese people. Actually, some of the Korean participants were avoiding having relationships with Japanese:

So, I can have much more in common with other foreign students [than with Japanese]. We foreign students can understand each other without explaining everything because we know the circumstances of living abroad. (K-3, Low)

However, in some cases, the experiences of Korean participants had seemed to be perceived by them as exaggerated ones. In other words, according to Korean participants’ accounts, they certainly experienced rejections and bad treatment by Japanese, but those experiences did not necessarily seem to mean that they were discriminated against in Japanese society. It was implied that even Japanese could be poorly treated anywhere in Japan, for example, just because the other person happens to be in a bad mood, or because the participant happen to act in an inappropriate or unacceptable way. A Korean, 0 (1991), recalled her own experiences in Japan, saying that what she had thought of at first as discrimination against her was, she realized, only misunderstandings because of slight cultural differences. Therefore, 0 (1991) warned that Koreans may need to be attentive to the differences between discrimination and misunderstanding, although these are difficult to distinguish. Of course, however,
it might not be appropriate to blame this situation only on Koreans. It could easily be assumed that Koreans could perceive a slight negative experience in Japan as one involving huge discriminatory issues after all they had been through. Even though the happenings between Koreans and Japanese was by only misunderstandings, not by discriminations, Koreans might perceive their experiences as discrimination derived from the historical events between Korea and Japan, the social situation in Japan in terms of discrimination against Koreans and the stereotypical views of both Japanese and Koreans.

**Indifference**

According to Korean accounts, especially at the low intimacy level, Japanese people seem to ignore or show no interest towards non-Japanese Asian people, including Koreans.

Japanese people know about Western countries such as the United States very well, but not about Asian countries at all! They even think that foreign students must speak English. (K-3, Low)

Japanese people call non-Japanese Asian people 'Koreans' or 'Chinese', but never call us 'foreigners'. 'For Japanese, foreigners mean ... well, people from Western or European countries. (K-2, Low)

These accounts indicate that Japanese have a lower interest in valuing Korean and non-Japanese Asian people, in contrast to Western, European people. Korean participants appeared to wish to acquire more respect as foreigners in Japanese society, according to their accounts. On the other hand, they mentioned that they did not like to be labelled as foreigners, saying that they felt excluded or even discriminated against when Japanese praised them
for their ability in the Japanese language. These accounts could indicate that Korean participants were placed in the complicated position of being between foreigners and Japanese, or neither of them. Japanese sometimes do not seem to regard Koreans as foreigners and, yet, sometimes reject them as outsiders. Under these circumstances, 'exclusiveness' seems to develop as one of the Japanese traits mentioned in Chapter 2; however, the frameworks or boundaries of insider and outsider do not seem to be clearly determined.

With regard to this Japanese trait, Nakane (1972) developed her theory of *uchi* (insider) and *soto* (outsider) in Japanese society, and even after twenty years, her theory is still influential in the realm of sociology in Japan and taught at the university level. She divided the Japanese sense of social structure into three categories. The first category includes the most important people for the individual, such as members of the family, colleagues at work, and close friends who see each other on a daily basis. Surrounding the first category, the second category expands its sphere and includes relatives, neighbors, acquaintances, people working at the same company or business associates, and people whom the individual does not know personally, but who are related to him/her through some kind of social network. According to Nakane, Japanese consider people in the first and second categories as *uchi* (insider), and people in the third category as others, *soto* (outsider). There is no limit to the outline of the third category; therefore foreigners are placed in this category as well as Japanese to whom the individual is not related. Nakane pointed out that a sense of
commonality or sharing plays an important role in Japanese interpersonal relationships, and stressed that even foreigners, once they could achieve a sense of commonality or sharing with Japanese, could be placed in the second category, uchi (insider), though that would be rare. On this point, in contemporary Japan, where more foreigners are increasingly interacting with Japanese at the community level as well as the business area than ever before, it may be assumed that there are increasing numbers of foreigners who are regarded as uchi (insider) by Japanese. However, as Nakane mentioned, the boundary of each category is subjective, and it varies depending upon the individual’s sphere of activity and interpersonal relationships.

Therefore, one could not affirm but could speculate that the Japanese, described by the Korean participant in this subtheme, could have had relationships with Koreans in the past and regarded them as uchi (insider). If not, the reason for the Japanese perception of Koreans as non-foreigners may also related to Japanese perceptions of their similar appearance (e.g., color of skin and hair), and sometimes their "Japanese" behavior or way of thinking, in comparison to Western people. In any case, it may be assumed that Koreans in Japanese society are placed in an unstable, ambiguous, and complicated position, and both Korean and Japanese seem to be confused in dealing with this situation. Furthermore, Koreans living in Japan seem to sense this Japanese attitude in their everyday experiences so that they not only have a negative image of Japan but also, in the worst case, eventually avoid having relationships with Japanese people. However, other Koreans find that there are some Japanese people who understand
them very well, and do not have any discriminatory views against them. Those Japanese people seemed to have one thing in common: understanding from experience.

Understanding from experiences

Not only the Korean participants at the moderate and high intimacy level but also those who were in the low intimacy relationships in this study mentioned that there were some Japanese people who showed understanding toward them and that they felt it was easy to communicate with them. According to them, those Japanese people seemed to have experiences studying abroad, living abroad, and having friends from other countries:

Well, the daughter of my host family... she has been traveling abroad since she was a child and used to live in the United States for a year. So she seems to know what to do in any case because she has experienced homestay, too. (K-1, Low)

There were some Japanese students who had experienced studying abroad at my school. Talking to them was totally different from talking to people who didn’t have any experience. I could feel that they really tried to communicate with me, not from courtesy or formality. (K-2, Low)

My teacher used to study in the United States and he had experiences of being helped by many people in those days. So, I don’t know whether it was because of that or not, but she is so kind to us foreign students. (K-6, High)

On the other hand, in the account of Japanese participants, the following statement of understanding from experience was offered.

Having foreign student friends, I came to understand that they were feeling lonely in what for them was this foreign country. So I am trying to have a good time with them as much as possible. (J-3, High)

Thus, the way Japanese people see these Koreans appears to have a
great influence on Koreans’ image of Japan and Japanese people and the Koreans’ intentions of having relationships with Japanese people. For the Japanese people as hosts, even if they do not have any international experiences, attempting to understand how Korean people have been treated and how they feel without the imposition of stereotypes is important in developing relationships with Koreans. In other words, what Korean participants appreciated seemed to be the sensitivity of those Japanese towards their experiences of living abroad.

The reason Korean people felt comfortable with some Japanese who had experiences of studying or living abroad might be that they had something in common. Hayasaka (1979) defined ‘relationship’ as basically a recognition of having some kinds of commonalities. In that sense, the account in terms of having experienced studying or living abroad could also be included in the next theme, Commonality. As mentioned earlier, the themes are interconnected.

(2) A Sense of Commonality

A sense of commonality included two subthemes: shared time/experiences and topics/interests. Shared time/experiences referred to the degree to which time and experiences shared by participants influenced their interaction. Common topics/interests involved topics or interests which seem to be important for Koreans and Japanese to develop and keep their relationships effectively.

Shared time/experiences
Shared time/experiences emerged as a subtheme in the statements at the moderate and high intimacy levels. The amount of shared time seemed to be proportional to the intimacy level between Korean and Japanese participants. The account in the moderate and high intimacy level suggested that shared time was especially important to developing and keeping their relationships with Japanese.

You have to join the ...for example, cultural exchange event or something, and talk to some people, exchange home numbers, make some phone calls, and then keep seeing each other. Otherwise, it's very hard to make friends just by knowing them from the same class at school or whatever. (K-6, High)

I think 'time' should be arranged, if you really want to have contact or make friends with people. So, Koreans who don't have any Japanese friends seem not to bother making time to get together with Japanese, instead saying they are 'busy' all the time. (J-3, High)

I wish we could spend some more time together, going out some place together or so. Then our relationships would be much better, although I guess it would be difficult because he has children. (J-2, Moderate)

For these participants, to spend time together appears to mean to have the same experiences. By having the experiences, people from different cultural backgrounds may be able to have a sense of commonality and connection, or, in other words, it may be the only way for them to have relations with Japanese people. Since foreigners usually do not have any social network prior to their visit to Japan, they would have to create one on their own. On the other hand, it is not so critical for some Japanese not to develop a new network and interpersonal relationships by spending time together and sharing experiences, because they already have some existing networks and they could develop new relationships.
through those networks if they wanted to. Therefore, although this subtheme seems to be common sense for the development of interpersonal relationships, it is the critical factor for the development of interpersonal relationships, especially between people from different cultural backgrounds.

This would imply that people of different cultures, while spending time together, would have opportunities to seek out more commonalities between cultures, personalities, and interests. Therefore, it can be assumed that what is important for the development of their relationships is not only the amount of time they share but also the quality of time they share. Examining the next subtheme, topics/interest, will help to explain that even though they spent some time together, some of the participants did not find it meaningful and constructive.

**Topics/interests**

This subtheme emerged in the accounts at all intimacy levels, centering on topics or interests in the historical relationship between Korea and Japan. According to the statements of moderate and high intimacy level participants, interest in the partner’s country and history is important and helpful for developing their relationships:

I definitely believe you should be interested in your partner’s country to get along well. (K-6, High)

Especially in making friends with Korean people, I think it’s much better to know the historical relationship between Japan and Korea than not knowing. It would be much more enjoyable! (J-2, Moderate)

I don’t think we should be responsible for history or apologizing all the time to Korean people. But whenever the
topic of history comes up, we should be able to talk about it. (J-3, High)

For some of the participants in the moderate and low intimacy levels, lack of common topics/interests and Japanese ignorance of the history of the two countries' relationship seemed to be one of the explanations for the difficulties in developing their relationships. Some of the Korean participants in the moderate and low intimacy level bemoaned the perceived triviality and formality of the topics raised by Japanese:

Japanese people I met had no interest in our history. They just talk about TV program, movies, and so on. All they say about Korea is that the food, 'kimchi' is good and that prices are low. Then 'I want to go to Korea someday'. That's all. (K-1, Low)

Japanese students at my school are only thinking about themselves and not interested in history or world events. So I found it wasn't very much fun talking to them. (K-2, Low)

We talk more about other people than our personal things. I would rather talk to other foreign students in my residence about my interest or secrets, but not to her. (K-4, Moderate)

On the other hand, interestingly, some female Korean participants did not seem to like emphasizing the history and culture of the two countries, hoping that they could talk about more personal matters:

Since my teacher always asks me serious questions about Korea or whatever, my Japanese classmates also talk to me in a serious manner. I wish we could talk about more personal things. (K-3, Low)

History and world events are certainly important and common topics for Koreans and Japanese; however, some Korean
participants felt that those topics were too formal to develop their relationships with Japanese. What they needed was more specific, personal and meaningful topics for their lives. In contrast to the Korean participants' expectations, some Japanese people tended to talk only about formal, superficial, and sometimes small matters when their relationships are low or developing. Therefore Koreans got a 'cold' impression of their Japanese friends.

Nakane's (1972) theory of *uchi* (insider) and *soto* (outsider) could be applied to this subtheme. She explained that Japanese social life is conducted within the first and the second categories only, and that Japanese have instant relationships with people in the third category depending on the situation: e.g., contact with a clerk at the store or contact with a taxi-driver. In such situations, Nakane mentioned that there are 'typical' Japanese interactions, but no developing or continuous relationships afterwards. Presumably, that 'typical' Japanese interaction with people in the third category implies the formal, noncommittal, and trivial conversation which Korean participants complained about. Although for Japanese, those meaningless conversations might play an important role as lubricant in society, Koreans, as foreigners, might only get a cold impression in such instant relationships.

Moreover, the expectation of Korean participants appeared to indicate that their definitions of "friend" might be different from that of the Japanese. According to O (1991), for Korean people, "friend" means someone with whom you can discuss all of your secrets, problems, and other personal matters. From her own
experiences and observation, she explains that Japanese people tend to have a distant relationship with those to whom they talk to about personal problems and avoid troubling their close friends. In that sense, among Japanese, talking about personal matters is not necessarily imperative in order to be close friends.

The issue of cultural differences of the kind mentioned above between the two countries seemed to appear as one of critical factors underlying the difficulties in developing their relationships. What is critical is that there seem to be slight differences which even participants themselves do not realize. Also, even if Korean participants noticed them, their perception of cultural differences might still be the unified or monolithic, sometimes stereotypical views. The word 'culture' itself has ambiguous, abstract, ideal and slippery meanings. As soon as a culture is 'spoken' about, discussed and idealized, the culture does not seem the same as the one we have or experience anymore. There appear to be parts of culture which we do not even realize in our own culture. Culture and cultural differences might only be constructed and re-constructed through the experiences in the environment the individuals had been raised in and in their experiences of staying in Japan. One seems to be able to be aware of 'culture' and cultural differences by interacting with people from different cultures.

In the next theme, some cultural differences which seemed important in developing interpersonal relationships between Korean and Japanese people are discussed. Moreover, not only the cultural differences themselves between Korea and Japan but also
participants' perception of the cultural differences are discussed.

(3) Cultural differences

Cultural differences included three subthemes: communication directness versus indirectness, friendliness/kindness, and perception of cultural differences. Although the last subtheme, perception of cultural differences, is not a characteristic of culture and is different in nature from the other two subthemes, it seemed to be important for developing the participants' interpersonal relationships.

Communication directness versus indirectness

The issue surrounding this subtheme emerged in almost every interview (except for K-3 low and J-3 high), and was especially prominent in the accounts of the moderate and low intimacy levels. This outcome is consistent with Sudweeks et al.'s (1990) thematic analysis of Japanese-North American interpersonal relationships and also the theme emerged in the Ting-Toomey's (1985) study, "Japanese communication patterns: insider versus the outsider perspective." Difference in communication directness seemed to be a barrier for the participants in the low and some of the moderate intimacy levels:

I don't know if I could make friends with Japanese because I can't know what they are thinking about. (K-1, Low)

Sometimes I really want them to say how they feel clearly. But they always say things in a roundabout way... I don't like it very much. (K-2, Low)

I think that it's OK when they (Japanese) neither show
their emotions nor freely express themselves. But still, it's dishonest not to express themselves when they have something different in mind. I even think that might be a national trait (of the Japanese). (K-5, Moderate)

On the other hand, differences in communication directness was mentioned in the participants’ accounts of some other moderate and high intimacy levels as real, yet positive.

It doesn’t bother me very much, because Japanese people were brought up in one way and we were brought up in this way... it’s all environmental and might be the nationalities, but not necessarily the personalities. (K-6, High)

I think it’s good to express themselves clearly. I kind of...even enjoy it wondering what’s coming next. (J-2, Moderate)

In the Ting-Toomey (1985) study, "Japanese communication patterns: insider versus the outsider perspective," this indirectness of communication as a Japanese trait was perceived as a positive virtue by outsiders (non-Japanese living in Japan), considering its nature and purpose, serving as "the style of respect for another person’s face and at the same time humbling oneself in front of another person." It could be assumed that this positive outcome in the Ting-Toomey (1985) study was because of the nature of the study. As mentioned in Chapter 1 of this study, the approach in the Ting-Toomey (1985) study was conceptual, asking participants how they interpret the systems of Japanese communication style. In this study, indirectness of communication as a Japanese trait was also appreciated as a "concept" by Korean participants in the high, moderate, and even some in the low intimacy level. This seems to imply that when Koreans come to the practical situation of communicating with
Japanese, it is emotionally hard to accept or understand the difference when the intimacy of the relationship is low or moderate, even though they understand it as a concept. Presumably, Japanese might need to realize why they can communicate in an indirect way and that this Japanese trait has been especially evident in the context of intercultural communication. Hall (1976) differentiates cultures on the basis of communication in the culture:

A high-context (HC) come is in the munication or message is one in which more of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little coded, explicit part of the message. A low-context (LC) communication is just the opposite; i.e., the mass of information is vested in the explicit code (p. 91).

According to this view, Japanese communication style is high-context communication, and in order to communicate with and understand others in a high-context culture, it is essential to know the hidden context, which could be the speaker's feelings or thoughts behind the words. If a person was not reared in a particular high-context culture, he/she would have difficulties in communication, because, as Hall (1976) states, "[h]igh-context cultures make greater distinctions between insiders and outsiders than low-context cultures do."

It must be important for Japanese people to realize that this high-context communication style would not necessarily be effective in communicating with people from other cultures. Since Japanese is the dominant culture in this study, Japanese might tend to be insensitive to other cultures. For example, in Sudweeks et al.'s (1990) study of developmental themes in
Japanese-North American interpersonal relationships in the United States, the difference in communication directness versus indirectness was mentioned more often by the Japanese participants (the minority group) than the North Americans (dominant group). Although Sudweeks et al. (1990) mentioned that understanding the difference in communication style was imperative for both Japanese and North Americans, the suggestion was basically for Japanese to accommodate to the North-American communication style, stressing that the ability of compensatory communication strategies would help to minimize the problematic perception of cultural differences in intercultural relationships. In this study, however, the minority's (Korean) accommodation to the dominant culture (Japanese) would not be applicable because of the characteristic of this particular Japanese culture, that is, communication indirectness, as explained earlier. Therefore, the suggestion would be for Japanese people to be sensitive to other cultures and to develop compensatory communication strategies in communicating with Koreans or people from other cultures, namely to be more explicit and direct than the normal Japanese communication style.

**Friendliness/Kindness**

This subtheme repeatedly emerged in the accounts of participants at the low intimacy level, and only Korean participants at the moderate intimacy level. According to their accounts, the Japanese definition of friendliness/kindness is different from the Korean, and it seemed to confuse the Korean participants attempting to build relationships with Japanese
people. Korean participants all appreciated and admired the Japanese friendliness/kindness to customers, guests, and people whom they meet for the first time in public places. However, Koreans tended to perceive Japanese people as cold in their friend-relationships:

Japanese kindness is different from the Korean one. Japanese are really kind, but for me... it’s like more courtesy and not something from the bottom of their heart. (K-2, Low)

Every time I see my Japanese friends, I feel as though I’m meeting them for the first time even though I felt we became good friends yesterday. (K-3, Low)

It’s really true that Japanese are so kind, but I can’t get the close intimate feeling with Japanese at all. I wonder if they really share love, grief, and happiness with each other. (K-5, Moderate)

These Korean participants’ impressions of the Japanese might be related to the Japanese communication indirectness mentioned earlier. It could be assumed that even if the degree of friendliness/kindness is the same for both Koreans and Japanese, the way of displaying friendliness/kindness might be different. Japanese indirectness in communication style might be an impediment for the Koreans in experiencing Japanese friendliness/kindness.

Since there were no Japanese participants in the low intimacy level in this study, it was impossible to know how problematic the difference in the definition of friendliness/kindness would be for Japanese who have difficulty in developing relationships with Koreans. However, as long as there were no accounts in terms of friendliness/kindness in the interviews of all Japanese at moderate and high intimacy levels,
one might be able to speculate that either they somehow overcame the problem or they just did not realize it as a problem because they showed their friendliness/kindness in their ways and Koreans just had no choice but to accept it. Obviously, Korean participants in the moderate intimacy level were still feeling this difference in the definition of friendship/kindness as a barrier to their relationships with Japanese. Therefore, in the moderate intimacy level, the Japanese participants did not seem to recognize this cultural difference as being as problematic as the Koreans did. This gap in the perception of cultural differences appeared to be significant for the development of the relationships between Korean and Japanese participants.

Perception of Cultural Differences

As expected prior to the interviews, many cultural differences were addressed both by Korean and by Japanese participants, such as communication directness versus indirectness and the definition of friendliness/kindness. In this theme, the issue is focused on how participants perceive and overcome those cultural differences rather than on the cultural differences themselves, because the relationships between Korean and Japanese participants seemed to be influenced significantly by how they perceived the cultural differences as well as by the differences themselves.

One of the typical attitudes toward cultural differences of participants in the low and moderate intimacy level was accommodation. Both Korean and Japanese tried to accommodate themselves, conforming to the way of acting or thinking in the
other's culture in order to get along with each other. This finding also came out in Sudweeks et al.'s study of Japanese-North American interpersonal relationships (1990). However, in contrast to their findings in which "accommodation" emerged in the high intimacy dyad and played a role in increasing the intimacy level, the accounts in this study indicated that "accommodation" was a sign of negative and eventually frustrated behavior, especially for the Koreans:

I tried to accommodate myself to Japanese people, at the beginning... but I got really tired of it. Now I don't care at all if they hate me and don't want them to be friends with me. I'll just be myself. (K-3, Low)

I always give up. I think I'm a kind of person who accommodates others' way of thinking, but sometimes I feel bad about it. (J-2, Moderate)

To accommodate oneself to another culture seemed to be tiresome and frustrating for those Korean and Japanese participants in the low and moderate intimacy level. As they got tired of accommodation, they tended to go back to their own culture, and started to deny the other's culture. In considering the notion of "relationship," Hayasaka (1979) explained that there should be differences as well as commonalities between any two objects in order to establish a relationship, and each object should retain its own character. From this point of view, it might be possible to conjecture that the participants who tried to accommodate themselves to the other's culture and could not proceed with their relationships feared loss of their own character and culture to some extent by accommodating. In other words, they might be feeling a threat to their own selves or identities as
Koreans by accommodating. However, it must be possible to say that one does not lose one’s self, but could add, expand, or enlarge one’s self by experiencing different cultures.

Hayasaka (1979) stressed the difference between ‘good’ interpersonal relationships and ‘true’ interpersonal relationships, saying that the former designates relationships of "homogeneous character" (doshitsu), with only commonalities, but the latter refers to relationships with differing characters. Therefore, the relationship which emphasizes only commonalities because of one of the persons’ accommodation might be a pseudo-relationship, and would be difficult to keep and develop.

Another perception of cultural differences by the participants in the low and some of the moderate intimacy level was confrontation. They tended to think that the one who should change was the other. Korean participants mentioned that Japanese were very stubborn and narrow-minded, while Japanese participants thought exactly the same of Koreans. Also, they thought there would be no compromise between people who had different cultures:

Even though I started to feel that I was getting closer to Japanese, what I would always feel in the end is that basically, there is a huge ‘wall’ between the way Japanese think and the way we think. (K-3, Low)

He seems to have his own strong idea about Japanese. And he never accepts any exception... even though I told him "That’s not right!," he never changes it. (J-2, Moderate)

I can see that Japanese certainly try to understand or accept others. But I think they tend to hold their idea strongly. Even though they said ‘Yes, I understand’, they would never change and correct their own idea. (K-5, Moderate)

There seemed to be no way to understand each other and improve
their relationships if both the Japanese and Koreans stayed with their own ways. For they tended to see the other’s culture subjectively from their own points of view. They did not seem to accept alternatives or try to find compromises, remaining judgemental by following the standard of their own culture.

On the other hand, different attitudes were seen in the accounts of the participants at the high and some of the moderate intimacy level. They tended to observe the cultural differences objectively, were not judgemental, and, rather, enjoyed the differences as much as they could. They seemed to recognize the variation or exceptions in each other’s culture, and accepted the person whom they met as he/she was:

I think it’s just the characteristics which are engendered in Korea. (J-1, Moderate)

Well, I don’t think the differences always have to be overcome. I’d rather be enjoying the cultural difference with him. (J-2, Moderate)

I think it’s just the difference in the custom. I can see the good point in the Japanese way, too, and also I noticed there were differences that depend on each person. (K-4, Moderate)

Many Japanese people say "Korean people are harsh!" I think it may be the national character of the Korean, but not always the personality of the person. So I try to see Japanese people in that way, too. (K-6, High)

These differences in the perception and attitudes towards cultural differences seemed to be one of the determinants of the relationships between Korean and Japanese participants. According to Hayasaka (1979), commonalities and differences exist simultaneously in a relationship and should be understood by the two persons in order to establish a real relationship. Although
such an 'awareness' appeared to emerge in many accounts of the participants, their standpoint toward cultural differences varied, as mentioned earlier. While participants at the low and moderate intimacy level tended to see the cultural differences subjectively and in view of right or wrong, those at the high intimacy level and some at the moderate level tended to take an observational and objective standpoint and were not judgmental. Nakane (1972) makes an observation about the Japanese view of differences or heterogeneity in its society similar to the one which was seen in the accounts of participants at the low and moderate intimacy levels. According to Nakane, Japanese tend to ignore difference within society. Moreover, it seems that they treat others (outsiders) subjectively from an insider's point of view. The reason is, Nakane claims, that the interpersonal relationship which is important for Japanese is based on the concept of commonality, in which such naive ideas as, "we understand everything about each other," or "we are all human," are emphasized. Beside this Japanese self-centered, subjective sense of social structure, Nakane attributes this lack of awareness of difference in the Japanese to the homogeneity of Japanese society in which people rarely have contact with different cultures.

However, it has been more than twenty years since Nakane's theory has appeared, and as the number of foreigners increases, Japanese make more contacts with other cultures nowadays. It could be argued that Japanese are aware of differences within society, but still do not know how to deal with and respect the differences. The Koreans, on the other hand, because of the
homogeneity of their culture, tend to emphasize the uniqueness of their culture and lack the spirit or the experiences of coexistence and cooperation with different races and cultures (Chung, see Chapt. 2). It could also be assumed that Koreans such as the participants in this study might be struggling to deal with and respect such differences. For both Japanese and Koreans, it might be important to realize and respect the coexistence of commonalities and differences.

(4) Involvement

This was the last, but not the least, theme which emerged from every participant in all intimacy levels in this study. Although this subtheme appears to overlap the subtheme "shared time/experiences" discussed earlier in this chapter, the focus of "shared time/experiences" was to discuss how the amount and the quality of the interaction affected the participants' development of interpersonal relationships. The theme of "involvement" particularly refers to the participants' psychological motivation for the interaction: how participants feel or actually act in having relationships with Japanese or Korean people.

The prominent attitude by participants in the low and moderate intimacy level was passiveness, accompanied with hesitation, anxiety, and troublesomeness. They were not willing to take the initiative, respond, and make efforts in order to develop their relationships:

My classmates come to talk to me a lot, and I think they're interested in me... but I somehow hesitate and avoid talking to them. I think that's why the situation became more difficult. (K-2, Low)
The reason why it’s hard to get along with Japanese is that I avoid having contacts with them.... I get tired! (K-3, Low)

She...does not quite ask first to go out or do something. (J-1, Moderate)

It is difficult to determine the reason for the hesitation and unwillingness to get involved with Japanese people. It might be because of the Korean participants’ past relationships with Japanese which did not go very well, experiences of discrimination, their personality, or a combination of these. It seems to be that each theme which has been discussed so far has an influence on the quality of participants’ relationships. According to the Korean participants’ account at the low and moderate intimacy levels, although they usually attempted to get involved with Japanese at the beginning, the development of their relationships was obstructed by all kinds of obstacles which emerged as themes in this study, and they seemed to give up pursuing their relationships. The lack of involvement would lead them to a vicious circle, which reduces opportunities to get to know each other and to overcome the obstacles. This keeps the intimacy of their relationships low and, eventually makes them more reluctant to get involved in their relationships.

On the other hand, accounts by the participants in the high intimacy level showed a different perspective. There were repeated words such as "positiveness," "activeness," "patience," and "effort."

I think it’s very necessary to be positive and active... to make the person open his/her heart. Because... just waiting and expecting the person to come to talk to me won’t work at all. I need to make efforts to become friends with Japanese
people, even though it takes a long time. (K-6, High)

I think it's important to make efforts and make compromises with each other. Although I suppose Korean people have more or less bad feelings about Japanese people, I wish they could be patient and positive. And I wish they could keep trying to have contacts with Japanese. (J-3, High)

When people encounter other cultures, there can be all kinds of psychological effects such as anxiety, frustration, confusion, disappointment, discouragement, uncertainty, stress and anger, which might lead them to failed mutual understanding, as seen in the participants' accounts in this study. It appears that the development of interpersonal relationships between people from different cultures is partial, but very much dependent upon how they deal with those psychological effects: whether they recognize the circumstance that they are in the midst of two different cultures and all the influences in such circumstances, or whether they let all those unexpected obstacles overwhelm them. Obviously, this study implies that it is important for the Koreans to be patient, while the Japanese need to be tolerant and sensitive toward Koreans as well as other cultures. However, what is more important is education in both Japan and Korea. Not only teaching about the variety of cultures, but also developing a more specific curriculum, such as stress management in cross-cultural settings may be necessary in compulsory education. Especially, pre-departure training for exchange students seems useful. Walton (1990) reviewed literatures on stress management training for overseas effectiveness, and identified four concepts for consideration in dealing with stress overseas: hardiness, cognition and coping, self-efficiency, and social support. In
addition, Walton emphasized the need for knowledge and preparation for the psychological aspects of a cross cultural setting. Especially for Japan, as the host country which is accepting more and more foreigners into its society, this kind of education may be imperative in order to establish effective intercultural relationships from the national level to the individual level.
5.0 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

First of all, there are several factors which make it impossible to make generalizations from this study. The small number of the participants (six Koreans and three Japanese) is one factor. The purpose of this study, however, was to share the participants' lived experiences and to investigate the profound problems and important factors in the development of their interpersonal relationships. It was more effective to have a small number of participants and much more detailed information from each participant than to gather general information from a large number of participants. In addition, the participants' age, academic background, and their social status as well as the Korean participants' purpose and motivation to stay in Japan, might have also affected the results. Relatively young, well educated participants (all of them attended universities), who came to Japan to study (or, in one case, serve as a Christian pastor) might have had positive attitudes towards having interpersonal relationships with Japanese people. Also, among the Korean participants in this study, two of them (K-5, Moderate and K-6, High) intended to stay in Japan more than 10 years; therefore, they might have had stronger motivations for adjusting to Japanese society and having relationships with Japanese than the other Korean participants. With participants from different backgrounds, such as seniors, workers, businessmen, or ones of low socio-economic status, the emergent themes might be very different. Therefore, further studies in this area of investigation would be necessary.

Moreover, prior to the interviews, it was considered that
the emergent themes might vary by sex (three males and six females) might also affect the themes. However, as interviews were conducted and transcripts were analyzed, the sex of participants did not seem to affect the themes in this study. It could be assumed that, at least with respect to the participants in this study, there were no differences between sexes in terms of the sense of seeking friendships, problems and demands, and what they believed to be important factors in communicating with each other.

Moreover, because of the smaller number of Japanese than Korean participants, the Japanese views of interpersonal relationships were less well-defined than those of the Korean. Since there were no Japanese participants in the low intimacy level in this study, it was impossible to capture the voices of those Japanese. It would be significant to examine the voices of Japanese who have Korean acquaintances but they or do not intend to develop their relationships with Koreans. Doing so would clarify the status of interpersonal relationships between Korean and Japanese in Japanese society. However, it could be said that this study was able to elucidate the Korean points of view about interpersonal relationships with Japanese in Japanese society. More specifically, obstacles, important factors, Japanese people’s attitudes towards Korean and interpersonal relationships, and the characteristics of Japanese society were revealed.

Secondly, it could not be denied that there was a limitation in the interview technique as the method of data collection in this study. Although the particular format of the interviews in
this study was the semi-structured open ended interview, the contents of interviews often tended to deviate from the topic of interpersonal relationships. Participants tended to talk about general impressions of the other's culture or cultural differences which were not very much related to the development of interpersonal relationships. Moreover, since there were difficulties in the time scheduling and each participant was interviewed in a single session only, there did not seem to be enough follow-up questions to develop the participant's statements. Therefore, I suggest that future interviewers be well prepared for research interviews, and, if time allows, it would be ideal to set up a few more interview schedules with each participant to obtain follow-up information.

Finally, the lack of a specific measure to increase the validity of theme development in this study might be questionable. It is generally recommended to have more than two persons independently analyze the same qualitative data and then compare their findings (inter-rater reliability) in order to reduce the potential bias that comes from a single analyst of the data (Patton, 1990; McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). Patton (1990), however, also stated that "[s]ince qualitative analysts do not have statistical tests to tell them when an observation or pattern is significant, they must rely on their own intelligence, experience, and judgement" (p. 313). Although in this study the researcher was the only sorter of the data, an attempt to compensate for this limitation was introduced by repeating the theming procedure several times. Also, as mentioned in Chapter 3, themes and subthemes emerged not only from the participants'
account but also through the researcher’s experiences of reviewing literature, living in Japan, living abroad, interacting with all participants face to face, and the writing/rewriting process.
6.0 CONCLUSION

Table 2 summarizes the findings for the themes/subthemes across intimacy levels of Korean-Japanese interpersonal relationships. Two subthemes: discriminatory attitudes and indifference under the theme, "Japanese attitudes towards Koreans", were prominent only among Koreans’ accounts. All Korean participants experienced Japanese discriminatory attitudes, but they dealt with them differently. Discriminatory attitudes negatively affected their interpersonal relationships at the low intimacy level, and were relatively influential at the moderate intimacy level, but were objectively viewed at the high intimacy level. Indifference was claimed and used as an explanation for the lack of intimacy only at the low intimacy level, while understanding from experiences was mentioned by the participants of all intimacy levels.

Under the theme "a sense of commonality", shared time/experiences and topics/interests were viewed as less constructive and less meaningful at the low intimacy level, while at the moderate and high intimacy levels, they were considered enjoyable and important. The lack of shared time was claimed as an obstacle for the development of intimacy at the moderate level’s accounts, compared to the high intimacy participants’ accounts, which insisted on making efforts to arrange time to interact.

Under the theme, "cultural differences," the subthemes communication directness versus indirectness and friendliness/kindness were prominent and used as explanations for the lack of intimacy among Korean accounts at the low and
moderate intimacy levels, while they did not seem to be problematic at the high intimacy level. Cultural differences were perceived as obstacles to greater intimacy at the low and moderate intimacy level. Also, accommodation was observed negatively at the low intimacy level, while accommodations was observed positively at the moderate intimacy level, but also conflict or struggles to overcome the differences were observed among Koreans at this level. Relatively, all Japanese at the moderate and high intimacy levels showed respect for cultural differences.

Finally, in the theme "involvement" participants' attitudes or feelings such as avoidance, hesitation and unwillingness to develop interpersonal relationships were observed at the low intimacy level. The mixture of activeness, uncertainty and hesitation was observed at the moderate level, while at the high intimacy level, activeness, patience, and efforts were prominently observed.

The themes and subthemes that emerged in this study provided several insights into the nature of the interpersonal relationships between Korean and Japanese in Japanese society. Significantly, implications for the development of Korean-Japanese interpersonal relationships are different from the ones offered in the other studies of intercultural interpersonal relationships, such as between Japanese and North Americans (Sudweeks et al., 1990).

First of all, the existence of discriminatory and indifferent attitudes in Japanese society is still making it difficult for Koreans to establish interpersonal relationships
with Japanese. Although it was not surprising that this subtheme emerged, it was still disappointing to observe that every Korean participant experienced some kind of discriminatory treatment. As Koreans stayed longer in Japan and made Japanese acquaintances, they seemed to start to meet Japanese who did not have discriminatory views against Koreans. Their attribution of discriminatory and indifferent attitudes towards Koreans appeared to shift from the Japanese people themselves to other factors such as mass-media, historical events between Korea and Japan, and the weakness in the political or economic power of Korea. However, the accumulation of the Koreans' daily experiences of Japanese discriminatory attitudes against Koreans eventually seemed to exhaust them and to limit their contact with Japanese people to a minimum.

There seemed to be a discrepancy in Koreans' attitudes and behaviors. Although they understood the diversity in the Japanese views on races and their attitudes towards having interpersonal relationships with Japanese were positive, their behaviors (having relationships with Japanese) tended to be passive and affected by such emotions as anger, disappointment, confusion, sadness, and suspicion. Therefore, it seems to be critical for Japanese society to realize and respect the existence of other ethnicities and cultural differences, and to correct indifference, ignorance and discrimination towards Koreans. Although the Japanese government is beginning to deal with the issues of Korean residents in Japan and Korean "comfort women," who served on battlefields throughout Asia in the World War II, generally, the perception of these issues by Japanese people
seems limited, and even talking about these issues has been considered taboo. Since even the contents in history textbooks in compulsory education in Japan have been distorted and contain little information about these issues, people could hardly know the truth about Korean residents in Japan and the issues of "comfort women." Consequently, talking about them with distorted knowledge and stereotypes could insensitively hurt or insult those people. Therefore, there seems to be a great responsibility for researchers and educators to approach these sensitive but important issues with understanding, and to provide the Japanese people with proper knowledge about the ethnic minorities in Japan. Touching on these sensitive issues in the realm of research, especially by interacting with people in the midst of these issues might be politically and ethically difficult. It is essential for researchers to deal with their participants with understanding, respect, tolerance, sincerity and unbiased views.

The second insight gained from this study is that it is notable how the perception of cultural differences affects development of interpersonal relationships. It seems important for both Koreans and Japanese to perceive the cultural differences more objectively and not so judgementally, and to be aware of the coexistence of the differences and the similarities. Koreans, especially those whose intimacy with Japanese people are relatively low, tend to consider some of the Japanese cultural traits wrong and unacceptable when judging from the standard of the Korean culture. In the present study the Korean participants' accounts revealed that they tended to deal with cultural differences, which were crucial for their interpersonal
relationships, either by confronting the other, or by negatively accommodating to the other. The reason for the negative accommodation by the Korean participants might be the potential gap between their attitudes and behavior; they behave by the standard of the Japanese culture, but think by the standard of the Korean culture. Consequently, this gap seems to cause them frustration when they encounter some contradictions between Japanese and Korean culture. Although the Japanese participants in this study showed respect for the Korean culture, it seemed problematic that they did not recognize the cultural differences as much as the Koreans did.

The educational implication of these issues is the implementation of a curriculum that focuses on cultural awareness and appreciation of cultural differences, not only in language education but also generally in the compulsory education both in Korea and in Japan. Specifically, in teaching practice, it is necessary to create classroom environments which support consideration and awareness of the implications of cross-cultural settings and to encourage tolerance or respect towards others. In the realm of Japanese as a foreign language curricula, as Hayashi (1991) stated, four basic communication skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) have been emphasized as the practical skills. On the other hand, the psychological factors such as, stress management or the inner process of adjustment to other cultures, have been neglected. With a prior awareness of the psychological effects in cross-cultural settings, such as uncertainty, disappointment, confusion, disorientation, anger, and loneliness, people would be better prepared to deal with
emotions that might impede the intercultural interpersonal relationships and cultural adjustments.

Moreover, teaching about cultures in the second or foreign language education setting seems imperative in order to provide understanding, as well as the ability to communicate properly with people in the society. All the Korean participants in this study had taken Japanese as a foreign language courses and acquired Japanese language skills sufficient enough to communicate with native Japanese, but some of them were having difficulties adjusting to Japanese society. Culture should be dealt with carefully in language education because of its diversity within the society. From my perspective as a Japanese person, I would say that there are many differences among the Japanese people, between men and women, from generation to generation, and from region to region. Also, more than anything, Japanese culture is rapidly changing all the time, as are other cultures. For example, recently, it has been said that Japanese women have become more active than they used to be: they obtain higher education and pursue more careers in society, they are not submissive anymore, and the average age of women for getting married is getting older, and so on. Also, it is often said that Japanese young people are much more Westernized than the older Japanese: they are more individualistic and do not want to be bothered by social obligations; they dress and act like Western people, and they are getting away from the Japanese traditional culture. Moreover, it is often said that not only young people but also Japanese society as a whole has been rapidly accepting Western culture, especially North American culture: more English
can be seen and heard than ever, on street signs, on television commercials, on the radio, in all kinds of magazines. Sometimes, this trend in Japanese society is even perceived as admirable in the sense that Japanese not only accept other cultures into their society but also change those other cultures appropriately to fit into Japanese society. Therefore those elements of Western cultures are no longer Western, but have become appropriated into Japanese culture after they came to Japan.

On the other hand there is another opinion, that because of these influences of Western culture, Japanese people are getting away from traditional Japanese culture, which is now considered retrospectively as an idealized one. All these examples might be generally and statistically true parts of Japanese culture. However, believing only in these perspectives seems premature and biased. In my opinion as a Japanese, Japanese society is certainly changing rapidly, often in conflicting directions. For example, many Japanese women are still having difficulties pursuing their career and acquiring higher social status, consequently quitting their jobs when they get married, while some other women do not even want to stay at work. Rather, they are eager to get married, so that they can quit their jobs and be housewives like traditional Japanese women who live dependently on their husbands. Also, although the Japanese have been accepting features of other cultures, at the same time they tend to reject other features in an effort to preserve the purity of their culture. For example, Japanese people feel uncomfortable and exclusive towards foreigners who can speak and act perfectly like the Japanese. Intermarriage might still be unacceptable for
some Japanese people. These contradictory coexistences of tradition and innovation, and the acceptance and rejection in Japanese society might be confusing and make it difficult for many foreigners to understand the Japanese people and culture. However, knowing the differences and diversity within a culture seems very important not only for foreigners in Japan but also for the Japanese, so that they would not have distorted and stereotypical views towards the other's culture.

Finally, it seemed significant that this study acknowledge openly the existence of cultural differences among Asian countries (in this case, between Korea and Japan) in the realm of the cultural studies in the West. So far, although the collective "Asian cultures" have been compared to the "Western culture" in the realm of cross-cultural studies, few studies in North America have examined the cultural differences among Asian cultures. Since this particular study focused only on the investigation of Korean-Japanese interpersonal relationships, the findings of studies of other cultures among Asian countries would be different and would be significant to understanding people from those cultures. Also, it appears to be important that cross-cultural studies examine not only the comparative differences but also the similarities or homogeneity between cultures so that people become aware of the coexistence of differences and commonalities, of heterogeneity and homogeneity.
7.0 EXPERIENCING DOING THIS STUDY

Personally, it seems that this study began when I left Japan four years ago and started to live in Canada as a foreign student. My experience of being a foreigner in Canada has been making me ask, "What is culture?" and "What is 'understanding' between people?" These questions have not been fully answered. Words such as "tolerance," "acceptance," "sensitivity," "appreciation," and "respect" are often heard when cross-cultural relationships are discussed, but their meanings seem to be taken for granted. I recall that I learned these words even when I was in Japan. So I knew and I was prepared to encounter people from different cultures, but my knowing was only at a concept level. I came to realize from my experiences of living in Canada how difficult it is to deal with "differences" in order to understand people from other cultures. I also came to realize that living in "differences" has had a great influence on my self, and actually, has changed my self. My new self was, of course, different from the self when I was in Japan. Upon reflection, I came to realize that I was struggling in dealing with my self, living in a space between Japan and Canada.

By doing this study, I have come to sense that the Korean participants in my study were having similar experiences to the ones I had. As they were having difficulties adjusting to Japanese society, some of them were worried whether they could re-adjust to the Korean society when they returned. In my case, experiencing living in Canada led to a feeling that my "self" has been altered: added to, expanded, or multiplied. It is not like switching from A to B, but more like adding B to A. Feeling that
way, I am not worried about re-adjustment after returning to Japan, because I know that I still have A in myself, although it is likely A will be different.

I cannot assert that living or experiencing different cultures affects people in the same way that I experienced it. Even if it does, it would be uncertain how long it would take or whether the person would even realize it or not. Or, this "multiplicity of self" could be constituted living within a culture: by meeting new people, doing different things, or reading books. However, it could be assumed that living and experiencing different cultures is an opportunity for enriching one's self, even though there are risks threatening the self.

In this study, I did not directly ask the Korean participants about their perception of "self" very much, since the focus was on their experiences of interpersonal relationships. However, I tried to understand the meaning, and especially the condition of their "selves" in the midst of the cultural differences which underlie their accounts. Although several obstacles which seemed to impede their intercultural interpersonal relationships were consequently observed, I have a positive impression of future relationships between Koreans and Japanese. I have a feeling that, the relationships between Korean and Japanese people are improving even though at a slow pace. For, at least, they are interacting more than they did in the past and in this interaction, they are beginning to contact not only the image, but also living embodied people.
Acknowledgments

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Appendix A

Letter of Initial Contact

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY

"Understanding of Korean-Japanese Interpersonal Relationships"

Rika Koike
M.A student
Department of Language Education
University of British Columbia

Home: (078) 904-1155

Some recent studies reported that many non-Japanese Asian students, who had acquired basic Japanese language skills which were sufficient to communicate with the native Japanese people, were isolated from the society and therefore had very negative attitudes toward having contacts with Japanese people and culture. So far, little work to study the cross-cultural relationship between Japanese and other Asian people has been done. It will be significant to study it not as each ethnic group, but from the individual perspective in order to avoid to develop some fixed categorization, so called stereotype.

I would like to invite you to participate in a study of the interpersonal relationships between Korean (living in Japan) and Japanese people. The aim of this study is to provide better understanding of how people from the different ethnic background develop their relationships (acquaintance, roommate, colleague, or close friends). This will be done by listening to the actual voices of both Korean and Japanese people who have already developed (or are developing) their relationships.

Participation in the study will require the two sessions of interview. The first session will take from about 60 minutes to 90 minutes. The second session will only take from 15 to 20 minutes. The interviewer will be a Korean speaking person. You will be asked how you have developed your relationship with the Japanese person. All interviews will be tape-recorded and analyzed as data for the study.

You will also asked to introduce your Japanese partner. The researcher will contact your Japanese partner and get agreement of his/her participation. Your Japanese partner will be separately interviewed as well.
Appendix A

Continued

Your participation in this study will be completely confidential. Your name and your Japanese partner's name will be concealed by use of a pseudonym in the interview, the analysis, and the report of the results. You are not, of course, under any obligation to participate. You may withdraw from the study at any time for any reason.

If you would like to participate, or you would like further information about this project, please telephone me at home (078)904-1155, or complete the attached consent form and hand it to me when I come to your school next time (2 or 3 days later).

Additionally, I would very much appreciate it if you would know anybody who is appropriate to this study and would introduce the person to me.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely yours,

Rika Koike
M.A. Student
Appendix A
Continued

Participant Consent Form

"Understanding of Korean-Japanese Interpersonal Relationships"

I would be interested in participating in the research project, "Understanding of Korean-Japanese Interpersonal Relationships," under the following conditions.

* I retain a copy of the letter for my reference.
* I will be able to withdraw from this project at any time.
* My participation in this study will be completely confidential.

Korean Participant:

Name (please print)_____________________________________
Signature__________________________________________
Date:________________________________________________
Address:___________________________________________
Phone:_____________________________________________

Japanese Participant:

Name (please print)_____________________________________
Signature__________________________________________
Date:________________________________________________
Address:___________________________________________
Phone:_____________________________________________

Thank you for your interest and participation.
Appendix B

Interview Guide

* NOTE: The abbreviation "(K)" after some of questions refers to the specific question for Koreans, and "(J)" is the question for Japanese. Questions without these marks were asked to both Korean and Japanese participants.

1. Opening (Sequence is flexible)

   Participant’s background

   * Age

   * Length of stay in Japan, including the planned length of stay in the future (K)

   * Institution or workplace which currently they are at

   * Current address, and type of stay (homestay, residence, apartment, whether they have any roommates)

   * Reasons for coming to Japan and the choice of the institution or workplace, including when it was decided and how it was arranged (K)

   Plans after they return to Korea (K)

   Japanese language study, including when started, self-evaluation of their ability in Japanese (K)

   Prior knowledge and interest of the other’s country

   Any experiences of living or travelling abroad, having intercultural relationships
Appendix B
Continued

2. Body  (Sequence is flexible)

Image or impression of Japan before and after they started to
live in Japan (K)

Image or impression of Korea before and after they interacted
with Koreans (J)

Relationships with Japanese (K) /relationships with Koreans (J)
(generally, and including the specific person for those who
participated as a pair)
* Whom they interacts with, how, and how often
* Impression of interaction with Japanese (Koreans) compared
to their relationships with people in the same culture
* If there are any differences, what are and how different
they are
* What they do or talk when they interact
* How they feel or think of 'culture' in interacting
each other: whether they feel any differences or
difficulties, or any similarities
* Any episode about satisfied, or dissatisfied experiences
in their relationship
* Any expectation for Japanese (K)
* Any expectation for Koreans (J)

Additionally, the following questions were asked to those who
participated to this study as a pair.
Appendix B
Continued

Relationships with the particular person

* Their perception of the relationship (acquaintance, roommate, colleague, or close friend)
* How and when they met each other
* How often they see each other
* How they communicate (in Japanese, Korean or both), and any difficulties in communicating
* How they think about the future of the relationships

The historical events between Korea and Japan

* How they feel or think of the historical events between Korea and Japan
* Any influences of the history on their relationships

3. Closing

Anything they feel or think about in their lives in Japan (K)
Anything they feel or think about in interacting with Koreans (J)
Appendix C

Sample of Participants' Account

(1) Japanese Attitudes towards Koreans

* Discriminatory Attitudes

"They seem nice in front of me and even talk to me a lot, but I know that sometimes they are staring at me and talking something bad about me behind my back." (K-2, Low)

"I have experienced so many Japanese stereotypical view towards Koreans. I wonder if more than half of the Japanese might consider Koreans as poor workers who come to Japan just for making money, if not as prostitutes." (K-3, Low)

"One day, we had a discussion at university about the issue of students from non-Japanese Asian countries and Korean residents in Japan, and I had a chance to present my opinion and some historical events between Korea and Japan. There were about 23 students in the class, and some of Japanese student showed very hostile responses, such as 'Go back to Korea, then!,' after my presentation." (K-3, Low)

"Compared to their attitudes towards other Asian, the Japanese are so much nicer and obedient to the Western people who speak English, because they consider the Western people superior." (K-3, Low)

"I think that because their economy has developed more than the one in Korea, the Japanese people believe that they are more superior than Koreans in every way." (K-3, Low)

"I am quite sure that if we were Americans, he (a Japanese) would never have showed such hostile attitudes." (K-4, Moderate)

"A Japanese, who is a pastor at my church, always praises me and Korean church, but I think that he has a stereotypical view and a sense of superiority against Koreans, because I have heard that when I am not around, he often talks about how wrong the Korean church is." (K-5, Moderate)

"It's not that I really like Asians more than Westerners. I happened to meet some non-Japanese Asians and have not had a chance to meet Western people so far." (J-3, High)
Appendix C
Continued

*Indifference

"The Japanese do not seem to be interested in other Asians, such as Koreans and Chinese, rather, they admire the Western people.... Do you consider Koreans foreigners?" (K-2, Low)

"Korea has been changed so much lately, especially the economy has much developed compared to before. So I wish that Japanese people would respect us as the same human." (K-5, Moderate)

"I think that the reason for the 'indifference' might be that they are the invisible minority.... I have heard that even Koreans consider not themselves, but the Westerners foreigners." (J-3, High)

"Some of my Japanese friends, who used to live and study in the United States, often make clear statements, such as 'I am not interested in other Asian countries!'" (J-3, High)

* Understanding from experiences

"Teachers, who are at the Japanese language school, are nicer and different from other Japanese people, because they have more chance to meet foreign students and they are used to get along with foreigners." (K-3, Low)

"One of professors at my university is very supportive for foreign students, while other professors are not very much. I have heard that he used to study in the United States for several years, so he might understand that how hard living abroad is." (J-3, High)

"As I get along with Korean and Chinese students, I realized that we Japanese should really respect those people and culture. If Japanese people come to have such a feeling, I don't think that they could show discriminative or hostile attitudes against non-Japanese Asians. (J-3, High)

"I think that there is a problem on the side of foreign students as well. They tend to stay together with other foreign students, being away from the Japanese people, because they believe that they understand each other in the same circumstance (being foreigners in Japan) and the Japanese don't." (K-6, High)
Appendix C

Continued

(2) A Sense of Commonality

* Shared time/experiences

"So far, since we both have been busy, we were not such close friends..., but I think it will get better from now, doing things together." (K-4, Moderate)

"It take time to make friends and get closer, but since everybody is so busy, it seems difficult to have a chance to get together. (K-6, High)

"I have a good Japanese friend whom I met in one of classes at university. We help each other at the class a lot." (K-6, High)

"I think that being able to take the same class at school is really helpful for foreign students to make Japanese friends." (K-6, High)

"Anyway, I try to do things together with her as much as I could, going out together, having lunch together, studying together, or teaching her Korean if she wants to learn. I think that is very important." (K-6, High)

"We went to a Korean cultural event together. There was a party after the event, then we became closer. (J-1, Moderate)

"I am worried that our relationship would fade away, because now, we are in holidays and do not have a chance to see her, unless either of us call and get together." (J-1, Moderate)

"Well, although both we are busy, especially because he has a family, I wish we could spend more time together, for example, going 'karaoke' or taking a small trip...." (J-2, Moderate)

* Topics/interests

"I talk about personal things with Japanese people, but not about historical or political issues between Korea and Japan. They don't seem to be interested in such topics." (K-1, Low)

"All they talk about is trivial things, such as what they want to do in a vacation or where they plan to take a trip...." (K-2, Low)
"Well, we Koreans talk about ourselves a lot, but the Japanese people do not seem
to. At a party or something, they just drink, eat, sing, and have a little small
talk. That's all. They just enjoy the time, but not with very much talking." (K-4, Moderate)

"We talk about language, Japanese and Korean, and also a lot about other people
whom both we know, rather than about ourselves." (K-4, Moderate)

"I have some Japanese friends who are very interested in Korea. I think because
of their interests in Korea, we got close very fast and easily." (K-6, High)

"Well, although I have never asked her, but I think that since she came to Japan
and study Japanese, she must be favorable to or interested in Japan." (J-1, Moderate)

"We do not talk about the historical events between Korea and Japan. It seems
that especially young Korean people are not interested in such issues, although
elderly people are." (J-1, Moderate)

(3) Cultural differences

* Communication directness/indirectness

"The Japanese people are different from us. They do not show their emotion as
much as we do, for example, even if there is something that he/she does not like,
they would not show their discomfort or anger." (K-1, Low)

"I do not like the way the Japanese explain things, the roundabout way." (K-2,
Low)

"I say my opinions and show my emotion a lot, but the Japanese do not. I think
that difference make it difficult to be friends with the Japanese people." (K-4,
Moderate)

"I cannot trust people who hide their thinking and emotion. The Japanese way of
communicating makes me suspicious whether they are using me or not, and I am
afraid that I would become to stay away from them, if all Japanese are like
that." (K-5, Moderate)
Appendix C

Continued

"I think that, in a way, it is good thing not to show one's emotion. For, the Japanese people do not express themselves so that they do not want to hurt the other's feelings. But still, for me they are not honest." (K-5, Moderate)

"I have known a Japanese person almost for a year, but our relationship is not getting better or anything, because he does not seem to open his mind to me. I am really frustrated." (K-5, Moderate)

"It might be my personality that I could not tell the Japanese people to express themselves more or stop saying something in a roundabout way. Or, I know that, even if I tell them so, they would not change. That is the way they are." (K-6, High)

"I think that the Korean way of communicating (communication directness) is good. Although sometimes I feel frustrated about it, I think that is just one of their cultural traits." (J-1, Moderate)

"Anyhow, what I felt was that the Koreans have a strong self, and they do not hide their emotion or thinking, compared to the Japanese." (J-2, Moderate)

"I try to express myself to him (a Korean) as much as I can." (J-2, Moderate)

* Friendliness/kindness

"The first thing I have found about the Japanese was that they are so nice to customers." (K-1, Low)

"I really admire the Japanese kindness, especially their good service at restaurants or stores." (K-2, Low)

"For me, it's like the Japanese people have two faces, the one at a party or something where they can be so friendly and the another one in the day time when they are different and cold." (K-2, Low)

"I think that even if it is superficial, the Japanese kindness is good, and I should learn that." (K-3, Low)

"Before I came to Japan, I have heard that the Japanese people are generous and kind. Generally speaking, it is true, but some Japanese I have met were not very kind. So I am a little bit disappointed." (K-4, Moderate)
Appendix C
Continued

*Perception of cultural differences

"Well, he is the type of person who makes every decision by himself, and I am the type of person who can easily accept or accommodate to other people. So, usually, things are O.K., but, sometimes his assertion is too strong." (J-2, Moderate)

"At the beginning, I tried to accommodate to the Japanese as much as I could. But, one day, I came to the point that I could not take it anymore! Well, I think that I am a little short-tempered, though." (K-3, Low)

"I gave up..., or, how should I say.... It’s like,'if nobody understand me, I do not care anymore.'" (K-3, Low)

"The Japanese people are so stubborn. Once they get an idea, they would never re-think it, nor correct it." (K-3, Low)

"For, example, even if the Japanese had an idea which seems, to me, wrong, and I told them about my idea, they would never try to correct their idea. So I would have to give up. I experienced such a situations many times" (K-5, Moderate)

"Well, since I came to Japan, I would like to contribute to the society in some way. So, if it’s necessary, I think I would tell the Japanese people that they should change such and such, as a pastor." (K-5, Moderate)

"Well, I wish that the Japanese society would change, but I do not think that is going to happen, unless there would be some kind of social movement." (K-3, Low)

"I go at my own pace, and they go at their own pace. If something happens, I would discuss it with them, then if we could not get along well, I would just avoid them." (K-3, Low)

"I have always been telling the Japanese people about my idea, opinion, and emotion, because by doing so, I hope that they would re-think about themselves and change their attitudes or idea." (K-5, Moderate)

"I realized that there are many good things in the Japanese culture." (K-1, Low)

"I am not usually judgemental about things. I try to see things from various points of view." (K-1, Low)
"I thought that it was just a characteristics of Korean people. I really do not care." (J-1, Moderate)

"There are cultural differences that I don’t like, but at the same time, those are the differences that I envy or appreciate." (J-2, Moderate)

"I think that 'differences' are 'differences.' I cannot do anything about it. I don’t think we should make them all the same." (J-3, High)

"I think that there is no point in telling them to change. They are just different." (K-6, High)

(4) Involvement

"There are chances to meet the Japanese people, but I do not actively try to get involved with them." (K-2, Low)

"We don’t call up each other very much, unless either of us have something important to say.... We don’t call each other just to say hallo or something." (J-1, Moderate)

"I get tired when I am with the Japanese people. At the beginning, I tried to spend time with the Japanese friends. But lately, it’s getting troublesome for me, so I just stay away from them." (K-2, Low)

"If they were actively trying to be friends with me, I try, too. But otherwise, I do not really try to be friends with the Japanese. I have a lot of foreign student friends, though." (K-3, Low)

"I really try to be friends with the Japanese. It needs lots of efforts, and completely up to me." (K-6, High)

"The Japanese people is quite shy, especially at the beginning of the relationship, so I try to talk to them first and break the ice." (K-6, High)

"When people meet each other, I think that the first impression, or the first five minutes is very crucial. If I am being nervous or shy, I think that the Korean person would hesitate to talk, too. So, I try to be active and talk to them a lot." (J-3, High)