Learning to be “Distinctly Other”:

Stories of Japanese Students in English-Medium Missionary Schools

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Abstract

An increasing number of Japanese parents are opting to put their children in English-medium international schools, due to the advancement of globalization and the increased focus on English acquisition in Japanese society. However, this distinct educational setting may have a long-term negative impact on Japanese students' linguistic development, cultural identity, and life decisions. The schools' strict English-only policy creates a linguistic island of sorts, where students may lose their Japanese linguistic proficiency, cultural identity, and even their place in society, thus opting to study and work abroad.

This case study will draw from my own experiences, as well as from interviews with parents, students, teachers, and school board members at one English-medium Christian school in Japan. Using both auto-ethnographic and qualitative interview data supported by autoethnography, I explore the impact of the school's language policy and Christian culture on the students' identity and linguistic abilities. I also examine what is needed to help the students bridge the gap between their school culture and the society that they are in. The results clarify the students' struggle to "fit in" the school and in Japan, the effects of a strict language policy, and the discrepancy between the expectations of the parents and the teachers. I conclude with a discussion on the impact of the language policy and how multicultural education that respects student identity may allow them to become truly balanced bi-cultural and bilingual Japanese citizens.

Keywords: bilingual education, immersion education, language policies

Résumé

Un nombre croissant de parents japonais optent pour placer leurs enfants dans des écoles internationales anglophones, en raison de l’avancée de la mondialisation et de l’importance accrue de l'acquisition de l'anglais dans la société japonaise. Cependant, ce cadre éducatif distinct peut avoir un impact négatif à long terme sur le développement linguistique, l'identité culturelle et les décisions de vie des étudiants japonais. La stricte politique permettant seulement l’anglais dans les écoles crée une sorte d'île linguistique où les étudiants peuvent perdre leurs compétences linguistiques japonaises, leur identité culturelle et même leur place dans la société, choisissant ainsi d'étudier et de travailler à l'étranger.

Cette étude de cas s'inspirera de mes propres expériences, ainsi que d'entrevues avec des parents, des élèves, des enseignants et des membres du conseil scolaire dans une école chrétienne anglophone au Japon. En utilisant à la fois des données d'entretien autoethnographiques et qualitatives, j'explore l'impact de la politique linguistique et de la culture chrétienne de l'école sur l'identité et les aptitudes linguistiques des élèves. J'examine aussi ce qui est nécessaire pour aider les étudiants à combler l’écart entre la culture de leur école et celle de la société dans laquelle ils se trouvent. Les résultats démontrent la lutte des étudiants pour s'intégrer à la fois dans l'école et au Japon: les effets d'une politique linguistique stricte ainsi que de l'écart entre les attentes des parents et des enseignants. Je conclurai par une discussion sur l'impact de la politique linguistique et sur la manière dont une éducation multiculturelle qui respecte l'identité des étudiants peut leurs permettre de devenir des citoyens japonais biculturels et bilingues véritablement équilibrés.

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If you're lost out where the lights are blinding

Caught in all, the stars are hiding

That's when something wild calls you home, home

If you face the fear that keeps you frozen

Chase the sky into the ocean

That's when something wild calls you home, home.

- Lindsay Stirling “Something Wild

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Statement of Research Problem

Since the early 2000s, the Japanese government, along with large corporations that have an international presence, has been attempting to increase English proficiency among the Japanese people in an attempt to encourage a stronger Japanese presence in the global society. Therefore, the government has been introducing various educational reforms to increase Japanese students' English proficiency levels by 2020. In addition, large companies such as the clothing company, UNIQLO and the e-commerce company, Rakuten, have also implemented English language policies, offering free English classes to their employees and asking for TOEIC scores and study abroad experience during the hiring process (Hashimoto, 2013). This has all been done in an attempt to foster global *jinzai* or global citizens, who have an understanding of cross-cultural communication and can work in international contexts.

Much of the government's work has focused on improving English education in public schools, because "with the advance of globalization, it is necessary to foster global individuals from the early stages of elementary school through lower and upper secondary school who excel in language, communication skills, subjectivity and understanding towards different cultures" (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2015, p. 10). However, there have been various issues with the reforms, including a lack of proficient English teachers, administrative support, and learning materials (Sakamoto, 2012; Machida & Walsh, 2014; Ng, 2016). As a result, it is still quite difficult to envision Japan with a large number of bilingual English- and Japanese-speaking global citizens.

While Japanese public schools continue to struggle to develop students' English skills, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (henceforth, MEXT) reports

that about 3,400 Japanese students attend one of 24 international schools in Japan, where they take most or all courses in English (MEXT, 2005). These Japanese students often attend school and interact with foreign-born students every day, and thus, have a good command of not only English, but also an understanding of foreign culture. Therefore, they are, in many senses, the very epitome of “a global citizen.” These Japanese international school students have the potential to stand on the frontlines of the global society as representatives of Japan.

However, as a former student of an English-medium missionary school, which is considered as one type of an international school in Japan, I have observed a tendency for these students to leave Japan when they graduate. This often occurs because they find that they are unable to find higher educational institutions or jobs that would admit and accept them. Without an understanding of the history and the social makings of Japan, along with its ties with religion, it is difficult to understand why so many students with an education from an English-medium missionary school decide to leave Japan, where they would presumably have an advantage over monolingual Japanese speakers in their post-secondary studies and eventual employment.

1.2 Objectives of the Study and Research Questions

The questions that I attempt to tackle in this thesis are questions that I have struggled with for much of my life. My experience of losing my proficiency in Japanese while attending a Christian, English-immersion missionary school in Japan has left me with various questions regarding why I attended such a school (and was forced to leave in seventh grade); how the school system affected the loss of my own native language; and how my experiences there have shaped my identity, my English language proficiency, and my decisions to study and work abroad.

I began asking myself these questions when I noticed that many of my Japanese friends who had attended the school with me also ended up abroad instead of staying in Japan. The research questions I have asked throughout this thesis are below:

1. What kind of linguistic support do English-medium missionary schools (henceforth, EMM schools) offer?
2. How does attending EMM schools affect Japanese students’ cultural and linguistic identity?
3. Why do Japanese parents choose such schools for their children? How do their expected outcomes compare with the reality for the children?
4. What kind of educational environment do EMM schools offer? Are there ways they can better prepare the Japanese students for success in higher education and eventual employment?

1.3 Thesis Structure

The first section of this thesis will consider the relevant literature around immersion schools, identity development, and language loss. In Chapter Four, I will discuss the research setting, the participants, and the methodology of the study. In Chapter Five, I introduce the data with stories of my own experiences in an English-medium missionary school as an autoethnography. Chapter Six will include the results of the qualitative interview data that I obtained, and finally, in Chapter Seven, I will discuss those findings with the various themes that I found through the study. Finally, in Chapter Eight, I will conclude this thesis by discussing the implications of this research as well as directions for future research.

Chapter 2 Background

2.1 Attitudes towards Christians in Japan

Because the focus of this thesis is on a missionary school, it is important to understand several key tenets of Christianity and the driving motivation behind creating religious schools in Japan. First of all, Christians are taught to believe that a central part of their journey is sharing the gospel, or "Good News" that Christ died for their sins and that they only need to believe in Jesus in order to have eternal life in Heaven after death. In Matthew 28:19-20b, Jesus commands, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (NIV).

Missionaries choose to make a career out of spreading the Good News, often by journeying from one country to another, and spending a large part of their time abroad establishing churches and guiding people to Christ. Although it is said that only about one to two percent of the Japanese population are Christian (Joshua Project, 2018), missionaries have significantly impacted the way Japanese society is run today. I will begin this section by discussing their main achievements, before reviewing the available literature on immersive education and identity formation.

2.1.1 A background on the impact of missionaries in Japan.

Christian missions to Japan have been underway since the 1550s, when a Basque Roman Catholic missionary, Francis Xavier, first landed in Japan. However, missionaries quickly found that the Japanese were not easily converted: throughout history, the Japanese tended to link Christianity to Western imperialism, and viewed religion as going against the divine emperor. This was due to the fact that Christians referred to Jesus Christ as "Lord" and "King," which was seen as undermining the emperor's authority. While the missionaries maintained a presence in

Japan throughout the centuries by building schools, hospitals, and churches, it was not until after the Second World War and during the American occupation that thousands of Japanese converted to Christianity. Thiessen (1954) suggests that this sudden surge in the number of converts may have been "attributed to the innate courtesy of the Japanese, who felt that they owed it to their conquerors to co-operate in whatever way was indicated" (p. 123). In addition, many desired to attain the external benefits of becoming Christian, such as access to education and services that missionaries offered.

Despite the newfound popularity of Christianity among the Japanese, however, as Buddhism became a more prominent religion in the nation, there was a decline in conversions, especially as Buddhist leaders copied much of the work that Christians were doing, such as establishment of schools and service centers. Watt (2003) writes that the spread of Christianity was hindered due to its "demand for exclusive allegiance (which stood in sharp contrast to the more inclusive approach of the Japanese), and the condescending attitude toward Japanese culture that some missionaries exhibited" (p. 2). Furthermore, some missionaries noted that only a small number of Japanese people actually understood the message of the gospel and an even fewer number were devout Christians, who regularly attended and participated in church programs.

2.1.2 Christian schools in Japan and their characteristics.

According to data from the Religious Information Research Center (n.d), there are 84 universities, 92 high schools, 72 middle schools and 34 elementary schools that are affiliated with the Protestant Christian religion in the Japanese school system. This number alone shows how much of an impact Christian missionaries had on the Japanese education system, as well as the schools' continuing popularity among Japanese students. Therefore, the number of students

who attend or have attended Christian-affiliated private schools throughout the years is high. On the other hand, it is estimated that less than one percent of the Japanese population are active Christians who regularly attend church (Lewis, 2017, p. 62). This gives evidence to Lewis's (2017) claim, "In terms of numbers of converts, Christianity seemed to be of little significance but its social and educational impact was immense" (p. 61). The reason for a low number of active Christians in Japan, even with the high number of Christian-affiliated schools, lies in the public image of a Christian school.

Firstly, Japanese parents generally send their children to Christian schools to receive a 'Western' education, focusing on the fact that there are "plenty of foreign teachers and the opportunity to learn real English and other languages" (Hideo, 1997, p. 53). Christianity was and still is seen as a method of "internationalizing" Japanese students; through receiving education based on Western religious foundations, students can become global citizens. Secondly, some parents send their children to Christian schools because they believe Christian schools are built on high moral standards and educational values (Lewis, 2017, p. 314). The assumption is that by choosing a Christian school, their children will learn good morals and values, growing up to be kind and hard-working adults. Finally, Christian schools are known for their high educational standards. This means that not only are the schools highly competitive in the academic world, but they also take "good care of every student, including the less competitive ones" (Ando, p. 533, 2012).

In reality, however, Hideo (1997) points out that many Christian schools use the term "Christian" for marketing purposes only (p. 52). Nowadays, most Japanese schools do not have as many missionaries anymore, and many schools have given up on a Christian education. While Christian values are still seen as a foundation of the school culture, most students are not seeking

true Christian faith and educators tend to refrain from imposing Christian ideology on their students (Hideo, 1997, p. 54). At least in the context of the Japanese school system, it is very difficult to find a Christian school that values Biblical teachings and imparts that knowledge to their students, especially in the expectation that they would convert to Christianity. These facts show that the school that I attended was, and still is, a very unique school.

2.1.3 Accreditation of Christian "international" schools in Japan.

Accreditation is a process that most international schools, regardless of their religious background, must undergo in order to be accepted by MEXT as an Incorporated Educational Institution (*gakko houjin*). As mentioned in the introduction, MEXT acknowledges 24 schools in Japan as "foreigner schools," or international schools (MEXT, 2005). Additionally, they also acknowledge international schools that are part of school accreditation organizations: the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI), Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), and the Council of International Schools (CIS). However, according to a database compiled by INS Navi (2017), there are 42 international schools in Japan, and not all of these schools are accredited or acknowledged by MEXT.

Attending a school that is not accredited can pose several problems for the schools, parents, and children. The lack of accreditation means that the school cannot receive government subsidy, which raises tuition fees, making it financially difficult for students to enroll in the school. Additionally, it is technically against the law for parents of Japanese citizenship to send their children to a non-accredited school, because this prevents their children from receiving the nationally set curriculum (Kanno, 2008). Article 26 of the Japanese Constitution maintains that: All people shall have the right to receive an equal education correspondent to their ability, as provided by law. All people shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection

receive ordinary education as provided for by law. Such compulsory education shall be free. (Japanese Const. Art. 26)

Therefore, some Japanese parents may receive warnings from the city or prefectural offices, because their child is not attending the municipal school that he or she should be at. Additionally, most Japanese universities usually do not accept students who have attended non-accredited schools. In order to enroll in university, such students must obtain the Certificate for Students Achieving the Proficiency Level of Upper Secondary School Graduates (*koukou sotsugyou nintei shiken)*, an examination that allows them to prove that they have the same educational level as students who have attended MEXT-approved schools. However, because the exam is held in Japanese, it can be challenging for students who have studied all their subject material in English to pass the examination. In order to have easier access to Japanese universities, many students choose to transfer into MEXT-approved middle schools to be able to take high school entrance examinations. Once in a Japanese high school, teachers can prepare these students to take the national university entrance examinations. Therefore, accreditation is a crucial aspect of any international school in Japan, regardless of its religious affiliation, due to its legal, financial, and practical obligations.

2.2 Attitudes towards English Education in Japan

2.2.1 To be Japanese – The myth of homogeneity.

The idea that Japan and Japanese culture is a homogeneous country has existed for a long time. In 1898, Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone called Japan a “homogenous country” and drew criticism from many within Japan and abroad for his disregard of the indigenous population. In 2005, the then Prime Minister Taro Aso made headlines after he stated that Japan had “one nation, one civilization, one language, one culture and one race. There is no other

nation (that has such characteristics)" (Kyodo, 2005). In both cases, the statements were made without acknowledgement of the changing demographics of Japanese society: According to recent data obtained by the government in 2016, about four percent of the Japanese population is made up of foreign residents and is increasing every year. Furthermore, this percentage does not include the number of interracial children or the indigenous population in Japan. In order to understand how this idea manifests itself, even with the increasing number of foreign residents, it is important to go back to the roots of this myth.

According to Oguma, (2002, as cited by Narzary, 2004, p. 312), the source of the idea of Japan being a homogenous country can be traced back to the 1860s:

> From the Meiji Period (1868-1911), during which a modern state was built in Japan, the Japanese have been ruled by the myth of the homogenous nation, which argues that the Japanese are a homogenous nation with pure blood-lines. This myth is a source of Japanese ethnocentrism, of imperialistic aggression in the 1930s and 40s and Japanese colonial rule in Korea and Taiwan, of discrimination against the various peoples of Asia, and of the discrimination against minorities and the ostracism of foreign workers that we see today.

After the defeat of the Second World War, Japan began to reconstruct its social, economic, and political standards. Around the same time, a genre of academic discourse called the *Nihonjinron* began to rise in popularity. Directly translated as "The Theory of the Japanese People," its ideas began to appear in newspaper and magazine articles and books. *Nihonjinron* maintained that the Japanese were ethnically, socially, and culturally homogenous, that they were different from other countries (Dale, 1986).

The discourse about Nihonjinron was simply part of attempts by Japanese and through the years, both Japanese and non-Japanese writers have attempted to define what it means to be Japanese in scholarly works and classic novels. Theorists in this field also aimed to clearly compare and define the Japanese and the West, and many works are based on this distinction (Burgess, 2010, p. 2). The framework of *Nihonjinron* is based on the idea that Japan is unique in ethnic, geographic, social, relational, and linguistic ways. More specifically, it argues that the Japanese are not tied to any other race, are geographically separated from other nations, are collective and societally hierarchical, and are relationally dependent on one another. It also argues that the Japanese language is distinct from other languages in that it allows for vagueness and prevents foreigners from perfecting the language. Many of these works have become so prominent in Japanese society that their theories are often presumed to be true and inarguable (Sugimoto, 2014, p. 193).

Nowadays, materials based on *Nihonjinron* can be found in popular culture, such as magazines, novels, and TV shows, which continue to contribute to the sense of pride that the Japanese have for this "myth of homogeneity" (Shirley, 2009, p. 34). Although it is difficult to pinpoint its exact effects on society, there have been a few surveys conducted over the years regarding the Japanese perception of their country's "homogeneous" status and the *Nihonjinron*. Recently, the Nippon Hodo Kyokai (NHK, or the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation) Broadcasting Culture Research Institute reported on the results of the International Social Survey Program's (ISSP) Survey on National Identity (2013). This survey on national identity was conducted by the Japan Broadcasting Corporation on 1,234 participants and the results were compared to 31 other countries. The results showed that the Japanese felt a strong attachment to their own country, with just under 90% agreeing that they "would rather be a citizen of Japan

than of any other country in the world" and that "Japan is a better country than most other countries." On the other hand, 63% answered that in order to be a Japanese national, ancestry was a necessary component, while 76% felt that the ability to speak the language was important.

These results show that while *Nihonjinron* may not be as predominant as it used to be after the Second World War, its roots still seem to have a stronghold on the Japanese perception of their country and society. Only recently, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's statement at the United Nations General Assembly regarding accepting Syrian refugees showed the government's attitude towards foreign immigration, prompting Usuda (2017) to report, "Abe's message at the United Nations was quite clear: He would prefer safeguarding the cohesion of Japan's ethnically homogenous demography than further stymying its economy... [or] allowing an influx of immigrants to settle in his country en masse." It is evident that even now, there is a certain sense of pride, as well as a belief of Japan being "a homogeneous country," and many would rather protect it than acknowledge the changing demographics of Japan.

2.2.2 Governmental attitudes towards English education in Japan.

English education in Japan officially began in 1854, when the Japanese government formed the Treaty of Peace and Amity with the United States (Hosoki, 2011, p. 200). Thus, English became a school subject that was taught by returnees who had been sent to the United States to learn English. Hosoki (2011, p. 201) maintains, "While the government's policy was still to import modern methodologies from the West, English gradually became one of the regular school subjects and the means to enter universities, and not the means to access Western culture and knowledge." From the beginning, most Japanese English teachers have focused on developing students' receptive skills, such as listening, reading, and grammar, because these are skills that are tested for university entrance exams. Thus, because international exams that test

English proficiency usually place little emphasis on communicative competency, Japan maintains some of the lowest scores in the world, and Japanese students have a noticeable deficiency in their English communication skills. For example, Japan has ranked 29th out of 30 countries in Asia on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam (Educational Testing Service, 2010).

Aiming to create an English education system that would allow Japanese to communicate on a global level in English, the government has reformed the system multiple times since 2002. Nowadays, English education begins in primary school instead of junior high school. In elementary school, students are introduced to English through communicative classes that use games and songs to cultivate their interest. When the students are older and are capable of retaining large amounts of systematic information, rigorous classes that focus on grammar, reading, listening, and speaking are introduced, usually in junior high school.

However, there has not been a visible increase in Japanese language proficiency in recent years after the reforms. Miyashita (2016) argues that this lack of increase has to do with the government’s attitudes towards English education: although on surface-level, the government seems to be pushing for better English education, in reality, they are aiming for the protection of the homogeneous culture. This can be seen by the use of phrases such as “developing human resources” and “nurturing Japanese identity” in various English reformation policy documents by the government. In addition, the government has not standardized the teachers’ English competency skills. Thus, there have been many studies criticizing the varying level of English education that students receive, which is dependent on the teachers’ proficiency levels (Kanno, 2008; Tahira, 2012; Samimy & Kobayashi, 2004; Sakamoto, 2012). Finally, the general fear of English dominating and causing children to lose their native Japanese language has further

hindered the government from fully investing in the improvement of English education. Therefore, while the government is introducing reforms and encouraging better English education in schools, the actual impact of the improvements seems to be shadowed by fear of English disrupting the social harmony in Japan.

2.2.3 Societal attitudes towards English education in Japan.

Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist, believed that capital includes non-financial assets that offer power and prestige to those who possess them. One form of capital, according to Bourdieu, was institutional capital, which included any academic qualifications or credentials, or in other words, education. He claimed that receiving education could lead to attaining cultural and linguistic capital, which could then be converted to economic capital. When language is acquired, the ability to access information increases through opportunities to interact with more people, which results in linguistic capital. He also believed that schools can play a large role in increasing their students’ linguistic capital by offering language instruction (1991). This idea of learning a second language to increase economic wealth in the future can be connected to people’s motivations to learn a second language. Being bilingual can lead to more employment opportunities, especially with the advancement of the global economy and companies requiring multilingualism as a requirement for employment. This is largely true, even within Japanese society.

Byram (2008) writes that Japanese parents see English as a means to attain social or cultural capital that will accumulate onwards for many generations (p. 77). In addition, Yamamoto and Brinton (2010) build upon past research that provided evidence that parents’ socioeconomic status provided their children more access to cultural capital. They found that embodied cultural capital, such as extra-curricular activities and shadow education, positively

affects academic achievement (p. 79). Nowadays, many parents choose to send their children to study English outside of school to increase their children’s chances of obtaining economic capital when they grow older.

A mother’s role in supplying English education to her offspring is significant, especially as in the Japanese nuclear family, the father is the breadwinner while the mother is in charge of the household and the upbringing of the children. Studies have shown that Japanese women often display strong desires or *akogare* towards English and Western ideology for various reasons, but mainly because they recognize English as a leverage towards better education, career, and romantic opportunities. For example, Bailey (2006) writes about his own experiences teaching English in Japan, finding that English conversation companies often used white male teachers to attract Japanese women and their children to their schools. Kubota (2011) found that Japanese women were drawn towards Caucasian male teachers more than non-White, non-native, female teachers of English. Kelsky (2008) argues that women see learning English as a method to work in the West, where they would be able to attain a good work-life balance and independence. Takahashi (2013) studied a group of Japanese women studying English in Australia, finding that the participants’ life trajectory plans involved learning English to a native-like level, finding a white “male” partner, and staying in the English-speaking world for the rest of their lives. In short, for women, learning English allows for not only economic capital, but also social and cultural capital to the envy of those around them. This “desire” spurs Japanese women to encourage their offspring to become “good” English-speakers, so that they could attain similar opportunities abroad.

However, the children themselves do not see English as a necessary subject to learn. According to a survey administered by Benesse Holdings Inc. (2015), an educational research

company, students’ attitudes towards English as a subject are quite negative. Among 2,967 junior high school students, over sixty percent reported that they felt English was one of their weakest subjects. Eighty percent of those who disliked English answered that they began to dislike it by the end of their first year in junior high school. Forty percent believed that they would not face significant difficulties in the future even if they could not speak English.

Moreover, studies have shown that Japanese children often do not try to speak English in the classroom for fear of being perceived by their classmates as aloof or superior. For example, Tomita & Spada (2013) discuss that Japanese students tend to ask questions about English grammar to appear as if they are not knowledgeable about the language in order to avoid being mistaken for showing off or pretending to be someone other than “Japanese.” These studies show the complicated dichotomy that Japanese students face daily as they learn English as a second language: even as the adults around them may encourage them to learn English, the social context that they are in forces them to maintain the same level of English as their classmates. To some extent, the students may also be contributing to the generally low level of English proficiency by influencing each other to maintain non-English speaking identities.

2.2.4 Attitudes towards Japanese English speakers in Japan.

Realistically, becoming a fluent English-speaker in Japan requires much time, money, commitment, and a resilience against the social norm. In other words, being a Japanese English-speaker is seen to be something desired, but hard to achieve. Moreover, once bilingualism is attained, bilingual speakers may not obtain the social or cultural capital that one might expect. For instance, Reesor (2003) explains that Japanese translators who have mastered English are usually underpaid young women with unstable jobs (p. 60), and other studies have shown that attitudes towards fluent English speakers can be discriminatory.

This can be seen through studies on returnee children, or *kikokushijo*, who have spent some of their childhood abroad. White (1988) found that returnee children are often seen by their Japanese counterparts to be different and “contaminated” by a culture other than Japanese. Kobayashi (1981, as cited by Fry, 2009) reports that upon reentry, Japanese returnee children faced discrimination and bullying for being socially and culturally strange. Recently, the term “Jun-Japa” (純ジャパ), which is an abbreviation of the word Junsui Japanese (pure Japanese) has become common to distinguish Japanese nationals who have had experience abroad and those who have not. Sato (2017), a returnee herself, writes of her experiences at a small international liberal arts university in Japan, where she struggled to gain acceptance from her “Jun-Japa” peers. Even though her parents were Japanese and she held Japanese citizenship, she was often told that because of her experience abroad and her ability to speak English fluently, she was unable to understand the feelings of those who were purely Japanese. She expressed feeling “jealous of junjapa students who had a family, culture, language, nation, or group that they could belong to” (p. 10) and struggled with her identity, feeling like she did not belong in Japanese society.

Chapter 3 Literature Review

3.1 Language, Culture and Identity

There is no question that language and culture are interrelated. Without the existence of language, culture cannot develop, nor can it be transmitted. Language is therefore, "the primary instrument in the expression, transmission, and adaptation of culture" (Kim, 2003, p. 1). Many have noted the centrality of language and culture to one's identity. Learning a language and culture can influence how one's self-identity is constructed.

As for second language acquisition and its effect on identity, Norton Peirce (1995) found through her study of the language learning experiences that immigrant women faced in Canada, that social identity constantly changes as one acquires a second language. Norton Peirce (1997) defines identity as "how people understand their relationship to the outside world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future" (p. 410). She argues that the term *investment* instead of *motivation* more accurately describes the complex relationship of identity, power dynamics, and language learning, saying that investment reflects "the complex relationship of language learners to the target language and their sometimes ambivalent desire to speak it" (Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 9).

This investment, she argues, is dynamic and changes by the interactions one experiences as they learn a language. Furthermore, she argues that learners are "constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world" (Norton Peirce, 2000, p. 11). This indicates that even when language learners are highly motivated, they may be reluctant to practice speaking the language in various social situations, especially when there is a power imbalance between themselves and target language speakers. Such situations may limit a language learner's opportunity to practice using the second language, which can lead to negative effects on their language development.

According to Norton's investment model, as time goes on and one garners more experiences, one's cultural and linguistic identity can transform and develop. In other words, it is something dynamic and not static. In this section, I will discuss the various terms related to bilingualism, types of immersion education, and finally, immersion education's positive and negative impact on children's language development and self-identity.

3.1.1 What it means to be bilingual.

Baker (2017, p. 4) suggests that defining bilingualism as a term is complex because of the many meanings that it may have, citing two different definitions: Grosjean (2012, p. 4) defines bilingualism as the daily use of two or more languages, while Valdés (2015, p. 38 as cited by Baker & Wright, 2017, pp. 4-5) focuses on the functional use in receptive and/or productive skills of two or more languages. However, Gárcia (2011) argues that it is difficult to categorize language dominance in someone who is bilingual, especially because receptive and productive skills cannot fully be measured. Grosjean and Li (2013, p. 12, as cited by Baker & Wright, 2017, p. 8) claim, "bilinguals usually acquire and use their language for different purposes, in different domains of life, with different people. Different aspects of life often require different languages." For example, Japanese students in international schools in Japan may use English at school, but may speak Japanese in the home. Moreover, they may know how to write academically in English, but may not be able to do the same in Japanese. People who are considered bilingual may not always have the ability to use both languages in every situation.

Baker and Wright (2017) have stated that the prevailing view of bilinguals in previous years was "two monolinguals in one person" (p. 7). This view of bilingualism often treats it as a problem rather than a unique quality that one possesses. Those who see it in this light will often try to force individuals to acquire a monolingual-like competency in both languages, and when

that is not achieved, will problematize it. This view led to the creation of the term "semilingualism" in the earlier years, which is the idea that a semilingual individual usually "displays a small vocabulary and incorrect grammar, consciously thinks about language production, is stilted and uncreative with each language, and finds it difficult to think and express emotions in either language" (Baker, 2001, p. 9). However, linguists and educators see this term to be somewhat derogatory, mainly because it places blame on the students without focusing on the lack of opportunities their surroundings may have imposed on them (Garcia, 2009). Furthermore, they argue that this term fails to recognize a bilingual's full linguistic repertoire and supports a deficit, rather than an asset model of bilingualism (Scanlan, 2007). Thus, García and Wei (2014) proposed the alternative view of bilingualism as two languages contributing to form a single linguistic system.

Therefore, the former, holistic view of bilingualism is the generally accepted idea of bilingualism by researchers in the field of second language acquisition and education. Those who have not yet fully developed both language abilities are generally called "emergent bilinguals" (García, 2009). García and Wei (2014) proposes the term dynamic bilingualism, claiming that this term "suggests that the language practices of bilinguals are complex and interrelated; they do not emerge in a linear way or function separately since there is only one linguistic system" (pp. 13-14). This view accepts that being bilingual does not mean having full command of two or more languages. Instead, it proposes that the use of two languages has no borders (i.e. language use is dependent on context) and language proficiency skills are constantly changing and evolving.

3.1.2 Additive bilingual education.

Lambert (1974) introduced bilingual education as either being subtractive or additive. In contexts that encourage subtractive bilingualism, bilingualism is often seen to be a problem and students are encouraged to replace their existing knowledge of one language with the language of society. For example, Baker (2017, p. 65) explains that immigrants in Japan are often encouraged to quickly learn Japanese and assimilate into its culture and society. On the other hand, contexts that encourage additive bilingualism allow students to maintain their first language while acquiring another. For example, in Canada, immersion education offers English speakers a chance to learn French in a bilingual education environment. In the most common French immersion model, early French immersion, English-dominant students first begin studying all subjects in French. Eventually, English is added back into the curriculum until the students are learning some subjects in English and others in French (Johnson & Swain, 1997). This type of education system, as proposed by Lambert and Tucker (1972), has shown to be effective in the native-like acquisition and maintenance of both French and English. It does not take away from the students’ first language (English), as subtractive bilingual education systems do, but adds to it, thus creating an additive bilingual education environment. Students in such programs do not lose the ability to speak English, and studies have shown that they become able to use French just as well as their French-speaking peers (Lambert and Tucker, 1972).

In such settings, the second language is introduced in methods similar to the natural process of language acquisition. In other words, the focus is on content rather than grammar, and allows children to initiate the use of the second language. This is because, as Baker (2017, p. 292) writes, “early insistence on the immersion language may inhibit children and develop negative attitudes to that language and to education in general.”

In the Japanese context, Rian and Schinckel (2011) report that out of the 100 or so schools that offer some sort of bilingual education, four schools, including the famous Katoh Gakuen, follow the immersion education system. These schools aim to equip graduates “with enough academic English to go to university overseas, and yet also with the same academic foundations as their Japanese monolingual peers” (p. 86). Katoh Gakuen was the first English immersion school that to follow the Canadian immersion model. Kamada (2000) studied two non-returnee Japanese children who attended the school, claiming that although neither of them had spent more than two months abroad, both children had the ability to produce English to a near-native like level, and were also able to read and write in both languages. Although the school administrators admitted that their students’ English literacy level was a few years behind compared with those in American schools, upon graduation, their students emerged both bilingual and biliterate. This, according to Kamada (2000), is “far ahead of any accomplishments seen elsewhere in any other regular Japanese school” (p. 38). These success stories provide evidence that when students’ first language is developed while acquiring a second language, they are more likely to reach high levels of competence in two languages. Furthermore, research shows that bilinguals in additive educational settings can reap the cognitive benefits of bilingualism, which include “divergent thinking, creativity, early metalinguistic awareness and communicative sensitivity” as well as metalinguistic awareness and earlier literacy development (Baker, 2017, pp. 153–154).

3.1.3 Language loss within language education

What happens when a student’s first language is not developed or when a school does not support their first language? There have been extensive studies on first language loss of immigrant children and its effects (Wong-Fillmore, 1991; Babino & Stewart, 2017; Toppelberg

& Collins, 2010). As Garcia (2009, p.116) writes, often in immersive environments, "children come in speaking one language, the school adds a second language, and children end up speaking the school language and losing their own language." This happens when a child becomes unmotivated to speak the home language because he or she feels that the school language is more valued than the home language. As Wong-Fillmore (1991) puts it, "It is the story of countless American immigrant and native children and adults who have lost their ethnic languages in the process of becoming linguistically assimilated into the English-speaking world of the school and society" (p. 324). Much of first language acquisition happens during early childhood (Lindfors, 1991) and when a second language is introduced during those early years of language development, children are more likely to lose their first language (Wong-Fillmore, 1991). When a young child begins his schooling in an English-dominant society, he will try to use English both at school and even at home, because of pressure from the school and his society (Wong-Fillmore, 2010). When schooling is the cause of first language loss, Toppelberg & Collins (2010) argues that this brings up an ethical concern: it "deprive(s) them of access to important job- and life-related skills" (p. 701).

De Anglis (2011) finds in her study of teachers' beliefs in relation to multilingual classrooms that while teachers generally had a positive view on bilingualism, they held the belief that in their classrooms, prior knowledge of another language hindered children's acquisition of the host language. She stipulates, "When approached by an immigrant parent enquiring about the suitability of continuing to speak the heritage language in the home, it is reasonable to expect that a large number of teachers would advise parents to stop or perhaps reduce the use of the home language with their children as speaking the home language may give rise to *delays* and *confusion*" (p. 228). Therefore, many teachers try to maintain control of a classroom by

enforcing a strict language policy. However, research has shown that within any system, whether it may be in a family, school, community, or country, the existence of a language policy can have negative repercussions. When a language policy is put in place in a subtractive language context, it has the potential to violate individual language rights, which include "the right to learn the mother tongue, including at least basic education through the medium of the mother tongue, and the right to use it in many of the (official) contexts" (Phillipson, Ranuut & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995). Such violation of language rights can lead to language loss, which in turn, especially causes children to become unable to communicate with their parents (Kouritzin, 1999) and feel as though they are missing a part of their identity (Babaee, 2010).

3.1.4 The cultural identity of bilinguals.

Language and cultural identity are closely interrelated. Kmiotek and Boski (2017) write,

> Consequently, the natural acquisition of a second language – like that of the first – involves one's inclusion into the second culture, rather than simply the assimilation of a linguistic code. Using any language implies "Becoming" a member of a particular cultural group (ethnic, national or both at the same time) and involves participation in a variety of social interactions, as well as the enrichment, or sometimes the formation or redefinition of one's own identity. (p. 193).

In other words, acquiring a new language often means acquiring a new culture, and can affect one's personal identity. There have only been a few studies on Japanese-English bilingual children and their cultural identities. For example, Downes (2001) studied Japanese children and their cultural affiliation in one of the most famous immersion schools in Japan, Katoh Gakuen. He reports that Japanese children studying English in an immersive environment not only displayed a sensitivity towards cross-cultural differences, but they also identified more strongly with Japanese culture than their Japanese counterparts at a public school. He cites Lambert (1984) and Lambert and Tucker (1972), saying that immersion can "not only open children's minds to other ethnic groups, but also encourage students to develop a strong appreciation for

their own ethnicity” (Downes, 2001, p. 178). On the other hand, when the students’ first culture is not respected or if a student feels as though their cultural background is undervalued, it may lead to mental health issues. Scoon (2012), through her study of 138 Native American students who were not achieving well in their English classes, concludes that because they felt suppressed by American culture, they not only felt isolated and alienated from that culture but also from their own culture and language. Pavlenko (2014, as cited by Baker, 2017, p. 371) cites “personality and social problems such as split-identity, cultural dislocation, a poor self-image, low self-esteem, alienation, emotional vulnerability and anomie (normlessness)” as other problems that may arise when both identities are not considered. When one’s cultural identity is not respected and valued, it may lead to various negative repercussions.

3.1.5 Linguistic and cultural support within language education.

Second language instructors hold the unique position to create opportunities in the classroom to help students feel comfortable to practice speaking the target language. In addition, they have the choice to empower their students by not only helping them acquire the target language, but also maintain and develop their own identities. Many researchers have pushed for second language education that allows students to reach the maximum benefits of acquiring a second language, or in other words, get a return on their investment in the second language. Their studies have shown that first language literacy assists second language development, due to a child’s ability to transfer skills from the first language to the second (Cummins & Swain, 1986; Leafstedt & Gerber, 2005). The higher the child’s literacy skills in the first language, the better he may perform in the second language. Furthermore, because culture and language are interrelated and contributes to building one’s identity, it is also important to consider how to respect and develop one’s native language and culture while teaching English. This section will

first cover how two languages can be developed in the classroom, before turning to how one's cultural identity can be respected.

Language acquisition, especially to a level that allows a student to keep up in schooling, is not an easy feat. Thomas and Collier (2002) conducted a longitudinal study in the United States, focusing on language minority students in public schools and their academic achievement. They found that there is a positive correlation between a child's first language schooling and second language acquisition. In other words, the more experience students have being supported in their first language, the better they may perform academically in a second language. However, they also found that such students need at least four years of schooling in their first language, and another four years in a second language schooling environment in order for them to reach full potential. They go as far as to state that "students with no primary language schooling (either in home country or host country) are not able to reach grade-level performance in [the second language]" (p. 7). In the best of cases, it takes seven to ten years for such students with no schooling in their first language to reach native-level proficiency. They suggest that support in the second language needs to be done in an enrichment setting instead of one that is remedial, and that "balanced bilingualism" is achieved when both languages are supported, such as in an immersion education setting.

Other additive language pedagogies include the allowance of "translanguaging," which is "the development of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages" (Otheguy, García & Reid, 2015, p. 281). Translanguaging allows students to use both languages interchangeably without confining them to the use of one language. It allows students to celebrate their multilingual skills and meaningfully communicate with those around them, by

using all of their linguistic knowledge and resources (García, 2009). This is especially important in the classroom, because it gives (emergent) bilingual students a voice, allowing them to communicate their complex emotions, feelings, and ideas in a way that they are most comfortable in and capable of.

Turning to cultural support, Trueba (1988, as cited by Kim, 2003, p. 4) argues that second language instructors should integrate both the home culture and the host culture in the curriculum to empower second language learners and their individual identities. Furthermore, when cultural misunderstandings happen in the classroom between learners, they should be addressed and dealt with, instead of dismissed and ignored. Cummins et al. (2005) also pushes for education that encourages the transfer of skills and concepts between the home and host language. The argument for this is that students will feel accepted when both their languages and cultures are respected, and their uniqueness is embraced (p. 39). He recommends the use of identity texts, which allows students to write about their experiences and stories in any language, before translating them into the target language with the help of their parents, teachers, or other students. These texts can then be published on websites, where they can be shared with the world (Cummins, 2006).

Contrary to widely-held beliefs that the first language (L1) can negatively interfere with second language acquisition, and therefore should have no place in the classroom, it can be said that the developmental level of the L1 plays a crucial role in a child’s acquisition of the second language. In addition, when a child feels that his L1 or culture is disrespected or unvalued, not only could this accelerate first language loss, but it can also negatively affect the child’s mental and emotional health.

3.2 A Gap in the Literature

As we saw from this section, bilingualism has no clear borders and cannot be defined in a few words. Those who are bilingual use their linguistic repertoire in various contexts and situations and may sometimes choose to use both languages in order to communicate effectively. To date, there has not been much research on L1 loss due to elite bilingual education in a linguistically dominant, majority language population, especially within the context of a country such as Japan, where learners’ L1 is also the majority societal language. Moreover, little research has taken place within the context of Japanese English-medium schools. Through this study, I will aim to answer questions about both the positive and negative effects of one such environment for Japanese students’ linguistic and cultural identity and life choices. Furthermore, I will examine how this school could promote first language retention and reap the benefits of second language acquisition.

Chapter 4 Rationale and Research Design

4.1 Situating the Researcher

To provide transparency in the relationship between my experiences and the qualitative data I collected, I decided to use both an autoethnography and a case study approach, both of which will be explained more thoroughly in the subsequent sections. Through this study of one English-immersion missionary school in Japan, I aimed to share stories from various angles: my own experiences there, as well as the experiences of the students, parents, teachers, and administrators. My hope is that this approach will not only allow for some objectivity on my part, but will also contribute to the discussion on how to prevent subtractive bilingualism in a school comprised of students from multilingual and multicultural backgrounds.

4.2 Finding the Intersection between Interview Data and an Autoethnography

As mentioned above, this study is a combined autoethnography and case study, in which the autoethnography plays a supporting role to the cases presented by my interviewees. Case study has been defined by Baxter and Jack (2008) as "an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources" (p. 544). This approach holds its basis in constructivism, which emphasizes that "the truth is relative and that it is dependent on one's perspective" (Baxter & Jack, 200, p. 545). Case studies focus on individual stories and perspectives. Instead of using one data collection method, they use various methods such as interviews, documents, and reports to validate a phenomenon (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998, p. 161). In order to answer my research questions, this method was the best approach.

Because I was looking at how this particular setting, an English-immersion missionary school, affected Japanese students' language abilities and why, hearing actual stories from those

involved was crucial in guiding my study. Thus, interviews were my main method of data collection. Anderson and Arsenault (1998) list the advantages of interviews, stating that interviews allow for participants to fully answer questions, while allowing the researcher to clarify answers if needed. Additionally, the researcher can pick up non-verbal cues, such as the way the interviewee holds himself or their facial expressions (p. 202). Out of the types of interviews that Anderson and Arsenault (1998) introduce, I chose the key informant interview approach, which allowed me to focus on a small sample of participants who had relevant experience or specific knowledge (p. 203). Therefore, in this study, I focused on four key groups of people: the students, who could inform me regarding their first-hand experiences of attending an international school; the parents, who could tell me about their experiences as a parent of a child attending an international school; the teachers, who could provide me with their knowledge and experiences of teaching Japanese students in the international school context; and finally, the principal and board members, who could provide me with specific information and past and current data.

In addition to the interview data, I also included the autoethnography approach to validate my experiences as not solely something that happened to me, but also to other students in the school. An autoethnography is a qualitative research method that considers one’s personal story, directly acknowledging and including one’s personal assumptions and reflections as part of the study. It is a form of scientific research that goes against the norms of objectivity and neutrality by allowing the researcher to focus on the self, while still producing valid results (Muncey, 2010). It has been defined as an art that combines both creative prose and ethnographic methods (Ellis, 2004), but also as a self-narrative that combines one’s personal story within society (Spry, 2001). Those who take on such projects must “retrospectively and selectively write about

epiphanies that stem from, or are made possible by, being part of a culture and/or by possessing a particular cultural identity... [then] analyze these experiences" (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, n.p.). Because I spent seven years at Japan Hope Academy (henceforth, JHA) and therefore have such a deep, personal connection to the school and its community, not only have my experiences there served as the starting point to this study, but they have also contributed a great deal to the person I am today. Putting myself directly into this research study and analyzing my own story from the viewpoint of an autoethnographer will serve not only to validate the stories of my interviewees, but also to illuminate and clarify the points where my own biases lie.

In addition, autoethnographers write to make their story accessible to those who have had similar experiences, while also making the story understandable for those who are outside of the context. Ellis & Bochner (2000, as cited by Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011) explains the aim of autoethnographers:

> [Autoethnographers] concentrate on ways of producing meaningful, accessible, and evocative research grounded in personal experience, research that would sensitize readers to issues of identity politics, to experiences shrouded in silence, and to forms of representation that deepen [their] capacity to empathize with people who are different from [them].

For some, writing an autoethnography becomes therapeutic, as it brings meaning and value to lived experiences (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). Therefore, many autoethnographies have been written on topics such as caregiving, health, occupational therapy, trauma, illness, and death (Wright, 2009; McMillan & Ramirez, 2016; Warne & Hoppes, 2009; Anderson, 2011). As Spry (2001) reports, a good autoethnography is not "simply a confessional tale of self-renewal but is a provocative weave of story and theory and "should reflect back on, be entangled in, and critique

this current historical moment and its discontents" (p. 713). By recalling memories, thoughts, and feelings of a particular event or moment in as much detail as possible, autoethnographers put to paper the meanings of the events and how they link back to research. In this way, they also allow the reader to not only connect to the story, but also judge whether there is a "degree of similarity between the study site and the receiving context" (Mertens, 1998, p. 183, as cited by Warne & Hoppes, 2009). My autoethnography will then work to validate the stories of my other participants.

4.3 Research Setting

JHA, where this study took place, was founded by a group of evangelical missionaries who were concerned by the lack of an English-medium, Christian educational environment for their children. Missionaries often work in a five-year cycle, in which they live in the host country for four years before returning to their country of origin for one year to visit various churches and to fundraise. In the case of most missionary families at JHA, during the year at home, their children attend U.S. schools, which means that not only do they have to retain their language level while abroad, but they also have to keep up with the curriculum in the U.S. Furthermore, because they end up attending American universities after graduation, it becomes even more of a necessity for missionary children to keep up with the curriculum abroad in order to perform well on U.S. university entrance exams.

Thus, JHA was officially established in 1970, so that these children could study together in one school. In the beginning, JHA only had an elementary school and a small number of students from missionary families. Grades were gradually added, until eventually the school had all the grades from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

According to a school board member, after the Second World War, Japan was faced with reconstruction. However, by the 1970s, the country was becoming one of the strongest economies in the world. Its rigorous education system, based on rote memorization and high pressure, was one of the reasons behind this quick turnover. While that system produced people who could thrive in a high-stress society, it also placed a lot of mental strain on Japanese children, especially in those who could not keep up with the system. These children often turned to violence, bullying, suicide, or nonattendance and caused many problems in the public-school system. Therefore, wealthy Japanese families sometimes chose to send their children to alternative schools, and JHA began to admit Japanese students at a higher tuition cost.

According to the JHA administrative office, the school has maintained an enrolment of about 30 to 40 students yearly, and to this date, approximately 300 students have graduated from the school. Out of the 300 students, 96 were Japanese and 40 of those Japanese students were enrolled after 2010. Thus, the school’s purpose changed with the times/ JHA now accepts students of various backgrounds, while still maintaining its Christian-based curriculum and all-English environment. The school mission statement states its purpose clearly: “Japan Hope Academy, as a beacon of biblical Christian influence in the Japanese culture, is actively committed to our unique position of providing families with a high quality, comprehensive Christ-centered education” (Japan Hope Academy, 2017). The school aims not to discriminate against those without a Christian missionary background, but accepts students on an individual basis. Administrators base their decision upon whether students have the necessary English proficiency level to keep up with the classes, and whether they have a strong Christian background. However, both criteria are not required for admittance; if a student has a high level of English proficiency but is not a Christian, he or she may still be admitted into the school.

The academic year is built upon the foundations of American educational institutions. While the Japanese system begins in April and ends in March, JHA’s school year begins in September and ends in June, with three long vacations in the winter, spring, and summer. During the school year, there are various events that are open to the public, such as the Christmas Program, Open Mic Night, the Spring Festival, and the Spring Program/Graduation. In addition, the school holds academic achievement testing every spring, while during the summer, summer school is offered for those in need of extra language support (Japan Hope Academy, 2017).

Classes are small and grouped by two or three grades, depending on the school year. Teachers are usually recruited from the United States and teach multiple subjects, mainly due to the small number of students and a lack of resources. Every student must take level-appropriate mathematics, science, English language arts, and social studies, along with an additional foreign language and P.E. classes, which are held once a week. In high school, students can take various online language electives from an American university. All classes, with the exception of language classes, are conducted in English. There are also a variety of after-school activities that the students can partake in, such as drama, basketball, volleyball, soccer, and Student Council.

In order to maintain an all-English environment, JHA enforces a strict language policy throughout the day. English is the only medium of communication that can be used at the school or during school-sponsored activities, with the exception of Japanese language class, emergencies, or when evangelizing to the community. In addition, to maintain the conservative, religious aspect of the school culture, the students have Bible classes for an hour every day, and the whole school also meets for a worship service every Friday. The rules of conduct are made to reflect Christian values, and students are encouraged to dress modestly and act in accordance

with the Scriptures. Finally, to connect with the community around them, students go out every so often to nearby houses to invite the community to various events at the school.

The school has maintained its feel of a homey, close-knit community ever since it was established. Perhaps due to the small school size, the older students tend to take care of the younger students, and as such, the younger students look up to the older students for direction. In the academic year of 2016-2017, when data for this research was collected, there were a total of 36 students from Grades 1 to 12. The breakdown of the student backgrounds with the total number of students in each classroom can be seen below.

Table 1

Number of Students at JHA and their Ethnic Backgrounds (2016-2017)

Grades	Total Number of Students	Japanese Students	Non-Japanese Students
Grades 1-4	12	9	4
Grades 5-6	6	3	3
Grades 7-8	4	1	3
Grades 9-12	14	3	11

4.4 Overview of Participants

In this study, I interviewed 21 participants: two parents, six students, two Japanese teachers, five homeroom teachers from grades 5 to 12, the principal, two school board members, and three former graduates of JHA. The participants and their background information are listed

below. Because the study was mainly focused on the students and their identities, I have included more background information about them than about the other participants. In order to protect their identities, pseudonyms are used for all of the participants.

4.4.1 Students: Grace and Anne.

Grace and Anne were twin sisters in sixth grade, and both had attended the school since first grade. According to their mother, they attended kindergarten and part of first grade at a school that was associated with their church. However, their mother decided that it was not a good fit for them and ended up enrolling them at JHA. Both of them were in the same class at JHA and preferred Japanese to English, opting to do their interviews in Japanese. They had an older sister, Sophia, who was a high school student at JHA.

4.4.2 Student: Riley.

Riley was in Grade 7 at the time of the interview. Her home language was Japanese and she was an only child. She took math classes at a Japanese cram school that specialized in one-to-one tutoring and also attended abacus classes. She expressed a dislike for biology classes but enjoyed spending time with her friends.

4.4.3 Student: David.

The interview with David was the shortest and was conducted during a busy period during the school day in the hallway. In 9th grade at the time of the interview, he seemed to be satisfied with the school and its curriculum. According to his mother, he attended an international kindergarten from a young age, and then was enrolled in another international elementary school in the area. However, because of the lack of English being used at the school, he transferred to JHA during the fourth semester of first grade. He has an older brother and used

mostly Japanese in the home but has competence in both English and Japanese. He took karate classes outside of school and wanted to go into sciences in the United States after graduation.

4.4.4 Student: Sophia.

Sophia was a bright girl with a big smile. When I asked her which language she wanted to do the interview in, she responded with, “A mix!” She enjoyed the school environment and its family-like atmosphere but wished that there were more course options. In Grade 10 at the time of the interview, she was beginning to think of attending university in the United States, in the field of psychology. According to her mother, she had attended a kindergarten associated with her church and was taking English classes before taking the entrance examination for JHA. Before her official enrolment, however, she was advised to attend an international kindergarten in the area to brush up on her English level. She felt more comfortable speaking in Japanese, but in terms of academics, she preferred English. Her two twin sisters, Grace and Anne (as mentioned above), also attended the school, and they often spoke to each other and with their mother in Janglish (a mix of Japanese and English).

Sophia was the only student I conducted a follow-up interview with, due to the nature of the interview content. Since the time of this study, she has begun attending an international high school at a different institution and is working on getting her International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma.

4.4.5 Student: Millie.

Millie was the oldest in the group of students that I interviewed. At the time of the interview, which was conducted in English, she was in 11th grade. She attended an English kindergarten and could speak some English before she enrolled at JHA in first grade. Her parents do not speak English, so her home language was Japanese, but both parents wanted her to speak

more English. She attended after-school abacus classes, as well as calligraphy and piano classes. In addition, she was enrolled in a Japanese online high school program, so she could keep up with her studies in Japanese. She wished to attend university in the United States but had never been abroad. She was the only non-Christian student participant, but she was not opposed to the religious teachings of the school.

4.4.6 The students’ mothers.

Although I tried to recruit more parental participation, only two mothers agreed to be interviewed. I met with Grace, Anne, and Sophia’s mother at a cafe in the evening after she finished work. David’s mother came to the school, where we conducted the interview in a quiet setting.

4.4.7 The teachers.

There were four teacher participants in this study. Avery was the Grade Five and Six homeroom teacher and also taught Bible, language arts, science and social studies for students in Grades Five through Eight. She was in her second year teaching at JHA at the time of the interview. She was of mixed Japanese and American race, and grew up being homeschooled in English in Japan. She had attended an online university for four years and had experience working in various international schools in Japan.

Ben was a graduate of JHA and the homeroom teacher for the Grade Seven and Eight class. Also of mixed Japanese and American race, he had attended Japanese school until Grade Seven before he had transferred to JHA. He taught science and computer classes and had experience working for the Japanese government, specifically in the English school board for a city in Osaka prefecture, before beginning to teach at JHA.

Kayla was the homeroom teacher for the Grade Nine and Ten class, but she also taught reading, math, social studies, and Bible for Grades Five through Ten. At the time of her interview, she was finishing up her first year at JHA, but she had experience teaching lower elementary in the United States for one year. Her university degree was in elementary school education and she was also certified to teach middle school, but due to the lack of teachers, ended up teaching high school students at JHA.

Noah was the homeroom teacher for the Grade Eleven and Twelve classes. At the time of the interview, he was teaching anything that needed to be taught – science classes, Bible, social studies, music, history, economics, and English. He also led the worship team at JHA and seemed to be very involved with the students. From the United States, he had never attended JHA as a student, but his wife was a former student there.

All of the teachers were Christian and tried to impart and uphold Christian values in the classroom. Although they had various responsibilities, they all committed to participating in the interviews and showed their passion for their students’ education, both spiritually and linguistically.

4.4.8 Former graduates.

After the initial interviews with the students and staff at JHA, I applied for and received further ethics approval to interview former graduates. Therefore, I interviewed three former graduates who fit the participation criteria of my study.

Two participants, Rafael and Emma, were siblings who had attended JHA while I was also there. Rafael was one school year younger than I was, while Emma was two school years older. After graduation, Rafael went on to a prestigious university in the West Coast of the United States. Instead of finding a job and staying in the United States, however, he ended up

back in Japan to work at a foreign-owned company. Emma, on the other hand, finished two degrees at another prestigious university on the East Coast. She is also currently back in Japan. Kyra ended up studying for the national high school exit examination while still at JHA. She successfully passed the examination and ended up in a Japanese university. At the time of the interview, she was in the United States on an exchange partnership program between her university and an American university. She had finished job hunting and was planning on returning to Japan to work.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

This research study was conducted after meeting the requirements of the Research Ethics Board at McGill University. I prepared two separate consent forms (see Appendix B) for the staff and the parents, both of which gave detailed information on who I was, what the study was about, how interviews would be conducted, and how the data would be handled in a way that would protect participants’ confidentiality. The consent forms were only given out after the participants expressed interest and none of the interviews were conducted until the forms were signed. All interviewees under the age of 18 required a parent or a guardian’s signature on the parental consent forms.

Before the interviews, the content of the consent forms was verbally explained, which included participants’ rights as an interviewee. Especially for the students, I stressed their right to decline answering any question, and that there would be no negative repercussions if they withdrew from the study. As for the interviewees above the age of 18, I explained the process as I showed them the consent form. Participants were asked to sign two copies: one for my own records and the other copy for them to keep.

During the interviews, I was careful not to disclose any information or opinions of my own that could alter my participants' answers. Although the participants knew my background as a former student at the school, both the principal and I communicated multiple times to the interviewees that they had the freedom to choose whether they participated. Therefore, there was no social hierarchy that bound the students, teachers, or parents to participate in the project. Regarding the handling of the data, all audio recordings of the interviews were deleted immediately after they were transcribed, and only my supervisor and I had access to the data. The data was also kept in a separate, password-protected, external hard-drive and was not handled by anyone else. All names were changed to pseudonyms in order to protect the school and the participants' identities, and those pseudonyms (see Section 4.4) are used throughout this thesis.

4.6 Procedure for Data Collection

In April 2017, I obtained ethics approval and contacted JHA to see if they would be interested in participating in the study. Although the current principal did not know me personally, he mentioned the project to his teachers during one of their meetings, and wrote back, letting me know that they were interested. It was decided that I would visit the school during the months of May and June, and would conduct research over a period of two weeks. At the end of May 2017, therefore, I returned to my alma mater and begin the research study.

During my first visit, I spoke with the principal, who seemed very interested in the project. We exchanged contact information, and discussed how data collection could progress. He helpfully shared with me the list of potential student participants who fit my criteria of being born of two Japanese nationals, and who had been at JHA for more than six years. On the Friday of that same week, he sent the potential students home with a slip of paper, which included

details of the study, my contact information, and a section to indicate whether the parents and students were willing to participate in the interview. By the following Monday, I was able to begin conducting interviews with teachers from Grades Five and above, as well as with the two Japanese teachers.

In the beginning, it was difficult to receive any answers from the parents of the students. Because all of the students were minors, according to the Research Ethics Board guidelines, it was necessary to obtain parental signatures before conducting any interviews with the students. Therefore, the principal personally emailed each parent of the potential interviewees for their consent to participate in the study. Two parents displayed interest in the study and the principal forwarded their email addresses to me so that I could contact them personally. I was then able to set up separate meetings with the parents at a location of their convenience, where they signed the consent forms for themselves, as well as for their children, before participating in the interview. Afterwards, I set up interviews with their children (a total of four students, as three were siblings) as their parents had signed the consent forms. As the very last attempt at obtaining data, the principal sent the consent forms home with the students. Two students returned with signed consent forms that allowed me to conduct interviews with them. One student and parent refrained from doing the interview.

In regards to the teacher interviews (see Appendix C: Interview Protocol), the interviews were usually conducted in the teacher’s lounge after school, at a time when the teachers were available. The interview with the principal was also conducted fairly early on in the week, in his office. The principal contacted the school board director for me, who also offered to participate in an interview. This interview took place at his home.

Most interviews with the students took an average of ten minutes, while those with the teachers, parents, principal and school board members lasted anywhere from fifteen minutes to over an hour. All interviews were recorded on a personal recording device and transcribed within two months (see Appendix C: Interview Protocol).

More specifically, during the interviews, the students were asked about their linguistic ability and confidence, their experiences in language support at school, and their self-identity and perceptions of their futures. The parents were asked about their decision to put their child in the school, their take on the benefits and challenges of attending the school, and their ideas on how the education system could better assist their children. The teachers were asked about the difficulties of teaching diverse classes of learners with both international and Japanese backgrounds, their stance on the usage of Japanese within the classrooms, as well as their ideas on what they think could help Japanese students transition into Japanese society. Finally, the principal and board members were asked about the school’s accreditation process, the ratio of Japanese to non-Japanese students, and the school’s mission statement and purpose and how that played a role in accepting Japanese students.

As mentioned above, I also received approval to interview former graduates of JHA later during the study. These interviews were also recorded and transcribed, before being included in the study itself.

4.7 Data Analysis

At the end of the interview process, I had about 500 minutes of data to transcribe. I listened to the recordings once to write out basic notes from each participant interview for easy reference. Then, for the actual transcription process, I used ATLAS.ti, software. Once all files were transcribed, I translated all the Japanese interviews into English. Finally, I transferred the

interviews into a separate TextEdit file (RTF) in order to upload them back into the ATLAS.ti project, so I could begin data analysis.

In this study, I used thematic analysis to examine the data from the interviews. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail” (p. 6). I took the theoretical approach to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 13), as I had general research questions in mind before I began the analysis process. Using this method allowed for a constant refining and narrowing of my research questions through the process of coding.

In accordance with Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-step method to thematic coding, I began the process by familiarizing myself with the data. After each interview, I jotted down my initial thoughts and any comments from the participants that stood out to me in my research journal. After I transcribed the interviews, I went back to the research questions I initially had and began to highlight and write down short comments on each Word document that related to my research questions. After that was completed, I began the coding process, looking for latent themes, which “identify or examine the *underlying* ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations – and ideologies – that are theorized as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). After this process was finished, I came up with notable themes that could encompass the codes.

4.8 Summary

In this section, I have described the methodology used in this project. To recap, this project was a qualitative study based on an autoethnography and interview data from current students, parents, and staff, which will serve to further validate my own experiences at JHA, as

well as help disentangle my own, somewhat biased, opinions from the data itself. In the next section, I will introduce my own story.

Chapter 5 Autoethnography

5.1 How it all began: Becoming a returnee

I was born in Fukuoka, Japan in 1993. My father was a blossoming cardiologist and my mother held a degree in English Literature. My mother still tells me of the day she held me for the first time, when she thought, “As long as she can learn a language and play an instrument, she’ll be happy.”

I grew up like any other Japanese child, but in a Christian environment. I enjoyed going to the park and playing with my friends from a private Christian daycare. My mother and I also attended church every Sunday, where I watched VeggieTales (a Christian show in which animated vegetables reenacted Biblical stories and taught Christian morals) with other children during the services. Like many East Asian parents, my mother had an *akogare*, or a strong desire, for me to acquire of the English language, imagining the “assured and sparkling promise” of English (Motha & Lin, 2014, p. 332) for my future success. Therefore, my mother played Disney English tapes continuously at home and in the car, but to her dismay, I did not show much interest.

I had just turned four when my father decided to take the whole family, including my still one-year-old brother, to Boston, Massachusetts, where we would live while he worked on a two-year research program at Tufts University. In the summer of 1997, our family of four moved to the United States. As my father began his new role as an assistant researcher, my mother was tasked with setting up our lives, which involved navigating a new society, as well as finding a new church and a school for me. She finally found a Japanese church close to our new home, and

through a church member there, heard about a private Christian kindergarten that I could attend. Despite her limited English, she enrolled me at the school and continued to take care of my little brother and I, while my father worked at the university.

On the night before my first day of kindergarten, she sat me down and taught me three words: yes, no, and bathroom, hoping that I would be able to survive in the case of an emergency. On the first day, after my mother and younger brother dropped me off, I looked around the classroom for a new friend. I spotted a boy who looked just like me – jet-black hair and dark brown eyes and immediately ran up to him, as he reminded me of my old life back in Japan. Smiling, I called out to him in Japanese, "*Issho ni asobo! (Let's play!)"* He looked up at me, said something in a language I did not yet understand (English), and walked away. It was not until a few years later that I found out he had been Korean, adopted by Caucasian parents. Having grown up in the U.S., he only spoke English.

Learning English was a slow process for me, as was navigating the new culture. On my birthday, my mom packed Japanese jelly and snacks to take to school and share with my classmates. "This is so weird!" "What is this?" Other kids had brought cupcakes with lots of sugary frosting on their birthdays, and I could sense that not too many kids were impressed. In my second year of Kindergarten, my mother accompanied us on a field trip and packed rice balls with seaweed wrapped around it for our lunch. I ate them without hesitation, but the other kids exclaimed, "Ew! What is that? Chocolate?!"

My life at school and my life at home were very different and I knew it. At home, I spoke Japanese and my mother taught me how to write Japanese characters. We prayed in Japanese before every meal and attended church, led by a Japanese-speaking pastor and his wife. My grandparents sent Japanese movies and books lest I forget my roots. Additionally, because

Kindergarten was only held three days a week, I was not completely immersed in the American culture or language. By the end of two years, I understood most of what was being said at school, but I could not communicate in English very well.

5.2 The JHA Years: A Shifting Identity

In the summer of 1998, I graduated from Kindergarten and my father finished up the research program that he had been participating in. We moved back to Japan, this time to the Kansai region. Once again, as my father began his new job at a new hospital, my mother was tasked with setting up our lives, which involved finding me a new school. She had heard of a Christian school close by that held their classes in English, but she was also aware of the social and legal expectation to place me in a Japanese public elementary school. According to the Japanese Constitution, all Japanese people are “obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection receive ordinary education as provided for by law” (Article 26). This means that from the first year of elementary school to the last year of junior high school (a total of nine years), all Japanese children must attend compulsory education that follows the national curriculum as set by the government. However, my mother decided to take the risk and had me take the entrance examination at JHA, which consisted of a short written test and English interview. As we left the old, run-down school building, the secretary smiled and patted my head, “I think she will do well here.”

My mother realized that there was a strong possibility that I could be bullied in Japanese pubic school, not only because I had just returned from the United States, but also because I had not grown up in the area. She was concerned for my well-being and whether I would be able to survive that strict, rigorous school environment, especially since I had just come from a very different environment. While the private Christian school would be costly, she knew it would

allow me to grow in a similar Christian environment as the Kindergarten that I had attended in Boston. My mother had been quite taken with the teachers there, who had embraced every student and their differences, myself included. She also desired that I retain and improve the little English that I had already, and decided that the Christian school, where I would be loved and well-cared for was the best fit for me.

On the first day of school, my mother drove me to school, unlike the rest of the Japanese children in my neighborhood who were walking to school clad in uniforms. I entered the classroom and was introduced to the only student in my grade, a boy named William. In the classroom for first to third graders, there were eight students including myself. Three were of Japanese descent, four were children of missionary families, and one was of mixed American and Japanese descent. My teacher was from the United States, and was the school principal’s wife.

William and I quickly became close friends. With no other classmates to play with, our numerous fights lasted no more than half a day, and the days passed with the two of us building “campfires” and “roasting marshmallows.” I was mostly immersed in English and Christian culture during the school day – other than two hours of Japanese classes each week, we studied every subject in English. I learned to read and write in English, and studied math and science using a Christian curriculum developed in the United States. We also had Bible classes every morning, where we would memorize Bible verses and pray together before we started our day. On Fridays, we had Chapel, in which the whole school would come together and sing worship songs and listen to a short sermon. During recess, our teachers watched us closely to make sure we were playing in English. If our teachers caught us speaking Japanese in the classroom or at any time during the school day, they strictly warned us to use English. On repeat offenses, they

punished us by making us write lines or by took away privileges, such as going outside for recess. In addition, because of the small community, our parents quickly found out if we got into trouble at school, as the teachers would talk to them when they came to pick us up after school. That was how my mother often found out that I was speaking Japanese in school.

During the first three years, my mother was never satisfied with my progress in English, often accusing me of speaking “kindergarten-level English.” She suspected that I was using Japanese at school and threatened to put me in a Japanese school if I did not improve, telling me about the awful cases of bullying there. My teacher told my mother that I would improve if she had me watch TV shows and read books in English at home, and she quickly took their advice. She got cable TV so I could watch CNN and Disney Channel at home, and ordered English picture books with corresponding cassette tapes, so I would be immersed in English even at home. I began to perceive Japanese as a forbidden language, what with the combination of the strict language policy at school and my mother’s actions.

However, that is not to say that Japanese culture did not enter our small international island. For example, one of the more popular Japanese girls would often come to school and teach us new ways to fold paper for origami, or give us the news on popular Japanese music or shows. “I learned this at ballet class from my Japanese friends,” she would tell us as we all crowded around her to watch her fold a piece of paper neatly into the shape of a heart. “They all do it this way now.” Knowing about Japanese culture was, in a way, a novelty, or something special and set apart. As we grew older, we spoke Japanese on the playground in hushed voices, trying out trendy words and talking about popular TV shows while our teachers were out of earshot.

In the classroom, however, we were taught that aspects of Japanese culture, such as its festivals and holidays that were based on Buddhism and Shintoism, were against the Bible. We were also taught to wear modest clothing and to shy away from things that celebrated evil or could lead us into temptation. Therefore, our class often seemed to be divided; students with non-missionary, Japanese parents generally had more freedom, while students with foreign missionary parents had many more restrictions. The dichotomy of the conservative teachings at my school and my home often confused me, and I could never figure out what was actually acceptable and what was not. With so much negative feedback about religious festivals and Japanese culture in general that I experienced at school, I began to look down on Japanese culture and treat it with disdain. Although deep down, I wanted to wear Japanese *yukata,* the traditional summer dress, and attend summer festivals, I never voiced the desire to anyone because I did not want to be judged for going against Christian teachings.

Christian teachings tell us that a Christ-like lifestyle is one that is different from the sinful ways of the world. At JHA, we were taught to keep our hearts and minds pure and as Christ-like as possible, which meant anything that celebrated or invited evil into our hearts was frowned upon. In JHA's version of this, we were taught to shy away from movies and books that went against Christian ways, such as *Harry* Potter (because the story is based on witches and wizards). This was difficult, especially because in Japanese society, many cultural and traditional events celebrated dead spirits or idols. For example, summer festivals run by the community usually have some sort of religious motivation, such as bringing spirits of the dead back from the other world (*The Obon Festival*). Even commonplace aspects of the Japanese home were not seen as *godly* at JHA. For example, we were taught that drinking alcohol was wrong because it could cause one to lose sight of Christ, as was divorce, as it went against the teachings of the Bible.

Being taught such things at a young age made me question the ways of my parents, who had a glass of wine with dinner, and would threaten to file for a divorce when they fought. As a young child, I used to be so scared that they would go to Hell instead of Heaven that I would often pray for them.

Because such things were seen to be evil at JHA, I mistakenly understood that Japanese culture was evil and Western culture, which was built on the foundation of Christianity, was good. The desire to be associated more with the good, Christian, American culture was so strong that at one point, I began to reject the ways of Japanese culture and treat it with disdain.
At JHA, they taught us that being a Christian meant that we were not a part of this world. My teachers told us that our true citizenships were in heaven, and that it was okay to feel like we did not belong in Japanese society. If we believed in God, we would go to heaven, where we would live in eternal paradise forever. Our identity lay in believing in Jesus, and according to my teachers at JHA, that was what was most important. In retrospect, however, these teachings encouraged the separation between my own cultural identity and myself.

As I was learning at school that it was important to share the gospel with those around me, so that they would go to heaven, I tried my best to tell those around me about Jesus. When I was in lower elementary school, I had a Japanese friend who I’d met in the neighborhood. Because I was still in the early years of my schooling, I did not have much homework, so we often played together. Once, at school, I was taught that we should share the gospel with our friends who did not know Jesus, so they could go to heaven with us. So in broken Japanese, I did my best to tell her about the gospel, but knew that I had failed when she said she didn’t understand what I was telling her. We ended up drifting apart after that incident, especially as I felt as though I had failed to provide her with the gospel, and thought she saw me as strange.

After that incident, the only time I used Japanese was twice a week in Japanese classes, at dance class once a week, or at home. While I met Japanese girls my age at the community dance class, I never quite fit in, and often walked home alone or played with my friends from school afterwards. Since our school was located near the public elementary school that they all attended, I would see a few of them walking to their school every morning and wave. However, I felt that there was a both a linguistic and religious separation between "them" and "us," and to some extent, I prided myself for being in the "foreign Christian" school, and for being different even though I looked like "them."

Around fourth grade, as my linguistic competence in Japanese began to decline, my parents started to employ the use of language shaming. Whenever I tried to join the conversation during dinnertime at home, they laughed at my childish vocabulary or told me to stop talking because they couldn't understand me. As my young brother, who had attended kindergarten in Japan, also began to employ the same methods when I spoke Japanese, I lost confidence in my linguistic ability and stopped trying to communicate with them in Japanese. This quickly became a problem, as I refused to speak Japanese and my parents could not speak English. I became silent at home, only speaking when I was spoken to and quickly retreating to my room after dinner. I was scared of being shamed for my lack of Japanese language ability and began to feel as though my opinions were better left unsaid if I could not articulate them correctly.

In the end, the combination of the school language policy, my attitude towards my mother tongue, and my family's use of language shaming contributed to language loss. By fifth grade, I had almost completely lost my Japanese communicative proficiency, often directly translating sentences from English to Japanese. For example, I once directly translated the sentence "I'm going to go walk the dog" into Japanese, saying, *"Inu wo arukini iku"* when the

grammatically correct way was, *"Inu no sanpo wo shite kuru"* [I'm going to go take the dog on a walk]. Since we were at church and I had uttered the sentence in public, my mother felt ashamed at my lack of linguistic proficiency in Japanese and scolded me all the way home from church. "You are Japanese! Stop saying such silly sentences!" By seventh grade, my parents grew frustrated at my increasing inability to form comprehensible Japanese sentences, and constantly reminded me that because I was Japanese and I looked Japanese, I should be able to speak the language. However, I did not see a need for it, especially because I was quite certain that I would attend an American university after graduation like everyone else did at my school. I was jealous of my school friends who were foreign, and longed for their blond hair and blue eyes, so I would be released from the expectation of being able to speak perfect Japanese. I was also frustrated that my grades did not improve, and lived under the constant stress that my parents would transfer me to Japanese school, like they had done with my younger brother.

My brother, who was three years younger than me, attended Japanese kindergarten. When he graduated kindergarten, my parents enrolled him at JHA instead of sending him to Japanese school, hoping that he would learn English. At that time, however, JHA did not have a list of requirements for new teachers, and as the school was often in need of new staff members, almost anyone could join the staff team, provided that they had bachelor's degrees and were Christians. Unfortunately, my brother did not have experienced teachers, and my parents were unhappy with the education that he was receiving at JHA. In addition, since he had attended Japanese kindergarten, his Japanese linguistic proficiency was far higher than my own; therefore, when he was in third grade, my parents decided that it was better for him to attend Japanese school. While my brother was nervous about transferring to a new school, he quickly made friends and did well there. I, however, took the transfer process as a warning, thinking that if I

did not pull up my grades, I would end up in Japanese school, just like my “poor little brother.” I did everything I could to thrive at JHA, both academically and relationally, but it was not enough to keep my parents from making the decision to put me into Japanese school.

5.3 Junior and Senior High School Years: Returning Home?

As time went on, my mother grew frustrated with the school and the lack of linguistic and academic support they were giving me. She did not understand any of the homework that I was given, and was no longer able to help me. All she understood was the grades that I received, which were far lower than those of my peers. She also saw that I was the only one who was not on the Honor Roll, while everyone else my age was. The situation at home became dire: I could not communicate with my parents, my brother and I fought in two languages – he used Japanese while I used English, and my grandparents were showing concern over my Japanese communicative ability, which was filled with errors.

My parents finally decided to transfer me back to the Japanese school system, when they realized that if I were to end up in Japan in the future, I would not be able to survive with my current level of oral and literacy skills in Japanese. In my own country, which did not feel like my own country anymore, I walked into the new school with trepidation on my first day, feeling like a foreign exchange student. Many things were different from my old school there: there were forty students in one class and more than 300 students in the whole school. No one spoke English, and many students came during the school hours to stare at the girl who was “Japanese but spoke only English.” In addition, it was no easy task for me to keep up with the rigid and passive education style, all conducted in what seemed to be a foreign language. I could barely understand the conversations going on around me, so understanding class content was out of the question. My teachers tried to help me reach the average academic level of a Japanese junior

high school student. The Japanese teacher taught me Japanese characters (*kanji*) and Old Japanese after school. The social studies teacher wrote difficult characters on the blackboard in front of me in big letters so I would be able to write notes. My teachers had never dealt with a case like my own - a Japanese national who only spoke English and had next to no knowledge of Japanese and had no experience taking Japanese compulsory education. Because in Japanese society, junior high school is still a part of compulsory education, the teachers were required by the government to equip me with enough knowledge so that I could go onto high school.

However, because I was lacking not only academically but also linguistically, there was only so much that they could do to help me. In my third year - the year before we took entrance exams to enroll into various high schools in the area - I was placed in a classroom with low-achieving students, otherwise known as the "class with dumb students."

Being in such an environment, I hoped that English class would be the one space where I could be myself and shine. However, the class itself seemed to be a whole new world of concepts that I'd never heard of before, as the teacher had the class chant, "SV – SVO – SVC – SVCC – SVOC!" [1]Most of the class was spent translating passages from our English textbook into Japanese, and discussing grammatical concepts. Even with the most basic of translations I struggled, mostly because I could not find the right words to use, and even if I did, I could not write it out in Japanese. It was also there that I began to understand that the other students did not like those who were "too talented" in an academic subject. Although no one said it out loud, I was aware of the unfriendly stares and the small sighs I heard around me when I answered a

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[1] This is a common method employed by language teachers in Japan that supposedly teaches students the rules of English grammar. S stands for subject, V stands for verb, O stands for object and C stands for complement. From what I remember, the teachers did not explain what an "object" or a "complement" was, but only had us memorize the pattern.

question in English and the teacher praised me. At one point, a girl whispered, "Just because she can speak English…" I grew quiet, even in English class, feeling as though I was not supposed to speak English, because that would be perceived by my classmates as "showing off."

In ninth grade, a year and a half after I transferred schools, everyone began to prepare for high school entrance examinations. I ended up choosing a general academic high school, but chose a program that focused on foreign languages. The night before the exam, my mother cautioned me against letting the interviewers know of my oral competency in Japanese, fearing that they would not accept me if they found out. As I walked into the classroom where the interview was held, I smiled at the two teachers sitting there, almost forgetting to bow traditionally. As the interview began and I answered the questions in flawless English, the interviewers' eyes became wider and wider. It was at that point that I finally understood what my mother meant when she said I needed to use English as a tool, as something to compensate for my lack of Japanese proficiency.

As high school began, I realized that being in a *Foreign Language Course* meant nothing – I was still in a strictly Japanese environment and speaking fluent English was still frowned upon. The value placed on group orientation was present in everything that we did, whether it was cleaning the school, eating lunch, or participating in events such as Sports Day and Culture Day. I struggled to set aside my own personal interests to go along with the group and did not understand how it could build character, as my teacher said. There were a few students who were mixed race, but I found that the few exchange students we had were my closest friends. My classmates saw me as "the girl who could speak English," and some used that reason precisely to push me away, dropping backhanded comments such as, "You're so lucky. You don't have to study for English exams," and, "You're Japanese, but you can't even speak Japanese." My

teachers saw me as an anomaly; I was the girl who looked Japanese but spoke English, and did not do well in other subjects. Although I was born in Japan of two Japanese nationals, my international upbringing and schooling made me different and strange; many of the things I did or said were socially or linguistically incorrect. English class was where I had some confidence but also struggled the most. "You can't start a sentence with the word 'Because'!" I argued with my teacher after she marked me down for filling in the wrong answer to the question, '*Why are you tired?'* My mother constantly reminded me, "Japanese English is different from the English you learned, Hina. You need to stop arguing with your teacher or she won't like you anymore. That's not what you do here in Japan. Do it their way, and you will pass." It took another year to finally achieve the 90th percentile in English examinations.

I grew restless after a year in Japanese high school, and when the opportunity arose to participate in a study abroad program for one year, I begged my parents to let me go abroad. I ended up studying for a year in Hungary, where I learned Hungarian and lived the life of a Hungarian high school student. However, this extra year added onto my "non-Japanese persona" and made it even more difficult to readapt to Japanese society when I returned to Japan. I was put in the same grade as before I left, so I was with students who were all a year younger than I was. My new homeroom teacher was kind, but she tended to use me as her CD player during English classes. "Oh, I forgot the CD player in the teacher's lounge! Can you read the words, Hina? Class, repeat after Hina!" As I read the vocabulary words and my whole class repeated the words after me, I could not shake off the feeling that I had been placed back inside a box. I longed to go abroad again.

5.4 University: Who Am I?

After graduating from high school, I was accepted into a small, liberal arts university in northern Japan. Established in 2006, the university was unique in that all classes were conducted in English and study abroad was mandatory. I was put in the highest English for Academic Purposes class, and I felt as though I was finally with students who had similar levels of English proficiency as I did. The university reminded me of my experiences in elementary school, but also gave me space to study at my own pace in a language that I understood. No longer did people stare at me or whisper behind my back for being the strange girl that spoke English but not Japanese. No longer was I seen as the bad student – suddenly, I was achieving top grades and I *liked* studying.

On the other hand, while my oral and written competence in Japanese had improved significantly since middle school, I was still not fully competent. I was often mistaken for being younger than I was for the level of Japanese that I spoke and wrote, which was probably equal to that of a Japanese elementary school student. The experiences that I had had throughout my years as a non-native speaker of Japanese (even though I looked Japanese) had made me feel an aversion towards anything relating to Japanese, so I struggled to force myself to take the compulsory Japanese calligraphy course, putting it off until the very last possible semester.

At the age of 21, I ended up in downtown Toronto at a Canadian university, on a compulsory exchange program that my school offered. My second exchange was, in some ways, similar to the first one in Hungary, as I got to experience student life as a Canadian. It was there, however, that I realized that I was being treated as if I were a Canadian student instead of a visiting international student. People often mistook me as someone who had been born and raised in Canada because of my linguistic competence in English. When I asked what a debit card was, I was met with looks of incredulity. If I made grammatical errors in English, my

friends laughed and teased me. It was there that I began to struggle even more with my self-identity.

After my return to Japan, my peers began the job-hunting process while I decided I wanted to further my education. My mother opposed the idea vehemently, saying that I would be better off holding a stable position at a company like everyone else. “We gave you the English education so you could use it as a tool to get a good job!” she said. However, I had gained some research experience in my undergraduate years and enjoyed studying in the field of linguistics and education. I had also heard from my Western friends that I was an adult now, and I could make my own choices. Going against the image of a “good Japanese daughter,” I ended up in Canada once again, this time to pursue a Master’s degree in Second Language Education.

Living in Canada as a full-time international student was different from being an exchange student. I was not bound by the rules of any institution in Japan, nor was I assisted in the process in any way. The experiences were similar, however. I saw my ability to speak English both as a gift and a curse: a gift in that I was able to keep up with my academics without linguistic struggle, but also a curse because I was often mistaken for a Canadian and sometimes could not obtain the help I needed without ridicule. I was also met with some forms of discrimination: even though my English is generally flawless, in the English-teaching world, I was considered to be Japanese. For example, in one case, I was asked to pretend to be Canadian for a whole summer while working with Japanese students, which I was able to pull off, to my surprise. In that situation, my students truly thought I was Japanese-Canadian, who had been born and raised in Toronto, and did not understand nor speak any Japanese. In another case, however, a company did not offer me any classes because I was Japanese, and they were afraid that I would not be able to offer the same quality of instruction to their students as their native

English-speaking teachers. While it was unsurprising that these employers held the perception that their clients would not want to be taught by a Japanese person who stereotypically could not speak English, I struggled to come to terms with the fact that my ethnic background could hinder me from getting an English teaching job, especially when I was simultaneously being mistaken for being Canadian.

My attitude towards Japanese was largely negative from my years of attending JHA, and in the years since, it has been a slow process to embrace that side of me. I have consistently struggled to accept the linguistic and cultural blunders that I make every day, often excusing them by saying, “It’s because I’m Japanese” when I don’t know something in Canada, but also saying, “It’s because I’m westernized” when making an unacceptable error in Japan. I’ve found, however, that the years of making such excuses has confused me even more in figuring out who I am. Even as I am writing this, I am confused – I feel as though I am an underdeveloped, confused hybrid and I don’t know who I am.

Chapter 6 Findings

6.1 Introduction

In this section, I will introduce the findings from the staff, parents, and student interviews that were directly relevant to my research questions. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the research questions were:

1. What kind of linguistic support do English-medium missionary schools (henceforth, EMM schools) offer?
2. How do attending EMM schools affect Japanese students’ cultural and linguistic identity?
3. Why do Japanese parents choose such schools for their children? How do their expected outcomes compare with the reality for the children?
4. What kind of educational environment do EMM schools offer? Are there ways they can better prepare the Japanese students and their linguistic competencies for success in higher education and eventual employment?

The results are presented below according to themes, including the students’ linguistic competence, cultural awareness, their future goals and expectations, the lack of resources, and finally, possible solutions as raised by the interviewees, with excerpts from the interviews added for further explanation. In addition, as the interviews were conducted in both Japanese and in English, all utterances in Japanese are italicized in the transcripts. In this study, I have inserted the original transcripts within the text. More specifically, the originals are written below longer quotes, while for shorter quotes, the originals are put in brackets following the quote.

6.2 Linguistic Competence and Educational Support

As mentioned in Chapter 2, except for Japanese classes, which were held a few times a week, all of the classes were conducted in English. In all classes, Japanese students and native English speaking students took classes together. In addition, during the school hours, the students

were required to communicate in English, even during break hours. This meant that the students had to have both oral and written competency in order to keep up with the other students in their classes. On the other hand, because the Japanese students were ostensibly natives of the society, they needed to have linguistic competency in Japanese, as well, to reduce the repercussions of attending an English-medium school, outside of the norms of society. By asking the students how they judged their linguistic competency in both English and in Japanese, I was able to obtain information on their perceptions of their own linguistic abilities as well as get an idea on the educational environment of JHA. In addition, I also asked both the students and the teachers about the linguistic support that the students were given in school, to get an idea of their linguistic proficiency levels.

6.2.1 Linguistic competence in English.

As mentioned in the literature review, it takes about five to seven years to develop academic language in a second language. This finding seemed to ring true for both Grace and Anne, who were in sixth grade. For these sisters, English speaking and writing was still more difficult for them than Japanese. In addition, Riley, who was in seventh grade, stated that essay writing in English was something she still needed support in, saying that it was difficult for her to come up with the content when writing essays.

Sophia, in Grade Ten, preferred English writing to Japanese writing, but her lack of linguistic competence as compared to the native-English speaking students in her classroom was something she found to be emotionally difficult. She also found that she was unable to express herself fully in English and desired the ability to speak at least one language fluently. Sophia found that because her teachers labeled her as a speaker of English as a second language, the expectations for her were low, even though she wanted to be treated like her American

classmates. She felt that her Japanese and English were both linguistically underdeveloped, which caused her to feel a lack of confidence in her schoolwork, but also in her interpersonal relationships at school, finally stating,

> I wish I could do better, but I’m just barely in the place I could get a good grade on. That’s what I’m just trying to reach. But yeah, both aren’t good. But I wish I could have better understanding in at least one of them.

For Sophia, being unable to fully use either language was something that consistently made her feel unconfident.

Millie, who was in Grade Eleven, pointed to her lack of vocabulary in English, saying that she often “forgot” English words easily. However, her homeroom teacher had the opposite opinion, saying, “[Millie] is very precise with her language. She chooses very well and she thinks about it. She premeditates and her accent is perfect – almost... But she definitely knows more in terms of vocabulary than [name of another student].” Out of the six students that I interviewed, only David, who was in Grade Nine at the time of the interview, felt most confident in his oral competency in English, but did not give a reason as to why he felt that way.

Turning to the teachers, Avery and Kayla both pointed out that the Japanese students’ vocabulary level was lower than the other students’ levels in the classroom. Kayla, who had prior experience in an ESL classroom in the United States, specifically used ESL teaching strategies, such as using pictures to illustrate new vocabulary terms, in order to assist the Japanese students’ comprehension of the class content. Ben “showered [the students] with native English” to help them learn English, but he admitted to not having any language teaching training prior to teaching at JHA. All of the teachers referred to the Japanese students as ESL students. While the students did, by definition, speak English as their second language, the teachers’ views were in

contrast with the students' view of themselves. After having attended JHA since first grade, they saw English as their more dominant language.

6.2.2 Linguistic competence in Japanese.

As Avery, one of the teachers, mentioned, the ability to speak and write in Japanese is a crucial part of surviving in Japanese society. However, all of the students I interviewed said that they felt that their written competence was much lower than that of their Japanese counterparts. As Avery said, if the students had not been Japanese or were from a mixed racial background, their lack of written competency would not have mattered, because they would have been considered to be foreigners. However, he stated that being Japanese but English-dominant made the students stand out from the rest of the society. He further explained that this would become a cause for problems now, but also later in their lives when they graduated from JHA.

At the time of the interview, Japanese classes were held twice a week for Grades One through Eight, while students in Grade Nine did not have any Japanese classes. For the high school students in Grades Ten through Twelve, Japanese was an elective class. Those who took other electives in Grades Ten through Twelve did not have any Japanese classes. There were two Japanese teachers, but only one of them participated in the interviews. The participating Japanese teacher had been teaching Japanese at the school for about seventeen years. When I asked how she found the students' Japanese linguistic ability, she answered that the students generally used workbooks that were two grade levels below their actual grade. She shared her concerns and a few anecdotes, exemplifying the students' Japanese proficiency levels:

> *... sometimes, if I ask the homeroom teachers, I sometimes hear them telling the parents that because the child's vocabulary level is still low, to please have them watch different DVDs or get used to hearing many [English] words. It's the same with Japanese. If I'm*

reading them a picture book, sometimes I’d say “bookcase” and the student asks, “Teacher, what’s a bookcase?” “What’s a kitchen?” Or if I say “Monday Tuesday Wednesday” there are some students who ask, “What’s Monday? What’s Tuesday?” And they’re in first grade. [Translation by author]

「だけど時々担任の先生に話を聞くと、まだまだボキャブラリーが足りないからDVDとか見せて、いろんな言葉に慣れるようにさせてくださいっておっしゃってるのを聞こえてくるのもあるんだけど、日本語にしても同じなんですよ。絵本読んだりしても、時どき「本箱」って言って「先生、本箱って何？」「台所って何？」「月曜日、火曜日、水曜日」って言ったら「月曜日って何？火曜日って何？」っていう子もいるんですよ。小学校一年生レベルで。」

As is apparent in this case, the Japanese students’ linguistic competency in Japanese was severely lacking, even from first grade. The teacher went on to say that she would sometimes check with the English teachers to see if the students had covered those words in English, and the teachers always expressed surprise and disbelief that they did not know the vocabulary in Japanese. While she understood that the school prioritized English education, she also voiced the concern that for the students, attending Japanese class twice a week was not enough to become competent speakers of Japanese. She also found that she was unable to use workbooks that fit the students’ levels to prevent demotivation, especially if their levels were more than two years lower than their actual grade. Regarding support, she mentioned that in the upper-year classes, where both native and non-native Japanese students took classes together, she divided them into groups according to proficiency level and taught them by group whenever possible. However, in some cases, she tended to give more time to the non-native Japanese speakers in the classroom who required more assistance.

The Japanese teacher understood that without Japanese linguistic ability, the Japanese students would struggle to continue living in Japan, even if they ended up attending an American university in the future. During the interview, she said:

> *Even though a student graduates from an American university with perfect grades, I’ve heard that when they start looking for jobs, there are students who decide that because they’re Japanese, they want to return to Japan. And when those kids come back into Japanese society, it’s a great thing that they can speak English, but they’re going to have to communicate with Japanese people, so they’ll have to know how to use Japanese honorifics, or how to communicate things, or how to write letters or emails, or how to read Japanese characters. Or else they’ll struggle. So I’d like to give them that ability – the necessary ability to survive in Japanese society.*
>
> 「でもやっぱりアメリカの大学を優秀な成績で出ても、仕事を選ぶ時にやっぱり日本人っていうことでやっぱりネックになって日本に戻ってきたいっていう人もいるんですって。だからそういう人たちが日本の社会に戻ってきたら、英語喋れるっていうことはすごくヒーローだけど、やっぱり日本人とコミュニケーションをするわけだからやっぱり日本語の敬語の使い方であるとか、ことのコミュニケーションするとか手紙とかメールとかの漢字が読めないっていうのは困るので、やっぱり社会に出て通用できる日本語力はつけておいてあげたいかな？」

Although her desire was to help them reach that level of Japanese proficiency using the limited resources that she had, she seemed to feel as though her support was never quite enough to help them reach native-like fluency in Japanese. She understood that the difficulty of fitting into Japanese society extended beyond their years at JHA, and wanted to help the students become linguistically competent, wherever they chose to go after graduation.

In summary, it is clear that the students had trouble reaching a level of linguistic competence in both languages. For the students, English competence was necessary for academic achievement at JHA, but Japanese competence was also crucial for communication and for their futures. As Sophia summed up:

> ...I want to learn Japanese too, since it's my home language and it's hard when you're like, learning both languages at the same time, but you're not better in one language. Like, I at least want to have one language that I can express my thoughts in without getting help from other parts of other languages, so it's like English and Japanese are on the same level, but it's not the level I should be on, either.

Even with the various types of linguistic support that the teachers offered, the instruction that the students received never was enough for the students to become competent dual language speakers. In the next section, I will discuss the students' cultural awareness, in an attempt to further understand how they perceived their identities.

6.3 Cultural Awareness of Japan and the West

As mentioned in the literature review, learning a second language can mean acquiring a new culture. However, in some cases, second language speakers may not identify with the culture where the second language is spoken, thus becoming bilingual, but mono-cultural. The students at JHA, however, had an interesting outlook on their cultural identity, perhaps due to the mix of international, Western, Japanese, and Christian cultural space that they inhabited. The two sections below will discuss their identities of being Japanese, but attending a Christian, English-medium school, to understand how the students, as well as their teachers and parents, perceived these identities.

6.3.1 The lack of cultural awareness.

Attending an English-medium missionary school, mixed in with native speakers of English, often caused cultural miscommunication within the classroom and brought about fights. For example, Kayla mentioned that throughout the year, numerous fights had started amongst the middle school students because the Japanese students did not understand American sarcasm. Even after seven years of interacting with American students and teachers, Japanese students struggled to understand Western culture and the way Western society worked. Sophia also discussed the irony of learning about the American financial system and history, when she had no need for it in Japanese society, but had never learned about the Japanese financial system or Japanese history.

A few teachers also pointed out the obvious lack of American cultural knowledge. Attempts to help the Japanese students connect their cultural background to the context that they were studying about often failed, and the teachers had to find other ways to teach the students. Specifically, Noah mentioned that he saw a few of his Japanese students struggle to understand aspects of Japanese culture, such as Buddhism, due to their upbringing in a Christian school system. He described the situation in the classroom,

> I’ll ask [Millie] about them because I’ve studied them and I’ve known them, and I’m trying to get her to compare, or draw the comparison between Western Christian culture, etc. And it’s like, how do you compare this to Japanese culture? And she’s like, I don’t know. She doesn’t know.

These examples show that even though the students spoke English, they were not always able to identify with American culture.

6.3.2 A desire to be *Japanese* but feeling stuck-in-the-middle

On the other hand, however, many of the Japanese students in this study discussed the desire to have Japanese friends or to experience the Japanese school system. Sophia mentioned how her interests did not always match with her American friends’ interests, and wished she could have Japanese friends as well, to talk about Japanese popular culture. She also discussed her feelings towards Japanese society, and how she felt that she was unable to fully fit in and be a part of society. She exemplified this by telling me, “So like, even when I meet people, I'm always like, "Heeyy!" so like, I make [Japanese] people feel really uncomfortable. It's really hard to get along with them, since in Japanese, it's really hard to just start a conversation especially in like formal, like, another teacher or another principal or pastor.”

Sophia implied that it was difficult to make Japanese friends because of her Western gestures and upbringing. In addition, she expressed a desire to get to know Japanese people who were native Japanese speakers. Further into the interview, she also said that because the JHA community was so small, she only had friends from the school. On the other hand, because her younger sisters, Grace and Anna, spent more time at a Japanese school before entering JHA, she felt envious of their friends outside of the school, especially since she felt that she was only able to make friends from JHA.

Furthermore, Millie pointed to the same problem of being unable to make Japanese friends, saying:

> It’s really like, hard for me to make friends in Japan. First, I don’t like, really go outside and play, so it’s like, I don’t really have time to do it, but it seems like the neighbors are really having like a separation with me. Kind of like, having a wall, basically? So it’s kinda really hard, to know if I really belong here or not.

In general, Japanese schoolchildren often play with other children in the neighborhood, go to school together, and attend after-school activities together. Because Millie attended JHA and did not have the chance to become friends with other Japanese schoolchildren, she felt left out and separated from her neighborhood community and Japanese society. Even when they felt a curiosity towards attending a public school, as Sophia, Millie, and Riley did, they felt that they were too different from the others to fit in. Riley also pointed to her level of Japanese linguistic ability as something that kept her from satisfying that curiosity, saying that she would probably “die” if she attended, because she would not be able to keep up with the schoolwork.

In a follow-up interview, Sophia expressed feeling like she was neither Japanese nor American. Regarding her sense of identity, Millie also said something similar, “It’s probably more of the middle... because like, I know some parts of the Japanese stuff, and like, I kinda know [American culture] because I’ve been here... so I’m kinda in the middle.”

David also found that he had a mixed identity, as pointed out to him by those around him. Whenever he was quiet, his friends from JHA said he was being “really Japanese” – the typical stereotype for Japanese students (Wong & Niu, 2013). Although he did not specify how that made him feel, it seemed like he did not know what to make of his friends’ statements.

Both Sophia and Riley said that they felt like they fit in the most when they were with friends who spoke both Japanese and English, because of the way they expressed themselves linguistically and culturally. As students with both languages and cultures as a part of their identities, they found that other “in-betweeners,” as they named themselves, understood them the most. As will be discussed later on, this feeling of being stuck-in-the-middle, or having partial but not full association to both Japanese and Western cultures was something that many of the Japanese students at JHA felt, and was not restricted to this small group of students.

6.4 Expectations of Student Outcomes

This section will discuss the results of the second research question, which centered on the parents' reasons for choosing JHA for their children, and also their expectations of their future outcomes. In addition, I included the students' understanding of their future goals to see if their desires tie in to their parents' desires. I found that while the parents chose the school because they sought either English education or Christian education for their children, there was a discrepancy between their ideas of their children's outcomes and the students' desires for their futures.

6.4.1 Reasons for choosing JHA.

The parents of the students mainly pointed to two reasons for choosing JHA for their children. One reason was because it was a school that instructed students in an English-immersive environment, which supported their children's English acquisition. For example, Millie mentioned that her mother had chosen the school for her so that she would acquire English as a native speaker, and that her parents also expressed a desire for her to speak more English, even outside of the school. The second reason was because it was a Christian school that taught Christian values and morals. David's mother, who had enrolled her son in JHA after having him attend another international school, pointed to the unique English-only environment at JHA as a reason for the change in schools. Grace, Anne, and Sophia's mother, on the other hand, also pointed to the Christian school environment at JHA, saying, *"There aren't many schools that have both English [immersion] AND Christian faith. And JHA isn't that expensive compared to other schools"* (Emphasis added by mother, translation by author). Another reason, however was the freedom of JHA's educational environment, which was different from the rigid Japanese school system, as Grace, Anne, and Sophia's mother pointed out.

Well, JHA isn’t very strict, right? It's very free at JHA. You can be unique and let your personality shine through. I think in Japan, they’re very strict about how your hair is done, or what color your socks are. And even with those socks, they've regulated how high they can be. And the color of their hair and all. I think it’s too much, they’re not in an army. I don’t think there needs to be extra rules that tie the kids up, like, “Don’t do this!” But at JHA, there are some rules, but [mostly everything] is okay. So the kids are free and happy there.

「まあ、厳しくないでしょ？自由でしょ？個性を活かしていけるから。日本の学校はもう靴下から何から全部厳しいでしょ。靴下の色とか何センチまでとか、決まってるでしょ。髪の毛の色も、これはダメとか、いろいろ厳しいから。そういう余計な厳しさはいらないかなと思って。軍隊じゃないんだから。子供を縛るような…「これはしてはいけない！」って縛るような？JHA の場合は OK、ある程度ルールはあるけど、子供たちは自由に楽しくやっていけてるかな。」

The driving motivation for their children to learn English, however, lay in both mothers’ histories. Sophia and the twins’ mother pointed to her experience studying abroad for a part of her education, and how that gave her a wider view of the world. She desired for her children to be the same, to *“be able to interact comfortably from many different backgrounds... because everyone [at JHA] comes from abroad, their vision widens. In Japan, in Higashi-Osaka, or in Nara, you would only see that one area. But [the girls] talk about America or England.”*（でもまあ、英語できるっていうことは強みだし、そういうことだけじゃなくて、国際人としてやってるから、こういう視野が、偏見がなくなるっていうか？中国人もいるしアジア人もいるし、だからそういういろんな人種と普通に付き合っていけるし、差別なくね？

やっぱり広いよね、考えが、みんな世界からやってきてるから、普通に視野が世界に向かって。日本だって、東大阪だって、生駒とかそこしか見ないような、奈良県とかね。でもそういう面でも広いし、話ししててもアメリカがとかイギリスがとか普通に出るし…） David’s mother said that during her university years when she studied English, she had had to give up many dreams, including becoming a fluent speaker of English. Therefore, she chose JHA out of the desire for David to speak English as a native speaker, and had even wanted David to get to the point where he would forget how to speak Japanese. She did not want David to long to speak English as she did, and wanted to give him the ability to speak fluent English without difficulty. The Japanese teacher summed up the Japanese parents’ motivation to put their children in JHA, saying, *“...these days, especially with the younger children, the parents think that since they struggled with English, they want their children to learn English. ...If they come to this school, they’ll learn English and if they’re living in Japan, they’d know Japanese. So they enroll their children into this school thinking that it’s good that they’d be able to study both languages at once.”*（ここの学校にいたら英語ができるようになる、で、日本に住んでたら日本語はわかってるはず。だからもう両方ダブルで勉強できていいじゃない、って思って入れてはるのかなって思う時もあるんです。）

The parents’ main focus was on their children’s English proficiency skills rather than their Japanese skills. In other words, they prioritized their children’s studies in English, and their Japanese studies took a back seat. They thought that if the children lived in Japan, they would be able to acquire Japanese naturally. The Japanese teacher was quick to question the tendency to think this way:

> *With English, this school is probably not enough, and with Japanese, two times a week isn’t enough either. Even for Japanese students, the kids who go to public Japanese*

schools who are in first grade, they listen to their teacher’s explanation in Japanese, they read Japanese and they write Japanese, from 9AM to 3PM, Monday to Friday. So it’s strange, isn’t it, to think that kids could acquire Japanese just by living in Japan?

だから英語にしてもこっちの分だけでは足りないんだろうし、日本語にしてももちろんここの授業で週に２回だけだしね。日本の子だって、日本の公立に行ってる子たちは小学校１年生のね、朝９時から３時まで月曜日から金曜日までずっと日本語で先生の説明を聞いて日本語を読んで、日本語で文章を書いて、習得していく部分も、日本に住んでるから日本語も習得できるでしょって思うところがおかしいでしょ？

In summary, the Japanese parents chose JHA because of its unique, all-English environment and because of its Christian values. In addition, the parents did not see a need for their children to keep up with their Japanese studies because they assumed that they would learn Japanese through the mere fact of living in Japan. Instead, they prioritized their children’s English language development, because that was what they deemed to be important for their child’s education.

6.4.2 The students’ futures.

According to the teachers, mothers, and the students themselves, the students had various future goals. For example, one student wanted to become an architect, another wanted to become an abacus teacher in the United States, and still another expressed a desire to study psychology. However, there were a few issues that the students needed to overcome before they were able to achieve those dreams.

For Riley, her dream was to become an abacus teacher in the United States to teach Americans about Japanese culture. However, she seemed to think that in order to teach about

Japanese culture, she needed to know the Japanese language. Because she deemed herself as lacking in Japanese linguistic competence, she judged that she was not capable of becoming an abacus teacher in the United States, saying, *“... I thought I would go to the U.S. and spread Japanese culture, but then people would say, ‘But you can’t speak Japanese.’ So I have to learn Japanese, but it’s bothersome.”* 「アメリカに行って、日本の文化をちょっと広めたい、みたいな。でもそうすると、日本語あなた喋れませんよね、ってなっちゃうから、日本語習わないといけないけど、めんどくさい。」

Sophia, Millie, and David all wanted to go abroad and study in American universities after graduation. For example, Sophia told me that she dreamed of studying psychology in the United States. However, the drawback for her was the cost of attending university in the United States. As her mother stated, unless Sophia was able to get a scholarship, it was close to impossible to send her child abroad. To keep her options open, Millie took online Japanese classes to keep up with the Japanese school system, in addition to what she was learning at JHA. Although at the time of the interview, she did not know what she was going to do after graduation, she mentioned to her parents’ concerns of her attending university in the United States, also because of the high cost.

The Japanese teacher explained that she often acted as a guidance counselor for the Japanese students around the time they entered high school, or ninth grade. When a Japanese student expresses a desire to attend an American university, she tells them of the future financial burden on their parents, and the necessity of obtaining a scholarship to help their parents pay their way through university. She also explains the importance of getting good grades, even in Japanese class, in order to get a scholarship. On the other hand, if they express a desire to attend university in Japan, she lets them know that they would be required to not only brush up on their

Japanese linguistic ability, but also pass a national high school exit examination because they attend an unaccredited school. She tells them of the importance of passing the exam in order to even apply for a Japanese university. According to the Japanese teacher, it was precisely because of the high cost of attendance at American universities, and the need to pass a high school exit examination in order to attend a Japanese university, that parents end up choosing to transfer their children back into the Japanese education system around ninth grade. By having the child attend the last year of Japanese middle school, which is still a part of compulsory education in Japan, it gave the child a chance to take high school entrance exams with other Japanese children. If they were able to enroll in a Japanese high school, upon graduation, they could go into a Japanese university without the hassle of taking the national high school exit examinations.

According to a few of the other American teachers, it was often around seventh or eighth grade that most Japanese parents pulled their children out of JHA and transferred them into a Japanese middle school. However, unlike the Japanese teacher, the teachers attributed this phenomenon to a different factor: that the parents found a difference between their cultural background and their children’s. The principal maintained that the school culture at JHA was established on a mix of Christian, Western, and international culture, quite unlike American or Japanese culture. Therefore, when the Japanese parents first see JHA, they find it to be a positive environment that is interesting and exciting. However, as their children slowly begin to acquire the school culture, and cultural misunderstandings begin to occur, the parents panic and transfer their child to a Japanese school, to counter the changes that they see in their child.

It was apparent that the school had seen many Japanese students suddenly leave around middle school. The Japanese parents at JHA expected that their children would become fluent and

competent users of both Japanese and English, but as the Japanese teacher pointed out, education at JHA was not enough for the students to become fluent in English, and living in Japan without attending Japanese school was also not sufficient for the students’ Japanese linguistic development. Therefore, as the parents watched their child turn from being Japanese-dominant to English-dominant, while consistently showing underdevelopment in both languages, their excitement slowly turned to concern. In addition, the parents became more concerned as they began to see signs that their child’s cultural outlook was different from their own. However, it was not until they were faced with a crucial decision – where to send their child to university – that it became necessary to act before it was too late for their child, lest they became unable to attend university anywhere. That was why so many Japanese parents ended up transferring their child to a Japanese public school around middle school.

6.5 The Educational Environment at JHA and Possible Solutions

As we have seen in the literature, the educational environment and the attitudes of the teachers can play a crucial role in helping Japanese students improve their proficiency in English while retaining their first language. I will wrap up this section by discussing the mission statement at JHA, with a focus on the strict language policy, and possible solutions as raised by the parents, teachers, and students.

6.5.1 The mission statement.

The JHA mission statement, as written on their website, says, “Japan Hope Academy, as a beacon of biblical Christian influence in the Japanese culture, is actively committed to our unique position of providing families with a high quality, comprehensive Christ-centered education.” In fact, their website says nothing about the school being an English-medium school, but as one of the teachers, Ben, argued, because the mission statement is written in English, that

should be enough for everyone to understand that JHA is built upon two pillars: Christianity and the English language.

The school, as the teachers maintained, does have a unique position: they are the only school in the area that offers English-medium instruction in an immersive environment. Ben compared JHA to other international schools, saying that because those schools tried to teach their children both English and Japanese, the students there never mastered either language or culture. He also added that it was precisely because they tried to teach subject matters in both languages that their Japanese students were unable to become linguistically and culturally competent. On the other hand, JHA offered all of the subject matters in English, and kept the students from using Japanese, with the exception of Japanese classes. This made them a “unique” school culture. Noah also pointed to this uniqueness:

> So that’s why those two things: Christ-centered and distinctly other, I think that’s what gives the school light, and that’s what we have to fight for daily. I mean, because in our own private lives and our thought lives, we have to fight to be distinctly other, which is distinctly joyful and not of this world and not bound by citizenship and seeking eternal reward and doing so in English. But really, the English is the vehicle, the content is all gospel.

For Noah, the Christian aspect of the school mission statement was what was the most important for the school. The teachers and principal seemed to agree that without both Christianity and English, the school would cease to exist, saying that the linguistic and the religious characteristics of the school were what made it unique and brought in both students and teachers alike. Ben went as far as to say, “If the statement of JHA included Japanese people’s

language and culture retention in the framework, then they should be doing more. But it doesn’t. Frankly, it’s not a priority.”

Unlike the Japanese parents, the teachers prioritized the Christian values of the school, but were unwilling to give up the English-medium aspect, in order to maintain the school culture. In addition, the unique English environment was one of the school’s marketing strategies and what kept drawing missionary children, teachers, and Japanese students to the school. For the school, the English aspect was what allowed them to spread the Good News to the rest of Japanese society, and what drew missionary families to the area. The staff at JHA strongly felt that if either aspect were discarded, they would lose their students and the school would cease to exist. That was the reason why they maintained such a strict language policy.

6.5.2 The language policy.

The strict language policy at JHA led to similar problems among the Japanese students. As Sophia shared in her follow-up interview, it was very stressful to study in an environment with such a strict language policy. When I asked her to describe how she felt about it, she replied, “...it’s like a limitation to how you express yourself... and you get punished for expressing yourself, just in another language. It was pretty stressful.” She mentioned that it made her into a quieter person than she initially was, as she kept herself from speaking up in fear of getting punished by her teachers. In addition, Kyra, a former graduate I interviewed also said something similar: that she barely spoke during her years at JHA because she was not confident in her English proficiency level, and did not want to get punished for slipping up and speaking Japanese. When I asked Sophia how the students were punished, she said, “[The teachers]... “threatened” me and the others, I believe... they’ll keep on saying if you speak a word in Japanese, there will be a referral going out and your parents will know.” According to Ben, it

was not difficult to keep the language policy in place, as he stated, “JHA students are so compliant. If we say don’t do it, they don’t do it.” However, this policy and the threat of punishment was enough for some Japanese students to choose to stay silent rather than to voice their opinions in English, which they lacked confidence in doing. Furthermore, in the home, their negative attitudes towards Japanese caused some of them to refrain from speaking with their parents, thus slowly eroding their Japanese speaking proficiency.

Turning from the language policy to the general educational environment, a former male graduate told me an anecdote that gave an insight on the limited resources that JHA had. He said that because there was no teacher who could teach high school math during his time there, he and his classmates were each given a textbook and a teacher’s answer book. They spent the semester studying independently with no support from their teachers. In addition, due to the lack of teachers, the school could not offer many electives. Many of the students, both former and current, said that if they could change one thing about JHA, they would add more classes, especially science-related classes. Rafael, also a former student at JHA, spoke of his experiences attending an American university after graduation, saying that he found himself to be far behind his peers in first-year science and math courses.

In summary, while the image of the school environment that the Japanese parents held was true in that it was a freer environment than that of a Japanese school, JHA had many issues, especially with the existence of the strict language policy and with the lack of resources. It would be unfair if I did not mention that the staff acknowledged the severe lack of resources at the school: it seemed to be something that was consistently on their minds. As Ben mentioned, the teachers came to teach at the school knowing that they would be underpaid and overworked. In addition, as the principal stated, the school tuition was quite low compared to other international

schools in the area, so that more students could attend the school. This may have been the reason why there was such a severe lack of resources, but that was the price to pay in staying true to the school mission statement.

6.5.3 More communication with the parents?

As mentioned above, everyone attending the school knew that there was a severe lack of resources. Furthermore, the teachers acknowledged that there was a tendency for Japanese parents to pull their children out of the school around middle school. However, for the staff, raising tuition to add more resources or implementing more Japanese classes for the students were not feasible options. When I asked them what they thought they could do to better support the development of both languages, no one could give a concrete answer, because supporting students linguistically meant that they needed more teachers who could teach the classes, as well as more resources for the students to use. As Ben said, the school’s priority was not to help students maintain their Japanese linguistic or cultural identity, but to teach them in English so that they could attend university abroad.

Therefore, the teachers generally agreed that they could not improve the school curriculum due to the lack of resources, nor were they able to change the language policy, as it would change the school culture. According to the teachers, the only thing that they could do was to improve communication between the Japanese parents and the school at the time of enrollment. As Ben said:

> What can the school do better to alleviate this conflict? I think the school can communicate in writing and in words before the student comes in with the parents and with the children what happens when you come to this school and give a very hard, hard truth and example. I think that's what the school can do.

However, as one of the school board members pointed out, even with the prior communication at the time of enrollment with Japanese parents, they usually did not listen to the warnings. This had to do with their desire for their children to become fluent speakers of English, which was generally the main goal for the parents upon enrollment. According to the board member, there was little effect, even when they cautioned the parents about the possible repercussions:

> I talk to the parents when they put their kids in first grade and I say, "You know, your kids are going to get good English. Within a year, they'll be relatively fluent. The problem is, five years down the road, you're going to be surprised at their weakness in Japanese.” And the parents say, "Oh yeah, yeah, we understand." But they don't understand it. They're just saying they understand it.

Currently, the school has entered into a trial and error phase, as more and more Japanese students are joining the JHA community, especially from the local international kindergarten. For the school, the most important question to ask upon enrollment was whether or not the child fit into the school culture. Although official enrolment was decided on a case-by-case basis, if a student could either speak English or came from a Christian family, he was allowed into the school. On the other hand, if a student could not speak English and did not have a Christian background, he would most likely be rejected from the school. The theory, according to the school, was that if there were too many Japanese speakers, the school would lose its English-immersive environment, and if there were too many students without a Christian background, the school would have to give up its Christian environment. This discussion seems to have been continuing for some time at the school, as the school board and staff have tried to come up with a formula to preserve the school culture. However, as the principal said, “[The school board

members are] just pulling numbers out of the air, they don’t know what that magical number is or where you hit a tipping point, you know, in the school’s culture.”

As mentioned before, it was only when the child surpassed their parents’ English levels and became unable to communicate with them in Japanese that the parents grew concerned. Consequently, regardless of the warnings that they received, Japanese parents transferred their children to other schools during their middle school years, causing the student to feel like a returnee, even though they had spent their whole life in Japan.

In conclusion, the educational environment at JHA was not always positive for Japanese students, due to its strict language policy and the lack of resources. This caused difficulties in better supporting the students’ linguistic development in both languages, to the point where the teachers placed more importance on helping them improve their English proficiency skills. As a school, the only solution they could find to help their Japanese students navigate the cultural and linguistic conflicts that they faced with their parents was by continuously cautioning their parents of the possible repercussions of attending JHA.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the significance of these findings in relation to my research questions and previous research findings.

Chapter 7 Discussion

7.1 Introduction

Through this study, it is clear that Japan Hope Academy (JHA) has managed to create a unique linguistic and cultural island within a society that is not always forgiving towards those who do not fit the mold. However, instead of offering an education system that embraces both Western and Japanese language and culture, the school used a strict language policy to keep the Japanese students from using their own language. Consequently, many Japanese students experienced not only subtractive bilingualism, but also struggled to fit into Japanese society, a situation which impacted their long-term decisions regarding studying and living in Japan.

Numerous factors have contributed to this situation, including the children's familial relationships, the policies and pedagogy used by JHA, Japanese societal dynamics, and the Japanese government's approach to promoting English learning. In this section, I will discuss the implications of the results introduced in the previous chapter, by first considering JHA's ability to create such a linguistic and cultural island in the middle of Japanese society. Then, I will discuss the effects of the teacher and parental expectations on the students, and how JHA's linguistic and religious education shaped the students' sense of identity and their future goals.

7.2 Factors Contributing to the JHA Environment

It is, in fact, quite surprising that JHA was able to create such a closed-off, linguistic and cultural island. At times called "an oasis in the middle of the desert" by its staff and students, JHA not only was a linguistic and cultural island, but also was a community of Christians in a very secular, non-Christian society. As Ben mentioned during his interview, while there are other international schools in Japan that have tried immersion or bilingual education, to his knowledge, no other school except for JHA has been able to maintain a fully English-immersive environment. In addition, as Ben said, JHA has been one of the only schools to produce so many

Japanese students with native-like English accents and high proficiency levels. Although I cannot validate this claim through research data, I have noticed that JHA students have a stronger command of English than Japanese students from other "international schools" in the area, who I've met through JHA and church-related events.

Through the interviews, I found three factors that may have contributed to the creation of this "oasis:" the characteristics of Japanese society, which prevented the students from creating community outside of JHA; parental desires and expectations, which kept the parents in agreement with the school language policy and education system; and finally, the strict English language policy, which allowed the staff to maintain control of the school and its students.

7.2.1 The Japanese government and society.

In the introduction to this thesis, I discussed the government and society's tendency in the recent years to foster global *jinzai* (global human resources) in order to maintain a stronger Japanese presence in the international economy. However, there seems to be a dichotomy between the government's call to foster global *jinzai* and reality. As Chapple (2014) reports, these concepts such as global *jinzai* and *kokusaika* (internationalization) *"*fail (perhaps purposely) to examine the requisite systemic changes required domestically" (p. 216). This can be seen through the government's use of phrases such as "nurturing individual's sense of Japanese identity (focus on traditional culture and history among other things)" (English Education Reform Plan corresponding to Globalization, 2014) when discussing English education reforms. Although the government argues that the need to protect Japanese identity is solely so that Japanese children are able to speak of their own country when studying abroad (Shimomura, 2014), others have criticized the government for fostering nationalism instead of internationalization (Chapple, 2014; Fitzpatrick, 2014).

It seems as though even as a society, Japan struggles to come to terms with idealism and reality. As an idea, having a country full of people who are bilingual English-Japanese speakers sounds good. In reality, however, having people who are bicultural might also destroy the peaceful society of Japan. This is why students who speak English are not fully accepted into society, as we saw from examples of students who were bullied for having had experience abroad. Even the system of accreditation that schools like JHA had to undergo in order to send their students to Japanese university showed this discriminatory attitude towards those with abnormal educational histories. The students from JHA, or at least those who attended the school before JHA became accredited, were forced to either take high school exit examinations in Japanese or go abroad. Simply speaking, the society itself is built upon a myth of homogeneity, which forces those with non-Japanese characteristics to either do their best to assimilate into the culture and society, or leave.

The Japanese students at JHA had an image of *normal* Japanese students, and they did not fit into that image. *Normal* Japanese kids attended public schools that were accredited by the Japanese government, they did not speak English, they played outside with their Japanese neighbors after school, and they did not identify with any religion. In comparison, Japanese students at JHA attended a small Christian school, spoke English, acculturated to the unique culture of JHA, had friends of international backgrounds, and identified with Christianity. Even if they were Japanese, those differences caused them to be set apart from the general Japanese population. As one of the school board members described, due to their time at JHA, Japanese students often felt like returnees upon “re-entry” into Japanese society. Moreover, similar to the experiences of returnees, they were labeled as “strange” for their non-Japanese ways, and often experienced feeling rejected by the general society. Like returnees, Japanese students from JHA

are unable to join into society from a very young age, even though they have the same citizenship rights and outward appearance as other Japanese.

As research on returnees and their experiences in re-acculturation shows, society is simply not ready to accept Japanese with multicultural and multilingual backgrounds. As Kanno (2000) explains, universities in Japan do not have the right systems in place to support returnees, who can speak Japanese but may not fully be able to understand lectures that are conducted in Japanese. Furthermore, Clavel (2014, n.d.), in an article for *The Japan Times*, stated that returnees are forced to adapt back to Japanese culture, instead of receiving opportunities to "practice critical thinking, debate and presentation skills" that they learned while abroad. If the government and the society are not ready to receive returnees, whose experiences and issues have been well-documented since the 1980s, it is safe to say that the system is not ready to receive Japanese students from international schools. While there have been many international schools established even within the last decade, once the Japanese students there graduate, most of them leave the country to pursue higher education abroad, precisely because the government and the society itself refuse to take advantage of these internationally-minded, linguistically-gifted young people. Similar to what Kanno (2000) writes about the ESL system, where students are separated from the mainstream classroom, so as not to disrupt the classes due to their lack of linguistic ability, "it is the students accommodating to the system, not the system accommodating to the students" (pp. 375-376). I and the other students at JHA knew from our experiences of feeling a separation between ourselves and the larger society that unless we were able to successfully accommodate to the Japanese system, we would have no choice but to leave the country after graduation. As Goodman argues in *The Japan Times* article mentioned above, "It's a missed opportunity. You have this particular group of people who could be taken

advantage of and the state should be mobilizing them far more effectively" (cited by Clavel, 2014, n.d.).

7.2.2 Parents.

One of this study's research questions investigated the motivations of parents in enrolling their children at JHA. It is possible to see this conflict between idealism and reality even within the Japanese home. When I was younger, my mother was in charge of everything that happened inside of the home, including all things related to child-rearing and the housework. My father, on the other hand, worked outside of the home: he was the breadwinner of the family. As Nakatani reports, a survey carried out in September 2000 by the Japanese government showed that the majority of both men and women thought the "care, socialization (*shitsuke*) and education of their children" (as cited by Nakatani, 2006) should be a shared task. In reality, however, it was the vast majority of mothers who did the housework and child-rearing in the home. Fueled by their attraction towards the Western culture and language, they were perhaps motivated to place their child in JHA.

Furthermore, for children who had prior experience abroad, like myself, JHA was the best choice, especially since in Japanese schools, anyone who is different from the rest of the group is bullied. As Kobayashi (1999) acknowledges,

> Because groupism in Japan is so strong, anybody who is different from the majority group is a potential target for bullying. Students who are serious or who have excellent grades or are remarkable in some particular talents could become victims of bullying (p. 9).

While there are different factors affecting the decision to send children to JHA, the interview results showed that those who sent their child to JHA because of its English-medium

environment displayed a strong belief that high English proficiency could help their children acquire a better job in the future. By sending their children to the school, the parents held dreams that their children would become proficient English-speakers, who could join large companies that operate on a global level. So strong was this desire for their children, that providing their children with Japanese education took a backseat. For some, like David’s mother, becoming proficient in English was not enough: she had wanted David to completely forget Japanese and showed disappointment in the fact that he still spoke the language.

On the other hand, some parents, like Sophia’s or my own, became alarmed when their child ended up becoming English-dominant and somewhat “Western.” This was the reality: by attending JHA, children did not become balanced bilinguals despite living in Japan. In fact, they displayed a lower level of proficiency than their counterparts in Japanese schools, sometimes to the point where they became unable to communicate with their parents or understand Japanese culture. As one of the board members mentioned, the decline happened from the point of enrollment in first grade, but parents often did not recognize the change until the children grew older. This probably had to do with the fact that young children often make linguistic errors; it is not until they are older that such errors in their native language become strange and unnatural. In addition, when the parents (or in this case, the mother)’s infatuation with Western culture is strong, they find their child’s increasingly Western ways endearing. It is not until the child reaches the upper grades when the parent suddenly realizes that there is a cultural and linguistic gap between their child and the other Japanese children from public Japanese schools. Moreover, they see that the ways of the Japanese education system would not permit their children to be accepted into Japanese universities, because the students at JHA do not qualify as returnees, nor do they attend an accredited school.

Thus, once these parents see that their child has become different from the bilingual, yet Japanese-cultured child that they envisioned, and that they would not be able to pursue further education in Japan, the parents panic and take action. Some parents, like my own or a few former Japanese parents at JHA, uproot their children from JHA and sent them to public Japanese schools, in order to give them a possible future at a Japanese university. Others allow them to stay in JHA for the moment, but consistently nag their child about studying Japanese, or enroll them in an online Japanese high school or cram school. Still others hope for the best and allow their child to stay at JHA, with plans to send them abroad on a scholarship. Regardless of the action, many parents notice that the reality is different from what they envisioned, and they are faced with a difficult decision that not only affects themselves, but greatly affects their child as well.

7.2.3 JHA.

JHA had a mission, and the motive was to maintain the Christian, all-English environment. However, this mission inadvertently made the school conflate the gospel with Western culture, succumbing to the idea that in order to be an example to the Japanese, they had to teach Japanese students to be American.

As mentioned before, the school was originally established for children of missionaries, who needed English education based on an American curriculum in order to easily assimilate back into American society upon their return. Therefore, English education was a large part of the curriculum. In regards to the Christian side of the school, missionary parents wanted their children to learn in a Christian environment. In a culture that is mostly based on Shinto and Buddhist beliefs, raising a child to be committed to one religion becomes crucial, especially for a missionary.

Since JHA was established specifically for missionaries, it was a necessity to uphold the all-English, Christian education system. While the school had more American students than Japanese students, this was not a difficult environment to maintain. American students who spoke English as a first language continued to study and communicate in English. Those who had gone to Japanese kindergarten and had learned Japanese, on the other hand, quickly lost their Japanese ability as their English proficiency level improved, until they were of native-level. As for the few Japanese students who were there, the majority of them, including myself, had some educational experience abroad. Since the American students and our teachers around us were all communicating in English, the immersive experience left us with a good grasp of the language.

While the language policy was in existence, because the language of community was already English, it did not need to be enforced. Its strict enforcement probably began when more Japanese students began joining the school after it was established, and the school demographics began to tip closer to the majority of the students being either Japanese or Japanese-speakers, and the minority becoming monolingual English speakers.

Placing a language policy within any system, whether it may be in a family, school, community, or country, can have negative repercussions, especially for those who speak another language. When a language policy is put in place, it has the potential to violate individual language rights, which include “the right to learn the mother tongue, including at least basic education through the medium of the mother tongue, and the right to use it in many of the (official) contexts” (Phillipson, Ranuut & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1995). Such violation of language rights can lead to language loss, which in turn, especially causes children to become unable to communicate with their parents (Kouritzin, 1999) and feel as though they are missing a part of their identity (Babaee, 2010).

Regardless of the existence of a concrete ratio of student demographics to protect the school culture, I found during the interviews that many of the teachers seemed to rely on the language policy to maintain control of the classroom. While some teachers allowed the students to use Japanese, as Noah said, the “rule of the land” was to speak English during school hours. To some extent, the line between the all-English environment and the Christian education seemed to have become blurred, as some teachers went as far as to say that English was a necessity in maintaining Christian education. It seemed to me that maintaining the school culture had become so important that some of the more balanced bilingual teachers failed to even acknowledge that the Japanese students had lower Japanese proficiency than average. At least two of the teachers argued that because the Japanese students were immersed in a Japanese environment outside of school hours and during vacation times, there was no reason to believe that they would lose their native tongue. Furthermore, the teachers seemed to believe that all the students would end up in American universities, including the Japanese students, so Japanese instruction did not take a priority in the school curriculum.

Therefore, at JHA, there was little to no linguistic support for Japanese, because the preservation of the school culture meant that all school activities had to be carried out in English in a Christian environment. However, as will be discussed in the next section, this caused the Japanese students to lose proficiency in their L1.

7.3 Exploring the Students’ Hybrid Identities

Although the students who I interviewed at JHA were all ethnically Japanese, they expressed a desire to be more “Japanese.” The findings in this study clearly demonstrate how attending JHA, where the language of community was English, and the school culture was

largely Christian and American, had had an impact on these learners' identities, making them bilingual and cross-cultural as well as influenced by Christianity in their perspectives and values.

7.3.1 Educational, cross-cultural kids.

Polluck and Van Reken (2009) coined and defined the term 'third culture kid' (TCK) to encompass children who have grown up as missionary kids or children of expats. These children often grow up in a country outside of their parents' passport country, and have a sort of hybrid identity, having aspects of their parents' cultures and the host culture in themselves. They feel no sense of belonging to either one country or culture, but often feel in-between (p. 13).

Within the TCK phenomenon, Van Reken (2009) created a definition for cross-culture kids, or CCKs. This is "a person who is living or has lived in – or meaningfully interacted with – two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during childhood (up to age 18)" (ibid., p. 31) In the case of Japanese students at JHA and myself, we are Educational Cross-Cultural Kids (Educational CCK), as we have attended a school that had a "different cultural base and student mix than the traditional home culture or its schools (ibid., p. 32)." According to Pollock and Van Reken (2009), we share similar characteristics with TCKs, in that we may struggle to fit in socially, linguistically, and culturally both in our home culture and our host culture. For example, for the current Japanese students at JHA, not only did they struggle to feel a sense of belonging in Japanese society, but they also did not feel as though they belonged at JHA. I also faced similar situations; as I mentioned in the autoethnography chapter, I often longed to be American because I did not fully fit in with my American friends at JHA.

In addition, we embody *hidden immigrants*, as coined by Polluck and Van Reken (2009), those who think differently from the surrounding culture but outwardly look like them. From the outside, we look Japanese (and we are Japanese). However, our identities are constructed

differently from that of the average Japanese person. Even our parents sometimes do not understand why we do things in the way that we do, especially because they assume that we should know how to *be Japanese.* According to Polluck and Van Reken (2009),

> People around them [hidden immigrants], of course, presume they share similar worldviews and cultural awareness because, from outward appearances, they look as if they belong to the group. No one makes the same allowances for the TCKs' lack of cultural knowledge or miscues as they would an obvious immigrant or recognized foreigner (p. 55).

This in-between, cross-cultural state is illustrated by the discrepancy in JHA staff and administrators' views of Japanese children versus the students' views of themselves. One school board member stated that he believed that the Japanese students were bilingual but mono-cultural, as they learned English at school, but were raised by Japanese parents. He concurred that even though the students could speak English, their dominant cultural identity was Japanese, especially with those students who had never had experience abroad. However, the students that I interviewed seemed to disagree on this point: they felt they could not fit into Japanese culture because they were not "Japanese enough" anymore, because they attended JHA and spoke English. These students prove that the literature on the relationship between language and culture is true: learning a new language very often means learning a new culture.

7.3.2 Emerging bilingual speakers.

In regards to the students' linguistic identity, because the teachers usually only interacted with the students in English and identified them as being ESL speakers, it is not surprising that they believed that their Japanese proficiency level would be higher than their English level. However, the fact remained that the Japanese students felt that both their English and Japanese

proficiency levels were insufficient: as Riley explained, her Japanese level was not high enough for her to attend Japanese school. During the follow-up interview, Sophia also attested to this fact: because her Japanese proficiency level was too low, she was unable to enroll in a private Japanese high school, instead having to choose the internationals and returnee track, even though she had never been abroad. Furthermore, the Japanese students struggled to keep up not only academically but also socially: many fights resulted from the students’ misunderstanding of sarcasm, that was employed by their native English-speaking peers. As research has shown, irony, sarcasm, and humor are one of the most difficult aspects of language for an L2 learner to acquire, as they require a complex understanding of language:

> ...L2 learners need to be able to comprehend the literal meaning that the lexical and syntactic elements of the utterance convey, as well as to be able to detect a mismatch between the literal meaning and the conversational or situational context – all of which are skills that develop as language proficiency increases (Shively, et. al, 2008, pp. 101-102).

At JHA, there were generally two types of Japanese students: students who had experienced life outside of Japan and students who had attended English-speaking kindergartens. In both cases, the students’ first language, Japanese, was not fully developed: as Lightbown and Spada (2013) report, it is not until school age that children become proficient in their native language. As mentioned in the literature review (see pp. 24-25), Thomas and Collier (2002) has shown that the development of the first language actually contributes to successful acquisition of the second language and it is crucial that the first language is supported. The Japanese students at JHA were in pre-school or kindergarten when they began learning English, and did not receive formal Japanese education. By enrolling at JHA, where their first language was not supported,

their development of the language stalled or stopped, and barely continued, while the acquisition of their second language (English) ceased to improve after a certain point. This was what made them become emergent bilinguals, rather than balanced bilinguals.

For the Japanese students, English was the main language that they used daily, even though they did not feel as though they were native speakers. For the most part, they spoke English from 8:30AM to 3:15PM every day. While those who attended extra-curricular activities outside of JHA spoke some Japanese when interacting with the students in those activities, those who did not either spent time with other JHA students or went home. At home, the students worked on homework, which was in English, and the only time they spent speaking Japanese was probably when they ate dinner with their parents or watched Japanese television. In my experience, since I had a younger brother who also spoke English and my mother encouraged me to watch English television, I barely used Japanese in the home. Realistically, it is incorrect to think that the students spent most of their time outside of JHA being steeped in Japanese, as some of the teachers seemed to believe. Even the students' sleep time was filled with processing the events that happened in English during the day (Wamsley & Stickgold, 2010).

Nevertheless, at JHA, the Japanese students' English also lacked richness and accuracy. This is in line with findings among English speakers in Chinese immersion programs reported in Fortune (2012, p. 13): "Studies consistently find that English-speaking [Chinese] immersion students' oral language lacks grammatical accuracy, lexical specificity, native pronunciation, and is less complex and sociolinguistically appropriate when compared with the language native speakers of the second language produce." In other words, being in an immersive education environment does not correlate with acquiring native-like L2 proficiency. Additionally, as Thomas and Collier (2002) have shown, continued development of the L1 is actually what is

crucial in successfully reaching a high level of proficiency in the L2. Thus, to believe that the Japanese students at JHA were fully proficient, native-speakers of Japanese because their English proficiency levels were not as high as their American counterparts goes against not only the students' opinions of themselves, but also against the research in second language education. The strict language policy at JHA largely affected the students' development of both languages. As the school did not permit the students to speak Japanese and the teachers labeled them as ESL speakers, the students did not speak up, especially since they believed that their English proficiency skills were lower than that of their peers. On the other hand, the language policy contributed to their image of the Japanese language; the prohibition against Japanese devalued it at the school and in the eyes of the Japanese speakers.

In my case, this, along with my mother's initial emphasis on English, was a large factor in my loss of Japanese proficiency, as from a young age, I truly believed that Japanese was a "bad" language, and English was the language I had to speak. In addition, regardless of the language I spoke, I felt as though I was consistently being corrected for my grammar or lexical errors, which in turn caused me to doubt the value of my opinions. Like many of my student interviewees, I felt as though I did not have the linguistic ability in either language to express my thoughts or feelings, and I often wished that I could have full proficiency in at least one language. I ended up being unconfident and doubtful of my own language ability as well as of my self-worth. As mentioned in the literature review, such negative perceptions of one's own language and of one's self are common when students' linguistic and cultural identities are not supported in the school setting (see pp. 23-24).

While it seemed as though the Japanese students that I interviewed at JHA fared far better than I did in terms of maintaining their Japanese, possibly due to the fact that most of them had

little to no experience abroad, the sense of uncertainty about their linguistic abilities was the same. The school’s language policy, as well as our parents’ and teachers’ attitudes towards our language abilities, contributed to our sense of confusion and uncertainty about our identity, not only as Japanese speakers, but also as English speakers.

7.3.3 Christian values.

Aside from the students’ linguistic identities, being brought up in a Christian school meant that the Japanese students learned Christian values and morals. While I did not touch upon this point during the interviews with the current Japanese students at JHA, I believe it played an important factor in shaping us and further separated us from the general Japanese society. This is because we were taught to be set apart from the world around us as we followed the ways of Jesus.

Upon speculation, I believe part of this teaching had to do with the fact that Japan is often seen as a spiritually dark country by missionaries; although missionaries try to establish churches and set up English classes for the Japanese, it takes many years for a Japanese person to even step into a church building. The aversion to any form of religion that requires an exclusive commitment is so strong that missionaries often give up and return home due to the lack of positive response from the Japanese. Some have argued that the difficulty lies within being “Japanese and a Christian” because so much of Japanese culture is based upon Buddhist and Shinto beliefs (Langley, 2017). In other words, because Christianity only allows its followers to follow one God and reject other religious teachings, Japanese people find it difficult to follow, especially when age-old Japanese traditions lie in Shintoism and Buddhism. Furthermore, there are serious societal problems with homelessness, suicide and domestic abuse in Japan. Because this is in stark contrast with the light and freedom that Christians believe Jesus brings, they see

these things as symptoms of the underlying problem with evil found in every human heart. These factors all contribute to the idea that Japan is “spiritually dark.”

Therefore, from the school’s point of view, it was crucial that we were taught to adhere to Christian values from a young age, especially for those of students who came from non-Christian families. Understanding Biblical teachings and Christian values ensured that we would overcome cultural misunderstandings and contribute to maintaining the school harmony. For example, even if we fought with another American classmate from a missionary family, our shared understanding of Christian values (in this example, forgiveness) could help us towards reconciliation, even if we didn’t have the words to express our feelings. For the better or for the worse, this helped to tame many fights without the use of words.

7.4 The Intersection of Language and Religion

During one of the interviews, Noah said that it was necessary for the school to be “Christ-centered and distinctly other,” especially so that more Japanese could hear the gospel. More specifically, when a Japanese mother enrolled her children at JHA, the children would be taught English through an education system based on Christian values. The school believed that when the children went home, which in some cases was a non-Christian environment, they would be strong candidates in spreading the gospel to their own family and those around them in Japanese. In other words, the English-medium environment at JHA encouraged some non-Christian mothers to enroll their children there. Once the children were enrolled, however, they would knowingly or unknowingly be taught English through Biblical teachings. English is what drove the mothers to enroll their children to JHA, but the school culture and everything associated with JHA were Christian. This outlook sheds light onto Noah’s comment: “English is the vehicle, the content is all gospel.” As we were learning about Christian teachings in English and the

importance of sharing Christ’s teachings with those around us, our teachers didn’t seem to realize was that we would not be able to do so because of the lack of the Japanese language. In other words, they did not see that we needed to switch vehicles when returning home. Our English “cars” were well-maintained, but our Japanese “bicycles” were falling apart. Using a bicycle without wheels, we could not bring the gospel to our Japanese families and friends.

I believe it is safe to say that as the Japanese children lost their native language, they became unable to relay to their parents what they learned in school. Biblical terms and language surrounding Christianity are similar to technical terminology; there is no direct translation between English and Japanese.

Therefore, while English could be the driving force behind the school’s vision, the Japanese students were not equipped with the right Japanese terminology to spread the gospel and furthermore, are unable to use their L1 to a proficient level, they would most likely be unable to evangelize to other Japanese people. In this way, teaching the students to be “Christ-like and distinctly other” may not be the most efficient way to spread the gospel in Japan. At the very least, the Japanese students should be equipped with the correct terminology in their L1 before being expected to share the gospel with those in their community.

7.5 Summary

In summary, the Japanese students at JHA were both ‘semi-cultural’ and semilingual. This was due to various factors that spanned from the government and the societal makings of Japan to the attitudes and the methods employed by the parents and JHA teachers. Although the ideal was for the students to grow up and become bilingual (and bicultural) adults, who could become successful and able to spread the gospel to Japan, the reality was that they could not find

a place for themselves in Western or Japanese society, nor could they evangelize to other Japanese people, due to their lack of Japanese ability.

Moreover, the school culture with its strict language policy made the Japanese students lose their first language and a part of their identity. Their loss of Japanese linguistic ability added to their “otherness”: not only were they largely influenced by Christian teachings, but they also spoke English to some level and had different, international experiences that other Japanese children did not have.

Thus, the Japanese students at JHA became hidden foreigners. From their outward appearance, they were Japanese and thus looked like everyone else in Japan, but because they did not fluently speak the language or fully understand the culture, they were like foreigners in their own country. On the other hand, if they did go abroad to live in a multicultural country like the United States or Canada, they were still different because their English proficiency level was not as high, nor did they have a complete grasp of Western culture. Either way, they did not fully fit into whichever society they chose to live in. The expectations that the school and their parents had did not meet the outcomes for the students, who did not become perfectly bilingual, nor did they become able to spread the gospel effectively to other Japanese people. They became students who could not express themselves due to their level of linguistic proficiency in both languages, and who felt that they did not belong in their own society, in which they were ostensibly natives. Generally speaking, the graduates I know have left Japan and have opted to pursue a career abroad. Furthermore, many of them, including myself, have struggled to come to terms with the Christian and English-immersive education that they received at JHA.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

For the last few months, I have struggled to come up with a conclusion. Japanese are well known for being unable to form a conclusive opinion – perhaps that side of me is Japanese. Throughout this past year, I have struggled to come to terms with my faith, my identity and my upbringing. I feared the implications that would emerge from this thesis would hurt my friends and family, as well as my participants. However, as my supervisor once told me, *the truth must be told.*

JHA was, and still is a school that has created a wonderful environment where its students can come and are loved for who they are. Throughout my study, never once did I feel that the staff did not love the students – because it was such a small school, the personal relationships developed between the teachers and the students were similar to those between parents and children. Unlike other large schools, where a teacher might only have the time to build that sort of a relationship with a few select students, at JHA, all the teachers knew each student by name and had a relationship with them. The teachers truly desired to model Christ's love to the students and were willing to work at the school, regardless of the pay they received or the lack of resources that they had.

However, as Ben once said during his interview, "Education is not perfect... You can't reach perfection. That's God. God's the best teacher." I believe the statement is true – education cannot be perfect, and like all systems, JHA had its problems. The problem that this study has uncovered was that the Japanese students at JHA were experiencing language and cultural loss, even though they were living in Japan. The school was originally established for children of missionary families, who would be returning to their home country (the United States) periodically. Thus, they needed to keep up with the American curriculum while in Japan. However, when Japanese students also started to request enrollment, it became even more

difficult to maintain an English-medium environment that was similar to the American school environment. This was why the school found it necessary to enforce a strict language policy.

A second issue that emerged in this study was that the administrators at JHA conflated the gospel with the English language, in an attempt to protect the school culture. The combination of the language policy and the conflation of the gospel with English inadvertently made the Japanese students lose a part of their linguistic and cultural identity, which in turn caused them to feel as though they were not a part of Japanese society.

Deeply embedded Japanese cultural values and societal structure also contribute to the long term impact that attending this type of school has on the students’ ability to fit into Japanese society. However, changing society and cultural values is a high order, which leaves us with the question: *What can the school, the parents, and the students do?*

First of all, the school needs to take a more multicultural stance on education, especially if they want Japanese students to stay in the school past middle school. This can begin with the teachers recognizing that the way they teach the students about Japanese language and culture can largely affect their outlook on Japanese society, as well as on their own identities as Japanese. In addition, it is crucial for the teachers to work with the Japanese students to support them in their future decisions, building a personalized plan with them so that they can achieve their goals. If these students wish to attend a Japanese university, the teachers should be there to support them. This will require them to learn about the Japanese university system.

Speaking of Japanese parents, it is crucial that the parents understand that without L1 development, the child will not reach a high level of L2 proficiency. While the desire for their children to become proficient in English is understandable, the Japanese parents need to understand that the children will be immersed in English at school. Even if the beginning is slow,

by middle school, the children’s English level will surpass that of their Japanese. By telling them to speak English instead of Japanese, the parents can inadvertently confuse children and increase the speed of Japanese language loss. While it is difficult to teach a child two or more languages, making sure that the child is consistently read to in Japanese, or having them join various communities outside of the school from a young age can help the child stay within Japanese society. As they grow older, encouraging them in a positive manner to speak Japanese can also help their children continue to embrace their Japanese identity.

As far as communication goes between the school and the parents, the parents need to be notified of the school set-up at the time of enrollment, including information about the language policy, and its negative repercussions. The parents need to understand that they are making a crucial choice in their child’s education by enrolling them in JHA: while it is a school that embraces the child as an individual and the child will learn English to a native-like level, the child may also lose their Japanese linguistic and cultural identity without parental support. The school should work together with the parents to set up a system that best allows the child to reap the benefits of being bilingual and bicultural.

Once again, JHA is a very unique school and due to the small sample size, it is difficult to form conclusive results that can be generalizable in all situations. It would be interesting to conduct a study that followed the Japanese students’ language development from first grade to see exactly when and how English becomes the dominant language. In addition, it would be interesting to investigate the impact of attending JHA education on the missionary (American) students, as well as those students who are not Japanese nor from missionary families. Finally, comparing language proficiency test results between JHA and other international schools in the

area might allow us to see how language policies in schools and their environments can affect a student’s linguistic (and cultural) development.

Through this research study, I have come to terms with how I lost my linguistic and cultural identity in being Japanese while at JHA, while also understanding that despite it all, my teachers and my parents were doing the best that they could for me. As a former student and a researcher, I hope and pray that the future Japanese students will learn to embrace their identities and will find their place in society wherever they end up, through receiving even better support from both their parents and their teachers at JHA.

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Appendix A: Ethics Certificate

McGill

Research Ethics Board Office
James Administration Bldg.
845 Sherbrooke Street West. Rm 325
Montreal, QC H3A 0G4

Tel: (514) 398-6831
Fax: (514) 398-4644
Website: www.mcgill.ca/research/researchers/compliance/human/

Research Ethics Board III
Certificate of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Humans

REB File #: 497-0517

Project Title: Japanese High School Students in International Schools: The Quest for Bilingualism in Japan

Principal Investigator: Hinako Takeuchi

Department: Integrated Studies of Education

Status: Master's Student

Supervisor: Prof. Susan Ballinger

Approval Period: May 18, 2017 –May 17, 2018

The REB-III reviewed and approved this project by delegated review in accordance with the requirements of the McGill University Policy on the Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Human Participants and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct For Research Involving Humans.

Lynda McNeil
Associate Director, Research Ethics

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* Approval is granted only for the research and purposes described.
* Modifications to the approved research must be reviewed and approved by the REB before they can be implemented.
* A Request for Renewal form must be submitted before the above expiry date. Research cannot be conducted without a current ethics approval. Submit 2-3 weeks ahead of the expiry date.
* When a project has been completed or terminated, a Study Closure form must be submitted.
* Unanticipated issues that may increase the risk level to participants or that may have other ethical implications must be promptly reported to the REB. Serious adverse events experienced by a participant in conjunction with the research must be reported to the REB without delay.
* The REB must be promptly notified of any new information that may affect the welfare or consent of participants.
* The REB must be notified of any suspension or cancellation imposed by a funding agency or regulatory body that is related to this study.
* The REB must be notified of any findings that may have ethical implications or may affect the decision of the REB.

Appendix B: Consent Forms

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保護者同意書(保護者・学生)

私はマギル大学(教育学部)でインターナショナルスクールが日本語能力とアイデンティティに与える影響について研究している大学院生です。この研究を通して、インターナショナルスクールに通う日本人学生の言語学習環境と言語学習成果について明らかにしたいと考えています。

参加者には、お子様の進路先としてのこの学校の選択について幾つかの質問に答えていただきます。お子様には日本語能力、アイデンティティと、それがどのように彼らの将来のビジョンに結びついているかについての質問に答えていただきます。インタビューはそれぞれ 30 分ほどを予定しており、放課後の時間帯に教室か一般のカフェなどで実施いたします。加えて、インタビューは録音させていただきますが、インタビュー内容が文字化され次第、録音は削除いたします。

頂いた情報は、細心の注意をもって取り扱います。参加者の名前は研究には使用されません。それぞれの参加者には仮名が与えられます。参加者はすべての質問に答えなくても構いません。また、参加者は理由にかかわらずいつでも参加を辞退することができます。この研究はお子様の学校での成績や対応には影響しません。しかし、頂いたデータはインタビューから二ヶ月後に匿名化させるため、それ以降はデータの取り下げには応じられません。また、現時点で研究の進行に関して懸念されている問題はありません。また、参加は任意であり、参加を強制するものではありません。

研究に参加していただいた方は、出版後に研究をご覧いただけます。
研究中になにか問題や心配があれば、私がいつでも対応いたします
(hinako.takeuchi@mail.mcgill.ca)。また、指導教官であるスーザン・バリンガー教授(susan.ballinger@mcgill.ca)も連絡していただけます。内容にかかわらず、どうぞご遠慮なく連絡なさってください。

研究への参加をご検討いただければ幸甚です。

実験の参加に際して倫理的な問題や不満などがあり、研究チーム以外の人間にコンタクトを取りたい場合、マギル倫理管理部にご連絡ください。(514- 398-6831 または、 lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca)
上記の内容を読んで実験に協力してくださる場合は以下を〇で囲み、ご署名をお願いします。研究への参加は参加者の権利を侵害したり研究者の義務を放棄するものではありません。なお、本同意書は参加者本人に返却され、研究者はコピーを保管します。
重要書類なので締め切りを 6 月 2 日（金）とさせていただきます。宜しくお願い致します。(いいえの場合もご提出宜しくお願いします。)

インタビューに参加する　　はい　　いいえ

Participant Consent Form (Parents and Students)

Dear Parents,

I am a graduate student at McGill University (Department of Integrated Studies of Education, Faculty of Education), conducting a study on the effects of international school education on Japanese language ability and self-identity.

Through this study, I would like to better understand the language learning situation and outcome of Japanese students in international schools. You as a participant will be asked a series of questions on why you chose this school for your child. Your child will be asked a series of questions about their Japanese language ability, identity and how that ties in with their future goals. Each interview will take about thirty minutes, in a familiar setting after school, either in the classroom, parking lot, or at a public coffee shop.

Additionally, the interview will be audio recorded. However, as soon as the interview has been transcribed, the recording will be deleted. The information that your child will give will be treated with full confidentiality. Your child's name will not be used. Rather, a pseudonym will be assigned to each participant. Participants may decline to answer any question, and it will be possible for your child to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason with no negative repercussions. This will not affect your child's grade or treatment at school. However, as data will be de-identified two months after the interview is conducted, it will not be possible to withdraw after two months from the date the interview is conducted. There are no potential risks to the study, and participation is completely voluntary.

While there are no individual benefits to you or to your child for participating, the study will be made available to you after publication. Throughout the study, I will be available for consultation regarding any concerns or issues. My supervisor, Dr. Susan Ballinger, will also be available for contact through email: susan.ballinger@mcgill.ca Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

I hope that you will consider working with me on this study. I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in this project.

If you have any ethical concerns or complaints about your participation in this study, and want to speak with someone not on the research team, please contact the McGill Ethics Manager at 514-398-6831 or lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca

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Participant Consent Form (Staff)

Dear Staff Members,

My name is Hinako Takeuchi and I am a graduate student at McGill University (Department of Integrated Studies of Education, Faculty of Education), conducting a study on the effects of international school education on Japanese language ability and self-identity.

Through this study, I would like to better understand the language learning situation of Japanese students in international schools. The purpose of this study is to investigate the kinds of language support that these students receive, and how that relates to their education and career paths after graduating.

I humbly ask for your participation in this research through a very short and informal online interview conducted at a time that fits your schedule. As with any information transmitted online, there is a risk of third party interception. However, there are no anticipated risks to your participation in the study, and it is completely voluntary.

A recording of the interview will be taken, which will be deleted as soon as it has been transcribed. The information that you provide will be treated with full confidentiality. All participants will be assigned a pseudonym and identifying characteristics will not be published. Should you wish, you can withdraw from the study at any time with no negative repercussions. However, as data will be de-identified two months after the interview is conducted, it will not be possible to withdraw after this time.

In return for your active participation in this study, the study will be made available to you after publication. Additionally, throughout the study, I will be available for consultation regarding any concerns or issues at hinako.takeuchi@mail.mcgill.ca. My supervisor, Dr. Susan Ballinger, will also be available for contact through email: susan.ballinger@mcgill.ca Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

I hope that you will consider working with me on this study. I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in this project.

If you have any ethical concerns or complaints about your participation in this study, and want to speak with someone not on the research team, please contact the McGill Ethics Manager at 514-398-6831 or lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca

Please sign below if you have read the above information and consent to participate in this study. Agreeing to participate in this study does not waive any of your rights or release the researchers from their responsibilities. A copy of this consent form will be given to you and the researcher will keep a copy

Participant’s Name (please print): _____

Participant’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Participant Consent Form (Students)

Dear Students,

My name is Hinako Takeuchi and I am a graduate student at McGill University (Department of Integrated Studies of Education, Faculty of Education), conducting a study on the effects of international school education on Japanese language ability and self-identity.

Through this study, I would like to better understand the language learning situation and outcome of Japanese students in international schools. You will be asked a series of questions about your Japanese language ability, identity and how that ties in with your future goals. Each interview will take about twenty minutes, over Skype or another online form of communication. As with any information transmitted online, there is a risk of third party interception. However, there are no anticipated risks to your participation in the study, and it is completely voluntary.

Additionally, the interview will be audio recorded. However, as soon as the interview has been transcribed, the recording will be deleted. The information that you give will be treated with full confidentiality. Your name will not be used. Rather, a pseudonym will be assigned to each participant. You may decline to answer any question, and it will be possible for you to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason with no negative repercussions. However, as data will be de-identified two months after the interview is conducted, it will not be possible to withdraw after two months from the date the interview is conducted.

In return for your active participation in this study, the study will be made available to you after publication. Throughout the study, I will be available for consultation regarding any concerns or issues at hinako.takeuchi@mail.mcgill.ca. My supervisor, Dr. Susan Ballinger, will also be available for contact through email: susan.ballinger@mcgill.ca Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

I hope that you will consider working with me on this study. I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in this project.

If you have any ethical concerns or complaints about your participation in this study, and want to speak with someone not on the research team, please contact the McGill Ethics Manager at 514-398-6831 or lynda.mcneil@mcgill.ca

Please sign below if you have read the above information and consent to participate in this study. Agreeing to participate in this study does not waive any of your rights or release the researchers from their responsibilities. A copy of this consent form will be given to you and the researcher will keep a copy.

Participant's Name: (please print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C: Interview Questions

1. *The Student Interview Questions (30-minute interviews)*
   a) Do you feel confident writing and speaking in English? What about in Japanese? Which language do you speak more?
   b) Have you ever received language support (ESL courses, summer school courses, after-school tutoring) from your teachers at school? How was the experience? Do you keep up with the Japanese education curriculum through cram schools or other outside means?
   c) Do you identify yourself with the Japanese or the English community?
   d) How do you feel in a group of friends who attend Japanese school, or with your extended family? How do they react towards you?
   e) What are your plans after graduation? Where do you plan to study and live? How did you make your decision?

2. *The Parental Interview Questions (10-20 minute interviews)*
   a) Why did you choose this school for your child? What were/are your thoughts on the decision?
   b) Do you think the school offers enough bilingual language support for your child?
   c) Does your child attend any activities outside of school? Which languages are they held in?
   d) Do you have any ideas regarding his/her future?

   e) What do you think the school could do to further benefit your child's experience?

   f) What kind of benefits do you see for your child in attending this school?

3. *The Teacher Interview Questions (10-20 minute interviews)*
   a) What experiences or difficulties have you had in teaching a class of students from diverse (international and Japanese) backgrounds?
   b) What strengths and weaknesses have you seen your Japanese students display in the classroom? Do they get along with the other students?
   c) Do you allow your students to speak Japanese in class? Why or why not?
   d) Have you done any training in working with students from different language backgrounds? If not, do you think you should have the opportunity to do so?

4. *The Principal Interview Questions (10-20 minute interview)*
   a) What kind of language support do you offer within the school? Do you offer any language usage opportunities outside of school, such as through events open to the community?
   b) What is your stance on students using Japanese in school?
   c) Upon graduation, which steps do your Japanese students take? Does the school offer support for admission in to Japanese universities or companies?
   d) What is the school's relationship with the Japanese community in Ikoma?
   e) Do you hear any concerns or complaints from Japanese parents?
   f) Do you agree or disagree with the school system now?