

# Life of Elderly Korean Japanese with Dementia and Their Memories as Evoked by Native Words

– The role of Korean caregivers –

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In this paper, I examined how relationships changed between one user and myself at a nursing home by offering care-giving based on cultural context, which then affected relationships with other users and the staff there. These users are elderly Koreans or Korean Japanese (also known as the “Zainichi”) with dementia. In this study, a participant observation was performed at K nursing home, which offers services based on cultural context, along with analyzed dialogues and attitudes among a particular user, family members, other users, and the staff, all via field work.

It is discovered that both bilingual conversation and an understanding of the users’ cultures and customs brought about friendlier relationships. Furthermore, users’ expressing themselves and talking in Korean can render their relationships agreeable with other users. The users’ past memories recur to them every day. It should be noted that the users in the past and the present “coexist” and that their memories are “represented” here and now.

The K nursing home not only supports users who cannot go back to their home country but also users’ families, giving relief to all of them.