

雪丸:こんにちは、英米学科の雪丸とクリーサーです。

私たちは2020年度から2021年度にかけて、学長裁量研究費という研究費の助成を受けて、「Unity in Diversity」という研究プロジェクトを行っています。

このプロジェクトでは、2年間の研究において、心身の障がい、学びの多様性、ジェンダー、LGBT+の権利、人種や民族などの内容を扱う日・英両言語併用のプログラムを構築し、それに伴うワークブックを作成することを目標としています。

今日の講師の先生は、名古屋市立大学のアブリル・ヘイ・松井先生です。

このプロジェクトの一環で、「New face of ELT: Black Women in Japan」というタイトルで、

英米学科の皆さんには、この講演会の内容を聞いて、日本に暮らす黒人女性に対する理解を深めてもらえたら幸いです。それでは先生方、よろしくお願いいたします。

Fiona: Avril thank you so much once again for joining us at Kitakyushu University and we're so interested in hearing everything you have to say about this topic, so off you go.

Avril: OK. Well thank you both very much for having me. It's lovely, lovely to be here and I always love to talk a lot about my topic.

So, my family is fed up with hearing about it so when I have an audience that's great. OK, so I'm just gonna start by talking probably a little bit about me.

Let me show you the schedule.

So, I'm going to talk a little bit about me and then I'm going to share about my research and experiences of the people that took part in my research and a few of my own researchers. And then I want to talk my own experiences, and then I want to talk a little bit about how I use my English classes to promote conversations about cultural diversity and stereotypes and that kind of thing.

So, if you do have any questions, I know that we are not live, but I'm very happy if you want to send questions to me via your professors. That will be great.

Fiona: Yep, you can send us anything you want and Yukimaru Senseu and I will pass them all on to Avril. I've known Avril for years and she is so approachable and lovely, and she will answer your questions perfectly.

Avril: Thank you, thank you, thank you.

OK, so a little bit about me then. So, I am from England. I come from the center of England, a city called Nottingham, and I came to Japan straight out of University, so this is kind of my first full-time job my entire adult life has been here. As far as my professional journey is concerned, I've always worked in English language teaching first as an assistant language teacher in Nagano. Part of the JET Programme.

So, I came thinking that I would just stay for one year and then by that time my Japanese would be perfect so then I could just leave but it didn't quite happen.

Fiona: I did exactly the same.

Avril: One year and then go home and then I moved. I was living in a in Nagano, a beautiful part of Nagano and I still go back there. Still have lots of friends and family really. They feel like family to me that live in that small town in the mountains.

And then I moved to the big city to Nagoya and I worked in an English conversation school and I taught all sorts of people all ages from babies up to pensioners. And then I went back into education, but I did it through distance where I upgraded my qualifications so that I could move into University teaching.

So, I've worked in English language teaching for a long time, and then of course in the middle of all this I met my husband and got married and decided to stay for a while. And now we live in Aichi close to Nagoya and I have two children. A 5th grader in elementary school and a 2nd grader in Junior High School and I tell you that because you know that is part of my identity it is who I am and it's probably my most important job, certainly the most difficult job.

Fiona: Oh yeah, definitely.

Avril: As you two know right? You can't train for this.

Fiona: There are no qualifications for being a parent.

Avril: So, I can see you both like shaking your head. Yes, OK.

So. One question that I like to ask my students when I first go into the classroom is what is your image of an English teacher? Your ideal image. What do they look like? Where do they come from? You know, what do you think their personality is like? And often students will say or describe someone who looks a little bit like this even though I'm standing there, and I look nothing like that. But you know, it is that that's the image.

But of course, these days I think there's a lot more diversity within English language teaching, so it's quite possible that students will find that their English teachers, will look like this and there's me looking a lot younger. So, and it's not really our students' fault or, it's not your guys fault that you have this image of an English teacher.

Even when I looked at my son's first year junior high school textbook. Sorry, *Head First* year junior high school textbooks. Probably many of you have seen this textbook, so you use it. Um? When I looked at it. I notice that you know there were very few people in that book who looked like me, yeah? I guess, there are a couple, but they generally come from an African nation. Looking at images of the UK of my country, there is no one here that looks like me.

Fiona: No, and of course we all walk around with the Saint Georges Cross on our faces.

I do that. That's how I go to work, I just paint it on as part of my makeup,

Avril: That's right or wearing a kilt.

Fiona: Yeah, I've got one of those and bagpipes.

Avril: Absolutely yeah.

So you know it's not really a, it's not really an authentic image of what the UK is like. There's a lot more diversity, especially within the inner cities, so that leads me onto my research.

Because basically more and more women like me, and men are coming to Japan. English language teachers come from all kinds of countries, not just you know, the English speaking. You know, America, UK, Canada, Australia, countries, but come from all over the world. And we're doing really, really great jobs here.

So, I'm showing you this not to talk deeply about my research, but just to show you that even though we are all black women. The women in my study come from many different places. Many different nationalities, Dutch, Jamaican, American, from the UK. Most people speak English as their only language and some people speak a number of languages. So, for example Kerry. She is Dutch. She speaks 7 languages. Seven, including English and Japanese. Seven languages.

Fiona: Fantastic.

Avril: If I spoke 7 languages, I would have it written on a T shirt and I would start every sentence with; 'I speak seven languages.' You know I would.

Fiona: I would say that in all of the 7 languages that I could speak.

Avril: Exactly,

Fiona: 'I can speak seven languages' in all of these different languages.

Avril: Exactly, in some ways people like Kerry, are better language models for students in a way because they understand how to acquire language. So, we have all of these amazing people, amazing women in Japan.

When we think about the image of black people in Japan. And what we see in the media, lot of it is often quite negative or stereotypical, sports, musicians. So, students for teachers like me before we even go into the classroom, we always have to be aware that students may have these images, or they may be afraid of us because of what they've seen on the media.

Fiona: Would you be able to explain each of these images to us I, I'm familiar with one.

Avril: OK, so this is just a typical picture of starving Africans that you know we often see and in if you listen to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie Ted talk and she talks about this single story, how there's a single story of people that is repeated again and again and again it becomes the only thing that people believe about them.

And so, especially when it comes to Africa, we often hear and see these images of poverty. War and disease, and that becomes the single story. Not Africans in Japan. And it can cause problems and misunderstandings.

My African friend who, she's from Nigeria actually, and she's a doctor and, she says that her colleagues will often ask her about wild animals, or, you know, walking miles to get water when she's never actually done those things. And in fact, the most walking she's ever done is in Japan, because at home she has a driver to take her everywhere. So anyway, that's the typical image of Africa.

This is Bobby Allogan. He's a little bit of a controversial character. I'm sure many of your guy students are very familiar with him. He's probably the most popular African man on Japanese TV, he is a talent.

He, he's not very popular within the black community. For the reason that the character that he tends to portray on TV is of someone who is. Very simple, unintelligent. Make lots, makes lots of mistakes in Japanese even though his Japanese is actually really amazing, and he just gives the very sort of negative image of Africans and black people in general in my opinion.

And this, comes from the NHK. Children's show, which is called 世界の今. OK, it's an NHK. Children show that you know, teaches Japanese children about what's going on in the world at any given time. This came out during the Black Lives Matter movement in the summer this year.

It's a short animation clip explaining the racial unrest in the US and it starts with this very angry looking like black guy with his bulging muscles and in the background, you have lots of like angry stamping. You know like people stamping their feet. His voice is very still gruff and gruff. Those words are we are angry.

And, basically, the animation gives the impression that like people in the US are angry and they are rioting because they're poor and because many of them are getting coronavirus, but the video didn't mention the killing of George Floyd by a White policeman at all, it didn't mention that at all or systemic racism, so it was really, it was really it's just a really terrible thing, but I think on the good side is that NHK got a lot of complaints about this animation, and most of those complaints came from Japanese people. Which I think is really, really, good.

Fiona: Fantastic.

OK. So, we think about these, you know, images of black people and media before we walk into the classroom. And so, when we think about that, we think, well, maybe things are going to be a little bit difficult for black people in the classroom, but actually my research showed something a bit different.

So generally, people you know really, really love Japan. Um? It's exciting, you know, people are here because they're interested in Japan or interested in travel interested in the culture or they may have Japanese family members like husbands and children.

So, there are many reasons why people are here and. I think when you love something and you're teaching that shows in what you do. But we can't always control what happens outside of the classroom, right?

First Break 15:15

Avril:

So, one of the issues that some of the women in my research have talked about is, is, getting stared at a lot. It happens a lot, still even in a big city like Nagoya, and we are here in our little town in our neighborhood you know we actually tend to forget that, you know, we look different, me and my kids, at least when we go outside and people kind of look at us, and especially when it's the four of us together, it can be quite confusing.

I remember in my early years in Nagano I caused a car accident. Yes, yes, I wasn't driving. I was just walking down the street in Matsumoto and this man was staring at me so much as he drove past, that he ran into the car in front.

Fiona: That that's really funny, Avril because I've been saying to Naomi that since my youngest daughter started elementary school and I wait for her at the gates, all of these little first year kids stare so much at me that they, actually a couple of them, fell over, yeah, [I think to myself] if you didn't stare at me so much, you wouldn't fall over.

Avril: They will get used to you eventually, right? Oh, that's so funny. Ok, before we go into the classroom, I'm talking about some of the issues that women have outside of the classroom that I think are typical of people living away from their families.

So, the distance from the family, especially now then we can't go back.

Fiona: Yeah, that's tough.

Avril: And of course, language issues too, because even though you know I speak Japanese, every new situation brings a whole new set of vocabulary as I'm, I'm sure you know you two are aware, like you know pregnancy, or learning to drive. I learned to drive in Japan so you know sometimes that can be tough.

Another thing that is perhaps a little bit unique to black women perhaps is hair and beauty care. First of all, there is a lack of products. There's just nothing that we can really use on our hair and we need the products so people like myself we generally will just have it shipped over, but when I first came to Japan, I couldn't do that, so it's terrible for my hair.

Fiona: Hair is important.

Avril: It is important. It's very important.

Fiona: I'm wondering how are you dealing with the COVID-19 situation, because shipments sometimes have been stopped right?

Avril: Actually, though for Amazon they started up again. It's fine, and now I wear my hair natural, so it doesn't actually need as much stuff as it did before, but I think another thing as well, is head touching. Even in the classroom or just random strangers, you know.

My kids are mixed race, but my daughter has this beautiful very curly very, very, long way, way too long, she's so getting it cut soon, long hair. And when she was little, people just wanted to touch her all the time and so one of the first things that she started to say to strangers was, you know 座らないでください! You know, 'Don't touch me!' because I would also be saying that to them, and then for me, one of the reasons I now wear my hair short is because I don't want people,

random people, touching my hair. It's unpleasant and it's kind of it feels like an aggressive action to me.

Once in a supermarket I do remember a woman coming up to me and my husband and asking my husband if she could touch my hair and he said, 'Only if you want to die.'

Fiona: Good for him.

Avril: Yeah, yeah, because he said no she does not like that at all and no. So, I think people understand that that our hair is different, but it's, it's, it's strange I think to want to touch a stranger's hair or teacher's hair someone you don't know very well. Even someone that you do know very well. It's not really socially acceptable.

So, a lot of women will talk about that, they'll say, 'Why do people keep trying to touch my hair?'

Fiona: I know, my youngest daughter, because she has naturally blonde hair when she was very little, people just wanted to touch her all the time. And from the age of two until about the age of four or five, she just wanted to sit on my shoulders, all the time and this was to stop people from touching her. It was a way for her to protect herself, so if she's up on my shoulders people couldn't touch her.

Avril: Yes, yes. You know we see that quite a lot, right? And it actually has a very negative effect, a child especially treated like an object.

Fiona: I sometimes get children coming to me and sometimes old people come to me and just grabbing my arm. They just they think it's OK and they lift it up and they go これ何? or 大変ですね! and I, and I say don't touch me and, they get really shocked, and almost angry sometimes. Not to the children I don't say that [don't touch me] to the children that touched me, it's the parents that get angry.

Avril: Yes

Fiona: I think to myself, well, this is my body and you really shouldn't be touching me just because I'm different.

Avril: Yes

Fiona: My body is not a public touching area. That has happened to me before.

Avril: Yes, yeah. I've, I've had that experience a couple of times too. Especially with my kids, people will ask 'Why?' when you say don't, don't touch them, and they'll say 'Why?'. And I remembered, yeah, I had the same thing too in in a in a doctor's office, a woman wanted to touch Mia again.

Eliai, didn't get touched as much because he's just too fast just moving around all the time, bit like now. But for Mia they wanted to touch her all the time and I said please don't touch her and she [a woman in the doctor's office] said, 'Why?' and she was rude about it, and I said because I just told you not to touch and she said but I want to touch her because she's cute, and I said there are cute children over there but you're not touching them why are you touching my child? No, and it was unpleasant, and it makes it makes you feel as if almost as if you're in the wrong. These people to invade your, your, space like that. Yeah, absolutely. So that is an issue, especially with small children. Long, hair. Yeah. Yeah,

OK so. I'm back to my, my, participants again. There's so much I could say that topic when I'm trying to move on. OK, so.

Thinking about treatment by Japanese people. Um? Generally, very positive actually and really very positive. But there was a little bit of a difference, so I saw that with women who came from countries where they were part of the racial minority so, for example, for a black American or a black British person [they] tended to feel very positive about the first contact with people in Japan. Probably because of the amount of racism in, in our countries. So, for example as Annabelle says here you know people are curious, but you know it was good that experience of interacting with people.

But Rose, who comes from Jamaica, so Jamaica, that is 98% black it was a little bit shocking for her not so much that she was a minority, but just the way that some people reacted to her. She's a very small woman, she's quite petite, thing is she was a dancer, um and she said that it shocked her that sometimes people would act as if they were afraid of her.

They would be like, びっくりした! that had a negative effect on her and sometimes when she came home, she just wanted to stay in her apartment, because she didn't want people to be afraid of her.

But then we go back again to Anne who talks about being in her community, she feels totally accepted, which is the same for us, we've lived here for about 10 years now since we bought the house and, you know, we're definitely a part of the community, including having to do all of the, you know, what's the コミ thing, around the コミ and sorting it and, yes anyways, but you know, they think this is good because you are part of this community, and I have very lovely neighbors but what's interesting here is that Anne does talk about how she feels that some Japanese people are more accustomed and more comfortable with white foreigners than other types of foreigners, and this doesn't happen all the time, but this has been part of my experience too in Japan.

So, the most recent one. You do not have to read this because I'm going to explain it. Don't panic about all this writing I want to talk about a letter to JR, to Japan Railways. So, when was it, last year? My friend and I were going to Kyoto to a conference and we were meeting at my local station she got there first, because I'm always late and she had bought her tickets already, by the time I arrived.

So, I went into the office to buy the ticket and it's my local station, so, I go there all the time and I asked the clerk in Japanese, you know, 'Could I have a ticket to Kyoto?' and he kinda turned his body and responded to my friend and she looked at me, and she was like, why is he looking at me?

And then in that moment I kind of realized. Well, she is a white American, and I am a black woman. So maybe he doesn't think that I can speak Japanese. So, then I said to him, 'Could you please look at me?', and I proceeded to get my ticket, but every time he asked a question he only looked at my friend, and it was, it was unpleasant. It was unpleasant and it was annoying.

But it was also ironic because I was going to Kyoto to go to a conference on diversity in Japan.

Fiona: Was that the same conference I was at?

Avril: That was the same conference here. It was that very day.

Fiona: There you go.

Avril: Yeah, exactly that conference, right? So, I thought about it and it's happened so many times in Japan, happened with Japanese people, but that I can understand, that I can understand, it's not pleasant, but I can understand it.

But it's also happened when I've been with white people, so I thought I'm going to do something about this.

So, I wrote a letter to Japan Railways and I explained that this situation had taken place how it made me feel, and I couldn't understand why, when faced with two foreigners, one white and one black, one was more acceptable than the other. And I sent this letter to the head office in Chubu in Nagoya and then I also took one to my local station I had written and don't worry, I had written and got it written in Japanese, got it translated.

Unfortunately, I didn't write it myself, I didn't translate it myself, I wrote it myself, I didn't translate it myself. It was translated into Japanese and I delivered these letters, and I didn't really expect anything to happen.

But about a week later in my office, I got a phone call which surprised me and then the result of that phone call was that I got a visit a week later from the head of human resources. In Shibu and the, the stationmaster, I suppose, the head of the station of my local station, so, they both came and I was kind of really expecting just an apology and some せんべい, and they would go. And they did, they did bring せんべい it was, you know, it was nice.

So, we all sat down, and they did, they apologized, and you know they said that they looked at the camera and they talked to the clerk, and the clerk did not actually remember, this happening and he didn't realize. He remembered us me and my friend, but he didn't realize that he was doing that and so I was about to say, well, that's, that's the problem, right?

But then they said, and we think that is the problem, is that it was so unconscious, and I think one thing that had shocked them was that I had said in the letter next year, the Olympics will be in Japan and train stations are probably one of the first places that many foreigners will encounter when they get to Japan, and if they are treated in the way that I was treated, we're going to have a very bad impression of

Japan. So, I think this kind of shocked them a little bit into action, and they said that they use the letter in a three-day training course, for the Chubu JR workers and they talked about it and how it shouldn't happen.

And then they decided to send the letter to all JR stations in Japan, which I thought was very, very, positive. I think there are some issues, but I think there are many people who want to fix those issues as well which is why it's important not to stay quiet. Many things we have to talk about, as unpleasant as they are, we have to talk about them. Yes, that's my experience there.

Fiona: Absolutely, I agree with you 100%. Fantastic result.

Avril: It was good. I was very happy that they, they, responded in that way. OK, so should I go on or are we OK with time?

Fiona: I think we are still OK, the time.

Break #2 31:59

Avril: All right then, then I want to talk a little bit about experiences in the classroom for black women in Japan. So, lots of great experiences, actually. Lots of very positive experiences, but sometimes getting into the classroom, there is a hurdle actually, getting into that classroom. And this hurdle is to do with what people believe about English teachers. So, in Camille's situation she was applying for a part time position at the University, and she phoned the person who was in charge of hiring, and um, I'm sorry, so, Camille actually went to the job interview and they said, 'Well, you know, we like you but we really want a white person because it's better for the image of the school.' and they were very, very open about that.

And then in another situation, Bella was applying for a part time University position and she phoned someone and he asked her if she was black and when she said yes he said that universities don't generally hire black people, and which is not the case obviously I'm here, right, but the person she spoke to was an American male. She presumed that he was a white American male, as some of these men who have been here for a long time they are kind of gatekeepers to these jobs and so often people are hired based on what they believe rather than what the actual University wants.

And so sometimes it's hard to, to, get past those gatekeepers. I think it's changing then I really do think it's changing, but on the whole, you know the women in my study had some really great positive experiences in the classroom. They get really close to their students and they actually say, quite often a theme that keeps coming up again and again is that there are a few positives to being, you know to being different I suppose.

In the, in the classroom, you know it's kind of a unique position and, we're able to get students to kind of open up in different ways and it's sometimes easier to talk about topics that other people might find it difficult to talk about, or they might feel uncomfortable talking about. And even if there is some misconceptions or student's express negative stereotypes, it's good in the classroom because then we can talk about it.

And so, for example, you know Kate said that she used to work in one of those bilingual high schools in Kansai and she felt that a lot of the students that felt different themselves, especially the biracial ones, would come seek her out after class to talk to her about their problems.

And she said that she felt that way because she can offer a different, perspective. OK so for me I also like to offer different perspectives of, of, our country, right? You know my country, so, you know, Britain, I think has a very white image. You know, I like to tell students that Britain is very multicultural in my opinion, it is more multicultural than the US. I think there is a lot more, lot more intermarriage, inter-mingling, that's my opinion and I'm sure there's research to back it up.

So, for example, there's you know over 250 languages used in London every day, not by foreigners, not by tourists, but by people who live in London, OK.

And there's people who are born and bred in Britain, I like to teach my students about, you know, famous black Asian Britons like Mary Seacole who was a nurse in the Crimean War. At the same time as Florence Nightingale, and she actually wanted to help Florence Nightingale, but she was turned away because she was black, so she went by herself.

Fiona: Good for her.

Avril: Yeah, and she established this treatment facility, which was right next to the battlefield. She would actually go onto the battlefield to tend to the sick soldiers, and when she came back, she was honored by the King of England and looked after until she died and they actually recently unveiled a statue of her in London.

And this is the mayor [of London], Sadiq Khan right? , first Muslim mayor and not to be political, but I think he's doing a very good job actually.

Fiona: I actually like him a lot

Avril: Yeah? They, and another thing that I tried to do in the class is just to be aware of the images that I'm using. So, you know if I'm going to talk about family, I'm going to talk about a family that's, let's choose, diversity or, you know, just people doing random things like ordering food, or taking a train, or University students sitting together so students have an idea that English is not a white language it is the global language. It's a multicultural language and Britain is a multicultural country.

Another thing that I talk about in the class and times is life for foreigners in Japan and I always bring up the issue of the empty seat because this is something that you know you students can actually do something about.

Especially, I don't know if it's especially in Nagoya, but like that's where I live, so I'd say, especially in Nagoya a lot of people in the foerign community will complain about the fact they get on a train or on a bus and nobody will sit next to them, even though the train is full, sometimes crowded, or sometimes people sit down and they will get up. I'll talk to my students about this and they realize that as soon as I say it, at least three or four of them will say, 'Oh yes, I've notice this, but I've never thought about it, but I see it.'

I see it happening and for me it's very personal because my son and daughter are Japanese, but they don't look Japanese and so my son is at that age where he is starting to take the train and do things with his friends and this will happen to him. And I don't want it to.

Fiona: No, my children can't take Japanese nationality, which is a discussion for another day but my son says to me, I hate the word *gaikokujin* and I say why and he says because everybody is *gaikokujin*. He says, 'The people who say that

I'm *gaikokujin* more than [them] means to me, that they are *gaikokujin* to me, so he said it makes me feel different.'

He doesn't like it because he's not different. He doesn't see himself as different to any of his friends, and I am pretty sure his friends don't see him as different to them because they've been brought up with him from being tiny. So, he's just beginning to realize this and he doesn't like it and he's also starting to slowly, even amongst COVID-19 to go out of his bubble and he will experience the same.

Avril: Yeah, it's true, it's true. They will experience it and I think the only thing we can really do is talk about it to try and prepare them for it and hope that they will talk to their friends about it too, to stop it happening. In some ways the kids learn so much better from each other.

Fiona: They can understand each other, but we have to say during COVID-19 social distance, it's OK not to sit near anybody on any train.

Avril: Very true.

Fiona: Way we have to say that.

Avril: But unfortunately, in Nagoya, the trains are so crowded still there is no, yeah, there is no concept of social distancing during rush hour. There should be but, yeah, I think yeah, kids don't really want to be different, don't, I don't always want that difference to be pointed out in any way. You know whether it's cultural or ethnic or the size of your body they don't really want that.

So, I think it's important you know for kids to point it out to their friends when they are being, are 'othering' them anything, or people they, they, love and so on. On that note though, you know, teaching their friends and my son, I am very proud of this story, but you know, I've known many of his friends since they were like three or four years old, but some of them, when he went to junior high school, some of them were new to us, and of course, in junior high school kids are getting, I think it's to do with the ALT English. I know because I used to be that like, 'Yeah I'm so *genki* and crazy.' Being crazy and hello and you know, and so some children when they see foreigners they still act as if that person is their ALT.

I'm so the first few months of junior high school is fine, and suddenly his friends started being, some of his friends would be like, "Hello, Hello" and you know "I love you" and they start shouting at me as I was walking by.

And. Finally I drive. I drive home past the park and of course my son is always playing football there with his friends. He will come and talk to me and his friends would come along and like you know, just watch and listen and then they you know go 'Hello, how are you?', 'Ah, I love you.' No, that's just not, no. that's not acceptable anymore, So, I went to pick up my daughter, I had to take her to the dentist, and I came back to the park and called my son over and I said, 'Listen, I'm really angry, I'm really angry.' I said, 'I am sick of your friends treating me like or disrespecting me like that. If you treated their mothers like that, you would be in so much trouble and you would never do that. You would never ever do that' and I said, 'so here's what's gonna happen. You have three choices. OK, number one, I can talk directly to your friends right now about this, number 2, I can talk to their mothers and number 3, you can talk to them.'

And he said, 'OK, I'll talk to them and I drove away thinking, oh, I don't know if I've done the right thing.' I really wasn't sure if I had done the right thing, but um, when he came home later, he said to me, I'm really sorry that happened, I talked to them and I told them that is discrimination that is 差別 and I would never talk to your mother like that. So, the next time you see my mother, you know just say hello properly or don't say anything at all.

He said: はい、分かった and now then now whenever I see them, they're like おはようございます。

Fiona: Well, done, very impressed.

Avril: But I you know; I think they hadn't realized how rude and discriminatory they were being until, he said something and I like to think that they thought God, I'm hurting my friend's feelings, because they are really close? But I was worried that they were going to not be his friends anymore, but I think they respected him more for that. Kind of went well, OK, OK so.

Are we still OK for time?

Fiona: You're fine.

OK, so. I'm still talking about the classroom and some of the things that I do. So, we talk a lot about cultural stereotypes within the class. I will show pictures. Of different situations, again contrasting the stereotypes because of course my students will see this as the only image of Africa rather than this is also images of African countries, you know, University in Lagos, students relaxing or rich people in their houses. We like to try to confront student stereotypes you know, what are the stereotypes? What do you actually think?

And when I was doing my Masters, one of my students, actually said this about black people in the classroom and I thought it was actually good that she said that she thought that Blacks are good at singing and dancing a little wild and lazy, I guess.

I'm glad that she made it clear what her stereotype was because I could ask her where that came from. Was this from experience? But it wasn't, because in fact the only black person she knew was me. I am not wild and lazy. Crazy maybe.

Fiona: Very good at singing , I know you're very good at singing.

Avril: Singing that is true, most people in my family are not.

Naomi: Oh, OK!

Avril: It is not a stereotype, I'm just different. It's you know, so we can talk about those stereotypes. We can talk about. Why students will react?

How students will react to this image of a scary black man and how they reacted to this image of a wonderful man, OK? And I want to create, I like to create that environment in the classroom, so they feel safe to say these things. You know, even if these things are not, you know, not good, and if they negative, I want them to say that in my class, and we can talk about it, and sort it out, and we also talk about cultural diversity in Japan.

And this is 1 slide I use, and I asked the students where do you think these people come from? And they all say lots of different countries like Brazil like America, like China and of course, I tell them that actually all of these people are from Japan and they all are you know biracial they all speak Japanese or have been through the same educational system.

And then we'll talk about what that means and that's always interesting because I often have, you know, mixed culture, kids or mixed-race children students in my math classes. And that's also good to talk about because they've all suffered from being a little different, [because of] race not being seen as real Japanese, and that's important to me. Obviously because of my family and my kids. My kids, when they were little, you know it is important. You know nowadays there's, there's, so many more families like mine, like, yours Fiona as well, and we really need to. We're in such a privileged position to help shape our students, apply this when it comes to diversity and just accepting people.

I often tell my students because they always say, you know, we need to know more about foreign countries, and I said, well, actually, no, you don't need to know more about foreign countries. We need to be more accepting of people who are different to you.

You know whether it's culture, whether it's ability, gender, whether it's sexuality, and it is that I'm hoping to instill into my students, and I think that is the basis of 'Unity through Diversity', right? It's acceptance. Accepting these differences and the differences are completely OK.

Fiona: Celebrating difference.

Avril: Exactly and that I think is all I have to say today.

Naomi: Oh wow, so that was real. Oh, my thank you so much.

Fiona: You always bring new thoughts and new insights to me. Whenever I hear you speak, and I've heard you speak a lot and you always inspire me to do, to challenge myself, and to do more than what I already do for diversity in the classroom.

Avril: I can say the same about you actually. Very inspiring.

Fiona: Naomi do you have a question?

Naomi: Um, not the question, but I really liked what you said in the last minute that are accepting people who are different to you. It is like really spot-on type of thing for this lecture. So, thanks wow, thank you.

Avril: Yeah, yeah, it's not, it's not an easy thing to do. I think when we are used to this ideology that everyone has to be the same and it's not good to be different. It is good to be to be different.

Naomi: It is.

Avril: It makes things more interesting.

Fiona: Being different is a positive thing, yeah?

Naomi: Totally, yeah.

Fiona: Thank you very much. Thank you very much for joining us today.

I think the students in our Department are going to get a lot out of what you said today and I, I know it's not going to be the last time that I personally hear you speak, because we often go to the same conferences about diversity and things like that. But I really hope this is not the last time our students hear you speak.

I hope that once COVID-19 is over and that we can start to travel again, I hope that you will come back to our University like you did before. You were you were so popular amongst our students, they loved you, they loved everything you said they thought it was amazing. So, thank you so much for today. Thank you.

Avril: Thank you my pleasure.