**MONASH UNIVERSITY**
THESIS ACCEPTED IN SATISFACTION OF THE
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# ERRATA

**p. 49**, l. 6: "mothers'" for "mothers"

**p. 64**, l. 13; l. 18; **p. 75**, l. 15; **p. 76**, 3 ll from bottom; **p. 79**, 2 ll from bottom; **p. 84**, l. 11; **p. 98**, l. 6; **p. 105**, 5 ll from bottom and **p. 123**, 2 ll from bottom: "Tokyo Gakugei University" for "Tokyo University of Education"

**p. 78**, 8 ll from bottom: "Her" for "His"

**p. 88**, last line: insert word "are" between "discourse" and "evidence"

**p. 254**, l. 1: "Hobsbawm" for "Hobsbawn"

# ADDENDUM

**p. 55**: Add before the last sentence:

"It is common for these two terms to be regularly conflated. It is often difficult to differentiate between two groups. Within this thesis, JCORed is generally used. However, only in cases where I refer exclusively to the education of Japanese children overseas do I use JCOed."

# DISCOURSES OF INTERCULTURAL

# EDUCATION IN JAPAN

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This Thesis is submitted in total fulfillment of the requirements
for the Doctor of Philosophy in Education

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## ABSTRACT

Intercultural (international) education is one of the vital issues in the field of education in the age of globalization. In Japan, throughout the long history of the education of Japanese children overseas, this aspect of education has attracted much research by academics and much interest from various groups associated with this form of education.

The aim of this study is to analyze current Japanese discourses related to intercultural education as these are presented and mediated by critical groups. Such discourses are explored in the context of the demands imposed by globalization and examined in relation to current theoretical debates related to culture, most particularly those focussing on cultural relativism, cultural imperialism, cultural essentialism and multiculturalism. This research is one of few qualitative studies in the area in Japan. Using these theoretical frameworks, I analyzed documents produced by academics and policy makers as well as interviewed individuals from three key interest groups. These groups, regarded as cultural intermediaries, consist of businesspersons, schoolteachers and Japanese children's mothers. These interviews were conducted in Melbourne, Australia and in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The findings identify the extreme normative feature of the discourses underpinned by cultural essentialism, and the discrepancy between the views expressed in public discourse held by policy makers and academics, and the views of cultural intermediaries. Discrepancies were also found in the views held by the three different groups of cultural intermediaries. A significant result of this study suggests that the powerful influence of cultural essentialism might be weakening as globalization proceeds firmly into this new century. The research provides significant insight into the study of intercultural education not only in Japan but also more generally.

## STATEMENT OF DECLARATION

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of diploma at any university or tertiary institution and to the best of this candidates' belief, neither does it contain material previously published or written by another person, except where due acknowledge is made in the text.

...[redacted]

Hitoshi Mabuchi

The plan for this research received the approval of the Monash University Standing Committee for Ethical Research on Human (Project 99/502).

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Needless to say, writing a thesis in a second language is an extremely difficult and frustrating process. Ms. Rosemary Viete and Mr. Steve Price have assisted me in this respect with their enormous amount of time and patience. I should admit that I could not accomplish this thesis without their endless and untiring support. My thanks also go to Professor Bill Howard for his warm timely consultations and Ms. Martha Howard for her assistance in transcribing.

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# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

I say to my students all the time, 'We are now entering into the age of co-existence. Thus, we must not discriminate against people even if there is a cultural difference between them'. I personally believe that there is no superiority or inferiority at all between cultures. Another important thing today is proficiency in language, particularly English. I may not have been able to acquire good English, but I hope our children can master it. Oh, one more thing shouldn't be forgotten. Before becoming so-called internationalized persons, we have to establish our identity as good Japanese citizens. (A Japanese teacher in a Japanese school in Kuala Lumpur)

It is vital for the Japanese to become more global regardless. Very few Japanese can get across what they want to say or perform in international circumstances. As well as language proficiency, therefore, the Japanese must acquire the competence to negotiate in international circumstances. Of course, there are some good points among the Japanese. For example, the Japanese women have been regarded as modest and sweet-tempered. When we come to the matters of internationalization, however, the Japanese have no sense at all. (A Japanese businessman in Melbourne)

Since I came here, I have tried to communicate with the foreigners [non-Japanese] in our neighborhood, but the language barrier has prevented it. The teachers at the Japanese school often talk about international understandings. Frankly speaking, however, my main concern is whether my son and daughter can catch up when they return to Japan. What do I think of Japanese society? I guess that it is still difficult for the women to live in. I sometimes heard from my old friends who are still working that the life is not easy, particularly for the working women in Japan. But I can not understand their feelings much because I have not gone through such bitter or hard experiences in my life. (A Japanese mother in Kuala Lumpur)

## 1.1 International understandings?

One of the main aims of this study is to analyze how education responds or how it attempts to respond to the enormous social changes called globalization. I will

examine this question in relation to Japan, which prides herself on being the second largest economic power in the world and the single non-occidental country participating in the G7 summit conference. In Japanese, the concept of globalization has been described under the term internationalization. One field of education, which is regarded as a response to globalization, has been called intercultural education or education for international understanding. The usage and concepts of these terms will be discussed in more detail in 1.4.

Education for international understanding as well as the internationalization of Japan's economy have been vital issues in Japan (*Iwanami Henshūiin*, editors of *Iwanami* 1998, the Economic Planning Agency 1997). This is also clear from the focus on these issues in recent publications. The National Diet Library, Japan maintains a comprehensive list, called *J-BISK*, of all publications in Japan since 1948. A look at the data for the mid-1990s reveals that approximately 300 books were being published annually that included the word internationalization in the title. Education and economic issues have been two main themes among these publications. For example, one quarter of these 300 books dealt with education and another quarter dealt with economic issues. A third quarter of books could not be identified from their titles with particular categories and the final quarter was divided into other areas such as politics, arts, sports, literature and so on. Internationalization has been one of the buzz-words in Japan for nearly half a century and education for international understanding has been regarded as one of the main issues in Japan's internationalization (The Central Council for Education 1996).

However, the question needs to be posed; why has education, particularly education for international understanding, been one of the main themes for so long in the context of internationalization in Japan? Another aim of this study is to explore this question. In order to do so, this study focuses on discourses related to internationalization and intercultural education. In particular, it examines discourses

concerning the education of Japanese children overseas. While I will deal with the significance of studying discourse in section 1.3 below, I will explain in the next section why the education of Japanese children overseas and of returnees is so important in the context of this study.

## 1.2 The focus of the study I – The education of Japanese children overseas and of returnees

Ironically, the issue of education of Japanese children overseas and of returnees (JCORed) has been regarded more recently as no longer an urgent issue in the field of education in Japan. The number of papers presented to related conferences has dropped. Moreover, the fact that schools that have accepted these returnees under special conditions no longer receive governmental funding for doing so demonstrates the decline of enthusiasm for this issue in Japan. Views claiming that "the peak of this problem has passed away" are sometimes found (Kojima 1996). Nevertheless, the education of Japanese children overseas and of returnees (JCORed) is extremely important when we study the discourses of internationalization and intercultural education in Japan. Five reasons for this are given below.

1) In discussions on intercultural education in Japan, a number of issues have been pursued, but the issue of JCORed has been the most persistent. According to the annual reports of the Ministry of Education, these issues are: education for Japanese children overseas and returnees; education for foreign students in Japan; Japanese language education for non-Japanese people; foreign language education, and education for the children of non-Japanese residents in Japan. Exactly the same issues were listed in a textbook titled *Education and internationalization* written by Kobayashi (1995) who was the first president of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan. Similarly, these issues are highlighted in a book called *The introduction of intercultural education* written by Ebuchi (1997a) who is the former president of the same association. The education of Japanese

children overseas and returnees, however, is the only issue among these, which has constantly been taken up in the educational policies in Japan for over 30 years (Ministry of Education 1959-to present). Therefore, JCORed is significant because of its long history and its constant presence in Japanese education.

2) Second, JCORed has been a constant issue in publications and the mass media in Japan for more than two decades. Between 1984 and 1995, 204 books about education for international understanding were published. Among them, 43 dealt with international understanding including JCORed, 16 were about foreign language education and 12 concerned JCORed exclusively. JCORed has certainly been one of the core issues. Sato (1996) pointed out that JCORed has been taken up by the newspapers and weekly journals as a popular social issue. Words such as *kikokushijo* (returnees) and *bairingyaru* (girls who are bilingual), which refer to the issues of JCORed, have been widely used in Japan (Sato 1995: 47-86). The actual number of returnees is not so large; merely approximately ten thousand Japanese children return to Japan annually (the Ministry of Education 1999: 53). Nevertheless, the media have paid much attention to this issue. This illustrates not only that JCORed is a popular and widely known issue, but also it is a unique issue. The catchy phrase 'Japanese children overseas are national treasures for this internationalized age' has been widely found in these discourses (Japan Overseas Education Service 1991).

3) We can not ignore the dramatic increase of special schools and institutions for Japanese children overseas. According to Japan Overseas Education Service (2000), there are currently 105 full time Japanese schools for these children and 195 supplementary schools (which are usually open only on Saturday) throughout the world. There are also approximately 150 junior high schools, 250 senior high schools and over 300 universities in Japan, which have announced their special consideration for the returnees' entrance and have provided special programs for

them. As will be shown in Chapter 3, these schools and courses for returnees rapidly increased around the 1980s, the period when the growth of the Japanese economy received widespread admiration both in and outside of Japan. Compared with other fields of Japanese education such as the education for children with disability or education for foreign children (who have little Japanese language competence), this swift increase in the schools for JCORed is noteworthy. In this respect, JCORed can be regarded as a unique phenomenon in Japan.

4) JCORed has been an issue in Japanese economic circles. In particular, it has been one of the vital issues for prestigious companies, which dispatch their employees overseas. I was affiliated with a huge bilateral project between Japan and Australia, which involved several large Japanese companies. The persons in charge of the administration and personnel section insisted on the importance of providing safe accommodation for their families and preparing sufficient educational circumstances for their children. The Japan Overseas Enterprises Association (1997), of which most large Japanese companies are members, has expressed similar concerns. Its monthly magazines regard JCORed as one of the most important topics along with issues concerning the safety of their employees assigned overseas. As a result, this Association has requested that governmental organizations such as the Ministry of Education promote and improve the situation of JCORed. Their various proposals since the 1970s have added another particular feature to the issue of JCORed.

5) Finally, I wish to point out the very high level of interest toward the issue of JCORed in academic circles. The largest academic association in the field of international and intercultural education in Japan is the Intercultural Education Society in Japan. Since it was established in 1981, the Association has played the role of an opinion leader in related fields in Japan (the Intercultural Education Society in Japan 1987-2000). Currently, the Association has more than 1000

members. When we look at the themes of the articles in its early annual journals during the 1980s, more than half of them focused exclusively on the issue of JCORed. The fact that discussions of intercultural education in Japan started around the issues of JCORed must not be overlooked. The same tendency is found in the journals of other relevant academic organizations in Japan, which are smaller than the Intercultural Education Society in Japan, such as the Association of International Education and the Association of Education for International Understanding. Therefore, although the interest in JCORed is not as marked nowadays, the fact that JCORed has been a constant theme in intercultural education in Japan for nearly twenty years proves how significant JCORed is in the context of this study.

I have considered the significance of JCORed in Japanese intercultural education. The five aspects of its significance also indicate that JCORed is important in various settings in Japan: educational policies, general publications and the media, schools, economic circles, and academic circles. This suggests that there is a great variety in the groups of people involved in this issue, which further adds to its significance. In other words, people from a wide range of different backgrounds have been speaking about JCORed, and as will be explored in later chapters, their voices have blended to promote JCORed in education in Japan. There has also been a presupposition that JCORed can and should make a very important contribution to Japanese education in the age of internationalization.

These are the reasons why I have chosen JCORed to focus on in this study from amongst the various strands in the discourses of intercultural education in Japan. Its long history, its constant presence, the variety of people involved, and the consistency in their voices, all make it a focus well-suited to the aim of this study. This is to examine the educational responses in Japan towards the enormous social change

called globalization. In the next section, I will explain the significance of studying discourses produced by cultural intermediaries as a means of exploring these issues.

## 1.3 The focus of the study II – Discourses of cultural intermediaries

### 1.3.1 Discourse

This study examines the discourses concerning intercultural education, particularly those focusing on the education of Japanese children overseas and of returnees as produced by cultural intermediaries. I will explain what discourse means in this study in this section and discuss cultural intermediaries in the next section.

Discourse has been used in a technical sense to describe any unit of speech longer than a sentence. Discourse can be any spoken language such as conversations, interviews, commentaries and speeches or any written language such as essays, notices and chapters (Crystal 1987: 116). In this study discourse is used in the Foucauldian sense. According to Foucault, discourse is the way language is used to express the relationships between power, values and knowledge in the social contexts in which it is being produced. The significance of focussing on discourse in the Foucauldian sense in the context of this study will be explained.

First, a discourse in the Foucauldian sense is "not a disembodied collection of statements, but groupings of utterances or sentences, statements which are enacted within a social context, which are determined by that social context" (Mills 1997: 11). This understanding of discourse whereby it is determined by its social context is important in this study. As explained below, this study examines the discourses produced by five different groups of people. Among these five groups, it is difficult to consider, for example, that Japanese businessmen overseas and the Japanese mothers overseas speak about intercultural education from the same points of view.

> A discourse as a particular area of language use may be identified by the institutions to which it relates and by the positions from which it comes and which it marks out for the speaker. The position may be understood as a standpoint taken up by the discourse through its relation to another (McDonnell: 1986: 3).

Nevertheless, as described in Chapters 3 and 5, the studies on intercultural education to date in Japan have scarcely paid attention to such different positions. In contrast, this study analyzes discourses in relation to the positions and the social contexts of those involved in intercultural education. Considering the positions and contexts from which discourse emerges leads to the second significant aspect of discourse in the Foucauldian sense as used this study.

Foucault (1977) claims that those who have power have control of what is known and the way it is known, and those who have such knowledge have power over those who do not.

> We should admit ... that power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (1977: 27).

This study regards two groups of people, policy makers and academics as the producers of discourse and three groups of overseas people, businessmen, schoolteachers, and mothers as the receivers or intermediaries of discourse. The first two groups which can determine policies of intercultural education and who dominate the field of intercultural education have more power than the latter three groups. Among the latter three groups of Japanese people overseas, the mothers are the least powerful. Examining their discourse in relation to these power relationships is one of the themes of this study.

This study also regards the discourse by policy makers and academics as a public discourse.

> This type of discourse analysis, then, has intimate connections with how human subjects are formed, how institutions attempt to 'normalize' persons on the margins of social life, how historical conditions of knowledge change and vary — how things 'weren't as necessary as all that' (McHoul and Grace 1993: 41).

The three groups of Japanese overseas, businessmen, schoolteachers and mothers interviewed in this study are deeply influenced by the policy of the Ministry of Education and the views of academics in this field in Japan. Policy documents and academic works in this sense appear to these three groups of people as normative and authoritative public discourses. This study scrutinizes how these three groups respond to this legitimated discourse.

Another important aspect concerning knowledge and power is the relationship between the researcher and the research participants or the interviewer and the interviewees. [It is]

> power-knowledge, the processes and struggles that traverse it and of which it is made up, that determines the forms and possible domains of knowledge (Foucault 1977: 27-28).

The power differential that may exist between the participants and the researcher could influence the interactions that form the data of the research. The question arises as to the authenticity of the transcribed materials and the validity of their discussion. This question leads us to a methodologically important aspect of this study.

For Foucault, truth is not something intrinsic to an utterance.

> Truth is of the world; it is produced there by virtue of multiple constraints (1979: 46).

> We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth (1980: 93).

When analyzing discourse, this study assumes that no discourse can be objective and neutral. I have conducted interviews as a researcher, but at the same time, I have attempted a dialogue based on a commonality of experience with the interviewees both as a parent and teacher of Japanese children overseas.

> Foucault is not claiming to speak from a position of 'truth' – he is aware of the fact that he himself as a subject can only speak within the limits imposed upon him by the discursive frameworks circulating at the time (Mills 1997: 33).

On the one hand, I am positioned as an 'insider', who can relate to and understand the circumstances of the interviewees. Simultaneously, as a researcher I am positioned as an 'outsider', having limited time and contact with the interviewees in their daily lives. Moreover, as researcher I will inevitably focus on aspects of the interviews that I value. Thus the power this gives me over the representation of the data makes me an outsider, too. These issues will be elaborated in relation to the methodology in Chapter 4.

The subject of this study is the ways the discourses are understood, mediated and negotiated by various groups of people, who are regarded as cultural intermediaries in intercultural education in Japan. The purpose of the research is to explore the hidden meanings of current discourses by asking cultural intermediaries to reflect on the values which underpin taken-for-granted statements about international understanding. This should lead us to the emergence of new understandings and questions for further exploration.

### 1.3.2 Cultural intermediaries

This study focuses on five groups of people involved with intercultural education in Japan. These people are policy makers, academics in related fields, businessmen who have residential experience overseas, schoolteachers, and the parents of Japanese children overseas. As explained above, I regard the first two groups as the main

producers of discourses concerning intercultural education, and the other three groups as consumers or, more precisely, the intermediaries of these discourses. While substantial studies have been undertaken focussing on what the first two groups of people have said and written, studies to date have paid little attention to the latter three groups. There have been some research studies concerning the situations in which the mothers and teachers lives overseas (see Inada 1991a and Inada 1991b), however, these do not consider their relationship to these educational discourses.

In this study, I argue the importance of paying more attention to these groups of people, who consume, digest, and interpret the public discourses which are found in policies and the works of academics. The voices of these groups of people usually do not find expression in academic journals or policy documents. In contrast to the concerns expressed in the documents, these people ponder and discuss intercultural education at the schools, in their companies and in the Japanese communities in which they are located overseas. They also speak and sometimes write about their views after they go back to Japan. Their level of interest towards the issues of intercultural education is significantly higher than that of the other Japanese who have no residential experience overseas. Their high interest is demonstrated in books in which they narrate their personal episodes and their involvement in intercultural education in Japan (Japan Overseas Education Service 1991). In the interviews for this study, I witnessed their interest in and engagement with intercultural education.

Featherstone (1991: 91) proposed the importance of cultural intermediaries and defined them as those who "act as intermediaries in transmitting the intellectuals' ideas to a wider audience". He includes social workers and counselors in this category. Eisenstadt (1972) also pointed out the significance of those who are engaged in transmitting and interpreting intellectual work to the public. According to him (1972: 18), teachers and business elites were to be regarded as the secondary intellectuals. Japanese businessmen and schoolteachers who have experience living overseas must

be placed into this category. Some mothers of Japanese children, who occupy administrative positions in their groups overseas such as the Japanese Ladies Association and the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) of the Japanese schools overseas, can also be regarded as cultural intermediaries in this study. These mothers transmit the information or views in the public discourses not only to their children but also to the other members in Japanese communities overseas. What these businessmen, teachers and mothers are doing is very much interpreting the public discourses by policy makers and academics, transforming them into plainer expression, and reproducing these discourses in their own contexts (Yoshino 1996: 242-243). Their voices have represented opinions at the front line of intercultural education in Japanese schools overseas, Japanese communities overseas and among the people who are interested in intercultural education in Japan.

For this study, I have focused on three particular groups of people in both Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and Melbourne, Australia, and examined their discourses. The first are the businessmen representatives of Japanese companies located in Melbourne and in Kuala Lumpur, and who are also executive members of the school board of Japanese schools in these cities. The second group includes the teachers and principals at full time Japanese schools. All are dispatched by the Ministry of Education in Japan. The third group includes mothers who serve as the representatives of the PTA of these Japanese schools. They are also the core members of women's groups within the Japanese communities, in which the majority of the Japanese are temporary residents. I regard these three groups in Australia and Malaysia as cultural intermediaries in the sense explored above. I conducted interviews with almost all members of each group in each city, that is, with the majority of those present in each city at the time of interviewing. The interviews explored their views toward JCORed and extended to issues of intercultural education, education for international understanding, their understandings of culture, their views about social change in Japan, and Japanese identity.

These three groups of people have many opportunities to engage with public discourses about intercultural education within their specific contexts. They also make decisions based on their cultural values while they are overseas. Their experiences in these overseas contexts help them talk about and reveal various views, feelings and philosophies about culture and education. As a result, analyzing their discourses as well as contrasting them with the public discourses produced by policy makers and academics has been a very challenging and fascinating task. These interviews tease out multiple aspects of Japanese discourses related to internationalization.

## 1.4 Terms and the translation from the Japanese materials

The interest of this study lies not in defining the meaning of some key concepts in intercultural education but rather in examining the ways in which such concepts have been used. However, it is useful to explain the specific meanings of two key terms, internationalization and intercultural education in relation to another two terms, globalization and multicultural education, because these terms have been used in Japan in specific ways.

As has been discussed above, the word internationalization has been used for a long time throughout Japan. Some have commented on its frequent use, stating that the Japanese are unique in the world in this respect since they have kept advocating internationalization so enthusiastically (Ebuchi 1997b). In this study, however, I will use the word internationalization as meaning almost the same as globalization for the following reason.

It is possible to distinguish the difference between the two words, internationalization and globalization, for when internationalization is discussed, nation states are the unit of its discussion, while the very concept of nation states is under examination in the discussion of globalization. If we understand globalization as a drastic social change occurring on a global scale, however, the word internationalization in Japan has also

been used to express this very meaning. These two words are interchangeable in this sense in Japan, and for the Japanese, the word internationalization is much more common than globalization. Ebuchi (1997b) above, who had served as the President of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan for the longest period of time to date, explicitly stated that internationalization in Japan means globalization.

The next term is intercultural education. As explained in the previous section, the title of the largest academic association in the related field of education in Japan is called the Intercultural Education Society in Japan, which suggests the ways Japanese understand this issue. Ebuchi (1997b: 16) defines intercultural education as "A cultural process or activities concerning human growth through the contact or interaction with different cultures".

In his definition above, we can see that the term intercultural education is used to mean multicultural education in Japan. Some Japanese prefer to use intercultural education instead of multicultural education. The statement by Kato (2000), who is the current president of the Association, illustrates this.

> Why we use intercultural education but not multicultural education comes from the unique situation of Japan. The number of foreign residents in Japan is less than 1 %, which is very low compared to the other countries in the world. Consequently in Japan, we emphasize different culture [from Japanese culture], which means foreign culture rather than multiculturalism as elsewhere in the world. This is demonstrated in the fact that the term intercultural[1] education which focuses on the difference between us [Japanese] and other people is used in Japan while the term multicultural education can be used more naturally in other countries such as US.

This comment by Kato illustrates various understandings which will be explored later in this study. However, since intercultural education is used to denote multicultural

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[1] The literal translation of the Japanese word ibunkakan (intercultural in English) is between different cultures.

education in Japan, I will use the term intercultural education when referring to the Japanese context and multicultural education when referring to this concept in reference to theoretical debates. A similar divergence in terms occurs when referring to internationalization and globalization. The former I use when referring to the Japanese context, the latter when referring to theoretical debates.

It is also important to note that the many excerpts and quotations used in this theses are found only in Japanese. This includes policies and academic literature from Japan as well as the interview material gathered in Melbourne and Kuala Lumpur. Because of this, I have had to translate these materials from Japanese to English. Every attempt has been made to be faithful to the original Japanese version of documents and interview transcripts. Additionally, my translations have been double-checked by a person bilingual in Japanese and English. As a result, some expressions, which might appear awkward in English, have been kept as they better reflect the original texts.

## 1.5 The structure of the thesis

In Chapter 2, I deal with the theoretical frameworks and the key concepts of this study. First, globalization is analyzed as an indispensable context when we consider intercultural education in Japan. Second, I look at how education has responded to social change, focussing on the American case which has exerted great influence in Japan. The 'assimilationist' approach and cultural pluralism are analyzed in relation to intercultural education in Japan. The notion of multiculturalism and the problem of cultural essentialism are examined. These form the basis for the analysis of relevant documents in Chapter 5 and the interview materials in Chapter 6 and 7. The key questions for this study are discussed in this chapter.

In Chapter 3, I critically describe the history of JCORed and intercultural education in order to provide a further context for this study. The distinguishing features of JCORed especially since the 1970s are introduced and critiqued. The origin of

JCORed, a rapid expansion of JCORed, and the process of how JCORed has become understood as a core concept in intercultural education in Japan are analyzed. The way in which academics in related fields have responded to the issues is also reviewed.

The research methods for the study are discussed in Chapter 4. I discuss the role of objectivity and neutrality. Here a qualitative approach is adopted in order to explore the hidden meaning of current discourses and to provide new insights into related issues. The method of selection of materials and interviewees is explained as are the reasons for these choices. The advantages and the limitations of this research approach are also explored.

In Chapter 5, I deal with the two kinds of public discourses related to these issues. The first is the section about intercultural education in the annual reports by ministerial organizations such as the Ministry of Education. I regard this material as representing policy in the area. The second group of discourses is selected from academic works concerning JCORed. Among the enormous number of books and journal articles written by academics, I have chosen two books, one written in 1986 and another in 1997. Each of these has been written by more than ten leading academics of the time. These books were regarded as epoch-making and were well reviewed in the annual journal of Intercultural Education Society in Japan. These materials also provide the focal points for the interviews, which are discussed in Chapters 6 & 7, that is these materials are considered to constitute the normative discourses against which the interviews are analyzed.

In Chapters 6 and 7, I report and discuss the outcomes of the discourses which were produced by cultural intermediaries in this study through the interviews conducted in Malaysia and in Australia. One school in each country was selected among the several full time Japanese schools. Associated with each school, three groups of people were interviewed, representing businessmen, teachers and mothers. The number of interviewees within each group at each school was between five and ten, so the total

number was forty-five. The interviewees' views towards intercultural education are discussed in Chapter 6, while in Chapter 7 I examine their views concerning culture. The outcomes, the analysis and the interpretation of these two chapters construct the core insights of this study.

Finally, in Chapter 8, I reconsider the significance of the discourses of intercultural education in Japan in the age of globalization. I conclude this thesis by presenting some possibilities for a new way of looking at intercultural education, particularly as we enter a new century of more vehement social changes.

# CHAPTER TWO

# THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

## 2.1 Introduction

Some important terms and their usage in this thesis, which were explained in chapter 1, are summarized as follows. Globalization has been called internationalization in Japan, and the issues debated regarding multiculturalism and multicultural education outside of Japan are dealt with under intercultural education in Japan. In Japan, intercultural education has been widely regarded as among the most important responses to internationalization.

This chapter will present a review of the theoretical literature related to globalization and multiculturalism. Then, some issues in education will be discussed in terms of globalization and multiculturalism. Current theoretical debates in these areas will form the conceptual framework of this study.

## 2.2 Globalization

Globalization commonly refers to a process whereby time and space are being compressed (Harvey 1989: 240) due to technology, transnational production and consumption and vast movement of people across borders. Giddens (1990: 64) defines globalization as a stretching process whereby modes of connection between different social contexts or regions become networked across the earth's surface. Waters (1995:1) suggests that postmodernism was the concept of the 1980s and that globalization may be the concept of the 1990s. In this section, I will concentrate on economic, political and cultural aspects of globalization as three major spheres of globalization, each of which affects intercultural education.

Although much has been written about globalization, the arguments about it can be categorized into two groups, one of which is skeptical about the extension of

globalization and the other which argues that globalization is all-pervasive. Those in the first group tend to assert that globalization occurs in particular fields and can be applied only in limited ways. When the term globalization started to be widely used, Burton (1972) and Bull (1977) claimed that it was a radical concept because it denied the saliency of the nation state as a prime organizing principle for social life. Gilpin (1987) saw globalization primarily as the advance of capitalism. Wallerstein (1990) regarded globalization as a process of geosystematic integration exclusively in relation to the economy. A common feature among their work was the view that globalization was occurring mainly in the economic sphere but not in other spheres. Waters (1995:33) criticized such theorists for restricting the significance of globalization to the economic sphere and pointed out their unwillingness to recognize the extent to which states were surrendering sovereignty to international and supranational organizations.

More recently, writers have stressed that globalization is an omnipresent notion present throughout various fields. Robertson (1992), for example, argued that globalization represents a consciousness of the world as a whole. He observed that the world is increasingly united, although he did not claim that it is becoming more integrated. Giddens (1990), on the other hand, pointed out the increase in ethnic conflicts and regarded these to be a part of the process of globalization. For Giddens, local nationalism should not be seen as counter-globalization but as intimately tied up with the process of globalization itself. Beck (1992), who placed risk at the center of his analysis of contemporary social change, pointed out that the distribution of risk follows the pattern of the 'boomerang curve'. In other words, local happenings in one location have increasingly come to affect events in others and are then affected by events occurring there. Societies cannot and do not any longer function in isolation. One of the common threads in the work of such theorists is their prediction of an overall decline in the sovereignty of the state. This argument is particularly relevant to

the exploration of education and political globalization, which will be discussed subsequently.

While there is now general acceptance that globalization is a multi-faceted process, it is still useful to analyze globalization in relation to the economic, political, and cultural spheres (Waters 1995, Appadurai 1996, Lechner and Boli 2000). By discussing how globalization is thought to be occurring in each of these spheres, the relevance of multiculturalism and the importance of multicultural education will become more apparent (Burbules and Torres 2000, Stromquist and Monkman 2000). I will explore such ideas in the following sections.

### 2.2.1 Globalization in the economic sphere and cultural imperialism

"The image of globalization to me is the Internet", "Globalization allows us to be able to travel throughout the world much more easily than before". These are some typical responses from interviews I conducted in Australia and Malaysia for this study. Globalization is often identified in relation to the dramatic advances in transportation and information technology. Dicken (1992) stated that this technological change was a primary force behind globalization and discussed its influence on how we communicate and how we think about and produce products. Appadurai (1996) also indicated how technologies have accelerated globalization, particularly in the economic sphere.

Globalization has increased as world production shifts from the production of tangible material goods to the creation of nebulous but more mobile non-material goods (Waters 1995: 75). The globalized financial market provides a ready example of the new globalized economy. The movement of people as tourists, temporary or permanent residents (for example, international students, businessmen, and professional elites) reflects this aspect of globalization.

Much emphasis has been placed on the economic sphere within the discussion of globalization. Giddens (1990) and Wallerstein (1995), for example, have examined capitalism historically and in doing so emphasize the role of the nation state in relation to globalization. However, others, including Robertson (1992) have pointed out that the economics of globalization should not be over-emphasized as the main engine of change.

Consumption has also been considered in relation to the economics of globalization. Waters (1995: 92) pointed out that stratification patterns are now linked more to possibilities for consumption rather than to the ability for production. Featherstone (1995) and Appadurai (1996) emphasize the importance of consumption in the context of globalization.

Now the question is how these recent changes caused by globalization in the economic sphere affect education. These require human resources with certain skills such as foreign language and intercultural competence. For example, as countries are increasingly integrated into the global economy, learning English has become vital throughout the world. Competencies for globalization have been expressed by Knight (1999) as follows: (1) intercultural competence, (2) adapting business English and business etiquette to the needs of international clients, (3) using national and global perspectives, (4) basic skills in additional languages, and (5) coping and resiliency skills. Knight's emphasis is on language and intercultural competence. In this regard, it is interesting to note that annual Japanese policies developed by the Ministry of Education emphasize two areas of education: Human resource development for living in an information-oriented society and foreign language [English] education.

The message is clear: nations are under pressure to create citizens who can cope with the circumstances caused by economic globalization. Enterprises require that their employees have such competencies. When Harvey (1990: 177) claimed that the 'just-in-time market' was a major feature of Post-Fordist production, he stressed the

necessity of having highly skilled workers with a well-developed sense of the consumer's point of view. Therefore, while globalization has occurred with the emergence of multinational corporations (MNC) and transnational corporations (TNC), each of these types of enterprises needs to have a professionalized approach to developing their human resources in the broadest sense.

> Cultural attributes (English language skills, style of life, adoption of US or European rather than local 'attitudes and values') appear to be just as important as more formal job skills in the promotion of women as well as men in TNCs in developing countries (Sklair, 1991:112).

Intercultural competence and language skills (usually meaning English) proficiency are promoted and developed everywhere in the world in order to prepare people for globalization in the economic sphere.

This connects to questions concerning cultural imperialism, particularly as it relates to the use of English as the international or universal language and the widespread norms which accompany English. Cultural imperialism is a phenomenon whereby a certain culture spreads its values and customs even at the expense of sacrificing other cultures. The phrase 'English [language] imperialism' has been considered in this light. Pennycook (1994) has argued that English has emerged as the international language through a process whereby deference is given to its allegedly natural, neutral, and beneficial features. He argued, however, that these suppositions cannot legitimate English as the international language because English is not natural, not neutral and not beneficial for many people in the world. In other words, the discourse above is legitimated only when those who have already acquired English are in a superior position and attempt to persuade others to accept the language use and the norms which accompany English in order to maintain their dominant position.

Looking at the Japanese context, Kosakai (1996) has argued that cultures have the potential to intervene in the home culture when they are not close to the home culture and when they have become idealized. This is particularly true if the outside culture

being adapted does not appear to harm the home culture. Chow (1993: 10) has described this kind of attitude toward the other culture as the Maoist attitude and explained how cultural imperialism as ideological domination succeeds best in capturing the minds of the masses without physical coercion.

Recently, the Japanese-made word 'global standard' has been widely used in Japan's economic circles. The term is used when giving normative sanction to an approach used in America or elsewhere in the West, the assumption being that it is somehow more rational. 'Global standards' are thus in fact Japanese perceptions of a practice assumed to exist in the West.

Views concerning cultural imperialism must be analyzed in the context of economic globalization. This is particularly important when considering the discussion of education policy and the outcome it is being designed to produce. There is, then, a connection between education and the global economy by means of notions about what is economically rational and socially feasible. Bearing this in mind, it is useful to consider globalization in the political sphere and how it evolves as economies become more global.

### 2.2.2 Globalization in the political sphere and nation states

While accepting that the world has become more globalized in terms of economic activity, theorists such as Waters (1995) assert that the primary locus of sovereignty and decision-making continues to reside in the nation state. In this section, however, the idea that even the state is under the strong influence of globalization will be explored. McGrew (1992) claims that the emergence of nation-states is itself a product of globalization. Two issues arising from globalization affect the contemporary nation state.

Firstly, certain issues, which had previously been considered as the province of the state, can no longer remain the concern of one state. One example is human rights. Since the mid-1990s, the sanctions against South Africa, the diplomatic isolation of China following the Tiananmen Square incident and involvement in Bosnia have clearly demonstrated that the notion of human rights has become an important legitimizing criterion that can allow intervention by one or more states in the internal affairs of others. Violations of human rights now meet with widespread global condemnation and often result in multilateral political action to protect these rights.

This change is even clearer on the issue of the environment. The amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere was a major issue discussed at the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP) in Kyoto (1997). The process used to negotiate an agreement between all participating countries at these conferences showed that the environment was a common and pressing political problem for each nation. Other issues include problems of food shortage, excess population on a planetary scale and problems which cannot easily be solved by a single nation.

Another issue is the decline in the ability of many states to control the growth of organizations and the mobility of people beyond national borders. In addition to TNCs, which were discussed above, international organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation framework (APEC) have all influenced a wide range of nations in that they have eroded the sovereignty of their member states. Furthermore, the rapid increase in the number of so-called Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), as the name itself clearly shows, is another example of emerging political globalization. Most of these organizations exist beyond nation states and are not controlled by national governments.

These issues lead us to ask about the viability of the nation-state. Lyotard (1979) has argued that the significance of the nation-state is declining. A similar thought is also expressed by Sklair (1991: 46) who suggests it is time to shift attention from state-centrist ideas to the analysis of the global system.

It is important now to consider what these matters concerning the nation state mean for education, particularly for multicultural or international education. As states have traditionally played a large role in determining education policy, any decline in the role of the state needs to be considered. As discussed above, education policies introduced by some nation states indicate that they still aspire to play a major role in multiculturalism in their societies. In this context, it is worth noting arguments that counter the notion of the declining nation state.

Giddens (1990) has argued that the sovereign autonomy of the nation-state has been underestimated, and has stated "while corporations are the dominant agents within the world economy, nation-states are the principal actors within the global political order" (71). Wallerstein (1995: 54) has argued that the redistributive powers of the state have increased the conflict resulting from the on-going operation of the capitalist market, and has stated that nation-states are the main players driving political globalization. He notes three adjustments made by the nation-state: the path of political participation through elections, the expansion of social legislation and the social wage or welfare. Education, particularly multicultural education, could be added to this list. This is an issue which will be examined in this thesis through the analysis of education policies in Japan and interviewees' views on the role of nation states with regard to education.

However, it is still undeniable that the notion of the nation state itself is under scrutiny. Robertson (1992: 62) has proposed that the notion of a homogeneous national society is breaking down in the contemporary phase of globalization. Appadurai (1996: 161-168), using Anderson's idea of the *imagined community*, has claimed that organizational forms are more diverse, more fluid, more *ad hoc*, and more provisional

in the imagined world and the concept of the nation state has remained in opposition to the concept of these new organizations. One of the implications of such changes is the distinction between the notion of the state and the nation. What is argued is that the conventional view, in which the states serve as main actors in educating their people, must be re-examined in the process of globalization. The focus of the argument has now shifted from the role of the nation state in the political domain to the notion of nationality and national identity.

Hall (1996) strongly advocates the position that the nation must be seen not only as a political entity, but also as something that produces meaning – a system of cultural representation. He argues that national identities were once centered, coherent and whole, but are now being dislocated by the process of globalization. Notions of nationality and national identity have now become central to political arguments, and within this transition, the focus has gradually shifted from the political to the cultural sphere. The importance of the notions of nationality in multicultural education will be dealt with in 2.4 of this chapter. Here I will examine the third sphere of globalization, cultural globalization.

### 2.2.3 Globalization in the cultural sphere and the notions of progress and universality

Discussion of globalization in the economic and political realms involves recognition that globalization is also tied up with people's values and preferences. In this section, I will discuss globalization in the cultural sphere, with particular attention being given to the notions of progress and universality. These notions are central to the questions that form the basis of this study. I will firstly explore and critique the notions of progress and universality in this section and then I would like to see how these arguments are meaningful in the field of education.

While postmodernism has been used to refer to a variety of perspectives on socio-political history, two central emphases seem to characterize postmodernist perspectives. One is the insistence that any body of knowledge can be understood only in reference to the power relations which give birth to it. The second is a skepticism that questions concepts such as 'universal validity' and 'progress'.

Lyotard (1979) has discussed postmodernism and the concepts of legitimacy and universality in the context of globalization. According to him, legitimacy derives from a concept of emancipation of human beings---an idea linked to the notion of progress. These ideas, however, are commonly only considered from a Western perspective. He argued that legitimacy for any discourse has been based on its ability to emancipate according to some universal criterion. He commented, however, that universality is not universalistic. In this manner, Lyotard questioned conventional notions which underpinned much of modernization theory and modernity.

Similarly, according to Harvey (1990), postmodernism rejects all universal or totalizing discourse. He questioned the belief in linear progress and also the doctrines of equality, liberty and enlightenment. Harvey has suggested that the idea that the entire world would gradually become more homogeneous has come from a linear perspective.

One of the main concerns for Wallerstein (1995 and 1996) has been the notion of universalism. He argued that the belief in universalism had been the ideological keystone upholding historical capitalism. He believed that most truths are particularistic rather than universalistic, and claimed that 'Westernization' has been arrogantly labeled 'modernization'. He argued that the search for truth was treated by the modernist theorists as the fountainhead of progress and well being. For Wallerstein, principles of universalism might be found through science, human rights, and meritocracy, which he described as the trio of universalism. Although Wallerstein himself did not use the word postmodernism, he came to believe that modernism was

no longer possible since the three principles related to universalism could not be taken for granted in the naïve ways typical of modernism.

Various arguments have been made around the two notions of progress and universality. All claim that a new era is being entered although there is some debate about what this era should be called. For instance, Giddens refuses to use the term postmodern because he regards the present as an outcome and therefore a continuation of modernity. Whether we emphasize the continuity with the past or not, notions of progress and universality are likely to continue to occupy a central position in current discussions, for example, in intercultural education. They are particularly important notions in discourses on education in Japan since they dominate educational discussions, as will be seen below.

### 2.2.4 Education and the notions of progress and universality

A modernist perspective has been central to the ideologies shaping educational policy in many nation states. Todaro (1997: 92-93) explained that a formal education system encouraged modern attitudes which assumed that more education would automatically result in more and better development. This perspective can be seen in their view which cuts across the naïve optimism of universalism expressed by many Japanese educationalists, such as Uozumi (2000) who is one of the leading scholars in intercultural education in Japan. Postmodernism presents an enormous challenge to that view. And if education itself attempted to respond to this challenge, tensions would emerge, particularly around the notions of universality and progress.

Educational institutions have traditionally committed themselves to the advancement of 'universal knowledge', and the belief that such knowledge existed lent credence to the efforts of those who sought to promote modernization (Knight and de Wit 1995: 53-54). Whether in the age of globalization, society really needs humans with such universal knowledge is doubtful. As mentioned above in section 2.2.1, it may actually

be the case that states and enterprises have a greater need for specific skills. Many corporations are not seeking standardized global men or women (Knight and de Wit 1995: 58).

Along with universalism, another dominant ideology in education is the concept of progress, especially linear progress. Although doubt about the validity of these perspectives has appeared in the writings of economists and political observers for some time, such skepticism has rarely been expressed in the field of education. Throughout the developed and developing world, discussion of education has progressed on the assumption that more education would result in the further development of a nation and its society. However, this view of progress has recently come to be questioned even in the field of education. The overall conclusion of the 1993 Paris conference of OECD was that high participation in educational programs was in no way a guarantee that nations would achieve a high level of development (Hughter 1995).

In Japan, optimistic and normative ideals related to universalism and progress seem to underpin a naïve commitment to global citizenship and to a belief that the 'coexistence' of different cultures will inevitably result from human progress. Again, some questions have emerged, including why responding to globalization has been taken to mean pursuing universalism, and how this kind of ideology has formed particularly in the context of intercultural education in Japan. Kurimoto (1996), for example, has argued that internationalization in Japan has meant the wholesale adoption of the Western European model as the modern and hence as the inevitable model.

In his study of the internationalization of higher education in Indonesia, Cannon (1996) found that universal is not in fact universal; rather it is American or European in origin. In a similar context, "*global standard*" has become a catchphrase in Japan. It has recently appeared frequently in the media, among businessmen and in

educational circles in Japan. The words are often used as a slogan to legitimate American thinking or American behavior as universally accepted norms. It is then a small jump to suggest that Japanese urgently need to adopt such thinking and behaviors to participate in the global age. This will be explored further when policy documents and academic works are examined in Chapter 5.

In this section, globalization serves as the stage for multiculturalism and multicultural education and has been discussed from various perspectives. Technological changes, consumerism and the increased mobility of people and the appearance of multinational organizations which cross national and cultural boundaries have been accompanied by a new regime of cultural imperialism, while the relevance of the nation state for understanding contemporary societies has been debated. Globalization in the cultural sphere was analyzed around the notions of universality and progress. The dominance of these notions in education was demonstrated and criticized for its Westernism. The issues raised in this section contribute not only to the shaping of the significant questions of this study but also provide a backdrop against which, in the following sections, multiculturalism and multicultural education will be explored.

## 2.3 Multiculturalism and multicultural education

The aim in the following two sections is to examine some crucial aspects in the debate about multiculturalism and multicultural education. These are critical to the conceptual framework of this study. It is important to discuss multiculturalism and multicultural education together because the relationship between them is dynamic and interactive. The debate about multiculturalism and multicultural education has focused on two main concerns. The first is the debate between multiculturalism and anti-multiculturalism. The second concern is the attempt, particularly since the 1990s, to explore the notion of culture and particularly, to challenge the essentialist view of culture. The first of these concerns is an exploration of the 'multi' in multiculturalism,

and the second is about the 'culturalism' in multiculturalism. These debates about multiculturalism and multicultural education are examined with reference to the aims of multiculturalism and the problems contained in multiculturalism. In this section, I will discuss multiculturalism and in section 2.4, I will discuss the essentialist view of culture.

The argument concerning multiculturalism and also multicultural education are examined chronologically in this section. Although individual representations vary from country to country, examples will be taken primarily from the American context because the discourse of intercultural education in Japan has significantly been influenced by its American counterpart. The chronological flow is shown below.

> Notion of assimilation → (Liberal) cultural pluralism → (Strategic) multiculturalism [2]

One reason to examine the development of multiculturalism in chronological sequence is that, as described below, cultural pluralism appeared in protest against assimilationist ideas. In the same way, multiculturalism is regarded as a response to the problems of cultural pluralism. In other words, the latter approach has been an attempt to critique and overcome the former approach. Another reason for examining the chronological sequence of the argument is that it leads to the underlying debate between multiculturalism and anti-multiculturalism.

These reasons are deeply related to another important aim in examining multiculturalism, and this is to examine the tension between two notions, integration and diversity. I argue that these two views have been the key notions in any form of discussion of multiculturalism. Scrutinizing multiculturalism in relation to these polarized notions should provide crucial insights for this study. Bearing this in mind,

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[2] Definitions of each term will be given in the following section.

the following section presents the principle aspects of each chronological stage, indicating influential factors in the emergence of multiculturalism and its problems.

### 2.3.1 Assimilation

There is a wide range of definitions of the notion of assimilation (Sandberg, 1974, Liefer, 1981, Nielsen, 1985). In the context of assimilation, the phrase 'when in Rome, do as the Romans do' is often used. This expression reflects that there is a point in common among the many definitions. Assimilation is the process whereby minority groups merge into the majority group. The process of assimilation, its speed and its degree may vary, but the process was believed to be irreversible and progressive (Park, 1928). Behind the commitment to assimilation was the belief that society would become more rational, more meritocratic, and more universalistic (Sekine, 1989). In other words, the concept of assimilation has been related to the concept of modernization (1989: 61). A liberal outlook, which believes in progress, human integrity and tolerance, is found in the idea of assimilation (Gordon, 1975: 118-119). This faith in assimilation can be expressed in the sentiment that it may take some time, but we can be integrated someday in the future.

Questions and doubts have emerged regarding this model that presents a one way process of minorities assimilating into the majority, because it has not worked in the way assimilationalists expected. Does assimilation not equate with Anglo-conformity, for example, in the US and in Australia? From the point of view of assimilationists, however, those who fail to assimilate into the majority come to be labeled as people who are irrational or otherwise deviant (Marger, 1985: 57-59). When an entire group fails to "fall into line", it comes to be labeled as maladjusted and as an ethnically residual phenomenon (Nielsen, 1980: 78). This approach to assimilation may become part of the logic and ideology of the dominant group in defense of 'its' society and assist nation-states to achieve integration.

As a number of ethnic conflicts throughout the world indicate, people in minority groups have rebelled against assimilation. Conflicts between majority and minority groups and also among minority groups have increased, including in developed countries. The 'liberal' assumptions held by assimilationists have come to be seen as invalid.

### 2.3.2 Liberal cultural pluralism

Kallen was the first to put forth the concept of cultural pluralism in 1915 (Newfield and Gordon 1996: 84). Kallen claimed that people must not aim for integration into a dominant culture such as the Anglo-Saxon culture under the concept of assimilation. Rather he advocated that they should develop a positive awareness of each ethnic group's culture (Kallen 1956). According to him, people should not regard diversity among ethnic groups negatively but recognize it as a strength of a society and promote its maintenance. Kallen made it clear that cultural pluralism stood in opposition to assimilation.

While the idea of cultural pluralism developed, the idea of assimilation was criticized as a form of cultural oppression by a dominant group. Symbols of assimilation such as the 'melting pot' were replaced by the 'salad bowl' metaphor. The new metaphor suggested that many ethnic groups could coexist without sacrificing their original culture (Tai 1999: 43). This change from the 'melting pot' to the 'salad bowl' is particularly important when we consider the situation in Japan where the 'salad bowl' metaphor has become a popular and convenient shorthand to designate an ideal approach to intercultural relations in the field of intercultural education. However, while cultural pluralists criticized assimilation as an approach to intercultural relations, they did not provide a strategy for integrating the various groups or achieving their co-existence (Tai 1999). This meant that ideas regarding the implementation of

pluralistic policies were seldom spelled out and were characterized by a certain ambiguity.

Some pluralists such as Kimball (1990) and Schlesinger (1991) have regarded cultural pluralism as incorporating both integration and diversity. Ultimately, however, they emphasize assimilationist themes and downplay the importance of diversity, respecting it only in so far that it did not threaten the integration of society. They did not propose that the power relations between the dominant group and the minority group or groups be changed. This kind of cultural pluralism was amenable to most of those in dominant groups. In America, those groups consisted mainly of conservative Anglo-Saxon Americans (Newfield & Gordon 1996: 84). Emphasizing integration more than diversity, they adopted a concept of cultural pluralism approaching that of assimilation.

Others such as Steinberg (1989) and Nieto (2000) placed more weight on diversity and prioritized equality. They argued for affirmative action, claiming that an equal society could be achieved only by providing special rights for the members of minority groups and advocated that such rights should have legal status in society.

Affirmative action included the provision of bilingual education in public schools. Advocates of such education asserted that it was necessary to provide special consideration to members of certain racial or ethnic groups when making employment decisions or deciding who should be given entrance to higher education. Many movements promoting affirmative action in America emerged from the field of education. These movements began to be viewed as multicultural education particularly during the 1980s (Tai 1999: 51). Multicultural education has become a driving force of multiculturalism particularly in America.

Glazer (1976) was one of the early skeptics who criticized affirmative action. He argued that cultural pluralism which advocated affirmative action would split the

nation if each minority group started to apply for special consideration. Gordon (1981) identified two types of cultural pluralism. The first type of cultural pluralism, supported by writers like Glazer, is called liberal pluralism and the other type is called corporate or progressive pluralism. The former respects individualism but is reluctant to support the actions officially designed to change the status of minority groups in society. The latter, on the other hand, support the notion that unless those subjugated groups are given some political rights to be able to change their status, problems such as inequality would never be solved. The notion of multiculturalism emerged from the latter concept.

### 2.3.3 Multiculturalism enacted through multicultural education

Multiculturalism, particularly in America, was a result of stretching the notion of corporate cultural pluralism to its full extent. Tai (1999: 48) writes that national culture is not a single culture with one set of norms but a "mosaic" of different cultures. Multiculturalism and corporate cultural pluralism were similar in their respect for diversity in society. However, within multiculturalism the idea of a single common culture was also challenged. Multiculturalism often does not accept one culture as a dominant or core culture within society. According to the notion of multiculturalism, different cultures are represented as equally important and coexisting (Tai: 49).

Multicultural education has played a significant role in promoting multiculturalism (Nakajima, 1998: 13-31). Banks (1994: 10), a leading proponent of American multicultural education, defines "multicultural education as an educational reform movement designed to restructure schools and other educational institutions so that students from all social-class, racial, cultural and gender groups will have an equal opportunity to learn". Banks has been an influential figure in the debate in Japan, for example, he was the invited keynote speaker at the twentieth anniversary conference

of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan in 2000. Sleeter and Grand (1999) argue that multicultural education is socially reconstructionist. Nieto (2000: 314) sees multicultural education as an invitation to students and teachers to put their learning into action for social justice. These writers expressed two common notions. First, multicultural education has to be accompanied by educational or even political action to reform or reconstruct schooling, institutions and societies. Second, explicit in multicultural education is the goal of removing social inequality caused by economic, social and cultural differences.

However, those promoting multicultural education and multiculturalism have been criticized because they were seen as a threat to peace, social order and the integration of the nation state. The following section discusses some of the points raised by those critical of multiculturalism and through these considers the arguments surrounding diversity and integration.

### 2.3.4 The refutation of particularistic multiculturalism

While multicultural education and multiculturalism have received considerable attention, counterarguments have emerged and grown in popularity. Multicultural education is considered as too political, emphasizing too much the minority's points of view in the curriculum. The main concern of those opposing multiculturalism was that such a focus would lead to the disintegration of society (Ravitch 1990, Schlesinger 1991,).

Schlesinger (1991) argues that multiculturalism assaulted the common identity and threatened the unity of American society. He criticizes Afrocentrism[3] as a radical form of multiculturalism and opposes its tendency toward separationism.

Ravitch (1990) has divided multiculturalism into two types: plural multiculturalism and particularistic multiculturalism. She regards plural multiculturalism as the norm of a free society and as the principle behind integration in American society. Educational policy in America, according to her, has tried to accept diversity and is critical of racial discrimination. However, Ravitch concludes that these efforts have failed because of the extreme demands made by particularistic multiculturalism, which advocates minorities and denies there is any common culture. She recognizes the problems associated with Euro-centric perspectives, but claims that much effort has been made to correct them. However, she also notes that it is quite natural for education in America to be influenced by European cultures, considering that America was 'discovered' by Europeans and that more than eighty percent of the population today consists of the descendents of the founders. She criticizes particularistic multiculturalists because she regards them as attempting to improve the academic career of the minority children by encouraging them to have a false sense of self-esteem and to be overly proud of the accomplishments of their race in isolation. She opposes this kind of multiculturalism and argues that self-esteem must be born out of accomplishments attributable to one's own effort, rather than 'acquired' from ancestors through a study of one's cultural history (1990: 354).

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[3] Afrocentrism rejects the conventional understanding of African history and culture, saying it has only been framed by dominant European concepts. Afrocentrism attempts to rewrite the history of Afro-Americans and also reconceptualizes the history focusing on Africans' contribution to the world such as the civilization of ancient Egypt.

Those critical of particularistic multiculturalism were also critical of affirmative action (Tai 1999: 63). They claimed that affirmative action intervened in market economies and that for this very reason, ironically the opportunity for minorities to compete economically was undermined rather than enhanced. As a result of affirmative action, the minority groups felt inferior and the dominant people reinforced their superiority. A refutation of these arguments follows.

### 2.3.5 The counterarguments from multiculturalism

The debates surrounding multiculturalism in the USA have been important in Japan, in particular the argument by Ravitch and the counter-argument posed by Asante.[4] Asante (1991: 267) argues that Ravitch's version of multiculturalism is not multiculturalism at all, but rather a new form of Eurocentric hegemony. He disputes the notion of a common American culture and argues that there is a hegemonic culture, pushed as if it were a common culture. He declared that even Eurocentrism can find a place in multiculturalism as long as it does not parade as universal. Asante's arguments against Ravitch express a response to anti-multiculturalism.

Those critical of the multiculturalist position have tended to over-emphasize the likelihood that society would fragment. Their fears were that multiculturalism would bring political conflict into culture and academia. However, politics have always implicitly intruded into academic and cultural issues (Eller 1997). The real anxiety of anti-multiculturalists is of forfeiting the supremacy of the dominant culture and the collapse of their belief in its supremacy. The crucial problem in their argument is that

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[4] The argument between Ravitch and Asante was widely acknowledged in Japan. A president of the Intercultural Education Society, Japan referred to this debate in his opening address of the symposium in its 20th anniversary conference.

what they claim to be a universal norm is actually a specific one, and often the norm of their own culture, that is, the dominant culture (Eller: 249-260). They assume that the values of their culture (the dominant culture) are also the values of all other cultures. The argument of multiculturalists, however, is that this not only promotes the right of minority groups, but reveals that the dominant culture is merely one amongst many cultures of equal worth.

### 2.3.6 From the notion of 'multi' to the notion of 'culturalism'

Although multiculturalism and multicultural education have gradually been penetrating many societies, the arguments in this section have focused upon the debate between the proponents of the notion of diversity and proponents of the notion of integration.

One more important point must be mentioned. As Tai (1999) noted, those for and against multiculturalism have regarded culture as an entity. Appadurai (1996:12) pointed out that culture as a noun seems to carry associations which conceal more than they reveal. He proposed that the term "cultural" be used instead of "culture". Sakai (1996) has argued that both multiculturalism and anti-multiculturalism fall into the same problem of 'culturalism'. According to Sakai, culturalism is a way of regarding culture as an organic entity. The assumption is that multicultural societies consist of two or more undivided cultures which exist in a parallel fashion.

The arguments in this section so far have focused on the 'multi' in multiculturalism, but the arguments presented above hint at the necessity to shift the focus to the 'culturalism' in multiculturalism (Morris-Suzuki 1996). Therefore, in the next section, I will discuss the problem of culturalism. In particular, its essentialism will be examined.

## 2.4 Essentialist views of culture

In the discussion so far, cultures have been identified with ethnic or racial groups. This way of understanding culture reveals one of the notions of cultural essentialism. Within cultural essentialism, the premise that culture exists has scarcely been questioned. Each culture is seen as having some authentic elements that represent a particular culture. Each culture also has definite boundaries between it and other cultures. In the following discussion, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* by Charles Taylor (1992) will be taken up as a means of investigating cultural essentialism and identifying why this concept has recently become the center of debates around multiculturalism. Then, the notions of nationality and ethnicity will be explored in relation to essentialism. Finally, the possibility of diasporic hybridity will be presented and examined. Included here will be an examination of gender and its relationship to these issues.

### 2.4.1 The politics of recognition

With the development of multiculturalism, the relationship between the establishment of self-identification and politics has become important, and these perceived relationships have been the focus of the movement called the politics of identity. Taylor (1992) argues that the process of self-identification is honed through dialogue and conflict with others. In this process, obtaining the recognition of self-identification by the surrounding others comes to have an important meaning. However, some social conditions cause this representation to remain unrecognized. Therefore, a movement referred to as 'the politics of recognition' has emerged as protests against such social conditions and as a vehicle for those demanding equal recognition.

Taylor contends that the politics of recognition contains two antithetical ideas: the one is to demand equal citizenship based on universalistic ideas, the other is to assert the particularity of the individual, giving rise to the politics of difference. He used these antitheses to find a resolution to the conflict between what he describes as the majority and the minority. Majority and minority are often used to describe political power rather than number. For him, the core of the problem lies in establishing whether homogenization has actually occurred as the minority claims. He promotes the concept that all cultures have equal value. According to him, because affirmative action entrenches difference, it cannot provide equality as is the intention. He concludes that affirmative action is ineffective and that a different means of establishing equality needs to be found.

### 2.4.2 Multiculturalism as the discourse of the dominant group and the problem of cultural relativism and essentialism

Bhabha (1996) criticizes Taylor's idea. He argues that when Taylor asserted the equal value of different cultures, he meant cultures that did not include the cultures of minority groups, and referred only to those that have influenced society for long periods of time. According to Bhabha, Taylor established his own criteria for determining the value of each culture before he began to explore culture. In addition, Taylor focused on the inner world of minority people as exemplified by the notion of self-identification, and he tended to overlook the relation of such matters to power. Although Taylor noted the majority's ethnocentrism, he did not consider how this could actually be a way of sustaining the power of the dominant group.

Taylor's ideas are also premised on the notion of 'cultures as bounded entities'. The problem of seeing culture as a bounded entity is that it prevents us from seeing the diversity within the minority groups, which leads us to hold fixed and even

stereotypical views about minorities. This, as a result, helps to sustain the division between the dominant groups and the minority groups. Those who propound principles of respect through statements such as 'we must respect the demand for recognition of the minority groups' may belong to the dominant culture. However, their voices clearly identify with the dominant group (they are the "we"), and these drown out the hybrid elements within them, help to construct the minority cultures in essentialist ways, and, strengthen the position of the dominant groups. The differences within as well as between cultures have to be considered.

Chow (1998) pointed out that, in the politics of recognition, only the White culture recognizes the non-White culture but not vice versa. In other words, the recognition that Taylor proposed has been practiced unidirectionally. Therefore, it is important to ask in whose hands power exists when culture is recognized and represented. Without the examination of this question, the principle of multiculturalism, which exhorts the equal recognition of all cultures, can be misused to maintain the dominant culture to the exclusion of others.

Lowe (1996) looks at cultural essentialism from a different perspective, which leads him to criticize pluralistic multiculturalism. Lowe's point is that the pluralistic approach of treating every culture equally creates an impression of uniformity of differences between minority groups but ignores the differences within each minority group. Accordingly, no sense of problematization of the issues of individual minority groups, which suffer differently in history, emerges. As a result, all cultures are represented naïvely as equal by the dominant culture. Multiculturalism, for Lowe, should not take this kind of approach, but must unveil the unequal structures and the contradictions that exist within each of the constituent cultures.

For example, the management of diversity in many business firms rereads how multiculturalism can be used to control minority groups. Many enterprises use the

concept of multiculturalism and implement programs in multicultural education as the number of employees from ethnic minorities increases. However, such programs function to avoid conflict between the ethnic groups and to promote a superficially harmonious workplace. In this way, multiculturalism in enterprises is often used as a slogan to maximize a company's interest.

The ideas discussed so far in this section have critiqued the notion of 'culturalism' or cultural essentialism in multiculturalism and multicultural education. One of the crucial aspects in the argument relates to 'difference' within cultures. Cultural essentialism needs to be problematized and deconstructed so that difference can be considered. In the following sections, the notions of nationality and ethnicity will be examined in order to problematize the concept of cultural essentialism.

### 2.4.3 Nationalism

Gellner (1983) has contended that nationalism produced nations, but not vice versa. According to him, the formation of the nations has its root in the emergence of modern nation states and industrial society, and the cultural and political changes accompanying these developments. Hobsbawm (1990) argued that the basic features of modern nations and phenomena related to modern nations contribute to modernity. He stressed the importance of the ideology that was produced to justify the positions of the state in capitalistic economies. Anderson (1983) argued that the decisive factor in the development of nationalism was the printing press. According to him, people imagined the nation through books, newspapers, and mass media. He proclaimed a nation to be an 'imagined community'.

The common feature among these accounts is that nations have developed as part of modernization and that nations have been built upon notions or myths of homogeneity.

Nationalism has played the role of bonding citizens in the process of forming nations. Calhoun (1997: 211-239) explained nationalism as follows:

> Nationalism claims essentialistic homogeneity within the group rather than actual hybridity within the group. The function of essentialism is to reduce a certain hybridity among the members of the group to a particular essential norm of the group. Nationalism is an idea that perceives and understands difference in superficial but not fundamental ways, and which neglects to see the differences and particularities among members of the nation.

Bhabha (1994) attempts to tease out certain problems in the abovementioned discourse. He argues that in the discourse concerning nations, mythical origins were invented and traditions were made up in order to create the organic integration of diverse people. On the other hand, nations have crises built-in because the boundary by which they identify themselves always risk being challenged by internal differences. According to Bhabha, the discourse of nations has always contained such tensions. He has focused on the discourse of the minority groups that can reveal this ambivalent condition of nations because those groups are positioned at the edge of the national culture.

Revealed here is the problem of discourses concerning nationalism. Sakai (1996) has proposed deconstructing nationality as a way of examining this problem. By doing this, it becomes clear that the essentialist understanding of culture is problematic. In the context of this study such understandings are represented in phrases such as 'American culture' and 'Japanese culture'.

### 2.4.4 Ethnicity

With an increasing number of ethnic conflicts, particularly after World War II, the primodialist approach attracted many adherents. This approach regards the differences

between races and ethnic groups as an essential and a primordial aspect of human nature. The theorists arguing this approach include Shills (1957), Geertz (1963), Isajiw (1974), Issacs (1975), and Van den Berghe (1979). One of their claims is that ethnic groups constitute a natural extension of family and kinship relations. Although Smith (1991) does not position himself as a primodialist, he emphasizes the significant role of an ethnic entity, which he called ethny, in the process of nation building. He argues that the nation state cannot be built without a core dominant ethny.

Barth (1969 and 1994), on the other hand, proposed a boundary approach in response to the primordial approach. In the boundary approach, ethnic groups are divided not by the particular integrated ethnic culture, but by attempts to maintain the boundaries which delineate their existence from that of various outside peoples. According to Barth (1994), each ethnic group and its cultural attributes are not primordial but have been changing in accordance with social conditions. He also argued that ethnicity could be consciously manipulated as the means of politics and that many attributes of ethnic groups, which are believed by primodialists to be objective, are mythical and deliberately constructed either in the ethnic group or the nation. For example, when people talk about a common ancestry, the ancestors are not factual ones but are imagined. People share a history, which includes some constructed narratives. In the same way, many cultural attributes were created because they play a significant role in distinguishing members of a certain ethnic group or nation from others (Smith 1991 22-23).

Sollows (1989) wrote about "the invention of ethnicity" to explain these phenomena. According to him, ethnicity is a cultural construction presumed to have genuine and natural attributes. The invention of ethnicity occurs in a particular context and is shaped by various power relationships. In the process, the evidence pertaining to the

process of the invention is removed so that the idea of a naturalized ethnicity can arise. Sollows argues that it is important that ethnic studies focus on these processes which result in or otherwise shape the invention of ethnicity.

To summarize, the discourse of ethnicity needs to be deconstructed. In the context of this study, the concept of ethnicity is particularly problematic in Japanese language discourse on intercultural education. For example, Japanese discourse claiming that Malaysia is a compound country consisting of distinct groups of Malays, Chinese, and Indians has to be deconstructed because of its definite boundary notions regarding the authenticity and integrity of each group. The problem with such discourse is the narrow view of the definition of culture based on cultural essentialism, which regards culture as equated with homogeneous ethnicity. What is required might be to revise the concept of a bounded entity in the study of culture and to shift the concept from the idea of celebrating culture to the idea of deconstructed culture.

### 2.4.5 Possibility of diasporic hybridity

The above discussion of nationalism and ethnicity contributes to the critique of cultural essentialism. The conventional frameworks related to culture, such as the nation state and bounded ethnicity, are being deconstructed. This begs the question: What kind of new framework can be devised to replace such a conventional framework? The concepts of hybridity and diaspora may point the way forward.

The word hybridity, which means the condition of mixing different kinds of things, has been used in a negative sense since the middle of the 19th century in biology or in the context of racialism (Young 1995: 1-28). Recently, however, positive aspects of hybridity have been discussed (Bhabha 1996). Young (1995), for example, argued that the hybridity presented by Bhabha corresponded to the concept of intentional

hybridity proposed by Bakhtin. Intentional hybridity may change the power relationships between the majority groups and the minority groups (23). The integration or homogeneity of many nations has often been achieved and constructed by denying the existence of hybrid elements (Tai 1999: 112). Hybridity in this sense replaces the conventional concept of national identity.

On the other hand, the word, diaspora has been used mainly to refer to members of particular ethnic groups such as the Jews who have been dispersed. Recently it has been used to describe the various experiences of people who have lived in different places through the world (Tai: 113). Diaspora can be refer to people who have deserted their original homeland as a result of expulsion and persecution, or have been forced to flee in the wake of political strife, conflict and war (Brah: 1996). Not all diasporas, however, inscribe the homing desire through a wish to return to a place of origin (Brah 1996: 193). In this sense, "multi-placedness of home in the diasporic imaginary does not mean that diasporian subjectivity is 'rootless'" (197). New understandings of diaspora can explain the social phenomenon and provide a viewpoint to seek out a new type of identity which does not depend on national identity or colonial, dichotomous identity. The concept of diaspora can be considered in terms of strategies to overcome the exclusiveness of the traditional identity.

In Japan, the word *nenashigusa*, which is literally translated in English as 'rootlessness', often has a negative connotation when used in the field of intercultural education. As discussed in Chapter 7, the notion of *nenashigusa* in Japan has generally been regarded as a characteristic of persons who cannot develop or maintain a coherent sense of their own identity due to having lived in different countries. *Nenashigusa*, however, has been used sometimes as a more neutral term, meaning (diasporic) hybridity. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

Appadurai (1996: 8) points out that the phenomenon, which Anderson (1983) described as 'imagined community', now occurs everywhere on earth. The important point of what Appadurai meant here was not the global integration of cultures, but that people imagined communities differently based on their experiences in their own contexts. In this sense, the identities, which emerge among those in diasporic communities, should be characterized not by integration but by hybridity. Hall (1996) proposes that we have to change the concept represented in the phrase "in spite of the difference", which has been claimed by the pluralistic multiculturalists, to the phrase "with difference". He emphasizes the importance of hybridity as the basis for an identity that is gained or achieved through difference. This may be interpreted as suggesting the value of a new identity or diasporic identity, which replaces the conventional national and ethnic identity.

### 2.4.6 Gender as an example of the problems of essentialism

Among the interviewees for this study in Malaysia, I found that some expressed quite supportive and liberal views toward multicultural or intercultural education. Those who were critical of other Japanese who held disdainful views of local Malays promoted intercultural programs. However, many of these people nevertheless failed to notice diversity within Malay society. For instance, most referred simply to 'Malay people' not recognizing differences amongst them that reflected unequal power relations. An example of this is the fact that when talking about Malay, the Japanese businessmen made no distinction between the diverse groups they must have encountered, such as colleagues and the women who work as cheap labor in Japanese factories. In this way, Malay people were treated as a unified entity almost all the time. Regarding Malaysians always as a single category prevents the possibility of exploring their diversity and gives rise to the danger of seeing all members of a social

stratum as a single entity. I will discuss these issues in relation to the analysis of my interviews in more detail in Chapter 7.

There are differences within cultures, within both minority groups and within majority groups. These differences are based on various factors including gender. Since one of the principle groups involved in JCORed is mothers, and since there was a lack of representation of women in business and teaching, the mothers group became an important source of women's perspectives on gender issue in relation to the discourse of intercultural education.

As discussed previously, one of my main arguments concerning the problem of cultural essentialism is that differences within a culture are not explored. Gender constitutes a significant difference within cultures, which is overlooked within essentialism. Works by feminists including Brah (1996) and Yuval-Davis (2000), illustrate counter-essentialist arguments. These authors argue that essentialized understandings of culture ignore power inequality including that based on gender. Inequality of this kind creates differences between men and women as well as amongst women and amongst men who share the same cultural identity.

Yuval-Davis (1997: 8) has argued that not all women are oppressed or subjugated in the same way or to the same extent, even within the same society at any specific moment. Mohanty (1995) too has criticized the monolithic view towards women and the assumption that women are an already constituted immutable category. She has claimed the existence of women who do not fall into a single category and therefore an increased diversity amongst women. There are increasing numbers of women who do not marry, who leave their local communities or even abandon their countries, and, on the other hand, there are many women who conform to patriarchal expectations.

These arguments provide a very useful perspective when multicultural education is examined in the context of globalization. According to Blackmore (2000: 137), "(globalization created) further casualization of the 'soft' periphery dominated by groups such as women at the local level". This means in the context of education that women are increasingly expected to be trained to fill the peripheral kinds of jobs such as guides, interpreters, and receptionists, all of which are described in Japan using beautiful phrases such as 'jobs for fluent foreign language speakers'. Many female returnees in Japan enter such jobs. In fact, such jobs have been very popular among girls who have some English competence. Such a phenomenon should be interpreted as meaning that globalization is maintaining the position of women playing a conventional supplementary role in a society. Yet, this notion of women being concentrated in peripheral jobs has never been problematized in the field of intercultural education in Japan.

In examining multiculturalism and multicultural education, it is important to acknowledge diversity such as that based on gender. Such difference and the concept of diasporic hybridity described in the section above have provided the basis for the challenge to essentialist multiculturalism and the development of strategic essentialism which will be discussed below.

### 2.4.7 Possibility of strategic essentialism

Minh-ha (1991: 107), a prominent feminist in the field has argued that "if multiculturalism focuses on the difference between one culture and another culture, it cannot be valid for the subjugated people. Multiculturalism must problematize the difference within a culture". This statement accords with what Lowe has (1996) argued (see section 2.3). As described in 2.3, pluralistic multiculturalism has not challenged the traditional power relationship, and has even contributed to the recent

anti-multiculturalism. One of the reasons change has not occurred is that pluralistic multiculturalism clings to a notion of cultural essentialism.

Intercultural education in Japan has the same structural problems. As discussed in chapter 3, the dichotomy between other cultures (essentialized foreign countries' cultures) and an essentialized Japanese culture has always been found in Japan. The discourse called '*Nihonjinron*', which is a systematic assertion of the uniqueness of Japanese people, society and culture, has penetrated the Japanese view, particularly that of people regarded as cultural intermediaries (Yoshino 1996).

One question remains, however. Can we reach a solution to the problem of cultural essentialism if we keep deconstructing essentialism to the absolute limit? In other words, an anxiety has emerged as a result of the fruitlessness of the endless deconstruction of identity. Rattansi (1994) has claimed that minority people need to form a positive identity to resist the dominant groups and he proposed *strategic essentialism*. Essentialism in this sense is regarded as not containing the elements of stability and authenticity but embodying the richness of fluidity and hybridity. At the same time, it must be strategically essentialist in each very specialized context. It is possible that shifting identities as a form of strategic essentialism may be an important element of multiculturalism and multicultural education.

Multiculturalism now is able to, and should, find a new path. I would like to characterize this path as a ridge trail, which drops to dangerous gorges on both sides. One side is open for the exhaustive deconstruction of identity. The other side is filled with the endless temptation to re-form essentialist views. The future of multicultural education and intercultural education might be dependent on whether they can successfully find their own ways within their specific contexts between the two.

## 2.5 Conclusion

The above discussion concerning globalization, multiculturalism and cultural essentialism is summarized below and important questions are noted. This discussion provides the theoretical basis for this study.

Globalization, particularly in the economic sphere, requires people to develop skills in foreign languages, especially English, and in intercultural competence. Therefore it is important to establish whether the competence developed in intercultural education corresponds to that required due to globalization. This also raises the question of why such great importance is attributed to English as the international language in intercultural education.

One of the most significant phenomena of globalization is its effect on the sovereignty of the nation state. This study will explore the perceptions of those involved in intercultural education regarding the impact of globalization on the role of the nation state for intercultural education and policy.

The notions of universality and progress were particularly considered in relation to globalization in the cultural sphere. The notion of progress implies the process of 'universal (often Western) cultures homogenizing non-dominant (often non-Western) cultures'. It is arguable that intercultural education in Japan regards the socio-cultural norms in the US as progressive and universalistic norms. This study will explore whether this is in fact the case.

Multiculturalism and one of its most distinctive manifestations, multicultural education, were analyzed basically in the American context since these have strongly influenced their Japanese counterparts. While intercultural relations have passed through four general stages, from perception of assimilation to liberal cultural pluralism, to pluralistic multiculturalism, to particularistic multiculturalism, the two notions of integration and diversity have always been the center of the debates.

However, it is generally the minority that is integrated into the majority, not vice versa, and consequently existing power relationships remain as the status quo. As will be described in the next chapter, one approach that has been adhered to in intercultural education in Japan has been liberal cultural pluralism, which, without examining power relations between cultures, advocates all cultures have equal values. The ways in which those in intercultural education in Japan regard these cultural pluralistic views and how they respond to the recent phenomenon of non-Japanese coming into Japan needs further exploration.

Finally, cultural essentialism was identified in the debates both by pro-multiculturalists and anti-multiculturalists. Following the arguments, presented by Taylor, and Bhabha and Young, the notion of cultural essentialism, in which monolithic cultures with their authenticity and defined boundaries were problematized and seen to require deconstruction. As thoroughgoing deconstruction of identity itself is not the ultimate goal of multiculturalism, however, the necessity of employing strategic essentialism in each individual context was considered as it may provide a new path to multicultural and intercultural education. On the other hand, the notion of diasporic hybridity and insights related to gender were suggested as new valid conceptual framework for multicultural and intercultural education, as it has the potential to replace the notions of nationality and ethnicity. These discussions lead us to ask to what extent those in intercultural education in Japan regard Japanese society and culture as either essentialistic or hybrid. The above discussion also leads us to explore whether they recognize Japanese society as diverse or homogeneous. Gender will form a key element in this exploration as it illustrates an important division within Japanese society reflected in the groups interviewed for this study.

These questions will form the core questions in the analysis of political and academic documents in Chapter 5, and the interviews in Chapter 6 and 7. In the next chapter, I will present a critical history of intercultural education in Japan to provide a more

specific context for this study. This will provide a necessary background for the political and academic discourses within which the interviewees understand issues.

# CHAPTER THREE

# CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF THE EDUCATION OF JAPANESE CHILDREN OVERSEAS AND RETURNEES

This chapter presents a critical review of the history of the education of Japanese children overseas and returnees (JCORed). The aim is to combine the core questions provided in Chapter 2, and the historical context of JCORed in order to produce more specific questions, which are used to investigate key documents more deeply, as well as the interviews with the cultural intermediaries in the field of intercultural education in Japan. First, I deal with the history of JCORed by referring to various documents based on the policies, which have been issued by the Ministry of Education. The initial phases of JCORed, its development, its peak period, and its turning point are reviewed chronologically. The second part of the chapter concerns the history of the discourse of JCORed, which is discussed with respect to these themes: adaptation; a naïve belief in internationalization and the erasure of Japaneseness; and optimistic notions of modernism. Various works by researchers are discussed in relation to these three themes.

The chapter uses the following abbreviations. While JCORed refers to the education of Japanese children overseas and of the returnees, JCOed does not include the education of returnees. Two government departments have played significant roles in the history of JCORed, the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA).

## 3.1 Policies and history of the issues

### 3.1.1 The beginning of the issue (1950s)

The first time JCOed issues appeared in the records of the MOE after the Second World War was in 1958 (Sato 1991), when the president of a Japanese company in Brazil wrote to the MOE. The letter contained questions about whether the Japanese children who had been studying at local Brazilian schools would be accepted by elementary or junior high schools in Japan upon their return, and how they would be treated if they wished to enter senior high schools or universities. Letters containing similar questions have been sent to the MOE repeatedly since that time.

This symbolizes some distinguishing features of JCOed. JCOed started with requests made by presidents of Japanese companies or members of Japanese business communities overseas. These people, who are called *chūzaiin* (Japanese businessmen) staying overseas temporarily due to their business, have played an important role in JCOed from its beginning. *Chūzaiin*, many of them also the fathers of Japanese children overseas, placed pressure on MOE through their parent companies in Japan, and later through the main business circles. Their influence will be demonstrated in this chapter.

Another feature of JCOed in this period is illustrated in letters to the Ministry (Sato 1991: 31-33). The concern of *chūzaiin* was how their children would be treated after returning to Japan. The clear wish was expressed that their children should be able to advance into higher education without any handicap caused by having been overseas.

In these early days, the MOFA acted as an agency to refer the requests regarding JCOed to the MOE. For example, the MOFA, pressured by the local Japanese community in Bangkok, passed on their requests to the MOE. This was an excellent example illustrating a strategy used by the Japanese business community overseas to approach the MOE; it exemplified the firm connection between Japanese government

organizations and the Japanese overseas communities that have mainly consisted of *chūzaiin*.

As a result of these developments during the late 1950s, several full-time Japanese schools were opened in Southeast Asian countries where Japanese enterprises had advanced most aggressively. As seen in the following section, however, the general stance of the MOE in this period was *ad hoc* and their interest in JCOed was developed only when demands were made by big enterprises or the MOFA.

### 3.1.2 The MOE's change in stance (1960s)

With an increase in the above-mentioned pressures, the MOE finally conducted a survey in 1965, in which 1244 institutions participated including Japanese companies and embassies overseas and boards of education and major universities in Japan. It was the first time the MOE had explicitly addressed the JCOed issue. The guidelines for JCOed based on the survey were published in 1968. The following is a summary of their position. First, the Japanese government and its regional government would not take any responsibility for JCOed because they were not under the control of Japanese educational laws. Secondly, the Japanese government would only assist with JCOed upon the request of the Japanese communities overseas. Thirdly, JCOed must be managed by beneficiaries such as the parents.

The guidelines did not mention basic issues which were the concern of many *chūzaiin*, including the affiliation of organizations, management of expenditure, ways that government and private enterprises could share responsibilities, and government subsidy for JCOed. In other words, the MOE at that time did not show positive interest in or commitment to JCOed. The MOE's attitudes contributed to government views that Japanese schools overseas were to be privately funded and organized by the beneficiaries of such education. This is quite different to the stance in the policies of the 1970s and later.

Meanwhile, the outcomes of the survey above created major concern among *chūzaiin* and the Japanese business communities overseas. The survey revealed two realities of life concerning Japanese children overseas. First, many children were put in a lower grade than was normal for their age when they returned to Japan. Considering that the majority of *chūzaiin*, the parents of these children, consisted of elite white-collar workers, who had never experienced such treatment in their lives, this outcome was taken very seriously. Second, the survey indicated that more than 60 percent of *chūzaiin* dispatched overseas left their families behind in Japan, which led to calls for the more rapid establishment of Japanese schools overseas.

Not surprisingly, these outcomes of the survey came as an enormous shock to *chūzaiin*, their companies and the business circles in Japan. The companies that the *chūzaiin* belonged to were leading prestigious enterprises in Japan and the *chūzaiin* themselves had been regarded as a new elite and as vital human resources in the so-called era of internationalization (Japan Overseas Educational Services [JOES] 1971, reprinted in JOES 1991). The Japanese children overseas were 'their' precious children. Consequently, phrases such as 'handicapped returnees', and the catchphrase 'to save them' started echoing among these parents and the business circles in Japan (Sato 1995: 49-58).

Some changes in the education for returnees began to occur in the late 1960s, possibly due to the impact of the survey. What happened immediately after the survey was, however, related not to the education of Japanese children overseas, but more to the education of the returnees who had spent some time overseas. Special classes for these returnees were set up among the prestigious schools affiliated with the national universities (since 1965), and a number of prestigious private schools started to accept returnees, subject to conditions (since 1967) (Kuwagatani 1991: 196-208). Both occurrences were attempts to guarantee the smooth return of Japanese children overseas into mainstream education in Japan. To solve the problem of JCOed, it was

necessary to secure, to enrich, and to expand education for the returnees. The anxieties of *chūzaiin* had to be appeased. With the implementation of these measures, education for returnees seemed to be increasingly supported by the MOE.

Some other changes that emerged in the policies of JCOed in the 1960s were related to providing teachers and textbooks for Japanese schools overseas. In 1962, the first teacher sent overseas after World War II was dispatched from Japan to the Bangkok Japanese School, followed by others sent to other Southeast Asian countries. The MOE recommended those teachers to the MOFA and the teachers were dispatched under the aegis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The system was called the mentor college system because each affiliated school of certain national teachers' colleges took responsibility for sending teachers to a Japanese school overseas. In this way the MOE started to regulate the selection of the teachers of JCOed.

However, in 1966, when seven new Japanese schools were established, this mentor system could not provide sufficient numbers of teachers. According to Tada (1991: 64-67), it was the first time teachers of Tokyo public schools were sent to a number of Japanese schools overseas. At this time, most of the teachers were recommended by regional offices of the MOE to the MOE in Tokyo and selected by a committee of the Ministry. Because a shortage of teachers continued with the rapid increase in the number of Japanese schools overseas, securing teachers for these Japanese schools became one of the most important jobs for the MOE. The entire system of dispatching teachers overseas was directed by the MOE after 1980.

Another important event in the late 1960s was that textbooks began to be provided free for children overseas under the regulations governing compulsory education (Sato 1991: 41). After 1967, textbooks for all subjects were distributed to all the children of full-time Japanese schools. The children of weekend Japanese schools on the other hand received textbooks for only some subjects. This illustrated the MOE's

preference for education at full-time Japanese schools over schooling at weekend Japanese schools, where it could not regulate all aspects of the schooling.

Providing for JCOed in this way has brought about a high degree of centralization in determining the content of education. As Sato (1997: 51-77) pointed out, the dispatched teachers and curriculum under the national curriculum guidelines meant that almost all the Japanese schools throughout the world followed the same pattern. Some of the schools have simply attempted to copy the curriculum from already experienced schools such as the Bangkok school (The Center for Education of Children Overseas, Tokyo Gakugei University 1983-99). This tendency towards standardization has become one of the distinguishing characteristics of Japanese schools throughout the world.

Two distinctive features can be observed during the 1960s. The first is the reluctant attitude of MOE toward JCOed, which is hard to imagine in light of its current stance toward them. The second is that changes emerged in the policies of MOE due to strong pressure from the parents and consequently the industrial circles, both of which were involved in JCOed.

### 3.1.3 The period in which the management system of JCORed was established (the first half of the 1970s)

The 1970s saw the largest number of Japanese schools built in the history of JCOed. Coincidentally this led to a change of legislation, allowing completely free investment overseas in 1972, causing a dramatic increase in the number of Japanese companies and their employees moving overseas. More than 20 full-time Japanese schools (*nihonjingakkō*) and almost the same number of weekend Japanese schools (*hoshūjugyōkō*) were opened. In addition, more than 20 weekend Japanese schools were converted into full-time operations. In total, more than 60 schools were established in this period. Compared to the provision of education for other minority

groups, such as the children of foreigners in Japan, the children of the *hisabetsuburaku* (the discriminated class)[5], and physically and mentally handicapped children, this increase in the number of schools was remarkable.

Another significant development in this period was that the MOE introduced changes to regulations under the School Education Law (1972) to enable to students to gain smoother enrolment in senior high schools on their return from overseas. The main thrust of the changes was the addition of a condition governing the eligibility for enrolment in senior high school in Japan. The added phrase was "those entitled to enter the senior high schools in Japan can be graduates from institutions which the MOE acknowledges" (Sato 1991: 43). This meant that the graduates of the full-time Japanese schools could enter senior high schools in Japan, whereas until that time, junior high students overseas who wanted to advance to the upper schools in Japan were required first to enroll in a junior high school in Japan. If they did not complete three years of junior high school in Japan, a temporary enrolment of even a few months was necessary to secure their entry to a senior high school in Japan. Now the graduates of the junior high section of the full-time Japanese schools could be treated in the same way as junior high graduates in Japan. Sato argued (1991) that this change meant that the full-time Japanese schools were finally legally admitted as Japanese national educational institutions.

However, the above changes meant that after 1972, all the full-time Japanese schools were required to make up their curriculum according to the MOE's Course of Study. They underwent detailed curriculum inspection, to ensure they followed the domestic curriculum. This meant that the full-time Japanese schools were required to give priority to the continuity of their education with the system in Japan rather than the students' interaction with and learning from the local society while they were

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[5] Minority groups of people which have historically been discriminated against due to their birthplace.

overseas. Of course, some critical comments were made by various people, such as parents, teachers and educators (Kobayashi 1983). They emphasized the importance of international understanding in education. By this time, however, the full-time Japanese schools had established their basic direction; education was to be based on bringing up Japanese children as Japanese nationals, rather than on supplementary concern for international understanding. The phrase 'for Japanese nationals' has remained in annual reports and policy statements referring to JCORed since then (The MOE 1983-present).

The early 1970s were also the years various governmental organizations became extremely enthusiastic towards JCORed. The Central Committee of Education under the MOE made proposals about JCORed to the MOE (1974), and even the Diet discussed the issues of JCORed intensively during this period. A committee for JCOed was set up in the Diet among the several foreign affairs committees of the House of Representatives. Discussions of JCOed were recorded 29 times in the minutes of the committees (Sato 1991: 45). The contents of discussion are summarized as follows.

- The Japanese government must take responsibility for JCOed because these children's parents go overseas for the advancement of the nation's interests.
- At the least, the government must ensure the education of children at primary and junior high school levels, which comprise compulsory education in Japan.
- The Japanese government must provide sufficient human resources, materials, and the institutional conditions to satisfy the above.
- Fees should not be charged if the children are undertaking compulsory education.

The position on JCOed had dramatically changed from that expressed in the guidelines published in 1968. The fact that even the Diet made an issue of JCOed clearly demonstrated how much public attention had been devoted to this issue. In line with these discussions, several other things happened. A massive survey titled "A Survey Concerning the Reality of JCOed" was conducted by the government in 1974.

The support given to the weekend Japanese schools was also expanded dramatically in that year. The amount of subsidy for locally hired teachers overseas was increased and more teachers were dispatched to the large weekend Japanese schools. A distinctive feature of this period was the Japanese government's clarification of JCOed as education for Japanese nationals, and this tendency was strengthened further in the late 1970s.

We should not overlook the movements in business circles behind these trends. One of the significant initiatives in this period was the establishment of the Japan Overseas Educational Service (JOES) which has exerted a great influence on the history of JCORed (Takizawa 1991: 290-308). According to Takizawa, the movement began in the mid 1960s, but the speed of its development was very rapid. Executive members of the Japan Committee for Economic Development (*Keizai Dōyūkai*, JCED) containing a majority of prestigious Japanese enterprises first raised the issue of JCORed in 1964. Later in 1967, some members of JCED formed a sub-committee to tackle the JCORed issue and strongly demanded the establishment of an organization that would serve Japanese children overseas in various practical ways. A similar movement occurred in MOFA at the same time. In 1970, the committee proposed the establishment of a reliable organization to support the activities that the MOE and the MOFA had carried out until then. After the bureaucrats and the members of business circles had paved the way, 54 representatives from government, business circles and educators gathered to establish JOES in 1971. Its funds were contributed by large enterprises in Japan. In the 1990s, the numbers of participant enterprises increased to 750 and the total annual fund became around 535,000,000 yen, approximately $ US 4,460,000. Since the late 1970s, JOES has regularly published reports and proposals concerning JCOed and other business organizations in Japan.

### 3.1.4 The development of the management system (the second half of the 1970s)

In this period, business circles continued to show a strong interest in issues of JCORed. Beside the JOES's report above, the Japan Overseas Enterprises Association (JOEA) completed a report titled "Priority Policies for Promoting JCOed" in 1976. These reports contained a list of the very concrete proposals that had arisen from the wishes of *chūzaiin*, most of whom are the parents of Japanese children overseas. The clearest concern of the *chūzaiin* was to remove potential disadvantages for their children on return to Japan. On the other hand, any concern about intercultural education and understanding of the local population was difficult to find in their reports. One of the consequences of these reports, however, was that the prestigious senior high schools, two of which are affiliated with universities, decided to open their own campuses for returnees.

Subsequently, the Center of JCOed at the Tokyo University of Education was constructed. The prime aim of the center was expressed as follows: "This center serves to study JCOed from various professional aspects and at the same time to provide opportunities to study this issue for various people particularly interested in practical research in this field" (The Center for Education of Children Overseas, Tokyo University of Education 1998: 12). The center has become a Mecca for those studying JCOed. No such center has existed for other minority groups of students at a national university in Japan.

The third important consequence of the reports was to change the regulations concerning entrance to university for Japanese children overseas. With the increasing number of *chūzaiin* and diversification in the style of their overseas dispatch, it was an urgent issue to provide secure routes to higher education for the children at senior high school level. Two regulations were altered in this period for that purpose. First, the graduates from some senior high schools overseas could be treated as equal to those graduating from senior high schools in Japan (Sato 1991: 47). As a result of this

change, a number of private senior high schools began to be built overseas from 1980. Second, the MOE admitted the International Baccalaureate (IB) as a qualification for advancing to higher education. This opened the gate for graduates from international schools overseas, such as American schools, to enter Japanese universities. This new system, however, has not been widely used given that few Japanese students sit for IB. This may indicate that JCORed was not linked to the framework of international education but rather was treated as a principally domestic issue. The main interest in JCORed for parents and the business circles has merely been how to put returnees into the better schools on the ladder of the Japanese education system (Nishimura 1989).

In the late 1970s, some changes also occurred in the policies on dispatching teachers overseas by the MOE. First, 'Handing-over Sessions' involving the previous and newly appointed principals were organized from 1976. Second, the MOE took over the management of the preparation sessions for those teachers prior to dispatch. The length of the sessions was from three days to one week. Third, from 1978 onwards, annual conferences for all the full-time Japanese school principals were organized over four regional world areas. The MOE paid all expenses and sent its bureaucrats to advise the principals. All three changes were designed to strengthen the guidance of the MOE in the Japanese schools overseas.

### 3.1.5 The peak period for interest in JCORed and the interaction with the newly emerging movements (1980s)

In 1982, the MOE again conducted a wide-ranging survey. The main results were as follows (The Ministry of Education 1982).

> More than 92% of Japanese children overseas had Japanese friends while they were overseas, and among them more than 52% said they had many Japanese friends while they were overseas. More than 85% of their parents had anxieties concerning their children's education after they returned. Their major concerns were whether the children would cope with education in Japan upon their return (75%), whether the children could find a friend in Japan (42%), whether the children could adjust to the new circumstances in Japan (41%), whether the children could advance to senior high schools and universities without being handicapped by their experience of having been overseas (30%), and whether the children could speak sufficient Japanese (27%).

The same survey, however, revealed that most of the above concerns expressed by the parents never turned out to be serious problems when the children returned to Japan. Although the parents and business circles have paid scant attention to this particular result, it indicates that there was a gap between the reality of JCORed and the discourses constructed by parents, who insisted that JCORed was still not adequate.

In 1981 and in 1986, the Japan Overseas Enterprises Association (JOEA) submitted proposals to the MOE and to other relevant government departments. The basic frameworks of those proposals were not changed substantially from previous ones, and the contents were a repetition of their first proposals in 1976, but stated more concretely and strongly. In particular, they demanded changes in the conditions governing university entrance examinations for Japanese children overseas. The main interests of *chūzaiin* lay in JCOed and the crux of the issues for *chūzaiin* was placing their children into better schools without their suffering the disadvantage caused by being overseas.

As a consequence of all of the activities described above, a unique phenomenon arose in the 1980s: the building of private senior high schools overseas. This was the final dramatic development in the history of JCOed, concluding the changes in JCOed under the policies established by the business circles. Between 1980 and 1990, more than ten private senior high schools appeared overseas as the result of many proposals

made by various business organizations since the late 1970s. Schools opened in Denmark, Ireland, Switzerland, Alsace in France, Bremen in Germany, Tennessee, New York, and Atlanta in the United States, and in several suburbs of London. In London, in particular, four Japanese senior high schools were opened, resulting in undue competition.

This movement was obviously the response to the requests made by the *chūzaiin* and the Japanese enterprises from the second half of the 1970s. The MOE had enthusiastically increased the number of full-time Japanese schools at the primary and junior high school levels. As senior high schools are not included in compulsory education in Japan, however, the MOE could not play as active a role as it had done at the primary and junior high levels (Sato 1991: 47). Adding to the complexity of the issue was the fact that the problem of advancing to prestigious schools at senior high level is a vital issue for Japanese children overseas and their families (Sato 1991: 27). How to not disadvantage them had been a constant theme of JCOed. The increasing number of *chūzaiin* who had older children at the senior high school level further increased the urgency of the need for a solution to this problem.

In view of the above, some other distinctive features of these new private senior high schools should be mentioned. All of them are located in Western countries, except one that opened in Singapore in 1990. Many of them are in English speaking countries. The schools also allowed not only Japanese children overseas but domestic students from Japan to be enrolled. In fact, some schools attempted to promote the image and the advantages of study overseas (in English-speaking countries) to the children of wealthy families in Japan. Thus, those schools were not purely for disadvantaged Japanese children overseas but for the privileged children who could choose to study overseas but under a totally Japanese curriculum (Sato 1997: 87-88). Goodman, one of the few non-Japanese academics who has researched JCORed, vividly described and teased out the process by which certain groups of the Japanese

in the business and academic circles constructed the image of JCORed and helped to develop the special treatment for those children. Consequently, the JCOed, which had been promoted by the majority of the parents overseas and the business circles, became the provider of an elite education.

Towards the end of the 1980s, however, some new movements occurred in the policies of JCORed. The National Council on Education Reform, which was organized by Prime Minister Nakasone, submitted its final report in 1987. Over a two-year period, the members discussed various educational issues under the catch phrase 'the largest educational reform since the war'. As a result, three main principles, or pillars, of education in Japan were proposed. They were: 1) the principles of attaching importance to individuality, 2) the transformation of the system dealing with life-long learning, and 3) the response to the age of change. JCORed was mentioned under the subtitle of reform as a response to internationalization, requiring education to be more open in the era of internationalization (The National Council on Education Reform 1987).

Two consequences of this report should be pointed out here in respect of JCORed. The first is the reemphasis placed on education as 'forming the foundation' of the Japanese nation, which was a recurring theme in almost all government documents in that period. The phrase 'to bring up the Japanese who can be trusted in the world' was always one of the main aims of JCORed in the annual report of the Ministry of Education in the 1980s. Minei (1997: 233) commented that "the tendency of education for international understanding since the 1970s is to foster the distinctiveness of Japanese culture and promote identity as Japanese". Secondly, some new concepts began to emerge from the time of this report onwards. For instance, a proposal for a new style of international school that accommodates non-Japanese children in Japan, and the demand to respond to the increasing number of foreign children in Japan were made. These can be regarded as new attempts by the MOE to

tackle an issue that it had not previously considered, although one must be careful to identify which ideas brought about this change and what changes actually happened. This will be discussed later in 3.1.6 below.

In 1988, the New Council for Promoting JCOed was formed. This seemed to be the culmination of various studies and reports carried out in the 1980s. The 14 members met seven times, conducted surveys and submitted a report titled "Promotion of JCORed in the future". It was noticeable that, as with other reports of this period, the report simply echoed the requests by employees of the major enterprises and business circles. However, again new stances could be found, such as the attempt to respond to the need of handicapped Japanese children overseas and a proposal to dispatch nursing teachers (teachers employed to staff school infirmaries, and to care for handicapped students) overseas.

### 3.1.6 JCORed and 'education for international understanding' (1990s)

The MOE set up the Committee of Study about JCOed in 1991. The proposals made by this committee did not seem to include any new points when compared to previous reports. Considerable change can be found, however, in the basic philosophy of the Committee. For instance, the Committee attaches greater importance to intercultural experience for Japanese children overseas, paying more attention to the diversity of educational structures, encouraging interaction between returnees and Japanese students at home, and avoiding the exclusiveness of the full-time Japanese schools overseas. This meant that Japanese schools overseas would be open to local children in each country. Most of these ideas had already been expressed by academics and teachers; however, the significance here was that the MOE itself expressed these points officially in its reports for the first time.

This also suggests that the MOE had gradually shifted its policies from just providing a replica of education in Japan for JCORed, to attempting to seek interaction between

the returnees and the Japanese students at home. In other words, the MOE started to pursue education for international understanding for both returnees and the Japanese students at home. A similar trend in business circles, which had been very active in JCORed until this decade, cannot be found. Two reasons can be given for this. One was caused by the stagnation and even depression of the Japanese economy during this period. The number of *chūzaiin*, who had been the driving force of JCORed, had stopped increasing. In fact in some years, it had decreased (JOES, 1998). The number of Japanese children overseas, which had consistently increased until 1993, thereafter remained constant. The recession in the Japanese economy meant that enterprises would no longer be able to afford to put much effort into JCORed. The second reason, however, is more fundamental, and was caused by the fact that the conditions of both Japanese schools overseas and the schools accepting the returnees had dramatically improved from the point of view of the business circles. In other words, JCORed were already receiving favorable treatment. For example, many senior high schools overseas were built and some of them were unable to gather enough students. The word 'returnee' came to be regarded as defining a group of elite children who could stay overseas for a while, become fluent in English, and be entitled to enter prestigious schools or universities under special conditions set up for them (Sato 1995: 47-85).

Therefore, most parents and, particularly, business circles, were largely satisfied by the gains obtained in JCOed. They had first been involved with this issue as the subjects of the problem. Then, they used their social and economic capital as members of prestigious enterprises to promote the issue among the public. They especially approached government organizations such as the MOE. As has been seen, they were successful in obtaining full support from the educational policy makers. Their attempt to reproduce their class and culture was somehow accomplished.

Toward the latter half of the 1990s, the phrase 'education for international understanding' seemed to have gained a substantial foothold in discussions in this field. In some cases, the phrase has even been interpreted as unifying JCORed's approach to the education of foreigners' children and foreign students in Japan. Many of those who have spoken actively in these relatively new fields, however, have first-hand experience in, or originally learned from, the JCORed. As explained in the following section, the discussion of 'education for international understanding' has its roots in the original concepts that appeared in the JCORed debate of the mid 1980s and later. Therefore, the discourse concerning the ideological framework and implementation of education for international understanding, by and large, should be understood as the application of JCORed principles. For example, all policy documents still use nation-states as the unit to describe all phenomena and never forget to add the phrase 'to promote Japaneseness' (the MOE 1983-present).

In 1996, the Central Committee of Education published a report titled "Japanese Education: towards the 21st Century". The third and last section of that Report was named "Education Corresponding to Social Change". Out of five chapters in this section, the second dealt with internationalization and education, and education for international understanding (IUed), which was elaborated on as follows:

> An important attitude in promoting education for international understanding is not judging what is right or what is wrong in our lives, customs, and values, but recognizing the differences and finding the common aspects amongst them. We must raise children who respect the historical tradition and the diversity of values of each other's culture.
>
> Another very important aspect of education for international understanding is to identify oneself — in other words, to have a clear set of axes by which to measure oneself. Without establishing this, one cannot understand others and other people cannot understand that person. Those who do not have a self-identity as a Japanese or as an individual cannot be evaluated highly in the international society.

> Japan has been looking to the Western countries in every aspect so far. However, with more exchange and interaction developed between the countries in the Asian and Oceanic regions and Japan, and considering the Japanese position in Asia, we must realize that Japan cannot exist separately from those countries. Therefore, it is important to look to the countries in the Asian and Oceanic regions much more when we promote education for international understanding (Central Council for Education 1996: 48-56).

Three main themes are expressed clearly in the report. The first attaches great importance to the attitude of intercultural understanding. This attitude had begun to be emphasized in JCORed from the 1980s and became widely accepted in education for international understanding after the beginning of the 1990s. The second theme is the importance of deepening the Japanese identity, which is again emphasized. This also means that all discourses in Japan until now have been based upon the premise of national education by the nation states. The third is the government administration's acknowledgement of the necessity of shifting its focus from Western countries to Asian and Oceanic countries. However, some other interested parties, such as business circles and *chūzaiin*, still hold very strong Western-oriented values, especially in reference to education (JOES 1997 all 12 issues). Therefore, after the mid-1990s, a substantial gap between the discourses of government bodies, such as the MOE, and those of the other parties has emerged. This will be one of the main themes of this research, particularly in the analysis and discussion of the interviews.

As we have seen in this section, government administration has played a leading role in this field. The administration of the MOE played an important role in bringing the word JCORed and its image to public attention. Education for international understanding, which was also promoted widely by the MOE in 1980 and became part of popular discourse in the 1990s, is another example. The idea of shifting the learning target from the Western countries to Asian and Oceanic countries, however, had not taken root in the public consciousness. In summary, government departments as represented by the MOE, changed their stance throughout the period. First, they

were very reluctant to be involved in the issue of JCOed. Then, once they touched upon the issue, they attempted to regulate everything by themselves. Gradually, they seemed to realize the value and importance of education in a larger framework, such as that of education for international understanding. However, an important point to note is that the changes are a result of a number of interest groups influencing policy makers. One of the main aims within this study is to identify the power relationships between them and these can be discerned in the discourses of these interest groups.

## 3.2 Studies of JCORed — Writing by academics

The first section of this chapter has dealt with the history of JCORed considered in relation to economics and politics. The second section will examine the history of JCORed presented by the academic researchers, although they are also influenced by the ideas of the policy makers and the business circles. The study of JCORed has developed through three main stages, in which JCORed has been understood as: education for adaptation of returnees, education to promote the distinguishing (Westernized) characteristics of the returnees, and education for international understanding.

### 3.2.1 The first stage: education for adaptation of returnees (up to mid 1980s)

Until the mid 1980s, JCORed was understood and studied as education for adaptation of the returnees. The first systematic study of JCOed was carried out by a group of researchers led by Kobayashi at Kyoto University in 1975. They published a report in 1978, which contained several articles. The distinctive feature of these articles is that many of them focused on the concept of adaptation. Titles, for example, included "Adaptation toward the other culture by the Japanese and related education" (Ebuchi), and "Considering the significance of the survey about the adaptation of Japanese children overseas" (Kato). Since this first report, a number of studies have been

carried out by Sato (1976), Nakanishi and Noda (1979), Hoshino (1980), Kawabata and Suzuki (1982). Their main focus was again on the adaptation of Japanese children. These researchers were later to form the core of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan, which has become the largest and leading academic association in international education in Japan.

Their main interest at that time was on how Japanese children adjusted overseas and upon their return. They also examined how Japanese children compensated for their 'academic handicap' after their return to Japan. As background to their research, the authors alluded to anxiety of parents. Parents and teachers pressed the researchers to identify the best solution for these children so that they could adjust in a new environment across cultural borders. Therefore, the researchers concentrated on finding out the causes of the problems arising when the children encountered different cultures and when they were not able to adjust to them. The research also focused on identifying problems these students were facing in particular subjects at school. It was pointed out that subjects such as Japanese language and social science proved very difficult for them upon return to Japan (Nakanishi and Noda 1980). These discussions of intercultural education in Japan emerged almost a decade after the issues of JCORed had become a social problem in the late 1960s, and the primary focus was on how to compensate these children for the handicaps caused by being overseas.

After 1980, however, the focus of research gradually shifted from the academic adjustment of children to the nature or personality of those Japanese children, who had been overseas and returned. Behind it, as we have seen in previous sections, were the facts that many special schools in and outside of Japan were built in the 1970s and that many returnees did catch up well after their return to Japan.

In this respect, Matsubara (1980) was particularly interested in the positive and negative personality characteristics of the returnees. He listed 12 aspects of the returnees' characters that were positively evaluated by parents and six points that

were negatively evaluated by parents. Inamura (1980) and Nakanishi (1980) followed this with a study that adopted a similar approach. They sought to find out how the returnees were different from the students educated solely in Japan. These research studies eventually led the study of JCORed into its second stage, the period characterized more by a focus on internationalization and less on Japaneseness, which will be explained in the next section.

### 3.2.2 The second stage: education to promote the distinguishing (Westernized) characteristics of returnees (1980s)

This second stage is characterized by two features. The first involves the promoting of the characteristics of internationalization which Japanese children overseas and returnees are supposed to acquire. The second is concerned with the impact of returnees on the schools in Japan and Japanese society.

**More internationalization**

The book titled *Education in the International Age* was published in 1986 by the research center of JCOed at Tokyo University of Education. This book was a synthesis of the research on JCOed over the previous 20 years and the papers in the book were written by the leading academics in the field in Japan at that time. Although I plan to examine this book in depth in Chapter 5, I will touch upon some distinctive features, which represent the concerns of these academics.

One distinctive feature of the book was that it aimed throughout 'to maintain and to promote the distinguishing characteristics of the returnees'. For example, Hara listed the these characteristics as follows:

- a multilingual ability,
- positive attitude in the class,
- a gentle and cheerful disposition,
- independent,
- creative,

- trained to express oneself,
- rich in voluntary spirit,
- superb leadership,
- obtaining flexible and wider views of the world,
- ability to look at Japan objectively

Hara then proposed the necessity for JCORed to promote the characteristics of these children in Japanese schools and Japanese society.

In the same book, Kato, who was to become the leader of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan in 1999, wrote about how the educational environment around Japanese children overseas was superior to its counterpart in Japan. He claimed that education in the West was education which respected each student, but this was not so in Japan. He also argued that subjects like PE were very enjoyable in America but not so in Japan. On the other hand, Nakanishi who is also a leading academic in this field claimed that the distinguishing characteristic of the returnees could be summed up as their internationalized features (1989: 282-283).

The important thing among what these researchers have said is that the characteristics of returnees and their educational environment overseas are superior to their counterparts in Japan. Their assumptions about these positively evaluated characteristics and the environment for these children were widely shared by other academics and others, including those in the media and, gradually, the general public (Sato 1995: 47-85). It should be asked how they reached these views. Moreover, the question should be extended to inquire why the academics thought about these things in this way.

One of the reasons for their opinion can be found in their research circumstances. Many research studies in those days were conducted under the guidelines of the center of JCOed at Tokyo University of Education. As a result, the researchers used as their research fields the special schools, which were well known for accepting returnees. The data they obtained were based on the observations recorded by the teachers of

those schools. Most of these schools are regarded as prestigious institutions in the relatively wealthy areas of Japan. The majority of the returnees in those schools returned from the English speaking countries, mainly from America. It is clear that the samples for their studies did not represent the entire returnee population. In spite of this fact, the researchers drew generalizations from their limited research.

Another important aspect is the timing of these studies. The research was undertaken during the 1980s which was the era when the literatures of *Nihonjinron* were consumed, particularly by cultural intermediaries (Yoshino, 1996) that is academics, business people and teachers. During this era, in Japan, many stereotypical images of the West were contrasted with the uniqueness of the Japanese. Schoolteachers and those who engaged in intercultural issues could not escape their influence (Yoshino, 1996). This made them look at the returnees from a certain perspective. There was a great temptation for schoolteachers, and later the researchers, to believe that the returnees were the representatives of the 'imagined', idealized Western cultures.

As they were fascinated by the imagined distinguishing characteristics of returnees, they also attempted to use their findings to influence the schools in Japan and Japanese society. The second part of this section will focus on this phenomenon.

**The urgent necessity to change Japanese society**

It is not difficult to find discourses by researchers of JCORed describing how Japanese culture and society are inferior to their Western counterparts and how the educational situation in Japan revealed problems related to culture. For example, Kawabata (1978) pointed out features such as vagueness in communication and the exclusion of foreigners in Japan as characteristics of Japanese society. He argued that without changing such Japanese cultural values, the Japanese could never be respected in international circumstances.

Brack (1983) followed Kawabata in demonstrating the problems of ambiguity among Japanese human relationships. Nakanishi (1985) illustrated the lack of respect for creativity in the educational environment in Japan, and Ebuchi (1986) mentioned the problems of monoculture and homogeneity in Japanese society. All of their works constructed an important part of JCORed discourse during the 1980s (Kojima 1991: 436-444). Moreover and very importantly, such academics not only pointed out what they saw as the problems of Japanese education and society but also claimed that it was the returnees who could assist in changing such Japaneseness in education and society. Suggestions such as society needs to be changed and Japanese education needs to be changed are widespread in their writings. The authors of this literature expressed their subjective expectation that JCORed would play a vital role in these contexts.

These discourses could also be regarded as another side of the mirror of cultural imperialism, which was discussed in Chapter 2. The researchers seemed fascinated by Western culture in general. Most of them had had the experience of staying for some time in North America during the 1970s and 80s. In their eyes, Japanese children overseas and returnees even seemed to be 'missionaries', who would bring the 'better' norms and ideas of America into Japan. On the other hand, Murase (1983) once claimed that there was no difference in the personalities of Japanese children who were returnees and those who had never been overseas. His report, however, scarcely gained attention in Japan. This is another example of how the researchers wanted to look at the issue within their already established frameworks.

Finally it is worthwhile to note that these points of view were also visible in the works of policy makers of JCORed. As mentioned earlier, the majority of full-time Japanese schools were built only in non-English speaking countries while most weekend Japanese schools were established only in English speaking countries. This means that the bureaucrats of the MOE found no need for full-time Japanese schools in English

speaking countries, assuming sufficient educational facilities existed in English speaking countries, while this was not the case in the other countries. This symbolized the attitude of the people who were engaged in JCORed in this period. Under the name of internationalization, people were caught up by this kind of cultural imperialistic idea. Things from the English-speaking West were valuable and important. They had tried to mimic them and erase Japaneseness. This tendency dominated the discourse of the JCORed in the 1980s.

### 3.2.3 The third stage: education for international understanding (1980s – 1990s)

With reference to students living outside of Japan, there was another distinctive tendency in the discourse of JCORed in the 1980s: the discourse of education for international understanding (IUed) and education for local understanding (education for understanding another society from that in which one is living — LUed), which was written about extensively by leading researchers and teachers of JCORed.

The research conducted by two leading academics of intercultural education in Japan, Kobayashi (1980) and Ebuchi (1982) revealed poor interaction between Japanese children overseas and the local children. These results seemed to betray the expectation held by people concerned with JCORed, because the researchers of JCOed and some teachers at Japanese schools overseas held a naïve belief that Japanese children overseas, having a great opportunity to mix with the local children, were precious for Japan's future (The Center for Education of Children Overseas, Tokyo Gakugei University 1983-99). They considered that JCOed would lose its significance without the interaction between the Japanese children and the locals. Thus, some teachers and researchers started to promote more interaction between the Japanese children overseas and the local communities (Tokyo University of Education 1980s). Their position has gradually gained sympathizers among academics and

policy makers. As a result, the impact of these discourses became very visible in the 1990s. The phrase 'education for international understanding' became the main theme of JCORed in the 1990s. Policy makers and teachers tended to use that phrase instead of JCORed.

Questions arose here, however, as to what education for international and local understanding would consist of. As few people attempted to explain the meaning of such education, to identify what they really mean becomes an important task. In order to do so, I have attempted to find the words that are frequently used in their writings. Some key words and concepts were found among various academic articles and reports under the broad heading of international and local understanding. They are (1) co-existence of 'difference', (2) broad-mindedness or permissiveness and (3) the concept that understanding both the local and the Japanese leads to real international understanding.

**The notion of co-existence of 'difference'**

Kobayashi, who is the one of the founders of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan, published a book titled *The education of Japanese children overseas and the returnees* (1981). In this work, he emphasized the value of international understanding and the necessity of its acquisition. He also pointed out the importance of learning local languages and understanding local cultures. According to him, it is vital for the children who live in the 21st century to understand the different thoughts and the different ways of living while they are in different countries. In 1983, he proposed the concept of intercultural education for the first time in Japan and established the Intercultural Education Society in Japan. The literal meaning of the word intercultural education in Japanese language is 'the education between different cultures' He claimed that JCORed must be understood from the viewpoint of the education of a global society where different cultures co-exist.

Nakanishi (1988), who is also one of the core members of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan was more direct in defining education for intercultural understanding. He claimed that education for intercultural understanding is to understand the difference between one's own culture and other cultures so that education for intercultural understanding may provide the possibility of co-existence between them.

Two features in the discourse of these two writers are obvious. The first is the frequent use of the adjective 'different'. The issues in JCORed were all described and discussed under the framework of 'difference'. For both Kobayashi and Nakanishi, and eventually other academics and teachers who committed themselves to JCORed, the value of JCORed was expressed under this single word 'difference'. They always used 'different' in expressions such as 'different culture' or 'different people'. The fact that these key academics have used the word different in relation to JCORed indicates how they were devoted to looking at the issues in JCORed from the aspect of 'difference'. It could be argued that their emphasis on the concept of difference implies a belief in a solid and essential Japaneseness that distinguishes itself from other cultures and, as a result, minimizes the focus on any similarities between Japanese and other people. This implies an essentialist view towards culture.

The second feature of the discourse is the naïve belief in the concept of co-existence, which often appeared in the discourse of JCORed from the beginning of the 1980s through to the 1990s. Although the slogan used about co-existence is straightforward, most of the discourses seldom explained the meaning of co-existence. Academics, policy makers and teachers have used the motto as a catchphrase to promote JCORed. Some of the leading academics and the teachers, however, attempted to explore the meaning of it and to present how it could be achieved in the context of JCORed. The following section, about the spirit of broad-mindedness or permissiveness, deals with their explanations.

**Broad-mindedness or permissiveness**

Most literature on JCORed does not provide direct answers to questions about the meaning of co-existence or what is required to achieve co-existence. In the context of intercultural education, co-existence seemed to be presented as an axiomatic norm. The people concerned with JCORed including academics scarcely examined its meaning. Nonetheless, a very simple but strong relationship has been found in their discourse between international understanding and co-existence. Co-existence is seen as arising naturally from international understanding (Kobayashi 1995, Sato 1998).

Ebuchi (1986) and Nakanishi (1988) have attempted to describe meanings given to international understanding since the mid-1980s. Ebuchi, who was the longest serving head of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan, pointed out that an important condition for JCORed or education of international understanding is broad-mindedness or permissiveness (1986). Nakanishi (1988) claimed similar points as follows:

> Even though we practice the education of intercultural and local understanding, many have not reached the stage of real understanding of different cultures because they have neglected to acquire broad-mindedness or permissiveness towards difference.

While other academics in JCOed did not use the particular phrases of broad-mindedness or permissiveness, these phrases have influenced the discourse of JCORed and 'the acceptance of difference' became another catchphrase of JCORed in the 1980s and 1990s (Sato 1997). The message is clear. The goal of education for international understanding was to achieve co-existence among people from different cultures in a society. How could this be achieved? We needed to have broad-mindedness or permissiveness.

I cannot help wondering, however, whether 'broad-mindedness' or 'permissiveness' can result in international understanding. Although many proposals, such as how to

make friends in other cultures were expressed throughout the discourses, concerns about conflict or tensions in the process of the acceptance of difference were seldom considered. One can detect a naïve belief in the goodness of human nature, as Tomlinson (1991) pointed out, appearing within the discourse of JCORed throughout this period. A naïve belief is characterized by the innocent faith in universal progress among human beings.

**The concept of real international understanding**

Not only the academics but also the teachers who had served at the Japanese schools overseas wrote a number of documents about education for international understanding (IUed) and education for local understanding (LUed) between the 1980s and the 1990s (The Center for Education of Children Overseas Tokyo Gakugei University, 1983-95). Among their writings, the papers by Hidaka (1983), Ogawa (1983) and Okabe (1983) are regarded as pioneer works in this field and are cited often (Tanaka 1991: 388-396).

Hidaka (1983), who served at the Japanese schools in Singapore and Nairobi, proclaimed the significance of IUed. She said that IUed had to begin by understanding the local people overseas where the children live, and that real understanding must be achieved through encountering the attitudes and the thoughts of the local people in their daily life. She emphasized the importance of LUed. Ogawa (1983), who worked at the Japanese school in Brazil, echoing Hidaka, presented IUed as occurring through LUed.

While Okabe (1983), who was dispatched to the Vienna Japanese school, proposed LUed by experiencing local life on a daily basis, Oono (1984) argued that there was another aspect of LUed. He pointed out that promoting LUed led to the better understanding of Japanese culture and asserted the importance of understanding the local to the understanding of Japanese culture.

Two tendencies are found in what these teachers claimed and in how other teachers were later influenced by these pioneers. The first is the strong assumption about the relationship between IUed and LUed. Since Zenitani (1987) argued that IUed meant LUed, almost all documents declared that one has to start from LUed in order to promote IUed. It seems that LUed is the premise of IUed. However, few teachers or academics explained how the LUed could provide the IUed and even fewer considered the possibility of tensions between the notion of international understanding and the notion of local understanding.

The second tendency is more problematic. As seen in Oono's (1984) paper, a strong connection was found between understanding the local and understanding the Japanese. Noda (1985), who served at the Center of JCOed at Tokyo University of Education, following Oono, said that providing a firm awareness of Japanese culture is vital for promoting IUed. Similar expressions or phrases were found throughout the documents of JCOed in 1980s-90s (The Center for Education of Children Overseas Tokyo Gakugei University, 1983-95). In some of the literature, understanding Japanese culture is treated as a premise for better international understanding. In other literature, having better international understanding is a premise for understanding Japanese culture; this means the two understandings in the discourse are complementary.

In these papers there is an emphasis on Japanese culture. As discussed in the previous section, the study of JCORed was based on the idea that JCORed is education aimed at enculturating Japanese nationals. Still, it is possible to point out other distinctive features of these discourses, for they were written in the context of liberal modern thinking.

First, there was a naïve belief in the universal existence of international understanding. The writers created and imagined their own concept of international and local understanding simply according to their own expectation of intercultural education.

Therefore, these two understandings scarcely conflicted with each other. On the other hand, there was a strong faith in the notion of linear progress. Phrases such as "the more local understanding, the more international understanding" (Hidaka 1983, Zenitani 1987) and "the more understanding of the Japanese, the more international understanding" (Oono 1986) had been continually repeated in the literature (Uozumi 2000). Why did these writers gain this faith? How did their ideas influence other people involved in JCORed such as the parents and schoolteachers of these children? The study of these discourses and their influence will be explored further in Chapter 5.

## 3.3 Conclusion: Toward some research questions

I have described the history of JCORed, trying to extract significant issues from relevant policies and the academic literature. In its administrative history, the MOE, which eventually controlled JCORed, has changed its emphasis over time. Until the mid-1980s, MOE policies were strongly influenced by the demanding voices of the business circles backed up by the parents of Japanese children overseas and returnees. Considering that the number of Japanese children overseas was relatively small, however, the MOE could not justify large expenditures nor could it provide a convincing argument for changing the educational regulations just for these children. The MOE needed to establish a discourse to support a change in policies.

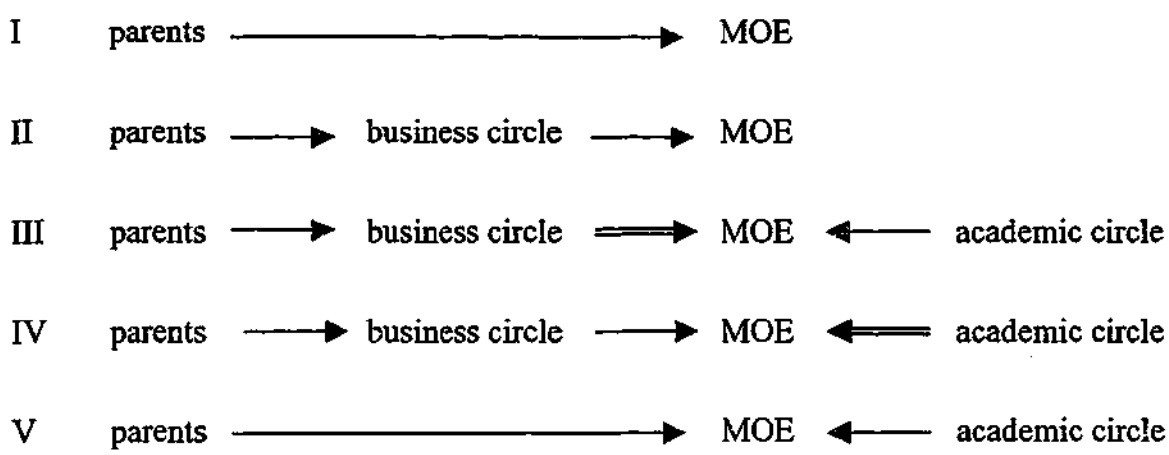
The catchphrase, 'education for international understanding' and numerous academic works in the field of intercultural education in Japan have provided supporting ideas for the MOE. These discourses, which emerged in the 1970s and have been continuously produced through the 1980s and the 1990s, have not only been used by the MOE but have also influenced other concerned people including parents and schoolteachers of Japanese children overseas. Since the 1970s, the notion of the need to internationalize and the notion of erasing Japaneseness have been widely observed in these discourses. The notion of progress and the belief of universalistic

international understanding were added to them after the 1980s. These key ideas have colored the discourse of JCORed and the later discourse of intercultural education, which has its roots in JCORed.

These analyses have led to Figure 1 (see next page) which illustrates the relationship between the main actors of JCORed. It also illustrates the correspondence between the distinctive features in each stage of JCORed and the parties involved in each stage.

The historical analysis of JCORed has provided a useful context for an in-depth analysis of the selected discourse of JCORed, which will be carried out in Chapter 5. This chapter, with the theoretical arguments of Chapter 2, establishes important questions that provide the basis for analysis of key documents. These questions also determined the shape of the interviews with the cultural intermediaries. Before proceeding with analysis of the documents and interviews, I will explain my methodological approach in the next chapter.

*Figure 1: The relationship between the main actors of JCORed*




I (1950s) the emergence of JCORed

II (1960s) establishing the management system of JCORed

*adaptation is the main theme*

III (1970s) strengthening the management system of JCORed

*more internationalization (Americanization),*

*erasing Japaneseness*

IV (1980s) the peak period of JCORed

*notion of co-existence, progress, and the belief of universalistic international understanding*

V (1990s) JCORed as education for international understanding

*increased spread of education for international understanding*

Keys: Roman numerals denote stages

Italics describe the key concepts found in the discourse of JCORed written by mainly academic researchers

← influence ⇐ strong influence

# CHAPTER FOUR
# METHODOLOGY

> We often narrate our lives according to a 'prior script', a script written elsewhere, by others, for other purposes (Goodson 1995: 95).

## 4.1 Conventional studies

The focus of this study is on the discourses concerning intercultural education, particularly those focusing on the education of Japanese children overseas. As discussed in the Introduction, studying discourses in the Foucauldian sense permits an examination of the notions of neutrality and objectivity which are sought in conventional studies.

In Japan, the notions of international understanding and co-existence in intercultural contexts have been presented as axiomatic and omnipresent norms in conventional studies in this field (Chapter 3). The idea of promoting understanding across national and cultural boundaries or living together harmoniously with people of different ethnic groups has scarcely been questioned; rather it has been regarded as universal and legitimate. In other words, the meanings of such understandings and the reasons for promoting co-existence have been left unexamined except for the small number of explanations related to the very abstract idea of humanism, which can be found in documents such as the UNESCO documents (1982, 1994), saying "we should live together in harmonious difference, because humanism binds us at a much deeper level" (UNESCO 1982: 8). As a result, most studies in Japan to date have concentrated merely on analyzing the problems that prevent these aims from being accomplished and on examining the ways to achieve these goals.

Because such conventional studies as these have shaped discourse about issues, this study regards them as public discourse. As examined later, the views expressed in this discourse evident in policy documents and works by academics in this field. The aim

of this study is to analyze these views and to examine through interviews how cultural intermediaries respond to these views.

Another feature of the conventional studies is that the approach taken toward the issue of intercultural education in Japan has been dominated by positivistic approaches mainly based on the use of surveys. Of course, some researchers have conducted interviews, but the role of the interviews in their research studies was always supplementary and aimed at obtaining clarification or complementary information. A large number of studies aimed to identify general trends so that people could use these to plan policies (Sato 1997). One result of this quest is that many research studies investigated psychological aspects and focused on statistical measures of objectivity and neutrality (Kurachi 1997: 90-93).

As discussed in Chapter 1, this study focuses on discourses in the Foucauldian sense, that is, in ways which make evident the links between power and knowledge. My concern with conventional studies is that they fail to examine the discourses in this sense and therefore can provide only limited insights. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the discourses surrounding intercultural education in Japan.

## 4.2 Objectivity, neutrality and the method taken

One of the objectives of this study is to provide some new insights and further questions that may contribute to a deeper understanding of the field of intercultural education in Japan. This study is based on a post-positivist approach. While it may be open to the criticism that the approach adopted is journalistic or a soft science (Nelson 1992), I believe that the significance of the approach is more valuable than the shortcomings implied by such labels, because this study assumes that people cannot be neutral and objective when they discuss concepts such as international understanding or co-existence. For instance, I really wonder if a Japanese businessman working in a major Japanese bank and a teacher in a Japanese school

overseas would hold the same values regarding intercultural understandings. It is likely that such people will talk about these issues based on their own values that in turn reflect their positions, professions and contexts.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Foucault states that discourses are determined by their social context (Foucault 1977, Mills 1993). Pitman and Maxwell (1992) state that all discourses produced are very much value-laden and related to context. In this sense, what is expressed in this study should be regarded not as neutral and objective, but rather as reflecting the power relationships in which speakers or the writers of documents are situated. Consequently, in this study, I subscribe to the view that so-called neutral and positivistic inquiry by an investigator may have little meaning (Guba and Lincoln1994). In contrast, the conventional studies have pursued generalizable objective outcomes without paying attention to such power relationships among the subjects of the research. This is one of the reasons why this study distinguishes the discourses into two categories, the public discourse and the discourse by cultural intermediaries, and examines the discourses produced by three different groups of cultural intermediaries.

At the same time, this research is not premised on the belief that 'truth' can transcend opinion and personal bias (Carey 1989). The epistemological basis of this study is the view that Bateson (1972) described, whereby all qualitative researchers are philosophers. In this study, because I do not believe that a neutral position is possible but that all knowledge is situated in response to personal values and context, as researcher I must bring the same understanding towards my own work. I will not presume that as researcher I am an innocent or neutral actor in the research (Villennas 1996, Smyth and Shacklock 1998).

It is a fundamental principle in this study that the researcher is not a neutral actor who is attempting to understand the interviews objectively. Just as the interviewees are situated in their personal contexts so am I as researcher. Because of this principle it

was important for me to refer to my experiences whenever it seemed useful to enrich the conversation. More concretely, I regarded myself as sharing similar experiences with the interviewees and made this clear in the introductory letter to the interviewees before the interviews were conducted in which I stated:

> I was a teacher involved in the education of Japanese children overseas in and outside of Japan. I have experienced life, where you lived, and have worked for Japanese companies. I have also been involved in issues related to the education of Japanese children overseas as a parent, and as an adviser to groups of mothers of such children. Finally, I am now a researcher who works at a university and am a member of the Intercultural Education Society, Japan.

In this way, the position of the researcher in this study became to some extent that of an 'insider' (Degrado-Gaitan & Trueba 1991), who is familiar with the context of the interviewees and who could thus discuss experiences that were similar to theirs. At the same time, I was positioned as an 'outsider' partly because I was the researcher which might suggest to participants that I had extensive knowledge and partly because I had taken on what interviewees could regard as roles of leadership in the field of intercultural education.

This research also regards the process of capturing the voices of such people through interviews as very important. The process means that there was a dialogue between the researcher and the interviewees. This sometimes resulted in interviewees changing their mind during the interviews.

Prior to the interviews, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire by mail. This required their responses to questions about their age, occupation, gender, length of residency overseas and any previous experiences living outside Japan. Additionally they were asked to present their response to a Japanese Ministry of Education's view and explanation of the purposes of international understanding and co-existence. This pre-interview questionnaire allowed:

a) basic demographic details to be collected prior to the interview, thus saving time;

b) some common ground to be established prior to the interview.

These factors were important as most interviewees stated they had a one-hour limit for the interview. The questionnaire allowed me to take advantage of this available time.

In this way, I gave them the chance to explore their ideas before the interviews. Then, the interviewees were questioned about their answers to the questionnaire they had already submitted and were asked to explain, for example, the reasons behind what they had stated. This process gave them opportunities to think through something in a different way; the interviewees occasionally changed their opinions from what they had said previously in the questionnaires or at the early stage of the interview.

It is important to acknowledge differences in the position expressed by the same person in the questionnaire responses and statements at the beginning of interviews relative to those made at the end of interviews. The interviewees were sometimes bewildered by the questions posed by the interviewer and could not answer and just uttered comments such as 'I have never thought about it in such a way'. Sometimes, what they said obviously contradicted what they had said before. Some of them realized these contradictions by themselves, but in some cases, they attempted to evade these contradictions. This process of changing positions, evident in Chapter 6 and 7, could not have been gained by a conventional approach in this field based merely on multiple choice type surveys. I use the fact they contradicted themselves as an important basis for my findings and interpretation. I understand this as a strength of my methodology because the interviews were dialogical processes. I used the questionnaire as a starting off point but during interviews, where opinions were exchanged, I was able to initiate a consideration of matters that interviewees had not considered previously.

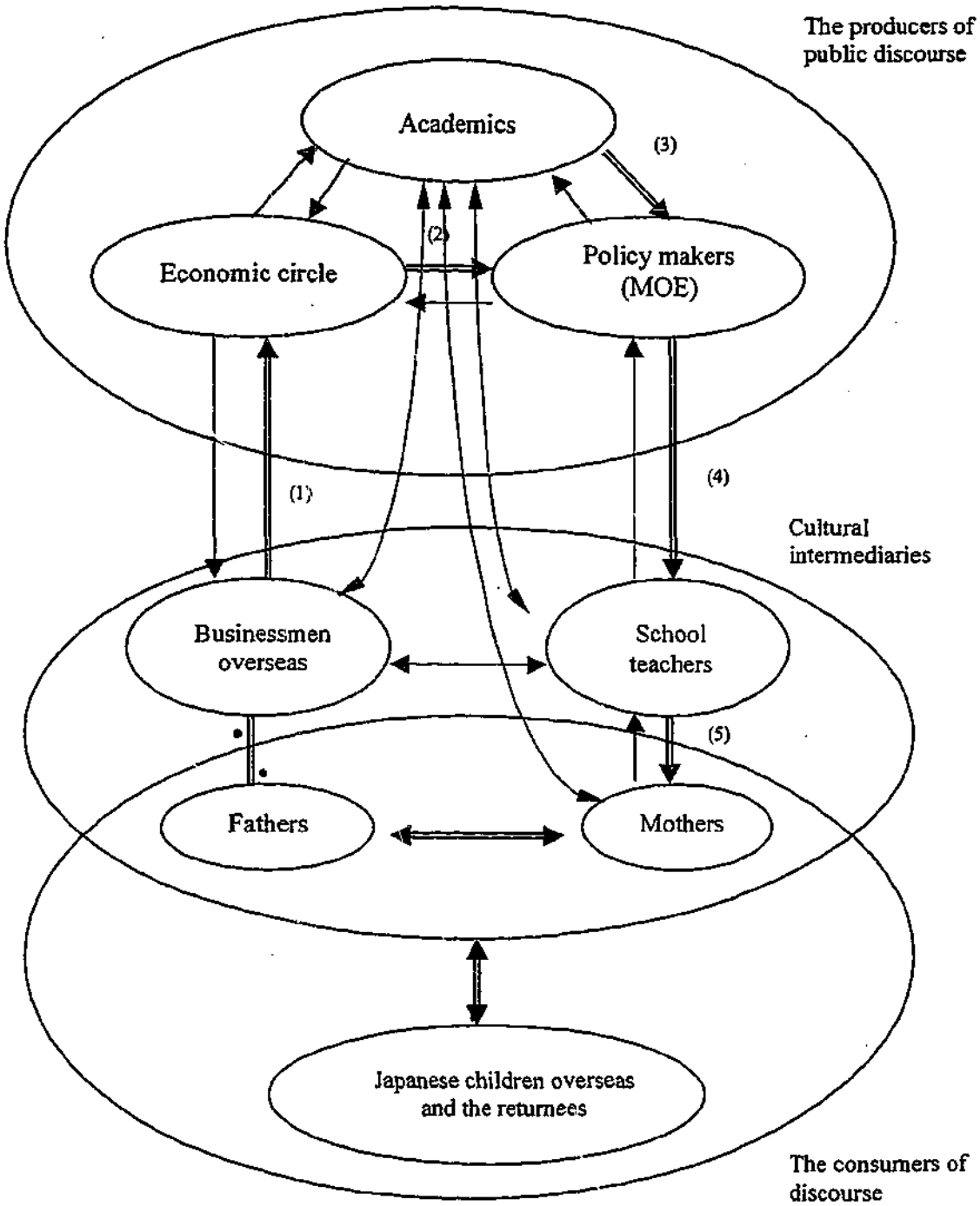
In the following sections, the process of how to select the document materials and the interviewees will be explained.

## 4.3 The five target groups

As explained in the Introduction, the aim of this study is to examine the discourse of five groups of people. These five groups of people are policy makers, academics in related fields, businessmen who have residential experience overseas, schoolteachers, and the parents of Japanese children overseas. Figure 2 below depicts key groups and their relationships to each other in the context of discourses related to intercultural education. Through their discourses, each group influences each other, but the strong influences, which were revealed in Chapter 3, are shown by solid lines.

Among the groups in Figure 2, academics, people in economic circles and policy makers in the MOE are regarded as the producers of public discourse on this issue. The studies of the JCORed history have traditionally taken up the documents written by these three groups of people (Japan Overseas Education Services 1991). The documents by those in economic circles, however, were written intensively from the late 1970s to the 1980s and concentrated on requests to improve the environments of JCORed. These requests included building more senior high schools for Japanese children overseas and expanding the special quota for the returnees to enter senior high schools and universities. These demands were influenced by the earnest wishes of the families of Japanese businessmen overseas, which are shown as arrow 1 in Figure 2. As discussed in Chapter 3, their demands influenced the policies of the MOE, shown as arrow 2. These discourses produced within the economic circle and by the MOE played a significant role in developing JCORed up to the 1980s. However, enthusiasm towards JCORed in this economic circle waned rapidly after the 1990s. Because of this, this study focuses on the discourses of the other two groups, policy makers in the MOE and academics involved in intercultural education in Japan.

*Figure 2: The Relationships of the Groups*




Keys: ← influence ⇐ strong influence

These two groups are considered the producers of public discourse in this study. Through the writing of these two groups, the idea of intercultural education held by academics influenced government policies, particularly after the 1980s. This influence is represented by arrow 3.

The next four groups in Figure 2, namely businessmen overseas, schoolteachers, and the fathers and mothers of Japanese children overseas, form the main groups of this study. They are regarded as cultural intermediaries in the context of intercultural education (Chapter 1). If the children in this context are regarded as the consumers of intercultural education, these cultural intermediaries, who have daily contact with these children, become literally intermediaries in transmitting the ideas, concepts, and norms created by the first three groups above. The conventional studies regarded these cultural intermediaries as the subjects of JCORed but not as the intermediaries who interpret the various discourses in the field. Of course, it is true that the fathers and mothers of Japanese children overseas are actual consumers of JCOed. If we regard them only as the consumers of the issues, however, we would ignore other roles they play. The parents of these children and the teachers have published many books since the 1980s (Japan Overseas Education Services 1991). The parents, the teachers and the businessmen overseas have talked and argued about intercultural education as a daily issue of their own. This is why they are regarded as cultural intermediaries. They receive the discourses of the first groups (producers of the discourse) and interpret them and then produce their views in their own contexts of intercultural education.

This study locates these four groups of cultural intermediaries as follows. Except for a few researchers, *chūzaiin* (the Japanese staying overseas temporarily, dispatched from their institutions in Japan) are all men and except for those leaving their families in Japan, most of them are the fathers of Japanese children overseas. Therefore, the businessmen overseas and the fathers of Japanese children overseas are regarded as

the same group in this study. The next group is the teachers. Most of them are dispatched by the MOE to full-day Japanese schools overseas. As explained in Chapter 3, before they leave for Japanese schools overseas, they have at least one week of training to learn the views of the MOE on JCORed and education for international understanding (arrow 4). Their lives overseas are centered around the Japanese schools and they spend most of their time within the Japanese communities where the schools are located. Once these teachers arrive at their positions overseas, they speak about their views of education and culture and, via various occasions such as PTA activities, advise the parents, especially the mothers, as authorities on the issues (arrow 5). There is not much chance for the parents to directly scrutinize the policy documents or the work of academics. The teachers also do not have much opportunity to read academic work although they do read policy documents issued by the MOE. Only one teacher and one businessman could mention the titles of relevant academic work during the interviews for this study. However, this does not mean that these people have not been influenced by the public discourse on this issue. As mentioned earlier and as Yoshino argued (1997), these cultural intermediaries accept, interpret and reproduce the discourses of intercultural education. Revealing those reinterpretations and analyzing them is a task of this study.

## 4.4 Public discourses

The documents produced by the policy makers and the academics will be dealt with in Chapter 5 as public discourses. These documents provide a significant context for the discourse uttered by the cultural intermediaries of this study. None of the schoolteachers, businessmen and parents speaks about intercultural education from their own experiences alone. As seen earlier, they have been influenced by these documents, although not directly, but through magazines, newspapers and talks by the people involved in JCORed.

This study examines these documents not only because they have influenced cultural intermediaries but also because of their significance as public discourses in Japan. Whether they are policy documents or academic work, both kinds of writings contain many normative statements about intercultural education because both types of documents have been written as guidelines to implement and to promote intercultural education. As was revealed in Chapter 3, studies so far have not scrutinized the ideological background of these normative statements. To scrutinize them certainly involves examining the view of culture contained in these documents, which has again been neglected by conventional studies. For these reasons, the policy documents and academic work must be studied as public discourse before the discourse of the cultural intermediaries is analyzed.

Furthermore, I used some of the contents of these public discourses in the interviews. The aims of education for international understanding cited in the annual reports by the MOE were sent as part of the pre-interview questionnaire already discussed. Likewise, many questions used in the interviews themselves were produced with reference to these policy documents. The discourses of the cultural intermediaries that are the main focus of this study are understood as a response to these documents.

Among various policy documents and academic works, two (one policy document and one academic book) were selected from the 1980s and two (one policy document and one academic book) were selected from the 1990s as representative examples of the conventional public discourse. As seen in Chapter 3, up to the mid-1980s, JCORed had developed and expanded continuously. The 1988 annual report of the MOE, titled *Japanese Government Policies in Education, Science, Sports and Culture 1988* was the first annual report of the MOE since World War II, and became the model for policy documents in the following decade. The 1990s is when intercultural education gradually shifted its focus from the JCORed to the wider concepts of education for international understanding. Another selected policy document is *Japanese*

*Education: towards the 21st Century* by the Central Council for Education Report in 1996. All annual reports by the MOE after 1997 have been based on this document. For these reasons, policy documents have been chosen for each period.

Among the academic works, the book titled *Education in the Age of Internationalization*, published in 1986 by the project group studying the education of children returning from overseas under the Center of JCOed of Tokyo University of Education, was taken as being representative of the conventional public discourse. This book was evaluated very highly in the annual Journal of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan (1987), as it summarized intercultural education in Japan up to the 1980s (Japan Overseas Education Services 1991). The book titled *The Introduction of Intercultural Education*, 1997, written by 12 academics most of whom were the executive members of Intercultural Education Society, Japan, was selected as the second academic work. The book is used as a textbook of intercultural education in many universities in Japan. The reasons for these selections will be explained in chapter 5.

## 4.5 Interviewees

The interview participants were directors of school boards, teachers in Japanese schools overseas and the mothers of Japanese children overseas. The directors are fathers of Japanese children studying overseas either at the time of the research or earlier. Within this study, these three groups are regarded as the cultural intermediaries of intercultural education. When Yoshino (1997) studied the discourses concerning *Nihonjinron*, he nominated the representatives of companies and the principals of high schools in a local town in Japan as the cultural intermediaries. In this study, the mothers of Japanese children overseas are added as an important group of cultural intermediaries. Needless to say, the parents constitute one of the important groups concerned with the education of Japanese children overseas. In Japanese

education generally, fathers play minor roles in schooling. Most fathers leave their children's education to the mothers; it is the mothers who come to schools for the various meetings, events, and parent-teacher interviews. In this study, I could not find any fathers' names among the members of PTA associations, for example.

To date, several networking groups of returnees' parents have been organized in Japan, and almost all members are mothers. I have been involved in two such groups as an adviser for the last seven years. Mothers' comments stating that the men did not understand them, struck me as being at once bitter and energized. This strengthened my desire to tease out their views, so that their opinions, so often unheard, might become part of the discourses of intercultural education.

The interviews were conducted in two cities, Melbourne in Australia as a city in an English speaking country and Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia as a city in a non-English speaking country. As discussed in the previous chapters, whether the context is in English speaking countries or non-English speaking countries is a very significant issue in intercultural education in Japan. Therefore, I chose one from each area. Moreover, the Japanese schools and the Japanese Associations of these two cities offered total co-operation with this study. As a result, I was able to interview all the members of the school boards, all teachers of the Japanese Schools including the principals and all who are in charge of the school committees, as well as all representative members of the PTA except for those who were not available due to unavoidable commitments during the periods when interviews were conducted. The details of the background of each group of interviewees and the circumstances of each Japanese school and the Japanese communities in these two cities will be provided in the introduction to Chapter 6.

## 4.6 The process of data analysis

The process for analyzing the materials for this study is divided into three main steps: description, analysis, and interpretation. This does not mean that each step is independent and has an equal weight nor that these three steps always occurred consecutively. Nevertheless, I would like to explain each step as a way of describing the process involved.

### 4.6.1 Description

"Data consists of observations made by the researchers and/or reported to the researchers by others" (Walcott 1994: 12). As I mentioned in this chapter earlier, what I have paid particular attention to is the notion that data are already theory-laden. The questions I asked the interviewees, the way in which they responded to my questions and the method by which I recorded their responses are all or at least should be driven by the theoretical frameworks that match the purpose of this research.

When I collected the materials I had planned to gather, regardless of whether they were from the interviews or documents, what I did first was to listen to or read them without reserve, attempting to forget the questions I had posed previously. Anything that was noticed at this stage was written down in the notes. In the case of the interviews, this debriefing process was very useful for me to recall the interview sessions and reflect upon them. Then, the interview materials were transcribed by myself and finally, all materials were placed in categories according to the key questions posed during the interviews.

### 4.6.2 Analysis

In this study, most emphasis is placed on analysis of the material collected. Finding a pattern among the materials (Huberman and Miles 1994), in particular, constituted

one of the core processes. First, in the case of the interview materials, all transcriptions were read individually and in conjunction with each other. Reading them as a block of the entire set of responses by the individual interviewee helped me to better understand each interviewee. Second, I read the materials ordered according to the questions asked. The outcomes of this process form the central findings of this study. Then, I sought to identify any patterns within and between the different groups interviewed. This examination was repeated several times in an attempt to find insights corresponding to the major questions of this study. What was vital to me was to tease out any significant responses to the research questions by finding patterns in the materials. Therefore, even one single response was regarded as an important result if it was judged as significant to this study. The tool I basically relied on was maintaining a healthy skepticism throughout the process toward what interviewees said and toward the conclusions I drew. I take healthy skepticism to mean what is often referred to as reflexivity (Smyth and Shacklock 1998). During this process I found that "the truly analytical moments would occur during brief bursts of insight or pattern recognition, some of which must already have occurred for the researcher to have identified even the most rudimentary categories and coding procedures" (Wolcott 1994: 24).

### 4.6.3 Interpretation

It is difficult to draw a line between the process of analysis and the process of interpretation, for the former contains the latter to a great extent. Jotting down notes, reading them again, and seeking the significance in them, however, formed the final steps of the process of this research. When the interpretations were made, I attempted not only to draw all possible findings from the materials but, more importantly, not to take the speculations beyond what the materials themselves could 'say' (Walcott 1994). On the other hand, the process of interpretation played an important role as it allowed me to go back to the original questions of the research and to reflect on the

meaningfulness of the questions and the correspondence between the materials obtained and questions. All outcomes of these processes will be explained in chapters 5, 6 and 7.

## 4.7 The advantages and limitations of this study

Finally, it is necessary to touch upon the advantages and the limitations of this study. Research has to "be reflexive of its own limitations, distortions and agenda" (Smyth and Schacklock 1998: 4). Being reflexive in this study means identifying and acknowledging the epistemological assumptions which caused me "to formulate a set of questions in a particular way, to seek answers to those questions in a particular way and finally to present ... findings in a particular way" (Ruby 1980: 157).

As mentioned above, I was able to relate to the documents and the interviewees as an insider with experience in being a teacher, working in a Japanese firm overseas and being affiliated with mothers' groups in Japan and so on. This is an important part of the theoretical framing of this thesis and one of my insider strengths. I could also interview the people and read the important documents such as policies and academic works in my first language, Japanese. In other words, I could share not only the language but also the cultural context of the main subjects of this study. These are the obvious advantages of being an insider in this research. For example, often, once interviewees recognized my knowledge and experience in intercultural education, they appeared to become more comfortable and were willing to share their own views and episodes related to intercultural education. Sometimes, they treated me as their comrade who could sympathize with them.

On the other hand, I always needed to be wary of being too confident. I realized that I should not assume that my position and experience were enough to make me seem to be one of 'them' when we discussed problems (Villenas 1996). For example, some of the business executives of the Japanese companies, who were usually older than I,

sometimes spoke condescendingly and what they said sounded almost didactic. A few of the teachers on the other hand saw me as an outsider as a researcher from a university and were reluctant to speak freely. Some of the mothers demonstrated hesitation to express their thoughts to me, as a male researcher. Such constraints cannot be eliminated from this study. Consequently, it is very important for the researcher to become conscious of the position he/she is placed in during the interviews, and while analyzing the materials. These factors encouraged me to keep in mind the limitations of how much I could obtain from the interviewees. On many occasions I thanked those, who had spoken overbearingly or warily, but who had gradually opened their minds and started sharing their own concerns regarding the issues of intercultural education as the interview sessions proceeded. This occurred when I started to enter into dialogue with them rather than merely posing questions to them. I believe that, in those moments of free dialogue, interviewees spoke more genuinely, freely, and openly. I also believe that the significant findings of this study could not have occurred outside these moments of dialogue. In other words, it is hard to imagine any meaningful analysis of the documents and interview materials without these dialogical reflexive processes.

The following chapters report the findings from the analysis of the dialogues between the researcher and the documents or the researcher and the interviewees, concerning the issue of intercultural education in the Japanese context.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# POLICY DOCUMENTS AND ACADEMIC WRITINGS

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes two policy documents and two academic books which have been central in establishing the public discourses of intercultural education in Japan. Prior to the interviews, the cultural intermediaries in this study were asked to respond to sections from these documents as a means of relating their responses in the public discourses. Their responses will be dealt with further in Chapters 6 and 7. This section explains why these documents occupy a significant position in intercultural education in Japan and their relevance to this thesis. I am dealing with these documents together because as described in this chapter, their contents overlap in significant ways even though there may be also differences between them.

The first of the two policy documents is the 1988 version of the annual report of the MOE, entitled *Japanese Government Policies in Education, Science, Sports and Culture* (1988). The MOE published its first official report in 1959, after which a report was published approximately every five years until 1988. Subsequently, reports have been published annually. The 1988 report became a model for the subsequent annual reports. Despite some changes to details, the reports from 1989 to the mid-1990s resemble the structure of the 1988 report. A further reason for selecting the 1988 annual report is that it was written in the late 1980s, which marked the end of the period during which JCORed expanded continuously in terms of the numbers of children involved. In other words, the 1988 annual report was published at a moment when JCORed was the central topic of discussion on intercultural education in Japan. I will focus on Chapter 8, 'Internationalization of Education, Culture, and Sports', especially, Section 2-1, 'Promoting Education for International Understanding',

Section 2-2, 'Improving Foreign Language Education', and Section 6 'Improving Education for Japanese Children Overseas and Children Returning from Overseas'.

The second policy document is the Central Council for Education Report in 1996, titled *Japanese Education: towards the 21st Century*. I have selected the Chapter entitled 'Internationalization and Education', especially Section 2, 'Promoting Education for International Understanding', Section 3, 'Improving Foreign Language Education', and Section 4 'Improving Education for Japanese Children Overseas'. This document was selected because the annual reports after 1997 have been all based on this Report even though it was not an annual report. As explained in Chapter 3, this report was also written when the concept of education for international understanding had taken a firm hold in the field of intercultural education in Japan after it started in the early 1990s.

These two documents have a similar structure regarding their discussion of education and internationalization. Both have three sections with the same titles, a section on "Promoting Education for International Understanding", a section on "Improving Foreign Language Education", and a section on "Improving Education for Japanese Children Overseas" although the content in each of the documents differs to some extent. In my discussion of these reports, I will focus primarily on the section "Promoting Education for International Understanding".

From the academic literature, two books have been selected as significant documents. The first of them is the book titled *Education in the Age of Internationalization* published in 1986. As this book was written by a project group studying the education of children returning from overseas under the Center of JCOed of Tokyo University of Education, the main focus is on the issues of JCORed. According to a book review in the annual "Bulletin of Intercultural Education Society in Japan" (Kojima 1987), this book was highly valued as an authoritative overview of the history of JCORed over the previous 20 years. Another distinctive feature of the book is that it was

written by 12 writers, the majority of whom are members of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan. Seven academics co-edited the book, all of whom were board members of the same Society; three of these seven later became presidents of the Society. These facts illustrate how intercultural education in Japan has been dominated by people studying JCORed. No book has been written by such a number of well-known academics in this field prior to this volume. In other words, this book shaped understandings of intercultural education in Japan up to the 1980s.

Another academic document is *The Introduction of Intercultural Education* in 1997. This book was written by 12 academics, most of whom were executive members of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan. Appearing almost ten years after *Education in the Age of Internationalization* was published, this 1997 publication also grappled squarely with the issues of intercultural education in Japan. Since this book, several books have been published by individual writers exploring single issues such as the problem of exchange students, or the children of foreigners, but none of them has dealt with such a wide range of issues in intercultural education or has been written by a large number of writers.

For these reasons I have selected these books as significant in this field in Japan. As already mentioned, these two books are similar in some respects and both are significant in that they were written by many well-known academics. There are, however, some differences between them. The first book, *Education in the Age of Internationalization*, contains many concrete proposals, which influenced the policies in the second half of the 1980s and onwards, while the second book, *The Introduction of Intercultural Education* is a more theoretical book, which did not set out to provide practical proposals for the field. Nevertheless, the important point here is the significance of these two books, which represented the contemporary views of academics in the field of intercultural education in Japan.

As previously explained, the four documents represent the dominant public discourse related to intercultural education in Japan. In reviewing the key sections of these documents, I do not aim to present a systematic discourse analysis but rather to enter into dialogue with the documents, which means conducting a critical reading in the Foucauldian sense, as explained in Chapter 4. The key sections of these documents also provide focal points for the interview. How do cultural intermediaries including businessmen, teachers, and mothers understand the view of intercultural education expressed in these documents? How do they establish their own understanding of culture in relation to the views of these four documents? During initial stages of the critical reading of these documents as well as from the literature discussed in Chapter 2, I identified eight themes to use in further critical reading of the documents. The eight themes are:

1. The importance of intercultural competence in the age of globalization – competence for coexistence.
2. Competence in intercultural communication, particularly English.
3. The relative importance of education for establishing Japaneseness versus education for international understanding.
4. Notions of modernization with particular reference to the ideas of universality and progress.
5. Cultural relativism.
6. Cultural pluralism.
7. Cultural essentialism – A view that regards both Japanese culture and society as unique.
8. Diversity in Japanese society, for example, gender inequality in intercultural education.

The eight themes above could be divided into two main categories of questions. While items 1 to 4 deal directly with intercultural education, items 5 to 8 deal with views toward culture. The sections from the documents I deal with have been selected because they relate to the themes above.

The interviewees were asked to express their views toward the questions developed around these eight themes during the interview sessions. In this way, the views presented in these public discourses and the views expressed by the interviewees as cultural intermediaries were compared and contrasted throughout this research. The interviewees' responses will be discussed in the next two chapters: Chapter 6 and 7.

The following abbreviations are used with reference to these documents.

**88-policy** = The 1988 version of the annual report of the MOE, titled by *Japanese Government Policies in Education, Science, Sports and Culture*

**96-policy** = The Central Council for Education Report in 1996, titled *Japanese Education: towards the 21st Century*

**86-book** = *Education in the Age of Internationalization* in 1986

**97-book** = *The Introduction of Intercultural Education* in 1997

## 5.2 An important intercultural competence in the age of globalization – Competence for coexistence

Among the four documents, the **96-policy** (50) states most clearly what education for international understanding aims at. Three points were raised.

1. The trend toward globalization entails the development of abilities and qualities to obtain a wide range of views, to understand, and to respect different cultures. Also the ability to co-exist with people from different cultures has become an important priority in Japanese education [this refers to the competence for coexistence].

2. It is important to develop [intercultural] communicative competence such as basic skills in a foreign language and the skills of self-expression, to develop basic skills to be able to express one's thoughts and opinions while also respecting those of others in international society [this refers to the competence in intercultural communication].

3. It is also important to establish self-identity as Japanese and as an individual in order to achieve international understanding [this refers to establishing Japaneseness].

These aims are reflected in the current policies of the MOE in the field of intercultural education. These three competencies appeared in all annual reports of the MOE after

1996. Other policy documents by the MOE have also developed their arguments based on these three competencies (Uozumi 2000). In this section, I will discuss the way competence for coexistence is represented in the policy documents and academic works. The competence in intercultural communication will be discussed in section 5-3, while the competence to establish Japaneseness will be dealt with in section 5-4.

The concept of co-existence was clearly presented in the **86-book** (p.31).

> As Japanese in the world, we have to aim for education, which contributes to a society of co-existence.

The **97-book** (25) also states,

> Intercultural education means education for the co-existence of many cultures.

The concept of co-existence has been one of the main themes of intercultural education in Japan since the 1980s (Chapter 3). I will examine here, however, two aspects of this widespread notion of co-existence. The first of them concerns the phrase 'as Japanese' appearing in the **86-book,** and the second is about the concrete contents of the competence for coexistence.

First, the expression 'as Japanese' is clearly defined in the **88-policy** (402).

> The aim of education for international understanding is 'to bring up Japanese nationals' as people who can be trusted in international society.

The phrase 'to bring up Japanese who can be trusted in international society' has been used in government educational policy as a kind of routine phrase (the **96-policy**). The message behind these phrases 'as Japanese' and 'bringing up Japanese nationals' is clear. The subjects, who co-exist with others, are always the Japanese. We (=the Japanese) have to aim for a society of co-existence. In these public discourses, embracing one's Japanese identity is a precondition for being able to co-exist. A question can be raised. What kind of people are the Japanese who can be trusted in international society?

The **88-policy** (402) seems to answer this question.

> In order to be trusted, we have to understand the other cultures including the way of life and the thinking of the other people. And in order to do so, we have to understand our culture, Japanese culture as a premise of international and intercultural understanding.

The logic here is that we must understand Japanese culture first if we are to be trusted in international society. This phrase 'we must understand Japanese culture' has appeared not only in the policy documents but also in academic writings and whenever intercultural education was discussed. It has dominated all kinds of documents of intercultural education in Japan since the 1980s (Sato 1996).

The important question here is, however, why the Japanese are required to understand Japanese culture more deeply before attempting international understanding. The four documents merely point out, without evidence, that those who do not know about their own culture cannot be considered true members of international society. The documents also provide anecdotes in which individuals were embarrassed because of not being able to explain Japanese culture to the foreign people. None of the four documents, however, provides an adequate answer to the question of why Japanese must understand Japanese culture prior to achieving international understanding.

The second aspect concerns the contents of the competence for coexistence. The above extract of the **88-policy** alludes to 'being able to understand the other culture (402)'. The **97-book** (116) explains that

> Intercultural communication means to know the diversity of culture, to affirm such diversity, and to have an idea to attempt to solve the conflict by discussing it.

What these documents claim is that we have to know and understand the other culture in order to achieve the competence for coexistence.

Some doubt, however, emerges. Can we live together or co-exist if we try to know and understand the other cultures? Is it easy, as the **97-book** argues, to negotiate

through discussion when conflict occurs? These questions have not been attended to in any of the four documents. The four documents seemed to ignore such questions as, for example, what would happen if we faced difficulty or conflict due to recognizing differences between 'them' and 'us'. The documents merely declared in a normative voice that we have to overcome any problems.[6]

> Intercultural understanding can be defined as respecting both our culture and the other culture together and being able to live together (the **97-book** 204).
>
> If we become conscious about global issues, then we can be international persons (the **97-book** 188).

There are neither studies analyzing the process for achieving a society of co-existence nor any consideration of the conflict that might be caused when we recognize differences between the cultures. The documents have been built on abstract and normative statements stating that we should know and understand other cultures in order to achieve a society of co-existence. This naïve optimism is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the public discourse of intercultural education in Japan.

## 5.3 Competence in intercultural communication

Competence in intercultural communication, stated as one of the most important aims of education for international understanding in the **96-policy** (p.108 above), has been another main theme of intercultural education in Japan. Some definitions of competence in intercultural communication are given in the policy documents.

> Communicative competence is the competence to deepen mutual understanding with foreign people in order to survive in international society (the **88-policy** 404).

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[6] A good example of this aspect is unquestioned cultural relativism, which will be dealt with in Section 5-5 of this chapter.

> It (competence in intercultural communication) is the competence to express one's thoughts and opinions while also respecting those of others in international society (the **96-policy** 52).

Two explicit aspects concerning competence in intercultural communication in these documents can be identified and subjected to closer examination. First, competence in intercultural communication refers to competence in a foreign language and, in particular, English. Competence in intercultural communication is explained in the section on improving foreign language education in the **88-policy** (404-406), and in the section on foreign language education in the **96-policy** (52-54). Both policies claimed that acquiring foreign languages is extremely vital for competence in intercultural communication and thus for intercultural understanding. Competence in intercultural communication is treated as almost equivalent to competence in a foreign language. In Chapter 6, I will examine how the view of these policies that competence in intercultural communication and foreign language competence are synonymous is understood by the cultural intermediaries overseas.

Although two policy documents used the phrase 'English education' only rarely, it is clear that foreign language in these policies means English. In the **88-policy**, for example, almost all contents under the section 'Improving Foreign Language Education', are about improving English education. In addition, two concrete proposals are made in the same section; the one is to invite more native English speakers from the US and the UK to work as language assistants in Japanese schools and the other is to dispatch Japanese English teachers to English speaking countries to improve their English. The **88-policy** commented that these proposals sought to provide students with greater competence in English through education. The **97-policy** proposed English education from the primary level and used the phrase "English conversation lessons by native speakers" (53). It asserted that we must improve listening skills and speaking skills. These assertions to promote greater

competence in the use of English or more conversational English have remained dominant and never slipped out from the policies of the MOE.

The second aspect of competence in intercultural communication in the policy documents concerns the English competence of Japanese people generally. Behind the assertions above, there has been a tacit understanding throughout the policy documents that the Japanese have insufficient English competence, especially in oral skills.

> [English teaching] has not been sufficiently implemented (the **88-policy**).
>
> It is necessary to improve English education regarding listening and speaking English competence as the more important of the competences of communication (the **97 policy**).

On the other hand, stereotypical views have been expressed about the children returning from overseas, who are expected to have acquired a level of competence in English that ordinary Japanese children do not have.

> Those children from overseas speak very fluent English (the **86-book**: 21).
>
> The returnees make some mistakes in writing and in grammar but demonstrate very good hearing and speaking abilities (52).
>
> Over half the returnees have become bilingual or multilingual (54).

These views reflect a perceived dichotomy between ordinary Japanese, who have no residential experience overseas, and the returnees. Implied is the view that Japanese people are expected to acquire a level of English competence something like that of the returnees.

The following themes were identified within the discourses considered in this section. In Japan, competence in intercultural communication means English proficiency. The ordinary Japanese do not have sufficient English proficiency, especially in oral skills.

On the other hand, those returning from overseas have acquired such language competence. How are these discourses accepted among the cultural intermediaries overseas? This will be examined in Chapter 6.

## 5.4 Education for establishing Japaneseness versus education for international understanding

As seen in section 5-2, the **88-policy** declared that education for international understanding must aim to bring up children as Japanese nationals in international society. But what is the content of that education? The same policy revealed an answer to this question, repeating the following phrase within the section promoting education for international understanding. The phrase is

> We consider that to develop the attitude which respects the cultures and traditions of our own country is important (the **88-policy**: 402).

The **88-policy** also pointed out that understanding the culture of our own country deeply should be the foundation of understanding other cultures and argued that JCOed aims to provide an education that provides the desired kind of Japanese nationals. What these phrases indicate is that Japanese people must understand Japanese culture and identity (the Japaneseness) before attempting international understanding.

When we consider that all educational policy documents are written within the framework of the national policy, which aims to strengthen the position of the nation state, it might be inevitable that there would be elements nurturing national identity even in the field of intercultural education. The tendency to promote education to establish national identity is, however, found not only in policy documents but also in academic writings in the 1980s. The **86-book** argued,

> Our task is to bring up children as Japanese who can serve international society (16).

> The aim of JCOed should not contradict the aim of the education which is to produce the [desired] Japanese nationals (41).
>
> We have to promote the educational ideas of our country to bring up rich internationalized Japanese (325).

These phrases indicate that even academics strongly shared the view that to bring up children as Japanese nationals and to promote Japanese identity was a premise of intercultural education. The problem here is, however, that these policy documents and academic works do not define what they mean by their ideal Japanese person. What characteristics distinguish them? While no policy documents or academic works provide an answer to this question, it is useful here to look at the changes emerging in the policies and academic works.

In the 1990s, the children in Japan whose parents did not hold Japanese citizenship, and those Japanese who decided that Japan was not the country in which they wished to live permanently, became more visible (Chapter 3). This phenomenon created some changes in the discourse of intercultural education in the 1990s. The phrase "to bring up Japanese who can be trusted in the world" has disappeared from the **96-policy**. Instead, the phrase 'to establish self-identity as Japanese and as an individual' has emerged. The phrase used for more than ten years was dropped although the **96-policy** still asserted that it is extremely important for children to deepen their understanding of the history and traditional culture of Japan.

As these changes emerged in the policy documents, the academic writings began to problematize the discourse of the 1980s more openly. The **97-book** raised questions regarding the notion of establishing Japaneseness that was advocated during the 1980s.

> If the subjects of internationalization are always the Japanese, it strengthens the Japaneseness and helps the nationalization of the Japanese rather than internationalization (186).
>
> The tendency of education for international understanding since the 1970s is to foster the distinctiveness of Japanese culture and to promote identity as Japanese (233).

The **97-book** also commented,

> There is a limitation in education for international understanding and we have to seek global education for global citizens (201).

A new direction has emerged, one that promotes education beyond the borders of the nation state and proposes so-called global education. However, no policy document to date has responded to these questions raised by the academics. As mentioned, all policies after 1996 have repeated the phrases of the **96-policy** and have not provided any new views so far.

These facts require us to look further at the history of the changes in policy documents and academic writings. JCORed has always been the main theme in the policy of intercultural education in Japan (Chapter 3), and policy concerning JCORed stated in both the **88-policy** and the **96-policy** clearly promoted the necessity to foster more special consideration of the returnees to enable them to enter senior high schools and universities. In this way, the notion of bringing up Japanese children as Japanese nationals has been dominant in the policy of JCORed and consequently in the policy of intercultural education.

However, it is true that the focus of JCORed has also changed.

> JCORed had shifted from just attempting to eliminate the anxiety of the people concerned to the education for their adaptation (the **86-book** 15).

As explained in Chapter 3, the flow of JCORed's objectives is summarized as the following. Education for adaptation → Education to promote the distinguishing features of the returnees → Education for international understanding (also the **86-book** 47 and 258). Consequently the **86-book** claimed that JCORed would have to be expanded to include the notion of education for international understanding. The **88-policy** must be understood as a response to these changes of focus. It is written along

these lines and the policy after 1988, including the **96-policy**, is still influenced by the desire to promote education for international understanding.

To conclude this section, I summarize the development of the discourse in the policy documents and academic works in this field. The policy documents traditionally promoted bringing up children as desired Japanese nationals, who understand Japanese culture deeply. On the other hand, the academic writings have argued more the significance of education for international understanding. Recently they have begun to develop more optimistic proposals for global education. While the policy documents so far have not responded to this recent view presented by academics, documents such as the **96-policy** accepted and promoted the notion of education for international understanding. In Chapter 6, I examine how cultural intermediaries respond toward these public discourses of intercultural education.

## 5.5 Notions of universality and progress

In this section, I scrutinize two key notions that appeared in the two academic works in relation to education for international understanding.

> Education in the future must be based not on the particularistic views that have been seen in schools in Japan but on the universalistic views that have been seen in schools in the West (the **86-book** 299).

Two views lie behind this statement. One argues that the West is universalistic and Japan is particularistic. The other claims that Japan must learn from the West since Japan lags behind the West.

### 5.5.1 The notion of universality

The discourse claiming that intercultural education must pursue the value of universality can be found throughout the documents.

> It (JCORed) aims to establish the dignity of human beings and of the individual as a basic concept of human education (the **86-book** 42).
>
> A true education for international understanding cannot be achieved unless it is supported by humanistic love and respect beyond races, ethnicities, and nationalities (the **86-book** 44).
>
> It is our task in education to pursue universality among diversity (the **97-book** 189).

A question emerges: what is the meaning of 'pursuing universality' in these documents? The **97-book** states answers that it is to recognize the differences in other cultures and to acknowledge the virtues of these (189). The **86-book** also commented that intercultural understanding means to develop an awareness of the differences in other cultures and to realize that these differences are based on the universality of humanity (157).

The problem with these discourses is that it is not always possible to assume that knowing the differences about others automatically leads to acknowledging them as valuable, as these documents claimed. Nevertheless, this kind of rather naïve view is repeatedly presented in the documents. Why have these views been so pervasive? As explained below, examining these documents further reveals that the universalistic value mentioned in these documents is based on the norms of an idealized American society. To identify these naïve views more precisely, it is useful to examine how these documents describe the characteristics of returnee children.

The **86-book** summarized the distinguishing characteristics of the returnees, compared with the ordinary Japanese (54-58). Although the list is long, I will reproduce it because many of the characteristics are opposite to those which many Japanologists and interviewees of this study saw as typical of the Japanese people.

1. They (returnees) often greet cheerfully.
2. They are honest and bright.
3. They have a spirit of independence.

4. They are individualistic and creative.
5. They have been trained to express themselves.
6. They have a volunteer spirit and are ready to help the weak people.
7. They have leadership.
8. They can think flexibly and have a wide range of views.
9. They can observe their own country 'Japan' objectively.

A very similar list is presented in the **86-book** (199).

Three things should be pointed out here in relation to the notion of universality. First, the list was filled with eulogizing phrases about the returnees. The returnees were described as ideal persons, having acquired the universalistic norms mentioned above. The validity of these characteristics has not been questioned. For example, this list of returnees' characteristics was introduced without any critique in a review of the **86-book** in the Annual Journal of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan (1987).

The second critical point is that these distinguishing features of the returnees have to be recognized as the flip side of the coin of which presents a negative estimation of ordinary Japanese. A body of literature called *Nihonjinron*, arguing the uniqueness of Japanese culture, society, often listed the following as the distinctive features of the Japanese

> They are not individualistic. They are reserved and respect superficial principles. They cannot express themselves skillfully. They have narrow views about the world (Mabuchi 1995a).

The blind praise of the returnees needs to be understood as a reflection of the negative estimation of the Japanese expressed in *Nihonjinron*.

The third point is that the **88-book** characterized the returnees almost exclusively as those who had experienced life in Western countries. In other words, the distinctive features of the returnees listed above illustrated the distinctive features of Western

people, as imagined by Japanese writers of these discourses. "Through the returnees, we Japanese who do not have such characteristics must learn from those who have such splendid characteristics." (30) is the message in these discourses.

It appears then that the universality, which intercultural education aims to achieve, is shaped by the imagined and idealized Western values and norms. If we look at the documents more closely, we find that they do not refer to the West in general, but rather focus on the values and norms of the USA in particular. The **86-book** has a section 'An American school cares for each individual student' and praised public education in America. The **86-book** in one section argued that the American approach in the math class might be more accurate and quick (108) than the Japanese approach. The **86-book** also commented,

> Students in the elementary schools in America have 'show and tell' classes and are trained to acquire a proper sense of humor, which is utterly different from Japanese vulgar jokes (158).

The **98-book** claimed,

> In America, people are required to assert their own opinion and to imbue their personality with a proper humor, while we Japanese must learn these skills (139-140).

All the writers of these documents are fascinated by particular norms in America and they regard them as universally valuable norms which intercultural education has to promote in the Japanese context.

To conclude this section, two things that have possibly shaped these discourses should be pointed out. The first, as explained in Chapter 3, is that most of the writers of these documents have had experience in America as overseas students during the 1980s. For these writers, America was the country from which they learnt and still have to learn. Second, the 1980s were the peak period of the literature of *Nihonjinron* in which Japanese culture or society was compared only with the specific image of

American society and culture (Yoshino 1997). The above documents have been written under such circumstances. These findings lead us to consider another distinctive notion in intercultural education, the notion of progress.

### 5.5.2 The notion of progress

The discourse saying that intercultural education in Japan still lags behind the US is a consequence of the above discourses. This section examines in what aspects and to what extent Japan is regarded as being behind in these documents.

Academics have expected the role and the significance of JCORed to change education in Japan.

> If we want to change our identity to be more flexible and diverse and to have more international sense, JCORed must play an important role in Japan (the **86-book** 30).
>
> JCOed re-examines fundamentally the way in which our education has operated over the last hundred years (the **98-book** 45).

A common attitude indicated in both documents is that returnees from overseas (the Western countries) will have an impact on Japanese society and thus JCORed will become a driving force in changing the homogenizing and immature education system in Japan.

The way in which these documents describe the perceived lack of development in education in Japan is the opposite to how they describe the distinctive features of returnees. For example, the phrases 'uniform education' and 'single-track tendency' are often used to describe education in Japan negatively (the **86-book** 199, 313). These discourses have adopted the views of the Japanologists uncritically such as the view that Japan has not a diverse but a very homogeneous society. One of the aims of this study is to examine how the cultural intermediaries overseas consider these public discourses of backwardness of Japan.

These public discourses state not only that Japan is delayed but also the degree to which Japan lags behind. A view presented by Kato (the **86-book** 81), who is a current president of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan, is as follows,

> My daughter entered an ordinary [he emphasized that the school is ordinary] elementary school in America [while he stayed in America for one year]. Having been taught in an education system respecting individual students, she could speak fluent English after six months. When she was about to leave for Japan, she spoke like an American with the American accent. I wonder if the schools in Japan could provide such education. Is it just that I feel ashamed with education in Japan?

This kind of partiality may be extreme. However, he became one of the most recognized academics and wrote an article that presented such a view, and later he became the president of the largest, leading academic association of intercultural education in Japan. Again, his comment above has never received any criticism. This illustrates the very distinctiveness of the discourse in Japan, which praised America and pointed out the backwardness of Japan. Ebuchi (the **86-book**), who was a former president of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan, also stated,

> The returnees to America, where the society has recently shifted under the idea of cultural pluralism on top of the traditional individualism, are much more fortunate than those who return to Japan (311).

This section illustrates how the dominant discourses idealized America and that most excerpts indicate that intercultural education in Japan has been enchanted by and longs to replicate the idealized image of the West, particularly of America (Yoshino 1997: 251-253). However, to expose this tendency is not the purpose of this study. Rather, it is to examine how these public discourses have been accepted by the cultural intermediaries.

## 5.6 Cultural relativism

The remaining section of this chapter focuses on how the documents view culture rather than intercultural education itself. The first theme is cultural relativism.

The **97-book** (50) pointed out the tendency of the parents of Japanese children overseas to encourage their children to make contact with the local culture and people in the Western developed countries whose culture they admire. On the other hand, it mentioned that the parents considered that there was nothing to learn from the developing countries and that they even regarded culture and customs in developing countries as harmful to their children. The policy of JCOed has been echoing such views of the parents. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the MOE has built week-end supplementary Japanese schools in the Western countries[7] under the premise that the children should attend the local schools there, while full-time Japanese schools have been built in the developing countries where the local education has simply been regarded as insufficient.

The Japanese schools in the developing countries, too, have operated so-called exchange programs between the Japanese schools and the local schools there. The reason why the Japanese schools run these exchange programs, however, is because without the program organized by the schools, no spontaneous interaction would occur between Japanese children and the local children in the developing countries. Furthermore, if we look at these exchange programs carefully, more than half of these programs are implemented only between Japanese schools and other overseas children's schools such as American schools or international schools but not between Japanese schools and the local schools (The Center for Education of Children Overseas Tokyo University of Education 1983 - 1999). While many public discourses have expressed their expectation that JCOed would provide an excellent guide for

[7] The majority of them are located in the United States of America.

intercultural education in the future, JCOed has evidently discriminated against the cultures of developing countries.

Nevertheless, policy documents and academic writings have kept advocating the legitimacy of cultural relativistic views in intercultural education.

> We must acknowledge the differences in life styles, customs and values between diverse cultures and have to respect these differences among each other. To promote such an attitude is extremely important in education for international understanding (the **96-policy** 50).
>
> The most important aim of intercultural education is to shift the peoples' consciousness from ethnocentrism to cultural relativism (the **97-book** 259).

The writers of these documents said that we have to treat all cultures equally, but at the same time they have plainly declared that to learn the languages of developing countries is of no value since education in these countries is of a low level. This highlights the contradictions in these public discourses and is a good example of Foucault's understanding of the relationship between power and knowledge. What actually happens in JCOed illustrates that some knowledge is more powerful than other knowledge. Thus, Japanese overseas want to learn from the cultures of the developed countries but not from the developing countries.

One of the critical aspects here is that cultural relativistic views in these public discourses have emerged only in the discussion concerning Japan and the Western countries. This is also related to the above finding that universalistic norms in these discourses mean the values and norms of the West. When those who produce public discourses assert all cultures are equal, they overlook the fact that the norms, which they believe to be universalistic, are derived from idealized Western cultures. Consequently, the advocates of such cultural relativism could keep promoting such idealistic and naïve views.

> The returnees are the persons who can overview the various cultures equally from a better position compared with the ordinary Japanese (the **97-book** 5).
>
> I will emphasize again. We should not regard that there are any supreme or inferior, or good or bad cultures in the diversity of cultures. We have to respect the cultural relativistic view (267).

These considerations help to identify why this kind of cultural relativism has been accepted and scarcely challenged in Japan. In Chapter 7, I will examine how the cultural intermediaries respond to this discourse of cultural relativism.

## 5.7 Cultural pluralism

In Chapter 3, I pointed out that the early stage of JCORed was focused on adaptation, that is, to help returnees be able to adjust themselves to Japanese society and education as soon as possible upon their return to Japan. Japanization is the word in Japanese that means assimilation. One of the aims of JCORed was Japanization in this sense. Some academics criticized this tendency.

> JCORed has been no more than education for assimilation (the **86-book** 22).
>
> Japanese society, which tends to maintain its homogeneity by excluding heterogeneousness, has not been changed at all (308).

The idea that academics developed to replace the notion of assimilation was cultural pluralism. The **86-book** claimed how splendid cultural pluralism is (311), and proposed that Japanese society must shift from the homogeneous model to a pluralistic model (313).

As a result, an out-and-out commitment to assimilation policy was gradually rejected after the 1990s. For example, the **96-policy** (56) argued,

> From now on, we will have to develop education for not only the returnees but also the children of foreigners in Japan and the ordinary Japanese children. In JCORed, we have to study education in which all of them can study together and which is open to other cultures and other languages.

The intention to move away from education for assimilation is manifest in such arguments. Nevertheless, it is still not appropriate to say that intercultural education in Japan started to embrace the notion of multiculturalism. There are distinctive features of cultural pluralism in these Japanese discourses. From the **96-policy** and the **97-book**, I will examine three such features.

The first concerns the attitude toward other cultures as expressed in these documents. Intercultural education in Japan has focused on deepening the understanding of other cultures. "Intercultural understanding has so far meant understanding other cultures" (the **97-book**: 100). Of course, this kind of effort is limited toward the cultures of the developed countries, especially English speaking countries (Section 5.5). Nevertheless, the discourse, saying that we have to be well aware of other cultures, has dominated the documents of intercultural education (Chapter 3).

On the other hand, intercultural education in these documents has also assumed the other culture to be a 'different' culture. The discourses advocate that the Japanese must learn these 'different' cultures as long as they do not lose Japanese identity. Providing that people can maintain their Japaneseness, the documents encourage them to absorb 'different' cultures enthusiastically. This stance is related to the notion of cultural essentialism, which will be dealt with in the next section.

The second feature of cultural pluralism in Japan can be seen in education for the children of foreigners residing in Japan. The presence of these children in increasing numbers in the 1990s has attracted much attention in the field of intercultural education (the **96-policy**). In contrast to the JCORed, which has undergone some

changes as seen above, education for these foreigners' children in Japan has been consistently underpinned by the notion of assimilation.

> It is important for us to help these children of the foreigners to adapt as smoothly by as possible into the life style and school life of our country (the **96-policy**: 56).

There is a message in the above policy indicating the hope that the foreigners will assimilate or adapt speedily in Japan. On the other hand, statements, for example, that mention their language or cultural maintenance have never appeared in any documents. Nor have policy documents mentioned ethnic schools for these foreign children nor education and programs involving such schools in Japan. The **98-book** only suggested some programs below.

> In the schools where many foreigners' children are attending, we have to promote education for international understanding, by letting these children talk about their countries, introducing their ethnic clothing, songs and games to Japanese children (180).

In short, these children are regarded as the mere targets of compensatory support and as temporary guests in Japanese society (Chapter 3). The stance of education toward these children accentuates and celebrates their difference, and typically focuses on what they can show and tell. In other words, they are treated in a very similar way to which returnees were treated once in the 1970s and 1980s. The priority of this education is to assimilate or adapt these children into Japanese society as quickly as possible. This is the second point indicating the view of cultural pluralism in Japan.

The third aspect of cultural pluralism in Japan concerns the view expressed in the last chapter of the **97-book** titled 'Establish the study of intercultural education' (Sato: 269-283). It presented three models of society, the society of assimilation, integration and co-existence. According to Sato, the assimilation model was illustrated as A + B = A (A is a majority group and B is a minority group). The integration model is illustrated as A + B = A + B (Both groups can maintain their identity, which

resembles the 'salad bowl model' discussed in Chapter 2), and the co-existence model is illustrated as A + B = A' + B' (Both should be changed). The author argued that Japanese society had to shift from the society of an assimilation model to the integration model and from the integration model to the co-existence model. The message is plain. The problem is, however, this statement does not mention anything about the process of how to reach such a society of co-existence.

It is generally understood that those who are in minority groups must change their identity to some extent whenever they encounter and interact with a majority group. Those who are in minority groups may also have to change their culture and sometimes even their language. The **97-book** argued that not only those who are in minority groups, but also those who are in majority groups would be required to change their cultures in order to achieve a society of co-existence. However, it did not discuss how this change could be achieved. Moreover, documents in the **97-book** neglected to consider the tensions, conflicts and confrontations, which may occur during the process.

I describe this kind of discourse as a conflict-free discourse and this conflict freeness is a distinctive feature of cultural pluralism as proposed by intercultural education in Japan. "We use the word 'intercultural education' but not 'multicultural education' in Japan because the notion of multicultural education has not been adopted in Japan" (The Intercultural Education Society in Japan, 2000). This is what Kato, who is the president of the Society, said at the opening of the twentieth annual conference of the Society. This symbolizes the basic stance of intercultural education in Japan. Intercultural education in Japan views the other culture as a different culture from the viewpoint of Japanese culture. Because the subject of social change (the Japanese in this case) is not required to be changed beyond their Japaneseness, no conflict emerges. Even if conflict does occur, the discourse regards this simply as a matter to be overcome with some achievable effort. Usually, the content of the effort is not

explained. This naïve cultural relativism and this idealistic notion of co-existence are supported by such a conflict-free view in intercultural relationship. The framework of this discourse will be further examined in the next section on cultural essentialism.

## 5.8 Cultural essentialism

As seen in the previous sections, works by academics have often described Japanese society and culture as homogeneous and have emphasized its uniqueness.

> The behavior and consciousness of Japanese people has been geographically and historically restricted (the **88-book**: 19).
>
> The Japanese lead a very hectic life and this lifestyle is so different from tranquil life in schools and society in other countries (48).

These works not only regard Japan as unique but they also consider the features of Japan and Japanese society negatively. For example, the **98-book** presented a table entitled a comparison between the schools in Japan and schools in other countries and described the following things in a very negative tone. The table lists 19 distinctive features of Japanese schools and 20 distinctive features of schools in other countries. Among them, only one negative terms was used to describe the schools in other countries, saying that students in schools in foreign countries drink cola, chew gum and lie down in the classrooms.[8] Concerning schools in Japan, however, at least six points were listed as negative aspects of Japanese education. They are:

> Curriculum is very uniform. The classes are one-sided (only teachers talk). It is a cramming knowledge education. The quota of the class is too large. Teachers prefer to give many moralizing lectures.

In contrast, academic writings in intercultural education have evaluated the society and culture of Western countries positively. The **88-book** illustrated how the

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[8] Commonly in Japan, these things are described in negative terms.

returnees' experience overseas was wonderful and valuable. It also praised returnees' distinguishing characteristics, which are a reflection of the academics' images of the society and culture overseas. For example, the **88-book** (283) pointed out that

> They (the returnees) have good public morality. They are independent. They have a volunteer spirit and a sense of internationalization. They are big-hearted.

These features were also regarded as "important social skills that the Japanese will have to acquire in order to be adopted in intercultural contexts" (the **97-book**: 134-150).

It is unclear where these distorted and even self-tormenting discourses come from. They uncritically claim that there is a sharp division between almost all problematized features in Japan and almost all praised features in the countries outside of Japan. A body of literature called *Nihonjinron* gives some clues, because, as cited earlier, the discourse of intercultural education has been influenced by and is very similar to the discourses of *Nihonjinron*. *Nihonjinron* and the discourses in intercultural education, for example, claimed that Japan has been geographically isolated, but they offered no evidence as to why only Japan could be described as an isolated nation in the world. These discourses argued that life overseas is tranquil, but they never identify where their 'overseas' is located. As I have argued (Mabuchi 1998), these discourses have at least three problems. First, these discourses have been constructed on the basis of selected examples; more precisely speaking, the discourses depend solely on examples that are convenient for the writers. For example, when they say that Japan is a small island country, they never refer to the fact that the UK or Singapore are also island countries. They compared Japan with a large country such as America or Australia and forced the readers to believe that yes, Japan is a small isolated country. Also, when they claim that education overseas is tranquil, they tend to ignore the facts of very competitive secondary education in Korea or Taiwan or that Japanese university students are often referred to as 'the students in leisure land' because of

having so much free time. These are just a few examples illustrating the biased focus of the writers of these discourses. This first problem of *Nihonjinron* leads us to consider the second problem, that is, that comparisons made in these discourses are very limited. As cited in the previous section of this chapter, when *Nihonjinron* discuss the issues in other countries outside of Japan, they focus only on Western developed countries, especially America. Most of these discourses were written, therefore, based on a comparison between Japan and an imagined and idealized America. The third problem is that *Nihonjinron* always deal with Japan as a whole (Befu 1987: 42-47). There is no focus on the diversity within Japanese society such as differences between generations, genders, and living areas. This homogenizing approach to Japanese society and culture is another distinctive feature of these discourses.

These views towards society and culture found in *Nihonjinron* and the works by academics and policy makers in intercultural education display cultural essentialism. Essentialism here means to regard Japan always as a whole and unique. It assumes that there is some essentialist core culture in Japan. This essentialism is the driving force which advocates the views that Japan is unique and has many problems in intercultural education and also that Japan has to catch up with Western countries which are always regarded as more progressive than Japan.

In Chapter 7, I will examine the response of cultural intermediaries overseas toward this essentialist view in the public discourse. If these Japanese overseas agree with these public discourses, how have they formed their views? With which country do they compare Japan? Do they regard Japan in a homogenist way? These are the questions investigated in the interviews later.

## 5.9 Inequalities in Japanese society: attitudes regarding male and female returnees

The discourses by academics in this field were characterized by their treatment of Japan as a uniform and homogeneous society. This tendency is true of the four documents that have been dealt with in this chapter. No single phrase could be found to reflect the diversity in Japanese society caused by location, occupation, income level, academic background, generation, and gender. Yet all documents regarded Japanese society homogeneously.

> It is extremely important in education for international understanding to know who I am. If a person does not make clear his standpoint as a Japanese, he/she is not evaluated highly in international society (the **96-policy**: 51).

This preached again the importance of establishing Japaneseness in intercultural education. In JCORed, if the children do not have a firm Japanese identity, they have been regarded as rootless and they have always been the targets of compensatory support. Marginality or hybridity of identity in a single person have been estimated only negatively in these discourses (Hara 1996).

Under the conditions described above, it has been difficult to deconstruct Japanese society and explore the diversity within Japanese culture. However, boys and girls have been treated differently in JCORed. When I taught in a school for returnees and a Japanese school overseas, when I was an adviser to the mothers of the returnees in Japan, and when I visited the Japanese schools in Malaysia, China, and Australia, I was told stories such as the following:

> If I had a son, I would send him back to Japan as early as possible for him to prepare to enter a good high school and a good university. But if I had a daughter, if she goes to high schools overseas or even a university overseas, I do not think it will hurt her career (a mother in Kuala Lumpur).

> In a girl's case, if she can speak English, it is very good for her in this age of internationalization. But in a boy's case, speaking English is important but does not come first. The more important issue for the boys is entering a good university in order to get a good job in a good company (a businessman in Melbourne).

Unfortunately, these views never appeared in any policy documents and academic writings. These are, however, widely expressed discourses among the people interested in JCOed including businesspersons, teachers, and parents.

There are some discourses, which are not mentioned in the public documents, but shared among those involved in intercultural education. The above are good examples. I will investigate these somewhat hidden discourses in interviews as much as possible. Particularly, I will focus on the issues which reveal the diversity within Japanese society. In doing so, I hope to find the commonality and differences between the public discourses and the discourses of cultural intermediaries and also between each group of cultural intermediaries. All of these issues will be examined in Chapters 6 and 7.

## 5.10 Conclusion

The discourses concerning intercultural education revealed in two policy documents and two academic writings have been examined. Below is a summary of these discourses in the written documents.

1) One of the most important competencies intercultural education aims for is the competence for coexistence. The process of how to reach co-existence, however, was not considered and the discussion of what to do when conflict emerged in such a process was not found either.

2) Another important competence is the competence in intercultural communication. The examination of the documents revealed that this means language proficiency, particularly oral English.

3) The documents repeated the importance of understanding Japanese culture and acquiring Japanese identity although they have also pursued international and intercultural understanding. This indicates that all documents have been written in the framework of education for Japanese nationals. After the mid-1990s, without discussing the relationship between globalization and nation states, some naïve discourse advocating global education emerged in some academic documents.

4) The works by the academics are filled with messages saying that intercultural education in Japan lags far behind the Western countries, and that it must be shifted to education grounded on universalistic values and norms. These discourses, however, have been supported by a naïve faith based on the idealized and imagined (by the Japanese) American values and norms.

5) While JCOed visibly discriminates between the cultures of Western developed countries and those of developing countries, public discourses do not accept this view. Policy and the academic writings have enthusiastically advocated cultural relativism saying that each culture has equal value and there is no superiority and inferiority between cultures.

6) The academic works pointed out the need to shift from education for assimilation to education for cultural pluralism. Education for the children of the foreign resident, however, still aims for them to assimilate into Japanese society. The documents did not consider power relationships between the Japanese and other people in Japan and simply encouraged Japanese to learn whatever they can from the different cultures. This conflict-free discourse is a distinctive feature of cultural pluralism in Japan.

7) Most documents regarded culture as being essentialistic. They also evaluated Japanese education very negatively. Three distinctive features of these discourses are pointed out. These three are that argument is based on selected examples, there is a limited comparison only with the West (America), and there is a homogenizing approach to Japanese society and culture.

8) As a contrast to (7), no discourse was found to mention the diversity in Japanese society and culture. The lack of interest shown toward gender issues, which is actually obvious in JCORed, is an excellent example, illustrating this tendency of intercultural education in Japan.

These are the main features of the discourses of intercultural education presented by the policy producers and the academics in the field. These features of public discourses form a significant context when the cultural intermediaries speak about their views on intercultural education. When the interviews were conducted, some questions emerged referring to these discourses between the interviewer and the interviewees. In Chapters 6 and 7, I will deal with data from the interviews and the analysis of these data, which will form the core of this study.

# CHAPTER SIX
# CULTURAL INTERMEDIARIES' VIEWS ON INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

## 6.1 Introduction

The interviews and their analysis that are the core of this study will be explored in this and the next chapter. The participants' views on intercultural education will be dealt with in this chapter and their understandings of culture will be dealt with in the next chapter. Before examining the outcomes of the interviews, I will introduce the two sites for research. These include the Japanese Schools and associated societies in Melbourne and Kuala Lumpur.

### 6.1.1 The Japanese School and Japanese society in Melbourne

**The Japanese School of Melbourne**

The Japanese School of Melbourne is located in a quiet residential area in the city of Glen Eira, which is approximately ten kilometers southeast from the heart of Melbourne. The school has 101 students (13 children in preparatory, 69 children at the primary level and 19 children at the junior high level). Most of them are the children of *chūzaiin*, Japanese businessmen overseas.

According to the school handbook, the aim of education at the school is "to bring up children who have a pride in and a consciousness of being Japanese nationals, who possess fertile and flexible thought, and who have a sense of internationality in order that they may become contributors to international society" (The Japanese School of Melbourne 2000: 7).

The school has 205 school days a year and three terms. The first term is from April to July, the second term is from September to December and the third term is from

January to March. Between each term, there are vacations from two weeks to one month. All of these schedules are identical to those in Japan. The classes start at 8:45 every morning and finish at 3:30. There are four 45-minute classes in the morning and two in the afternoon.

Five times a year there are student exchanges between the Japanese school and mainstream Australian schools. Japanese students introduce Japanese songs, games and calligraphy when they visit Australian schools, while Australian students participate in classes when they visit the Japanese school. There is also an annual school trip of four days. The children stay at a farm but mostly spend their time visiting various tourist spots. After the trip, all children must write essays about the trip. The junior high students have four hours of English lessons a week, which is the same as the students in Japan. On top of that, the Melbourne Japanese School offers English as a Second Language (ESL) lessons, four hours at the primary level and three hours in the junior high level.

**The school board and businessmen representatives**

The school board is the decision-making body of the school and has nine members. Five of them are the heads of Japanese companies in Melbourne. The other members are the principal of the school, a mother representing the primary section, a mother representing the secondary section and a member of the consular staff from the Japanese consulate in Melbourne. The members from the Japanese companies are also members of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Melbourne and Japanese Society of Melbourne. The school board has three secretaries, two of whom are executives of Japanese companies and one who is the manager of the school office. They are slightly younger than the members of the board. In the research for this study, I was able to interview the five business representatives on the school board and the two secretaries, who are executives of Japanese companies.

The average age of these seven businessmen was 46 and five of them had graduated from universities. Most of them had lived overseas and had had numerous overseas trips before coming to Melbourne. In this way they differed from the teachers and the mothers in this study, who had not had as many overseas experiences as these businessmen. They evaluated their English competency as fairly high. In fact, out of all the target groups for the interviews in this study, only the businessmen in Melbourne assessed their English competency as very high. Their degree of satisfaction regarding their life in Melbourne was very high, too.

**Teachers**

According to the school handbook (The Japanese School of Melbourne 2000), the total number of staff was 21 in 1999. There were 16 teachers and out of these 16, 13 had been dispatched by the Ministry of Education. They were selected from throughout Japan and stayed overseas for strictly three years. I interviewed seven teachers including a principal, a vice-principal, and five teachers who were the heads of various committees in the school. The average age of these seven teachers was 43; six of them had graduated from universities and one had a postgraduate degree. They evaluated their English competence as only average and were happy with life in Melbourne.

**Mothers**

All parents participating in PTA activities were mothers. From grades one to six in the primary and from years seven to nine in the junior high, there are representative mothers from each year level. Their term of service is one year. I was able to interview seven of them. The average age of these seven mothers was 38. Three of them had graduated from universities, two from junior colleges, one from high school, and one did not respond about her education. They self-evaluated their English competence as average and they were reasonably satisfied with their life in Melbourne.

**The Japanese in Melbourne**

According to the Japanese consulate in Melbourne, 5062 Japanese people were registered with the consulate as residents in Victoria in 2000. Most of them live around Melbourne. Melbourne has a fairly large number of permanent Japanese residents and some of them have formed their own association called the Japan Club of Victoria (JCV). Approximately 80 families are members of the JCV, which indicates that the majority of the 5062 Japanese are likely to be temporary residents, mostly businessmen and their families. 85 offices or branches of the Japanese companies are members of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Melbourne. Most of these member organizations are prestigious enterprises in Japan such as banks, manufacturers, and trading companies.

There are many Japanese restaurants around Melbourne and most Japanese foodstuffs can be purchased in several grocery shops around the city. Many businessmen's families live in houses provided by companies in exclusive residential districts such as South Yarra and Toorak. They read Japanese newspapers sent from Japan and watch Japanese national broadcasts on cable TV. These families enjoyed various activities such as golf. In fact, golf is played by the majority of Japanese men in Melbourne. They travel to other states in Australia and some neighboring countries, for example, Fiji and New Zealand and also go back to Japan at least every two years using their long holidays (Mabuchi 1997).

**The Japanese Saturday School in Melbourne**

There is a Saturday Japanese School in Melbourne, which over 200 Japanese children attend. Nearly a half of the children at the school are the children of permanent residents, and more than a half of them are the children of businessmen. The members of the school board are parent volunteers and the teachers are recruited from among

Japanese students studying at universities in Melbourne and mothers who possess a Japanese teachers' certificate.

There are not so many cities in the world where both a full-time Japanese school and a weekend Japanese school exist together. Apart from Melbourne, only New York, Chicago (there are only two full-time Japanese schools in US), London and Sydney have both kinds of school. All of these cities are in English speaking countries. One of the distinctive features of JCOed, described in Chapter 3, is that the division between the English speaking countries and non-English speaking countries is demonstrated in this way.

### 6.1.2 The Japanese School and Japanese society in Kuala Lumpur

The Japanese School of Kuala Lumpur is situated in hilly country near Suban, where the old international airport was. The school started in 1966 and shifted to the current site in 1993. The school is one of the largest Japanese schools in the world, and consists of two buildings: one for the primary section and one for the junior high section, each of which is three storeys high. Each building has its own courtyard and gymnasium. There are 734 students (56 children in preps, 464 children in primary level and 245 children in junior high level). Most of them are the children of *chūzaiin*, Japanese businessmen overseas.

**The Japanese School of Kuala Lumpur**

The aim of the school according to the school handbook is "to bring up Japanese nationals who have a healthy body, strong mentality, excellent intelligence and rich sense of internationalization based on the full development of the nature and ability of each child" (The Japanese School of Kuala Lumpur 2000: 31).

The school has 202 school days a year and three terms. The first term is from April to July, the second term is from September to December and the third term is from

January to March. Between each term, there are vacations from two weeks to one month. All of these dates are identical to the ones in Japan. The classes start at 8:40 every morning and finish at 4:30. There are four 45-minute classes in the morning and three in the afternoon. The last session of each day is used for club activities. This is different from the Japanese schools in Australia. The Japanese children in Kuala Lumpur do not participate in activities such as sports outside of the school, so the school has to provide these activities.

**International understanding exchange program**

Each grade has an exchange program with the local schools through which Japanese students visit a local school once a year and the children from local schools visit the Japanese School once yearly. The contents of the programs are the introduction of Japanese games and Malaysian games to each other. What the Kuala Lumpur Japanese School promotes the most in education for international understanding is the village stay program for the students in Grade 4 and upwards. In this program, the participants, including staff and students, study survival Malay language and then stay at a local Malay village for three days. Every year, the school has published a collection of compositions by the participants filled with enthusiastic exclamations such as "we have experienced the wonderful real Malay" (The Japanese School of Kuala Lumpur 1999). Only a tenth of the children, however, join this program each year. In other words, the Japanese children in Kuala Lumpur Japanese School have few opportunities to interact with local Malay people in their daily life except for contact with the driver or the domestic helpers at home. Like other Japanese schools, the Kuala Lumpur Japanese school has school trips. The senior primary school children go to Singapore and the junior high school children go to Thailand. The activities during the trips are to visit various tourist spots. Beside the school trip, the school runs two excursions a year to provide the chance for the children to enjoy the nature and culture of Malaysia. All these programs are planned and implemented by

the committee of education for international understanding led by the director of international exchange who is dispatched by the Ministry of Education to several Japanese schools in the world. The junior high students have 3 hours English lessons a week, which is the same as students in Japan. In addition, the Kuala Lumpur Japanese School offers English conversation classes for one hour weekly in the lower primary level and two hours in the upper primary and junior high school levels. The Ministry of Education nominated the Kuala Lumpur Japanese School as the school that best promotes education for international understanding in 2000. This indicates that the international exchange program of the Kuala Lumpur Japanese School is highly evaluated among the people involved in JCOed.

**The school board and the businessmen representatives**

The school board is the decision-making body of the school, and consists of 13 members. Six of them are heads of Japanese companies in Kuala Lumpur. The other members are a consular official from the Japanese consulate of Kuala Lumpur, the principal of the school, the deputy principal, the head of the school office, and three mothers who are the representatives of the PTA. Because I needed to interview businessmen who had an awareness of intercultural education, I chose to interview all six business representatives on the school board, and the consular official.

The average age of these seven people was 52 and five of them have graduated from universities. Most of them have lived overseas and taken numerous overseas trips, unlike most of the teachers and mothers. They evaluated their English competency as adequate. Their degree of satisfaction toward life in Kuala Lumpur was very high.

**Teachers**

Because of the large size of the school, there are 94 staff members at the school. Among them, 10 English conversation teachers and 7 teachers of preps have been hired from the local communities. 52 teachers had been dispatched by the Ministry of

Education and the head of the office and the director of international exchange program were also sent from Japan. I interviewed seven teachers including the principal, two vice-principals (one in the primary and the other in the junior high), two academic coordinators, and a head teacher of the preparatory year, the head of the school office and the director of the international exchange program.

The average age of these eight people was 53; six of them were graduates from universities and one had a postgraduate degree. They evaluated their English competence as average and some of them mentioned that their competence in Malay was also mediocre. This distinguished them from the businessmen and mothers who said that their Malay was not even mediocre. Their satisfaction with the life in Malaysia was moderate.

**Mothers**

All parents participating in PTA activities were mothers. I interviewed all officials of the year 1999 including the president of the PTA, two vice presidents, two representatives of mothers of preparatory year students, two secretaries, and two treasurers. The average age of these seven mothers was 39. Four of them had graduated from universities, two from junior colleges, two from high school, and one from a vocational college. They evaluated their English as average or poor and their Malay as very poor. Their satisfaction with life in Malaysia was not very high. The degree of satisfaction with life in Malaysia decreased from the businessmen to the teachers and from the teachers to the mothers. In fact, the mothers group in Kuala Lumpur showed the lowest satisfaction toward their current life overseas among all the groups in this study.

**The Japanese in Kuala Lumpur**

According to the Japanese embassy in Kuala Lumpur, 7638 Japanese people were registered with the embassy as residents in Kuala Lumpur in 1999. Most of them are

temporary residents. Compared with Australia, where a fairly large number of Japanese live permanently and have established an association of their own, no such organizations existed in Malaysia. There are approximately 600 offices, branches, and factories of Japanese companies, which are members of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Kuala Lumpur. Most of them are prestigious enterprises in Japan such as banks, manufacturers, and trading companies. Unlike in Australia, however, some medium and small size enterprises have also been established in Malaysia.

There are more than 10 Japanese bookstores in Kuala Lumpur. People can read Japanese newspapers on the same day as they appear in Japan and receive Japanese broadcasts on cable TV. The majority of Japanese use these Japanese media as information sources but do not use the local media (Mabuchi 1995b). The residential area for the Japanese in Kuala Lumpur is exclusively concentrated in four areas, Bangsar, Taman Tun, Mont' Kiara, and Subang (Shikauchi 1999). Japanese families live in a forest of high-rise condominiums attached to the shops where they can get most Japanese food and sundries. Japanese restaurants can be found everywhere in the city. Japanese families employ a driver and some home-helpers provided by their companies. In other words, their life in Kuala Lumpur is quite different from life in Japan in this respect. Their leisure in Kuala Lumpur is dominated by playing golf and dining out. In fact, a few people told me that the people, especially the men, couldn't live in Kuala Lumpur without playing golf because not only the businessmen but also every teacher at the Japanese School played golf in Kuala Lumpur. They travel to other countries in Asia and in the Pacific including Australia, and also go back to Japan at least every two years using their long holidays. They spend approximately three times as much of their time with their Japanese friends as they do with their local friends (Mabuchi, 1997).

**International schools and supplementary coaching schools in Kuala Lumpur**

There are several British and American international schools in Kuala Lumpur. Approximately 250 Japanese children go to these international schools. These children are educated in the English language throughout their curriculum. There is no Japanese Saturday School in Kuala Lumpur as there is in many English speaking countries. There are, however, six supplementary coaching schools in Kuala Lumpur. Japanese children, who choose the international school instead of the Japanese School, go to these supplementary schools. They attempt to develop their English at the international schools and prepare in the coaching schools for returning to Japan.

### 6.1.3 Interview questions

This chapter explores the views of the interviewees on intercultural education. The questions, which I asked each interviewee, are summarized in the five areas below. In category 1), I asked the interviewees for their views on competence in intercultural education. Before the interview, all interviewees had had a chance to read the Ministry of Education's views on JCOed attached to the pre-interview questionnaire that I had sent. I opened each interview by asking for their responses to the views of the Ministry of Education. The questions in category 2) examine whether and to what extent the interviewees regard Japanese as lagging behind in intercultural education. Questions in category 3) ask about their views toward the role of language in intercultural education, and in category 4) the aim is to tease out interviewees' views about the notion of universality in intercultural education. These questions reflect the conceptual frameworks and my critiques of the history and public discourses of intercultural education in Japan. Based on the contents from categories 1) to 4), I asked questions in category 5) in which I investigated the interviewees' views on globalization, definitions of intercultural education, and the national government's roles in intercultural education. I concluded this section by asking how the interviewees would respond if the norms of intercultural understanding and their own norms clashed.

The discussion of the findings in this chapter is organized under headings that reflect the questions interviewees were asked to answer. The questions asked were as follows.

1) Competence in intercultural education

   1. How do you define the competence required for successful coexistence?

   2. How would you define the competence required for intercultural communication?

   3. What do you think is the most important competence in intercultural education?

2) Indication about whether Japanese people are behind in acquiring competence in intercultural education

   1. Do you think Japanese people have the competence for coexistence?

   2. Do you think Japanese people have the competence in intercultural communication?

3) Views about the need to acquire foreign languages in Japanese intercultural education

   1. Why is English so important?

   2. Which is more important in countries other than English speaking countries, English or a local language other than English? To what extent are local languages important?

4) Indication of perception of universality in Japanese intercultural education?

   1. Do you think that making eye contact, saying yes or no, not speaking vaguely, are all important in intercultural communication?

   2. Do you think that these norms are all universal ways of maintaining communication?

5) The definition of intercultural education and the role of the government

   1. What do you think globalization is?

   2. How do you define education for international understanding?

3. Do you think that the government should be the major player in pursuing international education?

4. What would you do if the norms of intercultural understandings and your own norms clashed?

## 6.2 Competence of intercultural education

The questions in this section aimed to examine how Japanese overseas responded to the public discourses, particularly concerning the two competencies promoted by the policy makers and academics.

### 6.2.1 How do you define competence required for successful coexistence?

This question aimed to examine the interviewees' views on the notion of coexistence that has been widely advocated in the discourse of intercultural education in Japan. The interviewees' views are divided into two categories. One is that to coexist means to understand others, and the other is that to coexist means to understand Japan more. I will explain these below.

The most popular answer in the first category, on which approximately a half of the interviewees agreed, was expressed in the phrase 'the competence for coexistence is the competence to understand'. Then, I asked the interviewees, 'understand what?' Although the responses to this question varied, including "foreign countries' people" (a teacher), "people from overseas" (a mother), "local people who live in the country where I live now" (a teacher), "people of the various nations" (a teacher), and "people regardless of any national boundaries" (a businessmen), a common feature emerged. The notion of countries or nations dominated in their answers when they talked about 'the others'. This result indicates that the concept of the 'others' in the discourse of Japanese overseas is defined by the notion of nation. There was one businessman who stated "It's not just the nationality issue, it's about coexisting with people from

different classes and educational backgrounds". His answer was, however, exceptional.

There were some variations in the answers that focused on understanding others. The first variation concerned 'accepting people from other backgrounds', which was an expansion of the concept of understanding, mentioned mainly by businessmen. In fact, two businessmen used the term 'to accept' in English in their answers. When I worked among Japanese businessmen overseas during the 1980s, the term 'to accept' was widely used among them as one of the Japanese English expressions. It seems that the term 'accepting others' has been a popular idiomatic expression among Japanese businessmen.

Another variation suggested that 'understanding' is 'getting on well' or 'being good friends with others'. These answers sounded vague and abstract. Therefore, I attempted to seek more concrete meanings for their answers whenever it was possible. When I asked the interviewees in this category to further explain their answers, many of them began with recommendations such as 'you have to see [cultural] differences as differences, but you must not judge', and 'you shouldn't clash [over differences]'. These comments demonstrated their hope to avoid any confrontation. Quite a few interviewees emphasized the importance of mutual respect, putting up with things not liked, or simply compromising in order to avoid conflict.

As a whole, the message in the answers of this category is summarized in the following words and phrases of the interviewees. Competence for coexistence means "the ability to get along well with the people around you" (a teacher), and "the ability to have a smooth relationship with other people" (a businessman). They did not mention words such as 'clash' or 'confrontation' when they promoted the notion of coexistence. Their notion of coexistence was, therefore, a conflict-free model as was that in the public discourse (see Chapter 5). It has been identified in both the public discourse and in relation to at least half of the interviewees of Japanese overseas in

this study that the possibilities of conflict involved with the process of coexistence were scarcely considered.

The second category of answer was that to coexist means to understand Japan more, which came from approximately a quarter of the interviewees. These people claimed the importance of understanding Japaneseness, for example, "understanding Japanese people" (a businessman), "at least understanding Japan" (a businessman), "understanding your own country" (a teacher), and "having pride in your own countries" (a mother) as part of the competence for coexistence. What these answers meant is that the Japanese must deepen their understandings of Japanese culture in order to pursue international understanding. One of the teachers said,

> I'm not sure how strongly established my identity as a Japanese person is, but establishing it is important so as to accept the other person's culture, history and life style.

The stance of this category is identical to that in the public discourses seen in Chapter 5. These discourses echo what the Ministry of Education states: 'establish your identity as a Japanese' (Ministry of Education 1988). The relationship between strengthening Japaneseness and intercultural education will be explored more in 6.6 where the interviewees are asked for their definition of education of international understanding.

There were a few answers in response to the question of definition of competence for coexistence that did not fit either category although their numbers are small. Three businessmen stated that "the competence for coexistence is competence in intercultural communication", and one mother said "because the language barrier is so hard and I can't speak, I feel as if I can't achieve coexistence". They regarded competence in communication as the most important competence in intercultural education, views which will be examined in 6.2.2 below.

### 6.2.2 How would you define the competence required for intercultural communication?

This question asks the interviewees' views on another competence promoted by the public discourse in intercultural education in Japan. The responses to this question fell into two categories. The responses in the first category equated competence in intercultural communication with language proficiency, while the other responses did not see competence of communication as always related to language proficiency. I will discuss the latter view first.

Within this category, interviewees pointed out, for example, "there's language ability and also something else that is just as important" (a businessman), and "there must be something more important than language proficiency" (a mother). Then, I asked them to identify the other elements which are regarded as important by them in the competence in intercultural communication, other than language proficiency. The elements they mentioned were enthusiasm, a positive attitude, an international viewpoint, honesty, broadmindedness, an accepting attitude, philanthropy, courage and skill at communicating. In fact, two thirds of the interviewees mentioned at least one or two of these elements regardless of whether they believed these elements were more important than language proficiency or not. While all but one of these elements involved mental or emotional elements of communication, the last element 'skill in communication' in the list differed from the others because this emphasized the aspect of skill in communication. Only some businessmen mentioned this aspect of skill in communication as an important competence. One of them commented "things like selecting topics of conversation, the rhythm of speaking, listening to others, these are the same in English and Japanese, so communication skills include all these things". The other argued "it's not just language, things such as skills I learnt in Japan, how to get along with people, these are all as important as language". Considering that the businessmen's English competence was much higher than that of the other two groups,

and that only the businessmen pointed out the different elements of competence of communication in this way, the result indicates the more practical stance of businessmen toward intercultural communication.

Approximately one third of the interviewees plainly claimed that competence in communication does not only mean language ability. More than a half of those who said so were businessmen. One distinguishing feature among their answers is the perception that 'language is a tool'. They argued, for example, that "language is important, but it's important as a means" (a businessman) and "language is an important skill but it is just that, a skill" (a businessman). In fact, the terms 'tool' and 'skill' can be found only in the answers of businessmen. It must be noted again that only businessmen, who have more overseas experiences than the other groups, regarded language as 'a communicative tool'.

Now, the second category of the answers concerning competence in intercultural communication must be explored. The interviewees in this category claimed that competence in intercultural communication meant language competence and that language proficiency was the most important aspect although there might be other important things in communication. A half of the interviewees, especially the teachers and mothers, fell into this group. For example, they said "of course, language is the most basic [skill]" (a teacher), "language is everything" (a mother), and "language is the most important because even if you feel empathy, without language you can't understand" (a mother). Two things have to be pointed out here. The first is that when the people mentioned language proficiency – they meant in English - in particular, proficiency in oral English. In many cases, they use language and English as interchangeable terms in their answers. The expressions, for example, 'English is vital for communication' (a mother), 'the power of English conversation and the English language is strong in international society' (a teacher) and 'being able to speak English is important' (a mother) all demonstrated this.

The second notable feature is that more than a half of the people who fell into this category are mothers. As seen in the introduction of this Chapter, the proficiency of English of mothers was lower than that of the teachers and businessmen. Mothers interacted most reluctantly with the local non-Japanese people while they were overseas. Nevertheless, they claimed 'we must acquire the other language [English]'. When they stated their claims, they also expressed complex feelings toward English since they evaluated their English competence as fairly low. For instance, "I don't think we can understand anything without the language" and "if we can't speak the language properly, so many misunderstandings can occur over many things". It seemed that their complex feeling toward English was indicative of acceptance of the normative public discourse that advocates the need to learn English in the age of internationalization.

Not all mothers, however, agreed with this view. Less than one third of them argued that it is important to have a positive personality as well as language ability or that rather than language ability, only trying hard to converse is important. A mother frankly stated:

> I think that if I had studied English harder as a student, my life would be a lot easier. But I'm interested in people, so I think I can learn the language later. I don't think it's an excuse to just say I don't understand the language. If we have enough courage, there are plenty of opportunities. We just start from there.

These mothers were not many. Their contributions, however, reflected their concern with trying to overcome their insufficient English competence. Their contributions were also reflected in some of their own experiences in breaking the barrier of language. The majority of the mothers in Japanese communities overseas have only a few interactions with the local people. As one mother stated "we can live here without any contact with the people other than Japanese". Nevertheless, some of them do not fall into this category. As Mohanty (1995) has pointed out, this diversity reveals that

women cannot be treated as they usually are in most societies, as a single homogeneous group.

To summarize this section, there are basically two answers to the question of competence in communication in the intercultural context. One, which was supported by, in particular, the majority of the mothers, viewed competence of communication as meaning language proficiency. The other view, which was expressed by many businessmen, was that competence in intercultural communication is not only language proficiency. Those who claimed high English competence and many overseas experiences stated the latter view. On the other hand, those, who professed less English competence and fewer overseas experiences, supported the former view. This section has discussed the responses of Japanese overseas toward the public discourse that single-mindedly promote the importance of English. The results indicate that the responses varied from group to group and even within the same group of interviewees, depending on their relationship with and experience in intercultural circumstances.

### 6.2.3 What do you think is the most important competence in intercultural education?

The responses could be categorized under two general responses: the competence for coexistence and the competence in intercultural communication. The former view finds its advocates among the teachers and the latter view was supported by many mothers. A distinguishing feature was that the majority of teachers supported the former view and accepted the normative public discourse of intercultural education by the Ministry Education without any reservation. This was demonstrated clearly when many of them asserted that one of the important things is to understand their own country (Japan) thoroughly, a view promoted by the Ministry of Education throughout the history of JCORed and intercultural education (Chapter 3). Two teachers

commented that deepening the understanding of Japaneseness was the most important competence in intercultural education:

> If you don't understand your own country, you can't tell other people about it. That is insulting to the other people.
>
> If you go overseas without a strong understanding of your own country, you don't really have a respected place in international society.

Their views are in accord with the view of the Ministry of Education and also the major academics, who emphasize the importance of establishing Japaneseness (Chapter 5). The fact that the same tendency was not so obviously found among the mothers and businessmen in relation to this question suggests that the Ministry of Education exerts a strong influence in shaping the teachers' views in intercultural education in Japan. In the following sections, the influence of the public discourse on other aspects of intercultural education will be examined.

## 6.3 Indications about whether Japanese people are behind in acquiring competence in intercultural education

### 6.3.1 Do you think Japanese people have the competence for coexistence?

Except for two mothers, who said that Japanese had competence for coexistence, all interviewees answered that Japanese people did not have such a competence. The answers of the two mothers were "Japanese people have a sense of togetherness", and "Japanese people tend to accept positive aspects of other people". At interview, I asked these two mothers "do you think Japanese people can accept differing values?" They were bewildered and replied "I do not know". However, these two mothers did not replicate the discourse of the Ministry of Education and the academics, which states that Japanese people still lack the competence to achieve successful coexistence. Such opinions sitting at odds with the public discourse were found only among these mothers.

The majority view was that Japanese people have no competence in coexisting. At interview, I asked the interviewees why they thought Japanese lacked such competence. Three major reasons were offered, each of them by several people. The first reason was that Japanese stick together with other Japanese. The view that 'Japanese stick together' seemed to be shared widely among Japanese overseas because nine interviewees used exactly the same expression. The other two reasons were that Japan is an island state, and that Japan is a racially homogeneous country. These two statements reproduced exactly points made by the policy documents and the academic writings (Chapter 5), and demonstrate again public discourse was influential among Japanese overseas.

Five interviewees mentioned a different reason for the Japanese not having competence for coexistence. For instance, one of them stated "we haven't had a chance to interact with other cultures" and the other commented "because these opportunities will increase in the future, I think Japanese people will change". This indicates that a small number of people are not under the direct influence of the public discourse at least in some aspects, because these views are not found in the public discourse. These people attempted to consider and answer the questions from their own experiences. For instance, the view of one teacher was that:

> Children always talk about 'everyone', but it is very unclear who 'everyone' refers to. They think of themselves as being the same as everyone else, but in fact they all differ. Their personalities, their strengths and weakness all differ. I am trying to teach them that it is interesting that every one is different and that because we are all different we can be friends and have fun together.

This teacher's view was unique in that he questioned the discourse of Japanese homogeneity and presented his view towards his students. He was exceptional in this respect because the majority of the interviewees regarded Japanese society as a very homogeneous society (Chapter 7.4) and rarely suggested such a different point of view towards children. Still, even in this teacher's case, the aspects he raised

remained within a certain framework. He focused on the diversity related to the character or personality of the children but not to social stratification or differences in power. At interview, I attempted to bring out his view concerning the differences in the society caused by power relationships, referring, for example, to gender issues. My attempt, however, was not successful in obtaining his interest.

### 6.3.2 Do you think Japanese people have the competence in intercultural communication?

Except for four, all interviewees stated that the Japanese had no competence in intercultural communication. Three of the four who said that we (Japanese) had some competence in intercultural communication were mothers. These mothers claimed, for example, that "even if we can't speak the language well, we can get by". As seen in 6.3.1 above, a small number of participants raising a different view against the majority view were mothers. This again indicated that views not falling into the conventional framework tended to emerge from the mothers.

The majority, however, repeated the public discourse, that is, that Japanese do not have competence in intercultural communication. When I asked them the reasons supporting their answers, many of them immediately answered "because we are bad at language" (a businessman), and "because we are bad at conversation" (a teacher). Four interviewees added that the nature of Japanese people was an obstacle to competence in intercultural communication, and pointed out that it is because Japanese people are shy or easily embarrassed. These statements echo the public discourse claiming that we have no conversational skill and no language (English) proficiency, so we do not have competence in intercultural communication (Chapter 5).

The results of this section and the section above (6.3.1) both revealed that Japanese overseas generally accept the public discourse of policies and academic works

claiming that Japanese are generally lacking in the competence which intercultural education attempts to develop. On the other hand, these Japanese overseas have been blamed for moving only within Japanese circles and seeking few opportunities to communicate with other people except for the Japanese (Chapter 3). The responses to the pre-interview questionnaire highlighted this tendency (6.1.1 and 6.1.2). These Japanese, who talked much about coexistence, in fact, do not interact much with the local people. Teachers of the Japanese schools and the mothers in particular can get through a whole day speaking only in Japanese and with Japanese people.

Nevertheless, they are under the great influence of the public discourse of intercultural education, which promotes more interactions with the local people and more foreign language competence. I have heard many interviewees complaining that we (Japanese) lag behind in competence in intercultural education. These Japanese overseas, who have little contact with the local non-Japanese people, might have uneasy and complex feelings in their lives overseas. Their strong support of the public discourse and self-blaming statements could be a product of their complex feelings. In the next section, I explore how the interviewees viewed the public discourse claiming that 'competence in intercultural communication equals language proficiency which is equated with English proficiency'.

## 6.4 Views about the need to acquire foreign languages

### 6.4.1 Why is English so important?

According to the results of pre-interview questionnaire, nobody raised any objection to the importance of English competence in international society. Therefore, the question "why is English so important?" was asked of all interviewees. The responses fell into two categories. The first group regarded English as a tool of communication but the second group regarded English as a symbol of internationalization.

Within the first category, interviewees pointed out the wide usage of English as a practical reason for the importance of English, an opinion voiced by more than half of the interviewees. Many of these opinions were found amongst the businessmen. One businessman stated "competence in English is indispensable in the business world" and another stated "English is essential in order to access sources of information from the Internet". The reasons given for the importance of English are based on practical purposes, and they pointed out concrete situations in which competence in English is necessary. Nine people out of the ten who commented that competence in intercultural communication was not merely language proficiency in 6.1.2 above also valued English on only practical grounds. They stated "we need only a minimum English, for the content of what we want to say is more important than English competence" and "Unfortunately, we cannot help learning English only because of its wide use". In these views, there was no sign of an obsessive need to learn English or feelings of inadequacy at not being able to speak English fluently.

Many people in the second group who made comments such as 'English is the international language.' were teachers and mothers. When these people said this, it did not merely mean that they admitted the value of English as a common language in the world. What they said was more than that. These people in this second group accepted and promoted the superiority of English compared to other languages. Some examples of these views are:

> English is the best language in communication in the world. It is also the language of the countries such as US that lead this world at the moment (a teacher).
>
> If we can speak English, we have no problem to communicate with anybody in the world (a mother).
>
> English grammar is straightforward and the alphabet system is simple, so it's easier to speak in English than some other languages. If everyone could speak English, communication would be much better (a teacher).

At a glance, both the first group, which regarded English as a tool of communication and the second group, which regarded English as a symbol of internationalization stated very similar positions. They claimed a special importance and a distinctive status for English among languages. However, there is a difference between them. The view of the first group contains neither the element of yearning for English nor the sense of English being a superior language to other languages. The views, reluctantly admitting the importance of English in phrases such as 'we have no choice but to learn English', are found among the people in this first group. The second view, on the contrary, declares the superiority of English as the international language. The longing for English and also some complex feelings toward English, since they feel their English is not sufficient, are both combined in their views.

The pre-interview questionnaire indicated that the people in the second group did not evaluate their English competence highly (6.1). Nevertheless, they admired the people who speak fluent English because these people can speak the international language. Compared with some businessmen in the first group, the people in this second group did not present any concrete situation where English is necessary. Rather, they single-mindedly advocated that English competence is vital in international society. What they said echoed exactly the public discourse of the policy and academic writings in Chapter 5. These people were dominated by public discourse and believed in this normative discourse without considering the impact of English dominance.

### 6.4.2 Which is more important in countries other than English speaking countries, English or the local language other than English? To what extent are local languages important?

The responses to the above questions can be divided into two groups. Approximately one third of the interviewees made statements such as "It is enough if we can speak

English" (a businessman) and the other two thirds made comments such as "We have to learn languages other than English" (a teacher).

With the exception of one teacher, those in the first group saying, 'Just English is enough' were businessmen and mothers. When they were asked the reasons for their answers, however, the businessmen and the mothers responded quite differently from each other. The reasons that the businessmen raised included "If you can speak English, you can do business anywhere", "People of our social class generally speak English" and "If you only interact with management level people, you only need English." Thus the businessmen contend that in business there will be no problems if one speaks English.

On the other hand, the group of mothers raised very different reasons for their answers. The following comments illustrate their views; "after returning to Japan, there is really no opportunity to speak any language other than English, for example, Malay", "In terms of the future, English is more valuable", "I would have to say English is preferable [to Malay] for my children's future". Their claim was that a language other than English was no use in the future for them and their children. On the other hand, they all agreed that English was vital for their children's future. Their views demonstrated the realistic concerns of the mothers. They also displayed the position of the mothers not as providers of education but as indirect consumers on behalf of their children. The public discourse of the providers of intercultural education claims that 'when the Japanese are overseas, the Japanese should learn a foreign language' (Chapter 3 and 5). However, the consumers and cultural intermediaries of this public discourse, in fact, argued that English is the best option for the children's future. This stance of cultural intermediaries is clearer when the views concerning English are compared with the views of the second group below.

The second group, which consists of two thirds of the interviewees, expressed that the local language other than English was important in non-English speaking countries.

As this research was conducted in Melbourne and Kuala Lumpur, the interviewees in Kuala Lumpur obviously had much more opportunity to encounter a language other than English than the interviewees in Melbourne. In fact, many people in Kuala Lumpur answered 'we have to learn Malay as well'. On the other hand, the people in Melbourne avoided answering this question saying 'I really can't say'. Nevertheless, nobody in this study claimed 'the local language is really more important than English in non-English speaking countries'. As mentioned earlier, the Japanese School in Kuala Lumpur teaches English conversation classes but not Malay classes. The view 'English is the first priority' was held by all interviewees.

There are many teachers among this group who said 'as much as possible, we should be learning the local language other than English'. Compared with mothers in the first group, the teachers were much more oriented towards the normative discourse, while the mothers were concerned more with the realistic aspects, especially of the children's future.

To those who answered "we should learn the local language", I asked two questions "why should we?" and "to what extent is the local language necessary?" The responses were very clear. To the first question, they replied that it made the local people happy, saying "people are happy if we can speak even a little of the local language" (a teacher), "they are always thrilled when we speak Malay" (a mother). To the second question, the answers were "If we can give simple greetings, that's enough" (a businessman), "if we can say one or two phrases, that's fine" (a teacher), "we should know a few words" (a teacher), and "it's important to be able to say 'hello' and 'thank you' in the local language" (a teacher). These answers are found widely, particularly among the teachers. On the contrary, only three people proposed learning Malay seriously, for example, saying "we should teach Malay at school" (a mother).

The consistency of these responses revealed underlying values. The earlier pre-interview questionnaire had indicated that two thirds of the interviewees claimed the importance of learning a local language in non-English speaking countries. What that really meant, however, was that simple greetings are enough, and the reason to learn a local language was to make the local people happy. The hidden message in their discourse did not come out in the pre-interview questionnaire because it was concealed by the normative views saying 'learning the local language is important'. The pre-interview questionnaire failed to capture the real intention in their answers. This illustrates the strength in the methodology which combined a pre-interview questionnaire with interviews (Chapter 4).

Chapter 2 indicated that competence in English was regarded as one of the most important competencies in the age of globalization, particularly in international business circles and among the multinational corporations (MNC). The MOE in Japan has always advocated the importance of English education as one of its significant responses to the demands made by the industrial circles. The MOE has also announced in other public discourse recently that the Japanese need to study languages other than English, especially the languages of neighboring Asian countries (Chapter 3). Their 'only-English' stance has gradually changed and this new discourse seems to have been accepted generally by the people involved in intercultural education overseas. The reality is fairly different, however. The normative public discourse of the Ministry and the academics was accepted only superficially and these cultural intermediaries interpreted and changed the meaning of these public discourses in their own ways. As seen above, the discourse of the majority of cultural intermediaries still supports the belief in English as the superior language, not only because it is the global language, but because being able to speak English is understood as something splendid. These people hold a naïve faith in the attributes of English.

The question concerning cultural imperialism in the sense that Pennycook (1994) pointed out (see Chapter 2) has scarcely been raised by these cultural intermediaries. On the contrary, their views represented the attitude of a 'master' of a colony learning the languages of the colonized people. This section teased out a significant feature of the discourse of the cultural intermediaries who are facing globalization; their discourse matched the conventional normative discourse. The dominance of public discourse will be further examined in aspects of intercultural education below.

## 6.5 Indication of perception of universality in Japanese intercultural education

### 6.5.1 Do you think that making eye contact, saying yes or no, not speaking vaguely, are all important in intercultural communication?

The questions discussed in this section explored the views of interviewees regarding whether they considered the norms which were claimed to be universal in intercultural education as actually universal or not. First, I asked to all of the participants in the pre-interview questionnaire whether they thought that making eye contact, saying yes or no, not speaking vaguely were all important in intercultural communication. This question was asked because values associated with English speaking such as eye contact and saying yes or no clearly have been regarded as universally desirable mannerisms in many academic public discourses in Japan (Yoshino 1997). The result was that all of the participants answered 'very important', or 'important' in their replies. During the interview session, I confirmed their answers, and then proceeded to ask the next question.

### 6.5.2 Do you think that these norms are all universal ways of maintaining communication?

It was not so easy to categorize the answers to this question because the contents of interviewees' answers sometimes overlapped. Their answers, however, can be divided into four groups according to their main points. In the first group interviewees stated that these norms were universal and that they were mainstream and could be applied anywhere. On the other hand, approximately two thirds of all interviewees claimed that Japan was the only place where these norms could not be applied, and that Japan was unique. More than a half of those who said so, however, also claimed that all those norms were applied all over the world except for Japan, so Japanese people had to conform to them. These people constituted the second group. The third group, which consisted of one quarter of interviewees, argued that those norms belonged to English speaking countries or Anglo-Saxon countries. In this group, many people did not agree with the idea that Japanese people have to conform to their norms, which constituted a contrast between this group and the second group above. The fourth group responded that those norms were in no way universal. I will examine the answers of each group in more detail.

The distinct feature of the first group, which regards these norms as universal, was the categorical nature of their answer. Some of them declared that they were universal norms without any hesitation. Even after being asked by me if these norms were the same in East Asian countries and in America, they did not change their answers at all or only reluctantly mentioned that they might be slightly different from the norms of Asian countries but that they were still worldwide mainstream norms. The number of these people was, however, small, representing just one tenth of all interviewees.

In terms of number, the second group was the largest group of interviewees. The following are some typical answers from them. "In Japan, it is normal to be vague or indirect, but it's different elsewhere" (a businessman). "Overseas differs from Japan"

(a teacher). "Chinese people and the people from South American countries all clearly say yes or no, it's only Japanese who are different" (a businessman). Two distinctive common features must be noted here in spite of the variety in their answers.

The first of them concerns their view towards the cultures outside of Japan. The interviewees in this second group argued that what was said to be Japanese norms were not accepted everywhere, and they claimed that therefore, the Japanese had to change their norms to more universalistic ones. This logic was evident in their answers. Then, I asked them in the interviews if these norms were worldwide norms or norms of one part of the Western world. Most of them replied that they thought the norms were accepted everywhere. Conversation stopped at that point. They provided no further exploration about the believed universal norms. This result indicates that many Japanese overseas hold a view toward culture which constantly distinguishes Japan from other countries. According to them, Japanese culture and other cultures are always different and the other cultures are always universal. These people scarcely questioned their views toward the cultures outside of Japan and seemed to believe that other cultures differed considerably from a unique Japanese culture.

The second distinctive common feature in the answers of this second group is that their views were dominated by the discourse that regards Japan as homogeneous (Chapter 2). One of the answers vividly demonstrated this stance.

> If we're among other Japanese people, we can guess what they mean when they use vague expressions because our background upbringing tends to be the same. Because we're brought up in the same environment, we can do that. But with other people in the world, everyone's environment is different (a teacher).

Here, both the view of Japan as a homogeneous society, and the view of Japan as totally different from the other countries were expressed together. In other words, there was no examination of the diversity within Japanese society.

The third group consisted of interviewees who argued that those norms were the norms of English speaking countries, particularly the USA. Approximately one quarter of the interviewees fell into this group. While not many teachers and mothers expressed this view, many businessmen asserted this view. Two businessmen even mentioned the diversity in the norms in English speaking countries. One of them said,

> It's not the case that all those norms listed above are always essential. There are times when you have to be indirect in America, too. There is also a culture there that says you use indirect expressions to convince the other person.

This kind of view differed from other views because it acknowledged the diversity of norms within a country. The interviewees in this third group did not agree with the idea that Japanese people must adhere to other people's norms, which is another distinctive feature of this group.

The final group was distinguished from the other groups by their answers disclaiming the belief that the norms listed above are universal. When I asked them the reasons for their answers, most of them replied 'it depends on the country', and some of them pointed out "it depends on religion" (a mother), "it depends on circumstances" (a businessman), and " it depends on people's personality" (a mother).

When all of these views are taken together, they can be summarized into two categories despite their diversity. The first category is represented by the view that the Japanese people must adhere to the norms listed above and that (only) the Japanese lag behind; thus one of the missions of intercultural education in Japan is to have people learn these norms as universal norms. The people in this category accepted and advocated the public discourse described in Chapters 3 and 5. The opinions in this category were proffered by two thirds of the interviewees. A view from a teacher in an administrative position represented their stance.

> Japanese people are lacking in that ability. We have to clarify and change that.

The view in the second category is the opposite. Norms are not seen as universal but as the norms of English speaking countries. Many businessmen held this type of view. Although most of them still regard culture as differing from country to county, their views were at least not dominated by the public normative discourses.

## 6.6 The definition of intercultural education and the role of the government

Before shifting the focus of the contents of the interviews to the interviewees' views related to culture, the interviewees were asked four questions concerning their views about intercultural education. The four questions sought their views toward globalization, their definition of education for international understanding, their views about the role of government in education for international understanding and their responses as to when the values of international understanding and the values of their own culture clashed.

### 6.6.1 What do you think globalization is?

Three responses emerged to this question, each of which was given by more than 10 interviewees. These three typical responses are "understanding that the world is one entity" (a teacher), "I think of the information age" (a businessman) and "I haven't thought about it. I don't really know" (a mother). Only a few of the interviewees mentioned, for example, opening the market system or globalization in economic spheres. These more concrete indications were found only in the businessmen's group. One businessman stated that "globalization is standardization, or making minimum common rules", the other argued "globalization is localization, or business of localization in general" and the other pointed out "globalization equals Americanization". Their responses were exceptional, however. Most of the interviewees responded with rather an abstract image of globalization and nearly half of the teachers and mothers could not even say anything about globalization. This

result showed that although some businessmen might have to consider globalization through their business, many of the other interviewees have hardly thought about globalization in a concrete sense.

The result above also demonstrated that many of the Japanese overseas participants regarded globalization as an image or an abstract idea. The response such as 'the world is one entity' showed this tendency. Not many people consider globalization analytically, for example, distinguishing between globalization in the political sphere and globalization in the economic sphere as has been examined in Chapter 2. The only phenomenon of globalization that was pointed out by interviewees was globalization as it relates to the information age. More than ten interviewees mentioned the Internet as an image of globalization. In fact, the interviewees' concrete images of globalization were dominated by the term 'Internet'.

Considering the fact that a third of interviewees answered that they had not thought about globalization, there appears to be a gap between the understandings of globalization held by the academics or policy makers and those held by cultural intermediaries, at least by Japanese overseas. This gap must be noted carefully here. As Yoshino mentioned (Chapter 2), the understanding of some social notions by cultural intermediaries is different from the understanding of the notions by their producers, for example, policy makers or academics. This might be the case of the Japanese people overseas in this context. When they speak of intercultural education, it is not necessary for them to have a clear understanding of globalization as the context of education. Their discourses of intercultural education can be based on their imagined and vague concepts of globalization.

I asked one additional question regarding globalization: "Does globalization mean Americanization?" As seen in Chapter 2, the discourse claiming that Japan must become a society which adheres to global standards has been widely adopted in Japan. The reason to ask this question was to see how Japanese overseas as cultural

intermediaries understand this idea. In other words, I wanted to examine whether and to what extent they regarded the meaning of global standard as a particular American standard.

Nearly half of the interviewees responded that globalization in Japan equaled Americanization or that it was difficult to deny that globalization related to Americanization. Two interviewees clearly declared that "globalization in Japan is basically Americanization". Those who refused to see globalization in Japan as Americanization were fewer.

The results indicated that many Japanese overseas regarded globalization as Americanization to some extent. The results, however, also required careful analysis. Except for a few businessmen, those who saw globalization as Americanization did not give such a response when asked what they thought globalization was. Their statement that globalization was Americanization emerged after they had been asked whether they agreed with that view or not. Therefore, the extent to which Japanese overseas recognized that globalization in Japan may be Americanization could not be determined in this study.

### 6.6.2 How do you define education for international understanding?

The interviewees' general views on intercultural education were sought before I asked a group of questions regarding this concept. The reason I used the term 'education for international understanding' instead of 'intercultural education' here was that the latter phrase has been much more widely used among the people engaged in JCORed. The Ministry of Education has also frequently used it in its documents, as explained in Chapter 3. However, these two phrases have been used interchangeably in Japan.[9]

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[9] Except in some academic works by those in the Intercultural Education Society in Japan (Ebuchi 1997a)

The answers reflected four different views and each view was expressed by roughly the same number of responses. These four views on the definition of education for international understanding were: encountering a different culture directly; language (English) education; deepening understanding of other cultures; and establishing a Japanese identity. While the first two definitions can be regarded as referring to more concrete aspects of education for international understanding, the last two definitions can be regarded as focusing on rather more abstract purposes of education. I will examine each of them in order.

The first type of definition 'directly encountering a different culture' was expressed in statements such as "it [education for international understanding] is experiencing different cultures firsthand" (a businessman), and "it means living in a different culture" (a teacher). Some of the proponents added the comment that "this [direct encounter with a different culture] can't be experienced in Japan" (a mother) as the reason why they regarded direct encounters as so important. These views, at the same time, indicated the interviewees' judgement that Japanese people could not encounter different cultures inside of Japan. What they were saying was that unless Japanese people encounter some different culture outside of Japan directly, education for international understanding cannot be achieving its purpose.

The second type of definition was characterized by the view that language education is the most basic part of education for international understanding. Although the interviewees who fell into this category did not say language education was the equivalent of education for international understanding, the discussion of education for international understanding in their answers was occupied almost exclusively by matters related to language education. Their statements included the notion that the most important thing in education for international understanding is "to bring native speakers out from England or America and learn from them" (a mother) and "we [Japanese] have to learn from native speakers" (a businessman). These indicate some

distinctive features in their view. When they said 'the language', it meant again English. In fact, no other language was mentioned. These views also emphasized their strong belief in native speakers' ability to teach language. The result demonstrated that some Japanese overseas believe that if native speakers taught them, they could acquire better English.

The third type of definition illustrated the idea that a deepening understanding of other cultures 'was' education for international understanding. It seems, at a glance, that this type of definition and the first type of definition are not so very different. While the first type of definition proposed some concrete encounters with different cultures, the third type of definition placed more emphasis on abstract aspects of intercultural understandings, which did not always require direct encounters with other cultures. Views were expressed that "education for international understanding basically means acknowledging and respecting each other's cultures" (a teacher), "[it means] knowing and understanding many countries' cultures" (a mother), and "[it is] understanding that there are different races, cultures, traditions and ways of thinking to your own, and then accepting that and developing a considerate feeling and attitude towards others" (a teacher).

The fourth type of definition could be summarized as follows that education for international understanding means establishing Japanese identity. As seen in the early part of this chapter, this type of definition echoed the public discourses that advocated developing Japaneseness. This type of definition is often stated together with the third type of definition. One teacher stated that "education for international understanding means respecting your own culture while respecting the difference of another people's culture".

Considering these definitions of education for international understanding, it could be said that the first definition and the second definition have a common aspect. Both promoted some direct contact either with other cultures or with another language

(English). This was typically expressed in the view of a teacher, who stated "first you have to come into contact with the otherness".

Such a view shares the idea of putting faith in progressive notions that was examined in Chapter 2. The notion expresses an optimistic belief that the more we encounter the other culture, the deeper our international understanding. In this view, a question, such as whether conflicts arise in encounters between cultures or not, was scarcely considered by the interviewees. Therefore, I asked most of the interviewees "what do you do when conflict arises between the values of your own culture and those of international understanding?" The results of this question are explored in 6.6.4 below.

I have pointed out above that the third type of definition was rather abstract. In fact, my conversation with two mothers typically demonstrates such abstract features of their views. My question was: "When you say that, do you have an image, for example, of children holding hands all around the globe?". Their answers were: "Yes, that's exactly what I mean".

Three things can be pointed out in the answer above. First, when this type of definition stated the importance of 'understanding', the statements including the notion of 'understanding' were expressed as if they were self-explanatory. In other words, there is no analysis of what 'understanding' is and what processes are required in 'understanding'. Second, this type of definition is very normative in the same way as the public discourse, which stated that education for international understanding would be promoted through understanding other cultures. This type of definition and the views of the public discourse of education for international understanding were both based on the conflict-free optimism mentioned in Chapter 5. Finally, this type of definition of education for international understanding regarded culture as essentialist. A teacher, who proffered this type of definition, added the following remarks,

> Japanese people tend to be very self interested but foreigners aren't. In Malaysia, they treat other people with respect.

In his view, the cultures were based on the nationality and such culture was celebrated and authenticated.

Before closing this section, I would like to examine the fourth type of definition of education for international understanding. In fact, some interviewees used both the third and fourth types of definition together in their answers, so it seemed that understanding other cultures and establishing Japaneseness could be achieved at the same time in those interviewees' ideas. However, some interviewees put these two definitions in a different order. A teacher stated "it's important to consider foreigners and their cultures after we have first come to understand Japan and Japanese people". In such a view, establishing Japaneseness must come first before understanding the other cultures. Therefore, I have examined again the answers of all those using both the third and fourth definitions together. More than a half of them were found to prioritize establishing Japaneseness more than understanding other cultures. This view was particularly prominent among the teachers. For example, a teacher stated "education for international understanding first involves becoming aware of Japan and the Japanese people" and another teacher declared "education for international understanding means having pride in and affection for Japanese culture". One teacher faithfully reproduced the public discourse of policy. He stated that "teaching current understanding of Japanese culture and history is the best way to bring about a feeling of the importance of international understanding".

Another strong congruence was found between the public discourse and this kind of view held by Japanese overseas as cultural intermediaries. In the next section, I will examine how the interviewees viewed the role of the government in intercultural education.

### 6.6.3 Do you think that the government should be the major player in pursuing international education?

As mentioned above, many people have argued that education for international understanding should help establish Japaneseness among Japanese. Then, the question as to how these Japanese overseas consider the role of the Japanese government in such education was explored. An opinion voiced by more than half of the interviewees affirmed the government as the main actor that takes the initiative in education for international understanding. Another third of them, on the other hand, revealed negative responses to that view.

Within the group, which supported the idea that the national government should act as a central player in education for international understanding, various reasons were given. The first reason pointed out the institutional problems in politics in Japan. A teacher argued "it won't go any further at the teacher level or the local government level in Japan", and a businessman commented "it's not possible at anything other than the state level in Japan". The second reason was that the role of nation in education was very important. A businessman claimed "the state should provide philosophical principles in education", and another businessman declared "the area of education must be led by the state". The third reason for this view was slightly different from the previous two. A teacher stated "I think the state should lay down an outline at least" and the other teacher commented "it's easier if [the state does it]". Compared with the first and second reasons that strongly support the role of national government in intercultural education, this third view is considered to be more subtle or reluctant in its support of the role of the nation. A comment from a businessman, which was shared by a few others, represented this third view. He commented "It's not necessarily the case that the state should be the main actor in international education, but with Japan the way it is, I think the state should take that role".

Let us examine the views of the other group who claimed that the responsibility for intercultural education did not lie with the state. A businessman and a few teachers argued that they welcomed only the financial support from the government but not the other matters. A teacher stated "the government should provide money, but they shouldn't interfere with the contents of education". I asked those in this group who they thought were the main actors in education for international understanding. The answers varied. Some said "the best situation would be each school pursuing [education] freely" and "education for international understanding supported at local or community level is more worthwhile and long lasting". These views regarded the role of school and communities highly or at least expected them to have a role in education more than the national government.

In this section, two opposed views have been discussed. The one affirmed the role of the national government as a main actor in intercultural education and the other expressed negative views toward this role. The former view was advocated by many businessmen and teachers. In particular, most of the teachers supported the national government's role in education as indispensable. On the other hand, the latter view was expressed by many mothers. Some mothers reluctantly admitted the significance of the role of the government, for example, a mother said "it's quicker and simpler for the states to carry it out, rather than individuals or single organizations". Nevertheless, many mothers expressed a strong feeling of distrust toward the government. This view was found only amongst mothers. Below are examples of such mothers' views.

> I would like to do it myself, even the smallest thing. I suppose that in some way, I think I can't trust the government.
>
> I don't really know about the Ministry of Education, but I have an image of it being just people who are narrow-minded. I really wonder if things will change, or if they are thinking of changing things. The government has a lot of power. In reality, mothers don't have a lot of faith in the things the government does for us. There's always a feeling of distrust towards the policies they impose.

While businessmen and teachers stated that they had problems with the government as a main actor in education to some extent, only mothers expressed their distrust of the government so openly. These mothers' voices were also colored by their own experiences and lives. They seemed to pour what they had felt and thought into this particular question at interview, instead of expressing more objective sounding views shared by the people generally involved in intercultural education. All the businessmen interviewed were men and only one teacher was female. This breakdown reflects the gender pattern of those working overseas. The absence of a female voice within these categories makes the contribution of mothers to this study even more significant because it provides a perspective not commonly considered in other studies. Mothers stated what businessmen and teachers never expressed.

### 6.6.4 What would you do if the norms of intercultural understanding and your own norms clashed?

The answers to this question can be divided into four groups. The first group of answers is represented by a businessman stating "when different cultures interact and conflict arises, the basis should be that as much as possible the host culture or the one with the most people should be the norm". What the interviewees in this group were saying was that 'when in Rome, do as the Romans do'. I asked some of these interviewees what if there could be no resolution found, but could not get an answer from them.

The second group's opinion claimed there was no need to adjust to the other norms or cultures. A teacher stated "you shouldn't conform to the other person's viewpoint if it means deviation from your views". A statement of another teacher below expresses stronger assertions in this category.

> Just because you're overseas, what you think is important doesn't change. I still respect my own country [Japan] and I still think Japan has to be recognized by the rest of the world.

The third view emphasized the importance of discussion when conflict occurred. This view was mainly supported by businessmen and teachers. A teacher argued "you have to speak it through thoroughly", and a businessman promoted "Japanese people have to debate more". Their view was based on the assumption, which was seen in the public discourse, that Japanese people are not skillful in competence in intercultural relationships (Chapter 5).

The fourth view was summarized in a statement by a businessman. He claimed "you understand where it is possible to understand. There has to be somewhere you are similar, so you accept that part". Two further points will be raised concerning this kind of view. The first of them is about the notion of 'somewhere we are similar' in the above statement. A teacher commented "we must have something common among us". At interview, I asked those people, who expressed this view, how they could judge whether the people have common norms, values, and cultures. What was found was that when many people mentioned that there must be something in common, it meant that commonality should be found in relation to the mainstream cultures of the Western developed countries. A teacher argued,

> The question of whether it's possible to bring the different cultures together or not is decided by how close or how far away these are from Western culture, because that's the culture which has become mainstream in the world.

This tendency of believing that commonality should be found in the culture of Western countries was clearer in the comment of a businessman below,

> Anglo-Saxon [culture] leads the world, so if you don't consider that important, nothing really succeeds. We have to conform to them.

What these views revealed was that whether or not the Japanese people could adjust to the people from other cultures depended on how close these other cultures are to certain Western cultures.

The discourse that Japan lags behind in intercultural education was pointed out in Chapters 3 and 5. These two chapters also critiqued the discourse in which norms or cultures of English speaking countries were regarded as universal ones. The aim of intercultural education in Japan has been discussed as changing Japanese norms to those imagined Western norms (Chapter 5). The results of the interview here can be interpreted as showing how these public discourses dominate in the views of Japanese cultural intermediaries overseas.

Finally I would like to point out another aspect included in the view 'we accept each other because somewhere we are similar'. At interview, I asked as much as I could of the interviewees, "is that really possible?" The result was that some of them just became lost for words, and that some could not answer. A few of the interviewees uttered the same phrase, 'Yes, that's a difficult question', repeatedly.

This result suggested a difficulty for some of the interviewees. Some of them recognized contradictory problems in the public discourse, a recognition they attributed to their experiences overseas, although they seemed to keep stating normative views about intercultural education. Japanese overseas must have felt some conflict when they encountered the other cultures regardless of the fact that they interacted with them so rarely. This is why at the end of the questions concerning intercultural education, some interviewees frankly expressed their concerns about such education.

> If we cannot compromise, and there must be some areas we cannot, all we can do is give up (a businessman).
>
> It [achieving international understanding] is difficult. We cannot say generally because it depends on case by case. Yes, sometimes it is very difficult (a mother).
>
> Intercultural education is a very appealing word, but it is superficial, idealistic and wishful, I think the reality [of implementing it] is very difficult (a teacher).

Such a comment illustrated an important aspect regarding the discourse of intercultural education in this study. In some cases, the public discourse and the discourse of overseas Japanese as cultural intermediaries were identical. In some areas, however, the results clearly illustrated a gap in the views on intercultural education between the messages in the normative public discourses and the feeling of reality held by Japanese people overseas. I will further examine the causes of this gap and also the relationship between the public discourses and what the interviewees said in the next chapter.

## 6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented and analyzed the interview data concerning the views related to intercultural education. I will highlight the significant points of the findings below. Some gaps in their views between the businessmen, the teachers, and the mothers also emerged in the results. I will consider the significant differences between them in this conclusion, too. First, the findings will be summarized in six points.

The responses of interviewees on each of the first three issues reported tended to represent polarized views.

1) Regarding competences required for intercultural education and its definition, the two polarized views focused on either 'understanding the cultures of the other countries' or 'developing Japanese identity'. Two definitions of intercultural education were offered, one seeing its function as 'understanding the other culture' and the other as serving to 'establish Japaneseness'. Sometimes, the same interviewee raised the two views in a single answer. A distinctive feature was that these two parallel views were regarded as being able to sit harmoniously with each other. The interviewees seemed to imagine that no conflict should emerge between these two competencies or definitions in intercultural education. It was

also found that the Japanese overseas in this study hold the view that the more interaction between the people from different countries, the fewer problems there would be between the people from different countries. This kind of naïve view was expressed widely amongst the interviewees. On the other hand, some interviewees, particularly teachers, clearly prioritized establishing Japaneseness over understanding other people.

2) The responses regarding language competence (meaning English) in intercultural education and the relationship between intercultural education and language education were also polarized. One view regarded English as 'a tool of communication' between the different cultures. The other considered English as 'the symbol of internationalization' and promoted the acquisition of English as the highest purpose of intercultural education. Generally, the former view was supported by the businessmen and the latter by the mothers and the teachers.

3) The responses regarding the importance of learning a non-English language if they were in non-English countries were again polarized. Most of the businessmen and half of the mothers stated that 'English was enough', in other words, they argued that there was no need to learn a non-English local language. On the contrary, most of the teachers asserted 'the necessity of learning local languages as well as English'. The reasons for English being seen as enough were different between the businessmen and the mothers. The businessmen explained that it was no problem to communicate throughout the world if people had English as a tool of communication. The mothers, on the other hand, asserted the usefulness of English in their future, especially for the future of their children's career. Compared with these two groups, the teachers expressed very normative views, commenting that English and the local non-English language were both necessities to be acquired in intercultural education. Later in the interview, the interviewees, who answered in this way, were questioned to what extent they

considered it was necessary to have to learn the local non-English language. 'Being able to speak a few words such as "hello" and "thank you"' was the answer of the majority. This demonstrated that although many deemed English and local non-English language to be of equal importance, there was in fact a substantial difference in what they meant by learning English and learning local non-English languages.

4) Throughout the interviews, the wide acceptance of the public discourse among Japanese overseas was clearly revealed. For example, they regarded both competence for coexistence and competence in intercultural communication as very important competences. These are emphasized in the policy documents of the Ministry of Education, and were largely advocated by Japanese overseas. Another public discourse asserted by academics studying intercultural education in Japan is that Japanese lag behind in these competences. This was also widely accepted by the interviewees. The degree of the acceptance of the public discourse was particularly high among the teachers and the mothers who have fewer interactions and lower English competence than the businessmen. Nevertheless they echoed and supported the normative public discourses. It might be interpreted that their unconfident and complex feelings toward intercultural interactions caused them to adopt the normative discourses with greater vigor.

5) The other public discourse, which claims that Japanese social and cultural norms are specific and that Japanese should conform to more universalistic norms, found a large number of supporters especially among the teachers. The businessmen, on the other hand, had the tendency to say that those universalistic norms are merely the norms in English speaking countries and declined to comment about whether the Japanese should have to adjust themselves to these norms.

6) Most Japanese overseas in this study did not have a concrete idea of globalization, except for views on the 'information age'. Many had only a vague image that the world was one entity. The result revealed the gap in understanding of globalization between Japanese overseas as cultural intermediaries and the academics and policy makers as providers of the discourse, who had more analytical views towards globalization.

The distinctive features of three groups, the businessmen, the teachers and the mothers appear below in a further four points.

7) The teachers' group was the readiest to accept the public discourses. This tendency was particularly clear in their assertions regarding: (1) the importance of language proficiency in intercultural competence; (2) the importance of acquiring a local non-English language, and (3) the importance of establishing Japaneseness. In fact, throughout the interviews, what the teachers' group argued was largely in line with the public discourses. Only one exception emerged when they expressed their views on the extent of learning local non-English languages. Their answers stated that a few greeting words were enough, indicating a shallow enthusiasm for learning a language other than English. This illustrated the tendency of cultural intermediaries to interpret the meaning of the public discourse in their own ways. Even though they superficially seemed to reproduce the public discourse faithfully, the contents of their discourse may be different from the normative public discourse.

8) The distinctive characteristics of the businessmen's group were demonstrated in their views concerning competence in intercultural communication. Those who argued that language (English) proficiency was merely a tool of communication were mostly found among the businessmen. Many businessmen also did not agree to the blind promotion of some norms in intercultural communication such as eye contact as universal norms. The businessmen argued that these norms originated

in English speaking countries and that Japanese people did not have to follow these norms.

9) The mothers' group demonstrated a unique position on various aspects. One is revealed in the different stance from the teachers. Although both mothers and teachers sighed about their insufficient English proficiency and expressed their longing to acquire more English, some mothers asserted that they could have overcome the barrier of language if they had had enthusiasm and courage in their communication. These views were rarely found amongst teachers. Another example was found in their reasons as to why English was so important. Many mothers asserted that English was important for their future and especially for their children's future career. Such practical justifications were again not often proffered by the businessmen and the teachers either. The other distinctiveness of the mother's voices was expressed in their views towards the role of central government in intercultural education. The views were divided into two categories; one asserted the importance of the government role in intercultural education and the other argued that it was a matter for local communities or individual schools. A few mothers were the only group who expressed very strong distrust of the central government's role in education. I cannot assert here that all mothers or even most mothers are notably different in their views compared with the other groups of people. It was clear, however, that a small number of mothers tended to produce entirely different views from the others. They spoke frankly on the basis of their experience, which demonstrates an example of how, as Mohanty (1995) explains, at least some of their voices could not be interpreted in a framework of conventional discourse.

10) Comparing the three groups above, many businessmen and some mothers presented views more openly than the other people, particularly than the teachers, and these views were supported by their lives and experiences. To the last

question 'what would you do if the norms of intercultural understandings and your personal values clashed?', however, almost all interviewees, even the teachers, could not answer according to the conventional public discourses. In other words, they seemed to answer this question with their own ideas and expressions. Many commented that 'I do not know' or 'It was too difficult to answer'. While public discourses have repeatedly advocated the importance of integration between the different cultures, some interviewees plainly stated 'intercultural education is a very appealing word, but it is superficial, idealistic and wishful' and 'the reality of implementing it is very difficult'. These voices clearly illustrate the gap between the public discourse and the discourse of Japanese overseas as cultural intermediaries.

In Chapter 7, I will continue to explore the views of Japanese overseas as cultural intermediaries, but particularly those views related to their notion of culture. The findings and analysis will reveal the common features and also the gaps between the public discourse and the discourse of Japanese overseas as cultural intermediaries, and between the three groups, the businessmen, the teachers and the mothers.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

# CULTURAL INTERMEDIARIES' VIEWS ON CULTURE

## 7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyzes the views of the Japanese overseas on aspects of culture in the context of intercultural education. The questions, which I have asked all interviewees, are divided into the five areas. The results of the interviews and their analysis will be explained with reference to these five areas.

1) Views concerning cultural relativism

    1. Do you think there are inferior and superior cultures?

    2. Do you think all cultures should be treated equally?

2) Views concerning assimilation, integration and cultural pluralism

    1. Do you think Japan is an (ethnically) homogeneous country?

    2. Do you think some foreigners should be allowed to reside in Japan? Why?

3) Views concerning cultural essentialism I (Uniqueness of Japanese people, society and culture)

    1. Do you think that there are more cultural similarities than differences between Japanese people?

    2. What do you think are some characteristics of Japanese people?

    3. Are these common throughout Japanese society?

    4. What is your reference point for comparison?

    5. Do you think these characteristics will change, or remain the same?

4) Views concerning cultural essentialism II (Views on the notion of the *nenashigusa*)

1. What do you think about the fact that there are many returnees' children who do not go back (permanently) to Japan, and who go back and forth from Japan?

2. Do you think Japanese children who go back and forth from Japan are *nenashigusa*?

5) Viewpoints concerning inequality between males and females in Japan?

1. What do you think about gender inequality in Japanese society?

2. Do you think that male and female returnee children are treated differently? Do you think this treatment should change?

## 7.2 Views toward cultural relativism

### 7.2.1 Do you think there are inferior and superior cultures?

The responses can be divided into four categories. Half of the interviewees argued that they could not say there were inferior or superior cultures, and a quarter of them asserted that there should not be any such thing, and another quarter stated that they were not sure, or that they could not really say. Only four interviewees, less than a tenth of the total number, claimed that there are inferior or superior cultures. During the interview, I also asked the reasons for their answers.

The first view is illustrated in the following statements:

> Ways of thinking, life styles and culture are all components made up from that country's peoples' experiences. I don't believe you can compare them and say one is inferior and worthless and another superior and therefore of value (a teacher).
>
> I think that culture is determined in each separate country, so there is no inferior/superior relationship (a mother).

Several other interviewees stated similar views. Such views, however, did not answer the question why there is no inferior/superior relationship between cultures, because

the word 'culture' was just replaced in the phrase by 'each country's culture' in their statements.

A few interviewees who held this view attempted to explain why there is no inferior/superior relationship between cultures. For example, a teacher argued that "all human beings are equal, and so are their cultures". Most of the people in this group tended to repeat phrases such as 'all cultures are equal' and 'there is no inferior/superior relationship' and did not provide further explanations. Quite a few people in this group also expressed the view of the second group below.

The second view expressed by the interviewees was the belief that there should not be inferior/superior cultures. They did not assert 'there was not' but they did assert 'there should not'. A mother argued that "you have to respect other peoples' cultures" and a teacher stated "I think it is important to accept others' cultures and understand them". Their views faithfully reflect the normative public discourse expressed by policy makers and academics in Japan.

Only a few people expressed the third view, which claimed the existence of an inferior/superior relationship between cultures. They were found in the voices of a businessman stating "there is no culture in places where people are starving" and of a mother arguing "when you look at those developing countries where people are struggling just to stay alive, I think that their culture is certainly lagging behind".

The fourth view, expressed by the phrase of 'not sure', demonstrated the interviewees' bewilderment at this question. Most of the people in this group, however, also expressed the first and the second views, stating, for example "but I suppose that you must not label particular cultures as inferior or superior ---" (a teacher) or the third view, stating, for example "I can't definitely say there is no inferior/superior relationship [between cultures]" (a businessman).

The results, in which the majority claimed no inferior/superior relationship between cultures, reconfirm the strong dominance of the public discourse among Japanese overseas. As cited in Chapter 5, the statement that education for international understanding entails developing an attitude which respects the values, customs and lifestyles of other cultures (The Central Council for Education Report 1996) has always appeared in policy documents of JCORed and education for international understanding in Japan. Academics also advocate the cultural relativist standpoint where all cultures are respected, and not interpreted in terms of good/bad, high/low (Arai 1997). In this respect, the producers of these public discourses uncritically accepted a view claimed by Taylor (1992), who stated that all cultures are of equal value (see Chapter 2). Japanese overseas in this study responded to these public discourses by echoing them.

On the other hand, it should be noted that many interviewees expressed their hesitation when they answered the questions at interview. This was the first time the phrase 'not sure' was used often by the interviewees in the interview, and could be understood as their revealing reluctance. This reluctance might indicate that the interviewees' interaction with other cultures in their daily lives has resulted in them no longer definitely agreeing with the public discourse. A gap begins to emerge between the public discourse that is seen in this study as excessively normative and the views of Japanese people overseas as cultural intermediaries. This gap becomes more evident in their answers to the next question.

### 7.2.2 Do you think all cultures should be treated equally?

This question examined the interviewees' personal attitudes when they encountered people from different cultures rather than their general views about cultural difference. The result, compared with responses discussed in 7.2.1 above, showed that far fewer people expressed the normative discourses. Half of the answers claimed that treating

all cultures equally is difficult; far fewer claimed that they wanted to treat them equally.

First, I will examine the answers claiming that it is difficult to treat all cultures equally. Although in 7.2.1, the majority answered that all cultures are equal, most claimed that 'personally', it is difficult to treat all equally. The difference between the responses to the two questions brings into question the extent to which Japanese overseas are committed to the public discourses. They seemed to agree with the public discourses generally, but not necessarily in the concrete matters that involve their personal situations.

Further analysis of these responses revealed that the interviewees considered two criteria as they judged whether they could treat different cultures equally or not. The first criterion was how different the target culture is from Japanese culture. The phrase that 'I think it is a problem of degree' was stated by many people to illustrate their views. A teacher argued "to a certain degree, even if two cultures can be treated equally I think, actually treating Japanese culture, and say Irian Jaya's culture equally is difficult". This view suggests that the more similar the culture is to one's own (Japanese) culture, the easier it is to treat it equally. In their views, the degree of difference to one's own culture is the yardstick for treating cultures equally or not.

The other criterion is whether the target culture is close or not to the dominant culture in the contemporary world. For example, a businessman stated,

> There are some cultures which are accepted easily internationally and some which aren't. For example, in Muslim countries women don't show their faces, but that isn't done worldwide. I don't think we can treat those types of cultures which aren't international equally.

Here, the term "international" can be interchanged with 'the dominant culture in the world'. A teacher argued "Somewhere, we have to construct a core (widely accepted) culture and align with that". When these respondents said 'international culture' or

'core culture', they appeared to mean a dominant, a majority and a more influential culture.

Their voices demonstrated their underlying views of cultural relativism. Bhabha (1996) argued that the cultural relativistic notion presented by Taylor could not tease out the power relationship between the majority and the minority. Chu also pointed out that Taylor's view only focused on the position that the majority should deepen the understanding of the minority but not vice versa. Cultural relativistic views held by these Japanese interviewees coincide with Taylor's view. Superficially, these Japanese people overseas seem to believe in cultural relativism. Their acceptance of people from different cultures into Japan was, however, conditional. In addition, they have criteria for whether they accept people from different cultures or not. Unless the people are from more international or from more dominant cultures as these are imagined by Japanese overseas, they do not accept them. It could thus be argued that their normative cultural relativism might be only a slogan. Following Lowe (1996) as discussed in Chapter 2, the cultural relativistic view held by these Japanese overseas cannot tease out the inequality or power relationships between the majority and the minority in societies and consequently this view has a potential to help maintain the status quo within such societies.

Next, I would like to discuss the second type of response to the question which held that all cultures should be equal. This view resembled the normative views expressed in 7.2.1. One of the features of this group of answers was ideological. A mother claimed "if you believe that people have created culture, then of course they are all equal. You can't deny that". Another feature was that they expressed hopes rather than perceived realities. A teacher stated "I think that ideally, even if it is or isn't practical, cultures should be equal", and a mother argued "it is just my wishful thinking that the answer is that all are equal". All of their responses demonstrated how difficult it is for some Japanese overseas to escape from the normative public

discourses. As a mother confessed, what they meant was that the reality might be different but ideally all cultures should be equal. A statement of a teacher openly illustrates this: "I don't know why Japanese people won't say what they really think about an issue. It's a total lie to say that there is no inferiority and all cultures are equal".

The responses indicate that many interviewees were tied down by normative public discourses. This prevented them from facing up squarely to the differences between cultures, more precisely speaking, the difference between the dominant cultures and societies and the subjugated cultures and societies. Very few expressed this problem, and most of these who did were mothers. One of them stated,

> No matter how much you want cultures to be equal ideally, the reality is different. I think it's a matter of power ... the culture of powerful countries tends to have the upper hand.

No teacher expressed such a view.

To conclude this section, it was found that while the majority of the interviewees repeated the public discourses, they felt, because of their daily contact with the other cultures, difficulties in accepting cultural relativism wholeheartedly. On the other hand, they, except for a few mothers, still did not admit that their cultural relativism failed to recognize the differences within a culture and the power relationships in societies. Sections 7.4 and 7.5 further examine the views expressed by Japanese overseas regarding their understandings of the differences and the power relationships in society in terms of intercultural education. First, though, another aspect of the public discourse of intercultural education related to the understanding of 'culture' is discussed in the next section on 'cultural pluralism'.

## 7.3 Views toward assimilation, integration and cultural pluralism

I have pointed out the chronological progression of multicultural education in the US as follows: from notion of assimilation to cultural pluralism, to multiculturalism (Chapter 2). I have also argued that the cultural pluralistic approach has been adopted by the conventional public discourse concerned with intercultural education in Japan. I have mentioned, however, that the assimilationist view is still widely held in Japan. This section investigates how and to what extent Japanese overseas respond to the public discourse of cultural pluralism in their context, whether their views are more influenced by the notion of assimilation, and how much they have adapted to multiculturalism.

It was anticipated that it would be difficult for the interviewees to address the notion of cultural pluralism directly in the interview. I used the question "how do you interact with different cultures and people from different cultures?" as an opening question to tease out their views toward cultural pluralism, which is the concern of the second part of this section 7.3.2. First of all, however, I asked about views on certain aspects of Japanese society as background to the main questions of this section. "As is often said, do you see Japanese as being an ethnically homogeneous country?" was the first question asked.

### 7.3.1 Do you think Japan is an (ethnically) homogeneous country?

More than half answered 'yes'. Adding these to the numbers of those who said it is 'mostly a homogeneous country' two thirds of the interviewees viewed Japan as somehow a homogeneous country. Only a quarter answered 'no' to this question. Then, I asked the reasons for their answers.

Most answers of those who said 'yes' to this question were rather short. Only a few added an explanation such as one businessman who stated "I don't think there is any

other country as homogeneous as Japan", or as another businessman commented "there was some racial mixing in ancient times, but since then we've been an island country with no racial mixing, so we are a homogeneous country". Many of these who said a clear 'yes' were found in the businessmen group.

Those who said 'mostly homogeneous' raised the existence of a few other ethnic groups as the reason for their answer. A mother said "because there are a few other races ---". They, however, emphasized that their number in the population of Japan was small.

The view that Japan was not homogeneous was found in the comments of teachers, one of whom said "there are the Ainu and Okinawa people". A number of teachers claimed the existence of a small number of indigenous people in Japan as the reason for their view. The issues of the indigenous people have been dealt with in schools in Japan as a part of human rights education. This explains why teachers were more conscious of the existence of the indigenous people, for they have had a chance to encounter the issue much more frequently than the other groups.

Only two respondents offered answers that were totally different from all the other answers. They claimed that Japanese people see Japanese society as being homogeneous no matter what the reality.

> Japanese people have a mindset that Japan is a homogeneous country (a teacher).
>
> It's not that it actually is a homogeneous society, that's just how Japanese people see it (another teacher).

It must be noted that these answers point to an awareness of the discourse that advocates the homogeneity of the Japanese.

As a whole, in spite of the existence of some foreigners and even the indigenous people, many Japanese overseas tended to look at Japan as a homogeneous country.

Only an exceptional few claimed that homogeneity is a mindset perceived by the Japanese but not a reality.

### 7.3.2 Do you think some foreigners should be allowed to reside in Japan? Why?

This section examines how these Japanese people respond to the concept of assimilation and cultural pluralism. The first question in this section was 'do you think foreigners should be allowed to become residents (citizens) of Japan'. The responses were divided into three categories. Three quarters answered 'yes to a certain extent'. A quarter said 'yes, in unlimited numbers'. Only one stated 'no, not at all'. I investigated the reasons for the views expressed in their answers.

**The reason for accepting the people from different cultures**

Both groups who said 'yes, to a certain extent' and who said 'yes, in unlimited numbers' gave three main reasons. The first reason was that they would be isolated in terms of international society if they did not accept foreign residents.

> We will be totally isolated internationally (a businessman).
>
> It is inevitable to integrate with other people from abroad in order to obtain the respect from the people of other countries (a businessman).

This type of argument was made by many businessmen.

The second type of reason was based on the belief that it is impossible not to accept others.

> In the international community, it's impossible to live only in Japan (a teacher).

The content of the third type of answer was that if we accept other people, international understanding would be improved.

> It is important to know about various peoples, and that is linked to accepting people into Japan (a teacher).

> In order to attain international understanding, if there aren't various people around, then we will never further that understanding (a mother).

These three types of reasons for accepting the people from different cultures are all normative, and do not answer the point of the question. In other words, these arguments do not explain why Japan will be isolated internationally if we don't accept other races, or why it is impossible to deny accepting others or why international understanding will progress if other races are accepted into Japan.

A few people, however, did give concrete reasons. One reason for accepting foreigners related to the idea of sustaining the labor force.

> I think we have to supplement the labor force from overseas, especially when we think of the future population decline (a businessman).

> Japanese people will no longer do hard physical work. There are foreigners who want to do that work, so if they do it for us, they are happy and Japan also benefits (a mother).

They argued that the reason for accepting people from overseas was to supplement a shortage of labor caused by the aging society and the acceleration in the numbers of white-collar workers. Their views were, however, a rare case in that they did not reproduce normative responses to the question.

**The reason not to accept people from different cultures**

Only a teacher expressed this view. He reasoned,

> If you compare a racially homogeneous country with a country like Australia made up of many races, there are merits in the racially homogeneous country.

> There are no problems between the races and there are no extra costs associated with things like teaching immigrants English. We should be thinking more about the costs associated with a so-called multicultural society.

While most of the interviewees advocated accepting people from other cultures, his view was unique. Chapter 2 pointed out the arguments used to refute multiculturalism, one of which was that it would not be justified for the majority or the people in the host countries to have to bear the cost of supporting other ethnic groups. This teacher's view is sympathetic to this view of anti-multiculturalism.

It is important to note, however, that only one interviewee expressed a negative attitude towards accepting people from different cultures. The interviewees' views about people from different cultures suggest that by and large they are multiculturalists or at least cultural pluralists. In order to examine whether this interpretation is valid, I addressed two more questions below to three quarters of the interviewees, who responded that the Japanese had to accept people from different cultures to some extent. These two questions aimed to seek the meaning of the phrase 'to some extent'. This changed the emphasis from a focus on whether acceptance was desirable to how much acceptance was desirable.

**Why do you think there should be some limits to accepting people from different cultures into Japan?**

Two main reasons were expressed. The first of them pointed out that there is little space in Japan, and the second, expressed by more people, referred to their wish to keep the Japanese identity. The first type of answers were represented by statements such as "Japan is a small country" (a teacher), "Japan is small" (a mother), "Japan doesn't have space like Australia" (a teacher). These people used their belief that Japan is a small country in terms of area as an automatic reason supporting their opinion. It seemed that they did not consider the size of the population as a factor in maintaining racial harmony. It is arguable that if the cultural majority is greater in size (eg. Japan), it is easier to accommodate migrants from other cultural groups. The responses illustrate that the views of the Japanese overseas are identical in this respect to the public discourse mentioned in Chapter 5, that 'Japan is a small island country'.

The second type of reason required further interpretation because it led to a consideration of the meaning of interviewees' opinions that Japanese should bring in people, if only to a certain degree.

> I think we have to accept the foreigners to some extent. But if it creates the problem, for instance, of making the Japanese lose their identity, we shouldn't (a businessman).

> Japan has kept many good things as a homogeneous country. Therefore, even if we accept some foreigners, these foreigners should be only the good foreigners ... maybe from the developing countries (a mother).

What this group of people, in fact, claimed was that they wanted to maintain Japaneseness, and that Japanese should not accept everyone if they were to maintain Japan's good points.

Having considered this, the fact that only one interviewee expressed a negative view toward bringing other people into Japan requires a second look. The actual number of those who were holding the negative view might be much greater. This finding would again point to a gap between the superficial acceptance of the public normative discourses by Japanese overseas and the actual contents of their interpretation of the public discourses. In order to scrutinize this gap, then, I presented an additional question to these interviewees in the group who claimed to accept people from different cultures to some extent.

**Is it possible to accept people from different cultures while maintaining Japaneseness?**

More than half of the interviewees in this group said 'yes'. A few people answered 'no' to the question.

Those who answered 'yes' meant the Japanese could maintain their Japaneseness even if they accepted people from different cultures. They also asserted that the Japanese had to maintain Japaneseness. Their views could be summarized as being

that the Japanese should accept people into Japan only if it allowed the Japanese to maintain their Japaneseness.[10] There are some variations and distinctive features in their responses.

First, a number of them used the phrase 'when in Rome, do as the Romans do' as an important norm. The phrase was expressed within all groups, businessmen, teachers and mothers. Their message was that all foreigners coming to Japan were expected to adjust their behavior to the Japanese norms. Chapter 5 revealed that while the notion of assimilation had been criticized in the field of JCORed, it had still been a major factor in education for the children of foreigners in Japan (5.7). The result here indicated that not only in these policies but also among Japanese overseas, the idea of assimilation is a deep-rooted notion.

Other features of the interviewees' opinions are listed below. They felt it was problematic or even frightening if Japaneseness were challenged.

> The social order will collapse (a businessman).
>
> If we change everything, I worry about what will happen to the Japanese spirit (a teacher).

Then these interviewees attempted to justify their responses, admitting that they tended to deviate from the normative discourses.

> I think Japanese history should be respected, even though I understand this sounds selfish (a teacher).
>
> I don't want to lose the modesty and gentleness of Japanese although what I said here contradicts what I said before (a mother).

Finally, what they claimed indicated that their views were culturally essentialist.

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[10] The meaning of Japaneseness in their answers is examined in the next section, 7.4

> There's a part of Japanese people, maybe you could say the bloodline, which I think shouldn't be changed (a mother).
>
> We have to keep respecting that essence we have as Japanese people (a teacher).

These features demonstrate the strong caution among the Japanese overseas against loosing their Japaneseness, while at the same time they professed cultural pluralism or multiculturalism. Their statements also contained culturally essentialist views that supported their discourses. Chapter 2 presented a refutation against multiculturalism which claimed that multiculturalism had to be criticized because it threatened the integration of the nation. Chapter 5 pointed out that intercultural education in Japan drew a line between it and multicultural education. The common feature of what the two chapters presented is a strong resistance against the forfeiture of the supremacy of the dominant majority culture. This section found that the majority of the interviewees completely agreed with these public discourses of anti-multiculturalism. Their views were supported by culturally essentialist views. The views of Japanese overseas about the notion of cultural essentialism will be examined more in the next section.

Before doing so, let us look at the view stating that they did not mind if accepting people from different cultures changed some aspects of Japaneseness. This view was expressed only by a few mothers. A mother argued,

> I don't think that we have to maintain Japaneseness, or not accept other people because it could destroy that Japaneseness. Things that are going to disappear will do so naturally and things that will last will stay. I think that won't just be because of interaction with different races, it will happen with Japanese people anyway. I think that it is fine for Japaneseness to just disappear if it isn't necessary anymore.

Another mother stated,

> I think many people want to keep (aspects of Japaneseness), or they are afraid of things from a long time ago disappearing. There must be a conflict in losing them. But I think that we have to learn to overcome that.

The comment of the mother above especially has to be noted for mentioning a conflict in the process of accepting people from different cultures. It was unusual because most other opinions drew on conflict free discourses. For example, some referred to "Australia, where many different people all live together peacefully" (a teacher) or to "Malaysia, where different races have accepted us" (a mother). The above two mothers' views have a common aspect, too. Both of them are free from the view that assumes some unchanged and essentialist phenomenon in the cultures or societies. These mothers' views were not culturally essentialist.

Finally, it should be noted that these comments were produced again only by mothers. The mothers are the only group that challenged the notion of Japaneseness. For example, one said "I don't think Japan is such a wonderful country", or "Sometimes, I can't stand Japan". Why is this kind of view produced only by the mothers and what is the relationship between this kind of view and cultural essentialism? These questions are explored in 7.6.

## 7.4 Views concerning cultural essentialism I (Uniqueness of Japanese people, society and culture)

This section and the next section explore the notion of cultural essentialism in the views held amongst the Japanese overseas. The public discourses discussed in Chapter 5 assert that establishing Japaneseness is an important aim of intercultural education. These public discourses, however, pointed out that Japan lagged behind in terms of the universalistic norms implemented outside of Japan. Following these analyses, Chapter 6 revealed the tendency of the majority of Japanese overseas to adhere to these public discourses without any questions.

According to Yoshino (1997), the discourse of *Nihonjinron* gained many adherents among cultural intermediaries in Japan after the 1980s. The views regarding Japan as a country having a unique society and culture were a typical variation of cultural

essentialism. This section examines how the discourse of *Nihonjinron* was consumed and reconstructed among the Japanese overseas. This might provide insight into why Japanese overseas have been so much affected by the public discourses of intercultural education in Japan.

### 7.4.1 Do you think that there are more similarities than differences in culture between Japanese people?

The majority responded 'yes' to this question. A typical response was that from a teacher: "In Japanese societies, I feel there is more similarity than difference". Only three interviewees responded with 'I don't really agree'. These three interviewees listed some differences in Japanese society, including the differences between generations, the differences depending on region within Japan and the differences between rich and poor. In the following sections, however, the focus will be on the contents and the features of similarities amongst the Japanese, which were supported by the majority of the interviewees.

### 7.4.2 What do you think are some characteristics of the Japanese people?

Except for a few businessmen, who stated for example, "I can't really think of any" and "Even if that is in comparison with other countries, there are so many different countries. I can't really answer the question.", most of the interviewees listed distinguishing features of Japanese people.

Those that were mentioned frequently included:

> "closed-minded", "poor at language", "poor at expressing themselves", "always serious", "like being in a group", "lacking in originality", "hard working", "conformist", "one dimensional", "polite", "like speaking vaguely", "unfriendly to outsiders", "bad at foreign languages", "self-obsessed", "value harmony", and "fastidiousness"

A feature of this list is that there are more negative evaluations concerning the characteristics of the Japanese than positive aspects. Another feature found in the list was that these items resemble the distinctive features of Japanese listed by the academics reported in Chapter 5.

### 7.4.3 Are these characteristics common throughout Japanese society?

Most of the interviewees' responses were 'yes' to this question. Approximately a quarter responded that younger Japanese were probably different. Half of this quarter of the interviewees, however, stated that still most of those characteristics were common in most Japanese. Therefore, only a few interviewees claimed definitely that it depended on age.

Some typical responses were "those characteristics are what make Japanese people Japanese" (a businessman), "that is a true Japanese person" (a teacher). These responses regarded the distinctive characteristics listed in 7.4.2 as the features of true and authentic Japanese. A number of the interviewees also expressed their desired images of Japanese, even though they sometimes mentioned that change might occur amongst some Japanese. For example, a businessman asserted "I don't think those strange young ones and their habits are really Japanese". A teacher commented "I want Japanese people to have those characteristics I mentioned", and another businessman declared "I don't believe those people who don't fit into the list above are really Japanese". One businessman even believed that those Japanese people who did not fit into that framework would escape overseas.

The results demonstrate the existence of firm and essential images of Japanese amongst the Japanese overseas. They believed that a Japanese person was someone who had all those characteristics. Because they believed their ideas so strongly, even if they had a chance to encounter some Japanese who did not fit in with their imagined Japanese, they tended to ignore such variations. Calhoun (1997) has

explained that the function of essentialism is to advocate a particular homogeneity in a group in spite of a certain hybridity within a group (Chapter 2). The views of Japanese overseas here demonstrate this nature of essentialism in their construction of their image of the genuine Japanese.

As cited, only a few expressed the idea that not all Japanese fit the list above. A mother stated "people of my age and older, we can say that, but I don't know about the younger people", and another mother commented "I really don't understand what the teenagers of today are doing and thinking". What they claimed commonly was that the people younger than themselves might be different. This indicated that the views regarding the younger generation as not fitting the conventional images of Japanese people were shared amongst some Japanese overseas, particularly the mothers.

### 7.4.4 What is your reference point for comparison?

The interviewees gave three types of responses in almost equal number. The first type held that it could be still said that the Japanese had such distinctive features no matter what the Japanese were compared with. The second type of responses derived from the interviewees' own experiences and they compared Japanese only with people around them. The third type stated that they had compared Japanese with Europeans and Americans. I will explore these three types of responses below.

The views of the first group were represented by views such as "no matter what country I compare it with, those characteristics are all peculiar to Japanese people" (a businessman), or "if you compare Japan with any other country, those are the characteristics" (a teacher). What they claimed was that that was the case no matter the point of reference.

Within the second group, some typical views included "now I have actually come to Australia and lived here, I realize [the distinctive features of the Japanese]" (a teacher), or "when I compared myself to the Malaysians around me, I became aware of the distinctive features of Japanese" (a mother). They argued that their judgement was made within their personal intercultural experiences. When I asked those from the second group "if you compared Japanese people to another country's people, would the characteristics you listed change?", various responses emerged. Some responses were "maybe", "I don't know", and "no, no matter which country you compare Japan with, the characteristics are the same". Several other interviewees said that 'they thought certain characteristics were peculiar to Japanese people even when they were living in Japan'. According to these interviewees, the comparison could be made without an interaction with non-Japanese people. When I asked these interviewees "how can you say these are Japanese characteristics without comparing Japanese to other people?", they responded "if you compare them to other people, they may be different" (a teacher), "I don't know" (a mother), and "no, they won't change" (a businessman). I attempted to find the reasons of those who said that their answers would not be changed, but they merely kept repeating their statements, so I had to give up asking further.

The interviewees in the third group did identify the target of their comparison with Japan. A businessman stated "I compare Japanese people to Westerners", and a mother and a teacher shared the same comment that "I compare Japanese people to Americans". Sometimes, the interviewees in this group pondered and then uttered their answer. For instance, a mother, after a pause, stated "Well, I just thought of developed countries".

Two common tendencies can be found amongst the responses of interviewees from all the groups. First, when the interviewees constructed their arguments, they seemed to regard nations or nationalities as the unit of consideration. A businessman stated,

> Chinese people don't have any opposition toward immigrants, but Japanese are different. English people feel a barrier at first when they first meet people, but Australians aren't like that.

Throughout the interviews, many people, like this businessman, expressed statements of the form 'some people are like this, some like that'. The names of countries or nationalities appeared often in their statements. Lowe (1996) argued that cultural essentialism leads people to describe different cultures without scrutinizing inequality and the contradictions between them (Chapter 2). The interviewees' understandings of national characteristics fell into the pattern Lowe describes. They described them in terms of the distinctive features of each nationality.

The second tendency found in the responses is that the interviewees pondered and sometimes changed their views during the interviews. Seven of the interviewees made comments such as 'this is the first time, I've thought about a question like that' and nine of them said such things as 'the answer I gave in 7.4.3 might change'. The following excerpt from an interview with a mother demonstrates an excellent example of this.

> Mother: I think that I did think about Americans when I answered. I wonder why it was Americans?
>
> Interviewer: Do you mean your answer might have been different if you compared Japanese with Koreans or Chinese?
>
> Mother: Yes, I think so. For some reason, I have an image of white Anglo-Saxon people, and I use them as a comparison. I don't know why. I just have that image and that's what I compare Japanese people with. So if I went to China, I'd probably think of Chinese people as being the same as Japanese people.

Yoshino (1997: 172) described the bewilderment of a school principal when he was questioned how he could distinguish features of the Japanese without comparing

Japanese to other people. This section likewise reveals doubt and bewilderment in the interviewees when they were asked similar questions.

Roosens (1994) argued that it is enough to imagine not the specific but the general others in order to form the consciousness of belonging to a group. The majority of the interviewees in this study demonstrated this characteristic. The important distinction for them is that they are different from any other people in the world. When this tendency was pointed out, some of them became bewildered and changed their answers, saying that the distinctive features of Japanese they had pointed out previously probably should not be applied only to the Japanese. Some others, however, resisted changing their views. A businessman explained,

> In fact, I do feel that I would like Japanese people to keep being 'Japanese'.

This statement vividly demonstrated why the discourse of *Nihonjinron* is deeply rooted among the Japanese overseas. Many did not like to change the once formed image of Japanese and did not like to be made aware of the problem of *Nihonjinron*, essentialist views of the Japanese.

### 7.4.5 Do you think these characteristics will change, or remain the same?

This question aimed at examining the extent to which the interviewees thought the distinctive features of Japanese would stay unchanged. In other words, while question 7.4.4 above focused on how sensitive Japanese overseas were regarding the diversity of the Japanese, this question explored whether the contents of *Nihonjinron* were perceived by Japanese overseas as likely to change or not over time. The responses were divided into two groups: those that claimed that the characteristics of Japanese would not change or would be difficult to change; and those that believed that they would change.

Examples of responses from the first group include:

> I think they are deeply entrenched (a businessman).
>
> As long as the honorific speech patterns in Japanese don't change, those characteristic won't change (a mother).
>
> I believe those characteristics will remain Japanese characteristics for a long time into the future (a mother).

These views obviously regard the characteristics of the Japanese as solid and essentialist.

Examples of the second group's views are:

> I think they will change because we have so much contact with overseas countries (a businessman).
>
> Things differ between now and 10 years ago. I think they will have to change (a teacher).

Most of the interviewees in this group suggested a slow change in Japanese distinctiveness. One businessman, however, anticipated a rapid change, arguing "I think the speed of change will differ from now on. When globalization is occurring so quickly, the past isn't so important anymore. They will change".

The result was that a third of the interviewees expressed the view that the distinctive characteristics of Japanese would change, which demonstrated that some Japanese overseas did not regard the distinctiveness of Japanese as likely to stay solid forever. The result contradicts other results in this section in which the distinctiveness of the Japanese was asserted as firm and inflexible. However, the number of interviewees who stated these views was still small.

To summarize, I have considered the culturally essentialist views held by the Japanese overseas and examined how they understand the distinctive feature of Japanese promoted by the public discourses such as *Nihonjinron*. The overall results revealed

that many Japanese overseas in fact reproduced very similar discourses to *Nihonjinron*. As Mouer and Sugimoto (1986, 1995) and Befu (1987) have argued, this *Nihonjinron* discourse was a product of overgeneralization from limited examples, a comparison with a specific idealized other (Western) country, and based on a homogeneous approach which regards Japan as monolithic in terms of culture and society. Sollors (1989) argued that the notion of ethnicity or nationality was invented partly in order to naturalize these notions themselves. The views held by many Japanese overseas claiming that the Japanese had essentialist characteristics distinguishing them from other people over a long period of time, suggests that this view, generated by the producers of public discourses, has been transferred and reproduced by Japanese overseas as cultural intermediaries.

This section examined the views concerning cultural essentialism from the perspective of the *Nihonjinron* discourse. In the next section, views concerning cultural essentialism will be considered by exploring the interviewees' responses regarding the *nenashigusa* among Japanese people.

## 7.5 Views concerning cultural essentialism II (Views toward the notion of the *nenashigusa*)

In January 1999, the monthly bulletin of the Ministry of Education published a special volume featuring articles on JCORed. In this volume, an educator, who had served as a member of the Central Council for Education of the Ministry of Education, commented as follows,

> There was a returnee who said she was going 'back' to America. As a teacher, I felt betrayed by her decision and was very disappointed. We should not be bringing up these marginalized people. I believe we should be raising children who have a strong sense of their own identity (Kojima 1999: 26).

The author expressed a well-know position in JCORed, that is, that JCORed should aim to bring up children who possess a firm Japanese identity before they acquire intercultural competence. He also argued that JCORed should try harder to prevent persons from losing their Japanese identity as a result of leaving Japan permanently or coming and going from Japan. As explained in Chapter 2, such a person has been perceived as marginal and called *nenashigusa* in Japanese. The notion of *nenashigusa* is opposed to the views which support the cultural essentialism pointed out above. When I carried out the surveys among the Japanese people affiliated with the Japanese Schools in Asian countries (Mabuchi 1995b, 1997), this notion of *nenashigusa* was perceived very negatively among the Japanese overseas. This section explores the views of interviewees regarding this notion of *nenashigusa*, and whether they still regard *nenashigusa* negatively or not. This section also examines how their culturally essentialist views are 'changed' after they have experience of moving and going back and forth from Japan in their own lives.

### 7.5.1 What do you think about the fact that many returnees' children do not go back (permanently) to Japan, and go back and forth from Japan?

More than half of the interviewees expressed positive views toward the occurrence mentioned in the question although the contents of their views varied considerably. Approximately half the interviewees accepted it without any condition. A businessman said "I really support that" and a teacher commented "there should be more of that". On the other hand, some in this group agreed that it happened, but reluctantly. "I guess it can't be helped" (a businessman), "I suppose that it's that sort of age" (a teacher). What they meant was that times have changed and that they have to accept the emergence of this new kind of behavior of Japanese children. However, some interviewees approved of this coming and going under certain conditions. A businessman stated "if it's to an English speaking country, that's good", and a mother commented "it is alright, if it is a girl". The views in which the interviewees regarded

the superiority of English speaking countries were discussed in Chapter 6. The view that distinguishes between boys and the girls in JCORed will be examined in 7.6.2.

A few interviewees expressed clear negative views against this kind of impermanence.

> To some extent, I think children must adjust themselves to the Japanese way of doing things (a businessman).
>
> All the local schools overseas, they can't teach how relationships occur in Japanese society. If they are brought up over there, they can't adapt here and even if they're employed in Japan, they can't get along with people properly (a teacher).
>
> Speaking as a parent, I want my child to be Japanese (a mother).

Although a few interviewees expressed such negative views, as a whole, the result indicated that Japanese overseas rather sympathize with the notion of *nenashigusa* in specific cases of JCORed. The number of Japanese children who do not go back to Japan, and who go back and forth from Japan has rapidly increased (Chapter 3), so that the existence of these children has become familiar among Japanese overseas, which may have reduced the negative views against them. In the next section, the interviewees' general views toward the notion of *nenashigusa* will be explored.

### 7.5.2 Do you think Japanese children who go back and forth from Japan are *nenashigusa*?

Before addressing this question, the views of the interviewees on the notion of *nenashigusa* were obtained. The responses can be divided into three groups; those who approved the notion of *nenashigusa*; those who disapproved of it; and those who have changed their views since they went overseas.

The first type of responses approving of the notion of *nenashigusa* was represented by the following views. For example, a businessman stated "just because people are Japanese, I don't believe they have to understand everything about Japanese culture"

and a teacher said "calling them *nenashigusa* is quite a negative way of looking at it. I think we should be looking at the positive points that you acquire from coming and going [to Japan]". The interviewees in this group questioned the conventional view that regarded the notion of *nenashigusa* negatively, and presented a new positive point of view. Some of the interviewees in this group expressed their criticism of the MOE, the producer of the conventional discourse.

> This issue is not one for the Ministry of Education to deal with; it's up to the parents (a businessman).
>
> I think that people who have only ever lived in Japan would say that being *nenashigusa* is bad (a businessman).

What these businessmen expressed was a doubt about the governmental discourse saying that we (Japanese) had to develop a national identity. Another businessman argued that one does not have to identify as a Japanese person; if that person can develop their individual identity, that's fine. Many businessmen expressed this kind of view, which considered *nenashigusa* positively.

The second group consists of those who were negative towards the notion of *nenashigusa*. There were two types of responses in this group. The first type simply reproduced the notion of *nenashigusa* held by the MOE, and was found mostly among teachers. For instance, a teacher stated "I think it is important to be aware of yourself as a Japanese person" and another teacher commented "I think you have to value the country of your own nationality". These negative views towards *nenashigusa* were a replica of the public discourse of the MOE.

On the other hand, the second type of view expressed a negative attitude toward the notion of *nenashigusa*, speaking from the parents' point of view, and was found mostly among mothers and also some businessman who expressed their views as fathers.

> It would be sad to have children who don't share the same emotions concerning beautiful things, or who can't share other things with us. It would be very upsetting (a mother).
>
> I am not really sure what the Japanese identity is. But it is sad for a parent not to have things which you can naturally interact with your children about (a mother).
>
> I want to be able to understand my children completely, even every little detail (a businessman).

The voices here could be interpreted not as reflecting the general view of *nenashigusa* but as the expression of their sentiments as parents. In fact, a mother added an excuse "what I was saying now may not be accepted in the age of internationalization" straight after her sentimental remark. These interviewees, most of whom were parents, felt that it was impossible to stop their children's generation from becoming more *nenashigusa*. That is the reason they used such phrase as 'lonely', 'sad', and 'want to have a culture that can be shared with one's own children', which demonstrated their unsettled feelings as parents.

Meanwhile, not all mothers held the same views as the above. The next two examples show that some mothers' regard the notion of *nenashigusa* positively. A mother claimed "if he or she wants to do it, then I think it is OK to live somewhere other than Japan". Another mother argued "I think the child should be thinking about him or herself. For example, just because the parents are Japanese and have always lived in Japan doesn't necessarily mean that their child has developed an identity as a Japanese. If one parent is a foreigner, it doesn't mean the child is half-Japanese. I think it is something the child should acquire for him/herself".

These comments represented views of people who regard their children as individual persons and independent, and thus contrast with the views held by parents who sought conformity and dependence in the children. This suggests two kinds of attitudes among those that approve *nenashigusa* and those that reject it. However, I do not

interpret these two different views in such a polarized way. Rather, the interviewees who indicated they 'want to maintain close relationships with children' and the interviewees who expressed their feeling that 'I want my children to grow up by themselves' should be understood as two images in the mirror of the concern of parents about their children's' future.

The third group of interviewees held negative views about *nenashigusa* at first but changed their views once they lived overseas. Many teachers belong to this group. While the mothers above expressed their responses from the parents' point of view, some teachers started their response by expressing the normative view. For example, a teacher commented "I think children should have a base of Japaneseness. But since I came to Australia, I have started wondering what really makes a person 'Japanese'". The statement of a teacher below illustrated the changing of his views very eloquently and is typical of the responses.

> Before I was sent out here, the Ministry of Education emphasized that we should be teaching the children overseas about Japanese culture. Because I was sent out here as a Japanese national, I felt a sense of duty. But since then, I have started thinking about what the Japanese identity really is. I don't know myself. Here, there are parents with different nationalities, and immigrant children all living together quite happily. I think that is great, so I realize how narrowly I used to look at things.

This is an excellent example of a changing view. The interviews in this study so far have continuously illustrated the teachers' normative views which were a replica of the public discourses. However, on this issue of *nenashigusa*, they seemed more ready to question the public discourse. One teacher even asked me to answer his question.

> I want to ask something. Do you think it is really best to have a core aspect, such as a Japanese identity?

This was an unexpected question for the interviewer. It also confirmed the significance of the interview in this study as an opportunity to explore ideas. The

views of this third group, including this teacher, demonstrate that they had believed in culturally essentialist views but their intercultural experience had led them to question such beliefs.

This section illustrates that the public discourse on JCORed, including that we must not raise *nenashigusa* children, is criticized by many Japanese overseas including teachers. This also indicates a significant gap between the public discourse and the views of some cultural intermediaries in intercultural education.

Hall (1996) and Appadurai (1996) argue that the number of people who have had diasporic experiences has dramatically increased in the age of globalization and that the diasporic experience has started to occupy a large part of our lives. Nevertheless, the public discourse in intercultural education in Japan has kept producing the discourse which regards the phenomena caused by the diaspora very negatively, saying that Japanese must not raise *nenashigusa* children (Chapter 5). One of the theoretical frameworks that support their views has been the discourse of *Nihonjinron* looked at in the previous section. In their arguments, no element could be found to acknowledge and accept the significance of the notion of hybridity proposed by Bhabha (1994) and Young (1995). *Nihonjinron* emphasizes the uniqueness of the Japanese. Consequently, the public discourses in intercultural education regard the intercultural experience or competence held by the children overseas and the returnees as a by-product or like an accessory in their lives. These experiences should not threaten their core identity as Japanese, according to these public discourses.

As Goodman (1993) has argued, JCORed could be part of the process of reproducing the elite. The history of JCORed reviewed in Chapter 3 supports his view. Intercultural education based on cultural essentialism could not question the power relationships existing in society nor shake these relationships. Such educational views could not provide an effective strategy for changing society either. Education for international understanding in Japan, which succeeded JCORed after the mid 1990s,

has also developed within the same frameworks of JCORed (Chapter 3). The interviewees in this study had been subjected to this firm-rooted normative public discourse.

Nevertheless, a number of interviewees in this study were less accepting of the public discourse on *nenashigusa*. The situation overseas around them did not allow them to reject the notion of *nenashigusa* so simply. As has been seen, the responses showed that some interviewees were perplexed on this question. Their perplexity could be interpreted as the beginning for them of casting off some aspects of the public discourse.

The argument around *nenashigusa* was caused by the increasing number of people moving across the borders of nations and cultures. This phenomenon has the potential to provide an opportunity to deconstruct cultural essentialism. However, it should be questioned whether only intercultural issues make people acknowledge the diversity of society and deconstruct the views of their own culture. Lowe (1996) argued that a pluralistic approach tended to ignore the differences within the target groups. Intercultural education in Japan has been implemented along with this pluralistic approach. As a consequence, while much attention has been paid to the differences between cultures, little has been paid to the differences within Japanese society, and its public discourse has scarcely touched upon the internal diversity of Japanese society (Chapter 3 and 5). In the next section, the views of interviewees toward such diversity within Japanese society will be scrutinized. It examines the cultural intermediaries' views concerning an issue which the public discourses in intercultural education do not refer to.

## 7.6 Viewpoints concerning inequality between males and females in Japan

To what extent the Japanese overseas are sensitive to gender differences and how they regard these differences within Japanese society are the questions of this section. The pre-interview questionnaire indicated that the interviewees felt that inequalities in society were due to educational background and gender far more than to any other factors such as differences in occupations, income levels, lineage, and residential areas. This study focused on perceptions of gender inequality for two reasons. One was that I have often heard opinions that Japanese men remain ignorant of women's problems in Japanese society, a view frequently expressed by mothers of returnees. The second reason was that males and females are treated differently in JCORed. These opinions and the phenomena leading to them have not been examined in the public discourse of intercultural education in Japan, although Japanese overseas are aware of them. Examining the interviewees' views concerning gender issues in intercultural education provides a new lens through which to understand their views concerning culture.

### 7.6.1 What do you think about gender inequality in Japanese society?

The responses were divided into three types: the view which did not regard inequality between males and females in Japanese society as a problem; the view which expressed uncertainty, and the view which regarded it as a problem.

The first view was supported by many businessmen. They did not regard the problem of inequality between males and females as a male problem or even a social problem but as a problem arising from female characteristics such as their lack of physical strength. For example, a businessman stated "there is a certain discrimination but women are adding to it. Women have to try harder" and another businessman argued "I think there is discrimination but it can't be helped. Women don't have physical

strength. They cannot work until 3 or 4 at night like we [men] do". Some of the interviewees considered women only in terms of conventional frameworks. A businessman expressed his view that "raising women's status is something women have to win for themselves. But I want women to be gentle and attractive", and another businessman proclaimed that "I think there is prejudice, but women give birth to children. When they leave to have children, it affects the efficiency of the company's work. And there are jobs which only women can do".

Not all businessmen, however, expressed the same views as those above. For instance, a businessman confessed "I have never personally experienced prejudice so I don't really know, but if I were in the women's situation, my opinion would probably change" and another businessman claimed "the male-dominated Japanese society has to change. In order for that to happen, the social system has to be changed, for instance, reducing the long hours worked". These voices overlapped with the responses of the second and the third groups below.

The second type of response generally states uncertainty about whether gender inequality existed. Many teachers and some mothers expressed this type of view. For example, a teacher stated "nowadays, women have become stronger, so I don't feel there is so much inequality" and a mother commented "I was at an all female workplace, so I didn't really feel discriminated against".

Two features could be found in their responses. The first of them was the claim that discrimination in Japanese society has disappeared, pointing out the recent improvement of the position of females in society. For example, a mother stated "in recent time, women's power has become strong". The second feature was the tendency in their responses to refer to their personal surroundings. "Amongst teachers, women and men are equal" (a teacher). "I never noticed it at my work place" (a mother).

In the world of teachers at the primary and the secondary levels in Japan, the ratio between male and female teachers is almost the same (Shimizu 1999). This was the background against which many teachers expressed that they did not feel much difference at their work. The mothers in this study also had a certain context to support their views concerning gender issues. The majority of them had never worked outside after their marriage. Therefore, both the teachers and the mothers of this study could be characterized as those who were unlikely to experience inequality between males and females in Japanese society. Not all teachers and mothers, however, belonged to this second group.

The third type of response problematized inequality between males and females in Japanese society openly. Some teachers argued that discrimination between males and females existed even in the teachers' world. For instance, a teacher commented "there is discrimination against women in teaching. Even though there are more women in general teaching, when it comes to heads of departments, there are more men" and another teacher complained "it is difficult for women to take leave to bring up their children and even if they do, the system isn't set up for them when they return to work".

In the mothers' case, the situation was described more seriously.

> There are jobs just not given to women. I am telling my own children that. In teaching at school, it isn't so bad, but if you start work in a company, there are many more difficult things. Men's consciousness and society generally haven't changed. Japan is a society where it is difficult for women to work. There is no atmosphere which allows women to work (a mother).
>
> There is discrimination – I feel it and I think people who are working now would feel it even more. Even if their ability is the same, the men are in superior positions I think that women have to work twice as hard as men to get ahead (a mother).

Their comments illustrated the pressing problems these mothers felt.

Among the three groups of interviewees, the group of the mothers was divided into two: those who held the second type of views and those who expressed the third type of views. In other words, the mothers group was divided into those who felt inequality between males and females strongly and those who did not feel inequality much. The mothers in this study were all full time housewives who belong to a similar social stratification in terms of financial condition and academic background. Nevertheless, their voices were divided. This reflects the differences amongst the single category of women that Mohanty (1995) referred to and that was discussed in Chapter 2. In the next section, the cause for this division will be explored.

### 7.6.2 What do you think about the fact that male and female returnee children are treated differently? Do you think their treatment should change?

The difference in treatment of returnee boys and girls is illustrated in the following statements of a mother in this research.

> Boys eventually will become the head of a household and become workers in a company somewhere. So they have to be very sure of themselves psychologically. Even if they can speak English, they have to go through the Japanese education system. So they need to be sent back to Japan while they are still young. With girls though, they don't have the pressure of becoming the main person in the family, so they can learn English, or the local language and then go back to Japan as a returnee child - many parents think that is fine.

The public discourse does not refer to this phenomenon. However, the different treatment of boys and girls in JCORed, just as the mother above described has been a well known phenomenon among Japanese overseas. In fact, among the interviewees in this study, only two of them were not aware of the phenomenon.

Three types of responses appeared. Slightly less than a half of the interviewees claimed that this situation had to change, one quarter approved the current situation as

the correct one, and the rest of them stated that there was really nothing they could do. These three types of views will be described below.

The first type of responses was divided again into two groups: the one expressed generally by the businessmen and the teachers and the other by the mothers. The first group of responses asserted that the current situation with JCORed must change because Japan could not progress with the current way of thinking about male/female roles. A businessman stated, for example, "if we don't change, then Japan will no longer be of value in international society", and a teacher argued "we can't keep up if we still have that Japanese way of thinking that says men go to work, while women stay at home". The second group of responses, found among the mothers who wished that women's status should be improved, claimed that returnee children's situation must be changed. A mother expressed that "I want it to change, I want the inequality to disappear" and another mother stated that "I want girls to have a chance too".

The second type of response said there was no need to change the status of females in Japan. For example, a businessman stated "there is no need to change the way men and women are in Japanese society", and a teacher argued "there are things only men can do and things only women can do. If you think that the current [Japanese] social system has developed out of that long history, I think there's no need to change it". They regarded the gender relationship in current Japanese society positively and therefore they asserted that they did not find a problem in the phenomenon of different treatment of boys and girls in JCORed. Many teachers supported this view. One of them revealed his view toward women, arguing that "we have to respect the difference between the sexes. If women's femininity disappears and women become strong and start working in full time jobs, some of the charm of society will disappear". A few businessmen, on the other hand, expressed male superiority over females rather openly. For example, a businessman claimed "women just can't make difficult decisions. It's impossible to have total equality between men and women".

The common feature of this second type of view is that it regarded the relationship between males and females and the role of males and females in society as solid and essentialist.

The third type of response was represented by statements such as "there's really nothing we can do" made by a teacher, "it's just too big a problem for us to change, it's not possible" by a teacher, and "it's terrible, but that's just the way it is. I've given up" by a mother. 'There is nothing we can do' was a typical phrase in their responses. Some mothers explained the reason why they felt 'they cannot help'. A mother stated, for example, "I have to think of the benefits for me and my children. There's nothing we can do without today's society changing – it's not possible to just keep going on ideals alone". What she meant was that when she considered the futures of her children, she had to accept the situation of JCORed as it was and to take advantages from it for her children. Their views might be regarded as conformist, but the responses of such mothers revealed that they, at least, sought their own interests under such conformist phrases.

The responses above raise three points. The first concerns the fact that many interviewees regarded the differences between males and females and their roles in society in essentialist ways. Many of them especially restricted the females' roles in society. For example, a mother stated "I think both parents and children have the dream that if a girl can speak English, she could become an airline attendant or a newsreader on television". Blackmore (2000) pointed out that globalization led to further casualization of the 'soft' peripheral jobs which are usually dominated by women. In the context of education, this means that women are increasingly expected to be trained in the peripheral kinds of jobs such as guides, interpreters, receptionists, which are described by phrases like 'jobs for fluent foreign language speakers'. The expectation expressed by the mothers above exactly illustrated this tendency.

Views that regard females in essentialist ways also lead to views that look at the relationship between males and female in society in an essentialist way. Yuval-Davis (1997, 15) argued that the concept of natural sexual divisions of labor, in which the men protect the 'womenandchildren' were derived from the discourse of the naturalized image of the nation. In fact, the Japanese terminology of JCORed literally includes this phrase 'womenandchildren (*shijo*)', which is written together as one word, as a unitary concept. In this respect, JCORed has traditionally contained the notion in which the nation helps 'womenandchildren'. The term 'womenandchildren' in JCORed in Japanese symbolizes this. The voices which critique this concept and propose to eliminate the term 'womenandchildren' in JCORed have been raised a few times. For example, an opinion opposed to using 'womenandchildren' in intercultural education was expressed at the symposium of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan (1996). So far, however, the term has been widely used and no movement has occurred to change its usage, which illustrates the low-level interest toward the difference between males and females in the arena of JCORed and intercultural education in Japan. The views of Japanese overseas should be interpreted as reflecting faithfully such notions in JCORed and intercultural education in Japan.

The second point to make in this section concerns the division in the mothers' views. While most mothers expressed a reluctance to change the status of females in Japanese society, a small number of mothers supported such change. Approximately two-thirds of mothers did not agree to problematize the differences between males and females in Japan, a third of mothers wanted to change the situation. Although many mothers admitted the low social status of females in Japanese society, they did not agree with the necessity of such change. It is interesting to explore why they did not.

A possible reason for this was found among their answers to the question of whether they had ever felt the difference between males and females in Japan. Many mothers

answered that they had not felt a difference because they scarcely encountered the situation in which they could notice a difference. These mothers also commented they did not demand change because they had not personally experienced a sense of difference between males and females in Japanese society. A mother's story below illustrates this.

> I don't really notice inequality between men and women either personally or in the case of people around me.

Another mother commented,

> Speaking for myself, I don't really notice inequality between men and women.

A different mother said,

> I am not really the type of woman who wants to get out and get a job, so I find I just naturally accept the differences between the treatment of boys and girls in terms of overseas or returnee education. I suppose that in the case of boys, they will go out to work, find a job, start a family and look after their wife and children in the future, so they can't just slack off and relax. But with girls, even if they do go out to work, eventually they marry and set up house, so as a parent, it's easier to bring up a girl, you can really let them do what they like.

These mothers claimed that they did not have the experience necessary to problematize the status quo. Consequently, they did not demand changes. This is one of the reasons for the majority approving of their current situation. On the other hand, it must be noted that a few mothers still expressed interest in a change in the male and female relationship in Japanese society. A mother said,

> I have worked only for a short period of time, but I felt the difference between males and females most strongly. It was discrimination.

A difference between the mothers seems to depend on whether they had had the opportunities in their lives to experience the difference or not, or whether or not they have had some personal experience of inequality between males and females.

Finally, I will compare the analysis of the responses of this section with the analyses of the views concerning cultural essentialism. Those who approved the notion of *nenashigusa* and sympathized with the diasporic ways of life were not always those who criticized inequality between males and females in Japanese society. This suggests that those who were sympathetic to diversity in intercultural situations, for example some businessmen in this study, were not always as conscious of gender equality issues.

The outcomes showed that all nine interviewees who asserted culturally essentialist views, with the negative estimation of the notion of *nenashigusa*, were the same ones who did not problematize the inequality between males and females and who did not want to change the status quo in Japan. This result indicates that those who neglect the inequality between males and females tended to regard culture as essentialist. A teacher's statement below illustrates this.

> I think it is important to be aware of yourself first and foremost as a Japanese person. And there are different roles for men and women in society, and I believe that having women stay at home and look after things there helps our society go along better.

Minh-ha (1991) argued that if multiculturalism focused on the difference between one culture and another culture, it would not be valid for subjugated people and that multiculturalism had to problematize differences within a culture. The results of this section show that people who hold essentialist views of culture tend not to see the differences within a certain culture or a society. These people, on the other hand, tend to celebrate cultures and to distinguish Japanese culture and society from other cultures and societies. This indicates that two different types of views exist among the interviewees: those who have become aware of the problem of cultural essentialism and have started problematizing the differences within a society; and those who insist on regarding culture as essentialist and who are therefore reluctant to see the differences in a society.

## 7.7 Conclusion

This chapter examined the views related to 'culture' expressed by Japanese overseas, which form the context of intercultural education in Japan. I explored their views in four areas: cultural relativism, pluralism, essentialism (which includes views on the uniqueness of the Japanese and the notion of *nenashigusa*), and gender inequality in Japan. As in Chapter 6, the views of Japanese overseas were regarded as the views of cultural intermediaries, which will be compared with the views expressed in the public discourses. The views between three different groups, businessmen, teachers and mothers were also compared. The findings are summarized below.

1) Cultural relativism

An overwhelming majority asserted that there is no inferior and superior culture or that there should not be inferiority and superiority between cultures. In this respect, their views were a replica of the public discourse and were normative. However, it was also found that these views held by Japanese overseas were superficial and that they were expressed under certain conditions only. Firstly, when these views were expressed, the phrase 'ideally' was often inserted in interviewees' statements. In fact, many interviewees showed hesitation when they claimed such normative responses. Secondly, it has become clear that culture in the statements of many interviewees meant only Western cultures, which were imagined as being not so different from Japanese culture in terms of the degree of progress. In other words, what the interviewees meant was that there was no inferior and superior culture in relation to developed countries and Japan, though differences were seen to exist between the cultures of developing countries and Japan. Some even refused to regard developing countries as having a culture. Thirdly, cultural relativism by these Japanese overseas was often expressed as a wish or a desire. Their comments indicated that they expressed what they wanted to see but not what they really saw around them.

2) Cultural pluralism

This section examined the responses of Japanese overseas towards the normative public discourse on cultural pluralism in intercultural education. First, it was confirmed that most interviewees held the view that Japan is an (ethnically) homogeneous country. Then their views on accepting foreigners as residents in Japan were examined. Many were positive about accepting them to some extent and advocated the importance of living together, that is, they expressed pluralistic views. In the interviews, however, I attempted to focus on the meaning of 'to some extent' in their statements.

What was revealed was that when the interviewees said 'to some extent', it meant 'unless the foreigners or foreign cultures harm Japanese culture'. The results indicated that there was a lot of hesitation, when the interviewees explained the meaning of 'to some extent'. They were embarrassed about their hesitation and felt the need to apologize for their views containing a deviation from the 'perfect' normative discourses. Many interviewees, in fact, changed their responses during the interviews and provided rationalizations or explanations for why they changed their minds. At the same time, however, the results also illustrated that many Japanese overseas still believed in assimilation, since they used phrases such as 'when in Rome, do as the Romans do'. The interview demonstrated that they regarded Japanese culture as essentialistic. Only a small number of them, a few mothers in particular, did not express the perception that Japanese culture should be authentic, while the other interviewees did.

3) Cultural essentialism I (Views on the uniqueness of the Japanese)

The views claiming that the Japanese, their society and culture are specific or unique, which many Japanologists have advocated, were greatly supported by the interviewees. The distinguishing features of the Japanese listed by them resembled

those mentioned by the academics in intercultural education in Japan. Both of them assumed 'others' who were different from the Japanese. They were also keen to present the images of the 'authentic Japanese'. Except for a few interviewees who claimed that the Japanese in the younger generation might not fall into the category of authentic Japanese, the majority of interviewees asserted that these distinguishing characteristics of Japanese could be applied to all Japanese.

A third of the interviewees stated that they compared the Japanese with Western people or Americans when they constructed these views. More than half of them, however, could not identify the people or cultures they had used when they made their comparison between the Japanese and the others. During the interviews, when they acknowledged that they did not have a target people or culture in mind in their comparisons, some interviewees changed their views. For example, they said that the Japanese were not really unique after all, but some maintained their original views. When the interviewees were asked whether the distinguishing features of the Japanese would change in the future in the age of increasing globalization and internationalization, more than half of them disagreed, saying that the Japanese would not change.

All of these results demonstrate how their views assume Japanese people and culture are solid and essentialistic.

4) Cultural essentialism II (The notion of *nenashigusa*)

Many interviewees approved of the phenomenon of some returnee children not going back (permanently) to Japan, but rather going back and forth between Japan and other nations. On the other hand, they expressed negative views towards the notion of *nenashigusa* or that the people become rootless in their identity. This showed that, while they accept the concrete phenomena occurring around them, they were still unable to change their views toward the conventional public discourse that

*nenashigusa* is a negative concept. As described in Chapter 4, however, the interview process was dialogical and as the interview proceeded, many expressed shifting views. Half of the interviewees, who were negative about the notion of *nenashigusa*, changed their views and started stating that it might be a good way of living. This change was observed widely amongst the teachers who had so far produced the most normative views and deviated least from the public discourses. It seemed for the first time that they clearly questioned the public discourse they had learned, for example from the MOE, before their dispatch overseas. The change in their views may have also been affected by their interaction, even though indirect, with diasporic people, who live their lives as *nenashigusa*. The interviews demonstrated that essentialist views, which had really seemed to have a firm root among Japanese, might come apart at the seams when holders of these views were confronted with the concrete phenomena common among the Japanese overseas.

5) The views concerning the inequality between males and females in Japan.

Three views emerged: the view which did not regard inequality between males and females in Japanese society as a problem; the view which regarded it as a problem, and the view which expressed uncertainly. Generally, the first view was supported by many businessmen, the second view was offered by some mothers and the third view was given by some teachers and mothers. The views held by mothers were, therefore, divided into two groups.

The interviewees' views were sought about the attitudes that the Japanese in Japan were seen to have toward male and female returnee children, and whether these needed to be changed. Three aspects of their views are discussed. First, quite a few interviewees stated that there was no need to change the status of females in Japan or that nothing could be done. Their responses indicated that they regarded relationships between males and females, especially the role of females in Japanese society as a solid and essentialist one. Second, the responses of the mothers were divided between

one demanding a change in the status quo, and the other expressing conformity with the status quo. This division may have been affected by whether these mothers had an opportunity to encounter a concrete difference that was caused by an inequality between males and females in Japan in their own lives or not. Third, a comparison was made between the views concerning cultural essentialism and the views towards inequality between males and females in Japan. The tendency of the majority of those who strongly advocated cultural essentialism was that they were reluctant to either admit the inequality between males or females or to change the relationship between males and females in Japan. This tendency demonstrated how culturally essentialist views, together with views of cultural relativism and normative pluralism, regard 'culture' as a solid entity. These views can play a role in maintaining and even strengthening the position of various dominant groups in relation to gender and in the issues of intercultural education.

Comparing the three groups, the businessmen, the teachers and the mothers in this study, the teachers were mostly dominated by the normative discourse. Their responses to particular questions such as those concerning *nenashigusa*, however, revealed that there were opportunities for them to be released from the spell of these public discourses. The mothers were most critical of the normative discourse, but often they were divided into two groups: those who conformed to the status quo and those who wanted it changed. Many businessmen expressed strong criticism against the status quo of intercultural education, but they were the most reluctant to change the inequality between males and females in Japan.

# CHAPTER EIGHT
# CONCLUSION

This chapter relates the significant findings from Chapters 6 and 7 to the aims of the study. To provide a context for this, the main concepts discussed in Chapters 1 to 5 are reviewed.

The aim of this study was to examine the discourse concerning intercultural education in Japan, which reflects the vigorous social change that is globalization. This study focussed on the specific field of education called Japanese Children Overseas and of Returnees (JCORed) and education for international understanding in Japan. Particularly, the focus has been on JCORed since JCORed has a long history and has attracted much attention in Japan. As another focus of this study, it was decided to examine the discourses of Japanese cultural intermediaries residing overseas since they play a significant role in JCORed and intercultural education. These cultural intermediaries including businessmen, teachers and mothers have had first hand experience of other cultures in their working lives overseas.

This study examined multicultural education (called intercultural education in Japan) in the context of globalization (called internationalization in Japan) in Chapter 2. Globalization has impacted on education through the economic, political and cultural spheres. First, in the economic sphere, globalization has required education to produce more people competent in intercultural communication. Second, globalization has shaken the role of the nation state as the prime actor internationally. In the field of education, however, nation states have tended to maintain their power, which has created some tensions, for example, between the aims of education held by the bureaucrats and the parents. Third, cultural globalization has resulted in cultural imperialism, in which the values of dominant cultures, for example American culture, are understood as universal values. Multicultural education as developed particularly

in the US was examined as it has provided the model for intercultural education in Japan. While there has been a development from assimilationist perspectives to cultural pluralism and then to multiculturalism, one of the central issues has been the debate on whether a society should prioritize integration or diversity. This debate has also raised the problem of cultural essentialism, which in this study is examined in relation to views of hybridity and some aspects of gender studies. Together these issues provide the conceptual framework for this research study.

The history of the education of Japanese children overseas and of returnees (JCORed), education for international understanding and intercultural education in Japan has been examined critically in Chapter 3. This examination showed that JCORed was started to prevent the children of Japanese businessmen dispatched overseas from being disadvantaged, but that over time the MOE has strengthened its managerial control over JCORed. The examination in Chapter 3 also found that JCORed has gradually became part of a field with a broader focus on education for international understanding and intercultural education since the late 1980s. Policy makers and academics enthusiastically promoted education for international understanding and their discourse has been regarded as a public discourse in this study.

This study examined the views of Japanese overseas considered to be cultural intermediaries through investigating how they understand, interpret and respond to the public discourses produced by policy makers and academics. Three groups of Japanese overseas were identified as cultural intermediaries. These three groups are the executives of Japanese companies, administrative teachers of Japanese schools, and the representatives of PTAs of Japanese schools overseas. The representatives of PTAs were all mothers and members of all three groups of people served on the school board of Japanese schools overseas when I interviewed them. Before the interview, pre-interview questionnaires were sent to all participants of the research. One of the purposes of the pre-interview questionnaire with its attached explanatory

letter was to provide a foundation for discussion during the interviews. During the interview sessions, interviewees' views concerning intercultural education and their understanding of culture were explored by referring to their answers stated in the pre-interview questionnaires. The interviewees sometimes became perplexed and sometimes changed their original answer, which provided further perspectives when interpreting their responses. This study regards these dialogical processes as very important when teasing out the responses and views of these cultural intermediaries.

The questions asked in the interviews were concerned with views of globalization, intercultural education, and cultural essentialism as discussed in Chapter 2. The first half of these questions were designed to find the interviewees' views concerning intercultural education. The answers and an analysis of these were presented in Chapter 6. The second half of these questions explored the interviewees' understanding of culture. Their answers were presented and analyzed in Chapter 7. The same questions were also used as a basis for the examination of policy documents and academic works in Chapter 5.

In this chapter, I will summarize the participants' views on intercultural education and their understanding of culture. Firstly normative aspects of the participants' view are summarized and attention is drawn to the most important features. Then, I identify the ways in which these normative views are underpinned by cultural essentialism. However, because the participants do not always follow the normative discourse, this chapter also explores the significance of these discrepancies and the differences between views held by members of the three groups of cultural intermediaries. Finally, challenges to cultural essentialism in intercultural education are discussed.

## 8.1 The normative views

According to Ebuchi (1987: 19-26), writing in the first volume of the journal of the Intercultural Education Society in Japan, the aim of intercultural education in the age

of internationalization (globalization) is to bring up people who can co-exist with and understand people from different cultures. Ten years later, the president of the same association stated as the aim of intercultural education that it should seek to create a society in which people from different cultural backgrounds can live together (Kato 2000). There is no difference between these two views regarding the aim of intercultural education. The term 'education for international understanding' first appeared in policy documents in 1964 in Japan. The annual report of the Ministry of Education stated "we have to promote more international understanding by eliminating prejudice towards cultures from abroad" (the Ministry of Education 1964: 70). Intercultural education in Japan has held the same goal since then (The Ministry of Education 1964-2000). These comments illustrate well that intercultural education in Japan has not changed much in the age of internationalization although it has been much discussed.

This study has revealed the strong normative tendency both in public discourses and in the discourses produced by the interviewees as cultural intermediaries. Statements such as 'the Japanese have to live with people from different cultures' and 'we should respect the cultures of various backgrounds' are found very commonly in policy documents and academic works in Japan. As seen in Chapters 6 and 7, most of these public discourses have been accepted and advocated by the interviewees. In fact, many interviewees produced a replica of the normative public discourses in their responses. For example, the policy documents in the mid-1990s promoted the learning of languages other then English (The MOE 1998: 486). Many interviewees had assimilated the views expressed in the policies and stated that it was important to acquire languages other than English. They supported the normative value of the public discourse in this way and repeated almost the same phrases as are found in the public discourse.

The normative responses expressed by the interviewees, however, sometimes led to contradictions. For example, their intentions to learn languages other than English were accompanied by the sense of their superiority to the local culture in other than English speaking countries. Some said 'if we speak a few words or a greeting in the local language, it makes the local people happier'. The interviewees asserted the importance of learning both English and languages other than English, but their stance toward the language other than English and to learning English was sometimes different from the public discourse. The public discourse promoted the importance of learning languages other than English, as well as learning English. However, while the interviewees as cultural intermediaries accepted the public discourse, they occasionally changed its meaning to suit their intercultural context. This normative feature in the interviewees' responses examined further in Chapter 6 and 7 can be summarized in relation to two distinctive features as described below.

### 8.1.1 Conflict-free discourses

A number of views expressed among the interviewees' responses were polarized. One of the clearest examples of this was found in their views concerning the aim of intercultural education. For many interviewees, the prime aim of such education was to bring up Japanese children to have a firm identity as Japanese. The purpose of intercultural education for them is to establish Japaneseness. At the same time, however, the interviewees held up another aim of intercultural education, to bring up Japanese who understand universalistic norms and are able to accept these norms. Many interviewees regarded Japanese competence in international understanding as lagging behind others, and they argued that the Japanese must learn from more universalistic norms (usually meaning American norms). Among their views, no doubts or questions emerged towards the public discourses that drew attention to the backwardness of Japanese in intercultural contexts and that argued the necessity to conform to the idealized universalistic norms.

The significant problem here is the fact that the aim of establishing Japaneseness and the aim of promoting conformity to universalistic norms were held side by side without any questions. To respect the traditions of Japanese culture and to accept norms from outside of Japan could create a clash or lead to the rejection of one or the other. Nonetheless, the responses of the interviewees did not display any conflict between these two polarized concepts. When many interviewees presented both of them harmoniously, as a researcher I could not help wondering why these two were presented so optimistically and in such a conflict-free way.

A clue to the answer to this question above was found in the responses of the interviewees to the question of "what would you do if the norms of intercultural understandings and your personal values [as a Japanese] clashed?" When this question was asked, many interviewees were perplexed. Some were reluctant to respond, some avoided responding, saying "I don't know" and some changed their original view, for instance, saying "the notion of intercultural education is too idealistic, but the reality of implementing it is very difficult". These responses indicate that the interviewees regarded intercultural education and education for international understanding as abstract or ideological. In other words, they did not assume any situation in which their own identity was threatened or forced to be changed, when they presented their responses to other questions in the interviews.

As Chapter 3 and 5 revealed, JCORed and education for international understanding in Japan has developed on the assumption that the Japanese should and can interact with and understand people from different cultures. In this context, most of the interviewees did not show much awareness and interest in the conflict which might occur between the two polarized aims in the public discourses: establishing Japaneseness vs. conforming to the universalistic norms. The results rather indicate that the majority of the interviewees located themselves at the same position as the producers of public discourse in this respect. According to pre-interview

questionnaires, the interviewees enjoyed their lives overseas as members of the Japanese community. Their financial standard was very high. Put another way, they belong to the dominant Japanese strata whether overseas or in Japan. It is argued that their position in society may have led them to reproduce such conflict-free public discourses.

### 8.1.2 The naïve discourses

Another feature of the interviewees' views concerning cultural relativism and cultural pluralism could be characterized as their very naïvety. The majority of them claimed that people in all cultures should be treated equally, and asserted that the Japanese should allow foreigners to reside in Japan. However, the in-detail dialogues with some interviewees demonstrated that their views were naïve and that though they accepted and reproduced the normative discourse, they often interpreted this to suit their own context.

When the interviewees stated all cultures were equal, they were expressing in an abstract way a general belief they held. However, in subsequent questioning, it became apparent that in fact there were many ways in which they did not believe all cultures were equal. In addition, many interviewees included only the dominant Western cultures in their notion of cultures, when they promoted their cultural relativist views. Likewise, while the interviewees supported the harmonious co-existence of people from different countries and cultures (cultural pluralism), they accepted these people and cultures as long as they would not harm Japanese culture. A number of them said that their preferable people and cultures were the ones from Western developed countries. Furthermore, many of the interviewees still held assimilationist views, asserting that foreigners should accept and follow Japanese ways in Japan.

What do all these results mean? Were there contradictions between what they expressed earlier in the interview and what they stated later in the interview? One might say that the interviewees' acceptance of normative public discourse was only superficial. However, the more important point here is the strong influence of the normative public discourses on the interviewees. Although the interviewees sometimes had views which were distanced from the normative public discourses, they generally supported these discourses in their responses. In contrast to those Japanese who have never resided outside of Japan, the participants of this study had greater opportunity to encounter cultures outside of Japan in their daily lives. From the interviews there were indications that this experience caused them to reconsider the difficulties in treating people from different cultures equally or accepting them into Japan unconditionally. Nevertheless, the majority of the interviewees continued to express normative cultural relativist and cultural pluralist views.

In 8.1.1 above, I pointed out the stance of the interviewees who attempted to understand other people and cultures without changing their positions as the dominant group in society. This section indicated their persistence in maintaining the normative discourse in spite of their acknowledgement of some difficulties with it in some cases. In the next section, I will consider the view of cultural essentialism, which helped some interviewees to express such naïve and conflict-free statements.

## 8.2 Cultural essentialism

Almost all interviewees in this study regarded Japanese people, Japanese culture, and Japanese society as specific and unique in the world. What they said resembled the claims of the public discourses, policy documents and academic works in Japan.

These discourses claimed that there are authentic Japanese somewhere. They also implied the existence of the generalized others, who were different from Japanese people. This kind of view was defined as cultural essentialism in this study. In the

culturally essentialist view, there are boundaries between cultures. The specific features of one's own culture or of other cultures were regarded as essentialist and as not-easily changeable. Furthermore, the culturally essentialist view does not pay much attention to the diversity within a certain culture and tends to ignore any internal diversities. In insisting on the uniqueness of Japanese people, culture and society, such interviewees revealed their culturally essentialist views.

The majority of interviewees' responses in the previous sections can be understood in terms of their essentialism. What the interviewees expressed was that they wanted to interact with different cultures and wanted to learn 'about' different cultures. However, their targets were always 'different cultures', which were not considered to threaten their own culture. Consequently, the notion of understanding these different cultures does not create any conflict.

A reason why the interviewees keenly claimed such naïve cultural relativist and cultural pluralist views was also found in their culturally essentialist views. For the majority of the interviewees, various cultures mean different cultures existing without any conflict. Power relations between the cultures and the diversities within a culture were scarcely considered. In addition, each culture was understood as having an unchangeable and essential nature. As a result, when the interviewees stated 'Japan should allow more foreign residents', they did not expect that Japanese society, culture, and norms might change as a consequence. In fact, many interviewees became reluctant to express a statement like 'we have to accept more foreigners', when such possibilities were pointed out by the interviewer. The results indicated how firmly these interviewees held culturally essentialist views and that they constructed their discourses on the basis of these views.

In light of the above, cultural essentialism could be regarded as a fundamental concept in the interviewees' views concerning intercultural education and their understanding of culture. In as far as they were bounded by this culturally essentialist view, they

kept producing normative discourses which were naïve and conflict-free. Views which deconstruct a single culture to reveal the diversity within it or which scrutinize the power relationships between the various cultures tended to be neglected or ignored in their discourses. The interviewees were in fact reproducing public discourses which have not changed direction for more than two decades. These public discourses, like the interviewees, have not been accounting for the power relations and differences within Japanese society.

One of the reasons why intercultural education and education for international understanding in Japan have held the same goals for nearly two decades may be found in the above explanation. Unless such education is released from the spell of cultural essentialism, intercultural education in Japan will not find a viewpoint which is different from the conventional viewpoints. This is one of the important conclusions of this study.

Another important conclusion of this study reveals that the views of the interviewees do not always follow the normative discourses. I will consider the discrepancy between the public discourse and the interviewees' positions in 8.3 and the discrepancies in view between businessmen, teachers, and mothers in 8. 4 below.

## 8.3 The discrepancy between the public discourse and the views of cultural intermediaries

I have discussed so far how the public discourse found in policies and academic works dominated the views of the interviewees who were regarded as cultural intermediaries. However, on limited issues there were discrepancies between the public discourse and the views of the interviewees. This section will explore these discrepancies and consider their significance.

One of the discrepancies was found in the response to the question "what would you do if the norms of intercultural understandings and your personal values clashed?" In

the public discourse, these two norms are never considered to clash. For example, the annual report of the MOE (1998: 484) stated that "we [Japanese] must respect our valuable traditions and culture while accepting the universalistic norms of the world". It has been assumed that these two goals of intercultural education can be pursued at the same time. Many of the interviewees of this study, however, could not accept this naïve discourse. As seen earlier, their personal experience and their positions overseas created hesitation and led them to question the public discourse.

Such discrepancy between the public discourse and the interviewees' views emerged more explicitly when the interviewees became aware of the problem of *Nihonjinron*. During the interviews, when the interviewees acknowledged that their *Nihonjinron* was constructed without any comparison with other people, or when they admitted their *Nihonjinron* was the product of a comparison only with the idealized image of the US., approximately half of the interviewees expressed the necessity to change their *Nihonjinron*. These interviewees who live overseas are surrounded by various people who are not Americans or at least who are not imagined Westerners. The interviewees could not avoid recognizing the problem with a view that distinguished between only Japanese culture and non-Japanese culture. In other words, the outcome of the study indicated that the interviewees as cultural intermediaries, due to their circumstances, could acknowledge the problem of culturally essentialist views.

On the other hand, some interviewees expressed their wish to maintain the distinctive characteristics of the Japanese although they could not confirm the uniqueness of the Japanese. For these interviewees, essentialized Japanese culture was considered not as a fact but as a wish. An ideology that desires to see a monolithic and authentic Japanese culture was apparent in their responses. For these interviewees, Japanese who hold hybrid features, in other words, who are *nenashigusa*, are not 'the expected Japanese'. Their view resembles the public discourse in which the notion of *nenashigusa* has always been regarded negatively.

The largest gap between the public discourse and the views of interviewees, however, was found in the response to the question concerning this notion of *nenashigusa*. Even though the public discourse of JCORed had traditionally regarded the notion of *nenashigusa* as negative, many interviewees expressed an opposite opinion. Many of them, who expressed a negative view toward the notion of the *nenashigusa* in the pre-interview questionnaire, evaluated the notion positively during the interviews. They approved of the way of life in which people go back and forth between their home country and other countries. They accepted the people who have a hybrid identity due to residing in many different countries. Even the teachers, who were very faithful to the normative discourses in the other questions, supported such positive aspects of *nenashigusa*. The interviewees' experiences changed their view toward the notion of *nenashigusa*. A teacher's statement vividly illustrated this.

> Before I was sent out here, the Ministry of Education emphasized that we should be teaching the children overseas about Japanese culture. Because I was sent out here as a Japanese national, I felt a sense of duty. But since then, I have started thinking about what the Japanese identity really is. I don't know myself. Here, there are parents with different nationalities, and immigrant children all living together quite happily. I think that is great, so I realize how narrowly I used to look at things.

What was once a very negative concept is increasingly understood positively. Shifting the definition of *nenashigusa* from the negative view of rootlessness to a more positive understanding of hybridity reflects globalization. A possible explanation of this relates to the interviewees' encounters overseas with non-Japanese people and culture and related diasporic experience. For example, they may have encountered Australian ethnic minorities and the dominant discourses in Australia about the positive nature of cultural difference. These discourses include the policies on multiculturalism.

These results indicate that the seemingly strong public discourse and its core culturally essentialist view were questioned by the interviewees with respect to certain issues. At the beginning of this chapter, I mentioned that intercultural education and education for international understanding had held the same goals for more than twenty years. However, the strong influence of the normative public discourse and the deep rootedness of the culturally essentialist view were weakening. A beginning of a change in the status quo may be indicated by this. A rebellion against the public discourse that regards *nenashigusa* negatively could be seen as the beginning of a breakdown of the culturally essentialist view in the age of globalization. In the next section, I will explore another possible break in the normative discourse, evident in the discrepancies between the views of businessmen, teachers and mothers.

## 8.4 The discrepancies in view between businessmen, teachers, and mothers

The interviews demonstrated that businessmen were sometimes fairly critical of the normative public discourse. For example, many businessmen regarded English as merely a tool of communication while the teachers and mothers expressed a more complex feeling towards English, perhaps due to their lower proficiency in it. They also regarded English as a symbol of internationalization. In addition, a number of businessmen were critical of the public discourses that said that the Japanese had to learn and acquire the universalistic norms in intercultural and international society. They argued that the universalistic norms in the public discourse meant the norms of Anglo-Saxon countries. They also declared that Japanese did not always have to conform to these.

The above examples demonstrate that a number of businessmen questioned the public discourse and started criticizing it according to their life experiences. They, at least, attempted to deconstruct the mythical notion of the universalistic norms held in the public discourse. On the other hand, some businessmen, who demonstrated sensitivity

to intercultural issues, did not demonstrate sensitivity to some gender issues. Among the three groups of the interviewees, the businessmen as a whole showed the lowest interest toward the problem caused by gender inequality in Japan and they were reluctant to express any necessity to change such inequality.

Teachers were the most faithful to the normative public discourse among the interviewees in this study. In fact, they had more opportunities to encounter the public discourses than other groups. For example, the MOE has kept strengthening its management of the teachers who are involved in intercultural education in Japan. In addition, all teachers in the Japanese schools overseas must attend training sessions held prior to being dispatched. It is easy to imagine that these teachers have been strongly subjected to the public discourse of intercultural education. Nevertheless, as seen above, a few teachers expressed some doubts and questioned the public discourse, even if only on limited issues. Their personal experiences overseas provided a context from which they were able to critique some of the public discourses.

The mothers in this study showed the most divergence from the public discourse. They interpreted the public discourse to fit their own context, especially when it concerned their children's future. For instance, when they emphasized the importance of English, their reason was that English was useful for their children's future. The concept of 'usefulness' in their statement included not only that English is an international language as the public discourse promotes but also that acquiring English helped their children's results on the entrance examination to higher education and to job opportunities. Therefore, for these mothers, learning a local language other than English which the public discourse also promotes was neglected because they regarded a local language as being not as useful as English. In this way, the mothers made light of the normative public discourse that 'we should also learn languages other than English'. The tendency to prioritize their own interests

positioned the views of the mothers' group furthest from the public discourse, compared with the other groups. Moreover, of those interviewees who expressed complaints about and distrust of the policy of the MOE, the largest number consisted of mothers. Some argued that the MOE did not provide a satisfactory education for their children currently overseas.

As a general tendency, the mothers accepted the normative nature of public discourse less than the two other groups, and were also less enthusiastic to express culturally essentialist views. Compared to businessmen and teachers, some mothers showed the least interest in promoting Japaneseness and regarding Japanese culture and society in essentialist terms.

All mothers stated that in principle men and women should be treated equally. Some mothers believed that gender inequality did exist. However, most mothers did not feel this to be the case. This difference may be explained by various experiences of gender interactions. For example, some mothers had had positive experiences in the work force, which led them to believe gender inequality was not a big problem. This is illustrated by the following comments,

> I was at an all-female workplace, so I didn't really feel discriminated against. I find I just naturally accepted the different treatment between boys and girls in JCORed and Japanese society (a mother).
>
> I don't really notice gender inequality either personally or in the case of people around me (another mother).

On the other hand, teachers were the most faithful supporters of the public discourses in this study. As described above, however, if they had already encountered positive aspects of *nenashigusa* (diasporic hybridity), these experiences may have helped some of them to challenge such an influential public discourse.

In the cases of both the mothers and the teachers above, a vital factor appeared to be whether a person had had certain experiences or not, for example, experiences in

intercultural relations in the teachers' case, and in the mothers' case, the experience of diversity in society, including gender inequality. These experiences allowed them to question and to form critiques of the public discourse, although their experiences can not be generalized but must be specific for each person who is in an intercultural situation in the Japanese context. The importance of an experience which leads to a person challenging the normative discourse, and the difference in exposure to such experiences for interviewees from the three groups are important findings of this study. To explore these findings further would be a valuable focus of future research.

## 8.5 Summary: Challenging cultural essentialism in intercultural education

As one of its main aims, this study examined how education, particularly intercultural education, has responded to globalization. In order to do so, this study investigated the views concerning intercultural education and JCORed expressed in public discourses and in the discourses produced by cultural intermediaries.

The results indicated that strong normative discourses dominated both groups of discourse. For example, two polarized notions of integration and diversity have been equally promoted in public discourses and in the discourses of the interviewees. More specifically, the majority of the views in this study have emphasized the importance of both establishing Japaneseness and promoting intercultural understanding harmoniously. Such normative discourses were also found commonly in the interviewees' views concerning the acquisition of foreign languages and in their understanding of the notions of cultural relativism and cultural pluralism. On examining these discourses from various aspects, this study revealed the tendency of these discourses to be conflict-free and naïve.

The results of the study also revealed the dominance of cultural essentialism in the views of the participants. This was interpreted as one of the most influential factors in

the production of normative discourses. Those individuals who strongly advocated cultural essentialism were less attuned to issues of diversity in society, such as the notion of hybridity and of gender inequality. The implications of this strong cultural essentialism, despite internationalization, are that intercultural education in Japan has retained the same characteristics over the last twenty years and will probably remain unchanged.

On the other hand, however, this study revealed some resistance to the strong normative discourses supported by cultural essentialism. The discrepancy between the public discourse and the discourse of the cultural intermediaries in this study concerning *nenashigusa* could open up one possible area for change. The view that hybridity is valuable was not found in the public discourse, but it emerged among some interviewees. In addition, some of the interviewees expressed their strong concerns about the way inequalities between the genders in Japanese society are generated and maintained by the failure to recognize and value the diversity within the society. The responses of the interviewees discussed in 8.3 regarding questions on *nenashigusa*, and the responses of the interviewees discussed in 8.4 which revealed the mother's outspoken support for diversity over integration, could be regarded as the emergence of a challenge to the conventional culturally essentialist views.

Without any doubt, the number of Japanese overseas has rapidly increased under globalization. Not only the number but also the variety of their ways of encountering the world outside of Japan as students, technical experts, professional workers and long-term tourists have increased and will continue to grow. Despite these trends, this study showed that public discourses in intercultural education in Japan have obstinately maintained their normative discourse based on cultural essentialism.

At the same time, in contrast, this study also found the beginnings of a new perception, which could shake the firm conceptual framework of cultural essentialism in intercultural education. Positive attitudes towards the notion of diasporic hybridity

(*nenashigusa*) and a growing sensitivity to the power relationships within the society and culture could help break down the hard line of cultural essentialism. Culturally essentialist views, as this study revealed, have had and retain a very strong influence on the discourse of intercultural education in Japan. However, this study also indicated the existence of people, especially mothers and some Japanese overseas, who have begun to question, problematize and challenge this notion of cultural essentialism. One of the most significant results of this study suggests that the powerful influence of cultural essentialism might be weakening as the process of globalization (internationalization) proceeds into this new century.

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# APPENDIX A

## A SAMPLE OF AN INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT AND THE TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH

インタビュー：メルボルン日本人学校運営理事Ａさん

１－①　「共生のための能力とは、どのような能力ですか？」
自分を失わずに他の文化を理解すること。あーそういう考え方もあるんだ、そういう人たちもいるんだという理解を深めることで、あーあれは違う人間だと、すぐ離してしまわないことが重要。それが出来る能力。
１－②　「コミュニケーションの能力とは、どのような能力ですか？　それは語学力のことですか？」
その（共生する）ためには、コミュニケーションが出来なければならない。一番大切なのは言葉。日本人はどうしても固まりがちで（現地の人の中へ）入っていかない。だから冗談も分からない。（現地の人も）初めは日本人がいるというのでゆっくりしゃべってくれるが、酒でも入るとそれを忘れてだんだん早くしゃべり出す。その上に、ついていけないジョークが出てくる。例えば、西洋の世界ではシェークスピアくらいをある程度分かっていないと、その関連のジョークは分からない。何、笑っているの、と横の人に聞く（ことになる）。（だから）彼らの文化というか、彼らの常識となっている本などの知識がないと分からない。これは、なかなか難しいよ。
１－③　「あなたが考える最も重要な能力は何ですか？」
（回答なし。）

２－①　「日本人に共生の能力はあると思いますか？」
「（付き合う相手の）階層によるのでは？」その通りだと思う。でも、ハイソサエティー（上流社会）という人たちの間に入ると、向こうも我々を理解しようとするし、理解度も高い。だけれど（一般に日本人は）なかなか同じ土俵で（共通の理解は）出来ない。
２－②　「日本人にコミュニケーション能力はあると思いますか？」
あまりないと思う。
２－③　「日本人に１－③の能力はありますか？」
ＮＡ

３－①　「なぜ英語が特に重要なのですか？」
今は、英語がインターナショナルな言語。どこの国でも、韓国、香港、中国でも（結構英語でいける）。　そして彼らの上達度は我々よりはるかによい。テニス（全豪）を見ていても、英語圏以外の連中は平気に（英語を話す）。なぜ、こうも我々と違うのかと思う。
３－②　「英語圏以外では、英語と現地の言語ではどちらが大切ですか？」　「英語以外の現地語は、どれくらい重要ですか？」
（現地語を使えなくても）それほど恥ずかしくないよ。我々も（外国人に）日本語が出来なくても馬鹿にしないし、中国人が我々に中国語を[illegible]ないと言って馬鹿にもしない。「意思の疎通は英語が出来れば？」何とかなる。

４－①　「アイコンタクトをもつ、イエス・ノーをはっきり言う、あいまいに話さない、などは、異文化間コミュニケーション上、大切だと思いますか？」
そう思う。
４－②　「アイコンタクトをもつ、イエス・ノーをはっきり言う、あいまいに話さない、などは、コミュニケーションの取り方として、世界中で普遍的なものだと思いますか？」
これからは、かなりこれらが普遍的になるとは思うが――、アジア系では、もっと穫ってしゃべるからそうでもない。相手が傷をつくようなイエス、ノーはこちらでもあまりはっきりは言わない。英国的なのだろう。特に完全否定はしない。ノーと言うのに、ずいぶん回りくどく言いますよ。そういう場面がよくある。しかし、パブリックな領域では、イエス、ノーをはっきり言う必要がある。

５－①　「グローバル化についてどう考えていますか？」
アングロサクソンの時代をそう呼んでいる。日本の経済・文化がもてはやされた時代はつい１０年前（日出ずる国、ジャパンアズナンバー１）で、今は、アングロサクソンの逆襲の時代。アメリカのスタンダードに合わせなさいと（迫られる時代だ）。
５－②　「国際理解教育とはどのようなものだと思いますか？」
［異文化を肌で感じる事が重要。その為、現地で生活をしてみること、海外から教員（生徒も）を招く等の施策の必要］　（その為の）時間が足りないのではないか？　海外へは（日本から）逃げて来ている人も多い。
５－③　「国際理解教育は政府が中心になって進めるべきだと考えますか？」
文部省の官僚に、海外経験を何年かさせるとかしないとだめなのではないか。例えば、私学は補助をもらわないようにしてでも、もっと自由であってもいいのではないか。国は、金は出す。また、それを出してほしい人がいるのだろう。
「日本政府の教育政策の具体例とその改善策を挙げてください。」
現状をサポートしている（ように見える）。例えば、入試制度。全員のレベルを高めている点はよいし、評価すべき。（しかし）どの教科もここまで到達しなくてはいけない、という教育がよくない。もっと専門教育（例えば国際理解教育）へ回す時間がなくてはいけない。一般（的な）教育をやり過ぎる。例えば、歴史の年号のように、あほみたいなことを覚えさせる。
５－④　「もし、国際理解教育でいう普遍的な規範と、あなた自身の規範がぶつかったときは、どうしますか？」
自分を見失わずに、嫌なものは嫌と言う。例えば、トヨタの（会長）奥田さんは、終身雇用制のどこが悪いのかと立派に反論した。
「衝突、コンフリクトが起こった場合はどうしますか？」
経済、ビジネスの場合は簡単だ。競争する。負けそうになると相手に合わせる。そうではない分野では、ビジネスの世界とは違い、譲らなくていいものは譲らなくていいのではないか。

６－①　「文化間には、優劣があると思われますか？」
ある程度はあると思う。

６－②　「すべての文化は平等に扱うべきですか？」
随分迷ったが、文化があるようでないような国の文化（それも文化と呼べるかも知れないが、僻地の食べるものにも困っているところには、文化と呼べるものはない）とは（まともには）比べられない。（通常文化とは）欧米のそこそこアドバンストなカルチャーという意味ではないか。日本の文化が劣っているということはないということも考える。（だから上のような途上国の文化も含めて考えると）、優劣関係がないとは言えない。
（何が常識かは、時代によって異なる。例えば、イスラムの結婚制度を無茶苦茶だというのはクリスチャンの世界での話だ。日本も明治時代には今とは結婚の形態が異なった。）

７－①　「日本は単一民族からなる国だと思いますか？」
違う。「在日の方とか、外国人？」　そうだ。特に韓国の人の存在（がある）。
７－②　「なぜ、ある程度は他民族を受け容れるべきだと思われるのですか？」
国際理解がもっと早まる。ビジネスの面から見ると、人口が減る中でもっと分業すべきだ。例えば、皿洗いを高級取りがやっているからレストランが高い、とも言われている。（そういうことを外国人にやらせればいい。）ただ、そうなると理解が深まるか、違う意味で偏見が出てくるかは分からない。だから、あぶない部分もある。「ある程度という理由は？」国が広ければ資源があり、自給自足できるようならばいいが（日本は）小さすぎる。

８－①「日本では、社会の中の様々な差異よりも、日本人に共通する文化を感じますか？」
そう思う。
８－②　「日本人の特徴として、何を考えられますか？」
［閉鎖的。哲学が無い（宗教がない）。語学力が弱い。自己アピールが下手。人にやさしい。平均的に学力がある。］
８－③「これらは日本人全体に共通ですか？」
（上に挙げたもの）これが、日本人だ。
８－④「その時の比較の対象はどこですか？」
どこと比べてもそう（これが日本人の特徴）ではないか。（ただし）韓国は日本と（一部が）似ているかもしれない。（それでも韓国人は、）哲学がないことはないし、アピールも強いし、閉鎖的くらいが日本と似ているくらいである。「そうすると、若干の例外を除くと、すべて日本全体の傾向ですか？」そう、思う。特に、哲学がないのは、日本くらいだ。「宗教がないという点では、オーストラリア人も同じではないでしょうか？」いや、生活の点では、宗教に基づいているのではないかと思う。倫理性などは特にそうだ。卑近な例だが、女性の（セックスへの）無節操が、日本ほどひどい国はない。日本（そうした女性）は、なんでもあり（＝する）、そして金（ブランドものを買うため）の世界だ。アジアの他の国とも違う。
８－⑤「これらの特徴は変化すると思いますか、それとも変わりにくいと思いますか？」
根強いと思う。「変わらないですか？」全部が全部根強いのではなく、変わるものもある。哲学

がない、はもっと悪くなる。語学力が弱い、自己アピールが下手、はもう少しましになる。人にやさしい、平均的に学力がある、は悪くなる。しかし変化のテンポは遅い。基本的に、村八分という言葉が象徴するように、(日本は) 右に習えの社会だから、皆で渡れば怖くないと言って、どんどん悪い方へいくかもしれない。

９－①「日本に帰らないような、あるいは日本と海外を行き来するような、帰国子女の多様性についてはどう考えられますか？」
いいのではないか。こちらで、帰国子女でこちらの大学に一年留学している人に出会った。帰って教師になると言う。それはいいと、言ってあげた。そんな教師が増えてほしい。英語もネーティブだし (最近はアナウンサーでも増えたが)、そういう人が英語の教師にでもなってほしい。
９－②「そのような人は、根無し草だと思われますか？」
(根無し草だから) いいとも言える。日本人という顔をしていて、違う人種のような人がいればいい。「しかし、日本の企業ではなかなか難しいのでは？」そういう仕事をさせるからそうなる。教師などだったらいいのではないか。

１０－①「日本社会の差異の中で、力関係がよく反映されているのは？　特に男と女の間の不平等についてどう考えられますか？」
学歴と男女。(学歴は)、どこでも、特に人を紹介する時、例えば旧帝大、東大、東大法学部卒業というように出てくる。それが、役人の世界、名門企業のトップにも反映している。(男女の違いは)、日本社会では、まだまだ男尊女卑の差と言うのが、かなり強いのではないか。(同時に) やはり女子には能力がない (と思う)。いや、能力がない訳ではないが、(女子は) 勝手に甘えている。いくらでも素晴らしい人もいるので、やれば出来ると思うが－－－。教員の世界でも、校長や教頭 (に女性) はあまり見ない。「社会的な力の反映だと思うか？」そうだと思うが、それで女性がもっと反発して、男並に努力は (しない)。また、男並に自覚するような教育もしていない。女性自身もそれに甘んじている。「海外に出てくる日本女性が多い。日本を見限って、あきらめて、疲れて出てくるのでは？」疲れて (出てくる人) などが多いのではないか。日本社会では、一生自立してこういう人生を送るのだという絵 (プラン) は、男の方が描く。女性は、それがなく、無責任な人が多いのではないか。よく飲み屋などで会うワーキングホリデーの女性などは、逃避している。人生設計は？　この一年の意味は？　などと言う質問には、答えられない。やはり、結婚に (逃げ込めると彼女たちは考えている)。オーストラリアでは自らも働き、家事も分担という結婚だが、(今は大分違うかもしれないが) 日本の結婚は永久就職。少々能力がなくても、ただ飯が食える。「日本では、もし仕事を続けようとしても、社会の状況がそれを許さないところもあるのではないですか？」その面もあるので、社会と個人の両方 (の問題) だろう。しかし、社会は随分変わってきたのではないか。若い男性も。「組織としては、例えば産休などまだ取りにくいのでは？」いや、制度としては (組織は保障することを) 強制されている。解雇はできない。制度はあるのだ。　だから (女性は)、甘えている部分がかなり

あると思う。
１０－②「男子と女子とで、帰国子女に対しても対応が異なるような日本社会は、変わるべきでしょうか？」
受け容れる側がこうだから、せざるを得ない。８で触れたが、女性がそれでよければそれでよい。

（Ａ氏の最後のつぶやき：自分自身は、なかなか頼りなくて、現地化もしてないのだが）

注
番号の直後の質問が、全員共通の質問。
他の質問は、個々の回答者への質問。
（　　）は、補足説明。
［　　］は、インタビュー前に実施されたアンケートへの回答。

**English translation of a sample of transcription**

**Interviewee: Mr. A, Melbourne Japanese School,**
**Board of Directors**

1) Competence of intercultural education

1-1 **How do you define competence required for successful coexistence?**

Understanding other cultures without losing your sense of self. Coming to understand, 'there are people who think like that', 'there are people who exist like that'. It is important not to differentiate between people straightaway, saying 'that is a different person'. Having the capacity to do that is important.

1-2 **How do you define competence required for intercultural communication? Is it based on language ability?**

You have to be able to communicate to coexist. The most important thing is language. Japanese people seem to stick together and don't mingle with the local people. So they don't understand some things such as jokes. The locals speak slowly at first, when they know there's a Japanese person there, but if they've been drinking for example, they just forget and start speaking quickly. And then they start making jokes you can't understand. For example, in the west, if you don't understand some Shakespeare, say, you don't understand jokes related to that topic. Then you have to ask the person next to you why they are laughing. So if you don't understand their culture, if you don't know all the books that they do, you just don't understand. That is really hard.

1-3 **What do you think is the most important competence in intercultural education?**

(no answer)

2) Indication about whether Japanese people are behind in acquiring competence in intercultural education

2-1 **Do you think Japanese people have the competence for coexistence?**

**Doesn't it depend on the other person's position in society?**

I agree. If you are with well-educated people, they tend to make an effort to understand us and are usually successful. But generally, Japanese people can't usually achieve mutual understanding.

2-2 **Do you think Japanese people have the competence in intercultural communication?**

Not sufficiently.

3) View about the needs to acquire foreign language in Japanese intercultural education

**3-1 Why is English so important?**

English is the international language. Any country, Korea, Hong Kong, China, you can get by with English. They learn English so much faster than us. Even at the tennis (Australian Open), players from non-English speaking countries speak English fluently. I wonder why we are so different?

**3-2 Which is more important in countries other than English speaking countries, English or a local language other than English? To what extent are local languages important?**

Not being able to speak the language other than English isn't that embarrassing. We don't expect foreigners to speak Japanese, Chinese people don't expect us to speak Chinese.

**So are you able to converse adequately in English?**

Yes somehow.

4) Indication of perception of universality in Japanese intercultural education

**4-1 Do you think that (all the things we learn in Japan are important, such as) making eye contact, saying yes or no, not speaking vaguely, are all important in intercultural communication?**

Yes, important.

**4-2 Do you think that (all the things we learn in Japan are important, such as)**

**making eye contact, saying yes or no, not speaking vaguely, are all universal ways of maintaining communication?**

I think that they will probably become more universal. But Asians tend to speak in a more roundabout way, so it is not so much the case with them. It isn't all that common here to say yes/no in a way which will hurt the other person. That's fairly British I suppose. In order to say no, I go about it the long way round. That's very common. But in the public domain, it's important to say yes and no clearly.

5) The definition of intercultural education and the role of government

**5-1 What do you think globalization is?**

I think that globalization is a phenomenon of the ages of Anglo Saxonism. The era brought about by the Japanese economy and culture has only been around the last 10 years (Land of the Rising Sun, Japan as Number One) and now is the time that the Anglo Saxons are fighting back. It is a time when if we don't align ourselves with American standards, we will be compelled to.

**5-2 How do you define education for international understanding?**

{It is important to experience different cultures. For that, there needs to be a policy of experience of living overseas, or inviting teachers and students from overseas.}

There isn't enough time to do all that though. There are many people escaping Japan overseas.

**5-3 Do you think that the government should be the major player in pursuing international education?**

I think that the officials in the Ministry of Education need to have overseas experience for some years. For example, things need to be freed up, even the private schools need to become freer. The government should supply the money. Also, there are probably people who would like to get (?) a fund for that sort of thing.

**What are some examples of Japanese government education policy and ways in which they could be improved?**

I think they are maintaining the status quo. (As for an area which could be improved,) for

example, the university entrance exams - the fact that they are raising everyone's level is good. But education that dictates that all subjects must come to that conclusion is bad. There needs to be more time spent on specialized subjects, such as international understanding. They do too much generalized education. For example, making students do pointless things such as memorize dates in history.

**5-4 What would you do if the norm of intercultural understandings and our own norms clashed?**

Without losing sight of oneself, you have to say you dislike the things that you dislike. For example, Toyota president Mr. Okuda has defended lifetime employment brilliantly.

**What should you do when conflict arises?**

It's easy in the economy or business situations. You compete. If you look like you're going to lose, you align yourself with your competitor. In other situations, where it is different to business, it should be all right to concede when it's OK to give up.

6) View concerning cultural relativism

**6-1 Do you think there are inferior and superior cultures?**

Yes, to some extent.

**6-2 Do you think all cultures should be treated equally?**

You can't really compare (advanced countries and) countries where there doesn't appear to be any culture. You might be able to call it culture, I suppose, but in places where they can't get enough to eat, there really isn't anything you could call culture.

Normally we call 'culture' the culture seen in the fairly advanced western countries. I don't think that you could say that Japanese culture is inferior. So when you think about the example I said before about the developing countries, I can't say that all cultures are equal. And what is seen as commonplace depends on the era. For example the Islamic marriage system is seen as being awful by the Christian world. In Japan too, the marriage system in the Meiji period is different to what it is today.

7) Views concerning assimilation, integration and cultural pluralism

**7-1 Do you think Japan is an (ethnically) homogenous country?**

No.

**The long term Korean residents and other foreigners?**

Yes. Especially the Koreans.

**7-2 Do you think some foreigners should be allowed to reside in Japan? Why?**

International understanding will come about more quickly. Looking at it from a business perspective, while the population is declining as it is, we have to establish a division of labor. For example, they say that restaurants are expensive at the moment because there is expensive labor being used to wash the dishes. We should get the foreigners to do those jobs. But we don't know whether in those circumstances our understanding would deepen, or whether different prejudices would appear. So there are difficulties with that approach too.

**Why only 'some' foreigners?**

If the country was large and we had resources and could be self sufficient that would be fine, but Japan is too small.

8) Views concerning cultural essentialism I. (Uniqueness of Japanese people, society and culture)

**8-1 Do you think that there are more cultural similarities than differences between Japanese people?**

Yes I do.

**8-2 What do you think are some characteristics of Japanese people?**

{They belong to a closed society. No religion. Poor at languages. Bad at promoting themselves. Kind towards people. Speaking generally, they have academic ability.}

**8-3 Are these common throughout Japanese society?**

Yes. The Japanese are the people who possess those characteristics.

**8-4 What is your reference point for comparison?**

Wherever you compare it to, they are Japanese characteristics. But in some cases, Korea is similar to Japan. But even so, Koreans are not irreligious, are strong at promoting

themselves, it is only being a closed society where they resemble Japan.

**So, with a few exceptions, they are Japanese tendencies?**

Yes. In particular, Japan is about the only place without the religious element.

**Isn't Australia like that too?**

No, I think that a lot of their lifestyle is based on religion. Especially when it comes to ethics. It's a crude example, but there is no country where the girls are so unchaste as they are in Japan. In Japan they will do anything, just to get money (to buy expensive things). That's different to other Asian countries.

**8-5 Do you think these characteristics will change, or remain the same?**

I think they are strongly established.

**They won't change?**

They're not all strongly entrenched, some will change. I think the fact that we have no religion will become more pronounced. Being bad at languages, not being able to sell yourself will improve slightly. We will get worse at being kind and academically able. But the pace of change will be slow. As the word *murahachibu* (ostracism) implies, Japan is a society where everyone follows each other, thinking if we all do a particular thing, it will be all right, so society may gradually get worse.

9) View concerning cultural essentialism II. (Views toward the notion of the *nenashigusa*

**9-1 What do you think about the fact that there are many returnees' children who do not go back (permanently) to Japan, and who go back and forth from Japan?**

That's OK, isn't it? I met someone who is one of those people, and they are here (in Australia) at university for a year. S/he said that s/he wants to become a teacher in Japan. I said that that was good. I think there should be more teachers like that. They speak English as a native tongue, (there are a lot of TV announcers like that recently) and I think that people like that should become English teachers.

**9-2 Do you think Japanese children who go back and forth from Japan are *nenashigusa*?**

You can also think that it is a good thing. It's good if there are different people who are looking (physically) like Japanese.

**Wouldn't it be difficult for them in getting work in Japanese companies?**

Employers make them do that sort of work, so it's a problem. They'd be fine as teachers.

10) View points concerning inequality between males and females in Japan

**10-1 What do you think about inequality between males and females in Japanese society?**

In academic background and in male-female differences. In terms of education, especially when you introduce someone, it is often the case that you refer to that person as being from one of the old imperial universities, from Tokyo University, from the law faculty at Tokyo University. That is reflected in the government officials and the top people at the big firms. In terms of the male female divide - I think that there is still a predominance of men over women and that that is quite strong. For example, even at schools (where many female teachers work), there are not many female principals or vice principals. At the same time, I don't think the girls are all that capable. I don't mean they have no ability, but they don't bother making use of the opportunities they are given. I think they should just try harder because anyone can become a great person. In teaching too, the principals and teachers don't take much notice of the girls.

**Do you think that is just a reflection of the power within society?**

I think so, but the women aren't assertive and don't try as hard as men. And they aren't being educated to act in the way men do. The women themselves are happy with it that way too.

**There are many Japanese women overseas. Maybe they are tired of Japan the way it is and have moved overseas?**

I think there probably are many people who are tired of Japan and have left. In Japanese society, men tend to draw up a plan of living an independent life in a particular way. I think that women tend not to do that and there are many irresponsible women around. The girls on working holidays that I meet at bars and things (in Australia), they are just

running away (from the issues). They can't answer when you ask them, 'what are your long term plans?', 'what do you plan to get out of this year?'. They seem to be running into marriage (as an escape). In Australia there are marriages where both people work and they share the housework (although most might be different), but in Japan, marriage is lifelong employment. Even if you are not all that capable, you can make ends meet.

**In Japan, even if you wanted to continue work, don't you think there are situations in which it isn't approved of socially?**

There is that aspect too, so there are problems with the individual and society as well. But society has changed quite a lot. The young men have too.

**In terms of organizations though, it is still hard to take maternity leave?**

No, that is protected and enforced in the system. You can't fire someone. So there are lots of ways in which women are not taking the opportunities offered to them.

**10-2 What do you think about the fact that male and female returnee children are treated differently? Do you think this treatment should change?**

The society taking them in (Japan) is like that, so it can't be helped. As I said in the answer to question 8, if girls are happy with that, then that's fine.

(Last comment: I haven't really got that much confidence and I haven't really adapted to the local culture either)

**Notes**

Questions with the numbers are questions asked to all respondents.

Other questions are questions asked only to this respondent.

Explanatory comments are included in brackets ( ).

Answers contained in brackets { }are answers from the pre-interview questionnaire.

# APPENDIX B

## PRE-INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH

# アンケート（記述式以外の選択肢のある問いは、記号に○をつけて下さい。）

次に掲げたのは、「中央教育審議会答申：21世紀を展望した我が国の教育の在り方について（1997）」の中で、「国際化と教育」について、文部省の見解を述べた部分の抜粋です。文章を読んで下の質問に答えてください。

> 国際化の状況に対応し、我々は特に次のような点に留意して、教育を進めていく必要があると考えた。
> （a） 広い視野を持ち、異文化を理解するとともに、これを尊重する態度や異なる文化を持った人々と共に生きていく資質や能力の育成を図ること。
> （b） 国際社会において、相手の立場を尊重しつつ、自分の考えや意志を表現できる基礎的な力を育成する観点から、外国語能力の基礎や表現力のコミュニケーション能力の育成を図ること。

1．文中の（a）を「共生の能力」、（b）を「コミュニケーション能力」とすると、それらは、国際社会で、どれほど重要だとお考えになりますか。

① 国際社会において、「共生の能力」は

a）大変重要である　b）重要である　c）あまり重要でない　d）重要でない　e）どちらともいえない

② 国際社会において、「コミュニケーション能力」は

a）大変重要である　b）重要である　c）あまり重要でない　d）重要でない　e）どちらともいえない

③ 国際社会において、あなたが大変重要であるとお考えになる「能力」をお答え下さい。もちろん、上のものと内容が重なっても構いません。

（　　）

2　上の「共生の能力」、「コミュニケーション能力」、そして③であげられた能力（もしあげられていれば）のそれぞれは、一般の日本人にどの程度そなわっていると思いますか。

① 日本人には、「共生の能力」は

a）大変ある　b）少しある　c）あまりない　d）ほとんどない　e）どちらとも言えない

② 日本人には、「コミュニケーション能力」は

a）大変ある　b）少しある　c）あまりない　d）ほとんどない　e）どちらとも言えない

③ 日本人には、「1の③であげられた能力」は

a）大変ある　b）少しある　c）あまりない　d）ほとんどない　e）どちらとも言えない

3　外国語能力についてお聞きします。

① 一般の日本人に、外国語能力は、どの程度そなわっていると思いますか。

a）大変ある　b）少しある　c）あまりない　d）ほとんどない　e）どちらとも言えない

② 次の言語は、国際理解をはかる上で、どれほど重要ですか。

i）英語

a）大変重要である　b）重要である　c）あまり重要でない　d）重要でない　e）どちらともいえない

ii）中国語

a）大変重要である　b）重要である　c）あまり重要でない　d）重要でない　e）どちらともいえない

iii）英語、中国語以外の言語（思いつかない場合は、書く必要はありません）

［　　語］

a）大変重要である　b）重要である　c）あまり重要でない　d）重要でない　e）どちらともいえない

iv）英語、中国語以外の現地語（日本国外に居住、旅行するとき、その現地で主に使われている言葉）

a）大変重要である　b）重要である　c）あまり重要でない　d）重要でない　e）どちらともいえない

4　コミュニケーション能力についてお聞きします。

①　国際理解教育においてよく言及される「コミュニケーション能力」、例えば、アイ・コンタクトをもつ（相手の目を見て話す）こと、イエスとノーをはっきりさせること、あいまい表現をさけることなどを、どれくらい大切だと思いますか。

a）大変重要である　b）重要である　c）あまり重要でない　d）重要でない　e）どちらともいえない

②　上の①で挙げられた能力は、世界に共通する普遍的な能力だと思われますか。

a）大変そう思う　b）少しそう思う　c）あまり思わない　d）全く思わない　e）どちらとも言えない

5．国際理解教育は、かくあるべきだということを、あなたなりにお書きください。

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6．世界にはいろいろな文化がありますが、それら文化の間の関係についてお聞きします。

①「文化間には、どちらかが優れていて、どちらかが劣っている」というような関係はないと思いますか。

a）そう思う　b）少しそう思う　c）あまりそう思わない　d）そう思わない　e）どちらとも言えない

②　さまざまな文化は、まったく平等に扱われるべきだと思いますか。

a）そう思う　b）少しそう思う　c）あまりそう思わない　d）そう思わない　e）どちらとも言えない

7．民族についてお聞きします。

①　日本は、単一民族からなる国だと思いますか。

a）そう思う　b）少しそう思う　c）あまりそう思わない　d）そう思わない　e）どちらとも言えない

②　日本社会について、よく次のような３つの考え方があげられます。あえていえば、あなたのお考えは、そのどれにもっとも近いですか。記号に○をつけてください。

a）　なるべく単一民族からなる社会であるべきだ。

b）　ある程度は、他の民族の人たちを受け入れる社会であるべきだ。

c）　出来るだけ、他の民族の人たちを受け入れる社会であるべきだ。

8．それぞれの国において、その中に差異（暮らし方の違い、考え方の違いなど）があります。日本の中では、以下の差異が社会にもたらす影響を、どの程度強く感じられますか。

① 学歴の違い
a）強く感じる　b）少し感じる　c）あまり感じない　d）ほとんど感じない　e）何とも言えない

② 職種の違い
a）強く感じる　b）少し感じる　c）あまり感じない　d）ほとんど感じない　e）何とも言えない

③ 収入の違い
a）強く感じる　b）少し感じる　c）あまり感じない　d）ほとんど感じない　e）何とも言えない

④ 家柄の違い
a）強く感じる　b）少し感じる　c）あまり感じない　d）ほとんど感じない　e）何とも言えない

⑤ 居住地域の違い
a）強く感じる　b）少し感じる　c）あまり感じない　d）ほとんど感じない　e）何とも言えない

⑥ 男女の違い
a）強く感じる　b）少し感じる　c）あまり感じない　d）ほとんど感じない　e）何とも言えない

⑦ 人種、民族による違い
a）強く感じる　b）少し感じる　c）あまり感じない　d）ほとんど感じない　e）何とも言えない

⑧ その他、もしありましたら　（　　）
a）強く感じる　b）少し感じる　c）あまり感じない　d）ほとんど感じない　e）何とも言えない

9．8で考えてきた、暮らし方や考え方の違いについては、よく次の二つの考え方があげられます。
① そうした違いはあまり大きくなく、日本人全体に共通する日本文化が存在する。
② そうした違いはかなり大きく、日本人全体に共通する日本文化など存在しない。

上の②を基準にした場合、そうした違いをどれくらい感じるか下から選んでください。
a）強く感じる　b）少し感じる　c）あまり感じない　d）ほとんど感じない　e）何とも言えない

10．他の国の人と比べた日本人の特徴というものがあれば、5つほど挙げてください。もちろんいくら多く挙げてくださっても結構です。

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

１１．海外子女教育では、次のような傾向があります。すなわち、男子の場合は、中学の早い段階で帰国し高校受験に備える、女子の（特に英語圏やインターナショナルスクールに通う）場合は、高校段階、時には大学まで滞在国に留まるというものです。あなた自身は、この現象をどうお考えになりますか。もっとも、近いもの番号を選んで下さい。

① 男子と女子で、対応が異なるが、日本への帰国という前提で考えれば、納得のいく現象である。
② 男子と女子で、対応が異なるのは、海外子女教育の本旨からみて問題を感じる。
③ 何とも言えない。
④ わたしは、次のように考える（＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿

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１２．あなたご自身についておたずねします。

① 年齢

ａ）20−29　ｂ）30−39　ｃ）40−49　ｄ）50−59　ｅ）60−69

② 性別

ａ）男性　ｂ）女性

③ もしお子様がおられましたら（帯同、国内在住を問わず）、その性別と年齢をお書きください。

（　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　）

④ 出身地（都道府県名をお書きください）

（　　　　　　　　　　　　　）

⑤ 最後に卒業された学校

ａ）中学校　ｂ）高等学校　ｃ）短期大学　ｄ）専門学校　ｅ）大学
ｆ）大学院　ｇ）その他（　　　　　　　）

⑥ 在外経験歴（留学、赴任等）についてうかがいます。今までに３カ月以上滞在された国がありましたら、その国名と、滞在期間を年代の古い順に挙げて下さい。その中で留学にあたるものがありましたら、その国名を○で囲んでください。

（国名　　　　　　、期間　　　　）（国名　　　　　　、期間　　　　）
（国名　　　　　　、期間　　　　）（国名　　　　　　、期間　　　　）

今まで旅行、出張等で訪ねられた国がありましたら、思い出される限りで結構ですので、その国名を挙げて下さい。その中で、旅行にあたるものがありましたら、その国名を○で囲んで下さい。

（　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　）

⑦ 英語力についてお尋ねします。

i） 会話はどれくらいできると、ご自身ではお考えですか。

a）かなりできる　b）まあまあできる　c）少しできる　d）ほとんどできない

ii） 読む力についてはいかがですか

a）かなりできる　b）まあまあできる　c）少しできる　d）ほとんどできない

iii） 現在、英語の力をつけるため、何かしておられますか

a）レッスンを受ける　b）テレビや新聞を利用する　c）付き合い等で使う機会を増やす

d）その他（　　）　e）特にしていない

⑧ マレー語についてお尋ねします。

i） 会話はどれくらいできると、ご自身ではお考えですか。

a）かなりできる　b）まあまあできる　c）少しできる　d）ほとんどできない

ii） 読む力についてはいかがですか

a）かなりできる　b）まあまあできる　c）少しできる　d）ほとんどできない

iii） 現在、マレー語の力をつけるため、何かしておられますか

a）レッスンを受ける　b）テレビや新聞を利用する　c）付き合い等で使う機会を増やす

d）その他（　　）　e）特にしていない

１３．現地生活について

① 現地のテレビ番組をご覧になりますか。

a）大変よく見る　b）時々見る　c）あまり見ない　d）めったに見ない　e）何ともいえない

② 現地の新聞を読まれますか。

a）大変よく読む　b）時々読む　c）あまり読まない　d）めったに読まない　e）何ともいえない

③ 日本のテレビ（衛星放送）やビデオをご覧になりますか。

a）大変よく見る　b）時々見る　c）あまり見ない　d）めったに見ない　e）何ともいえない

④ 日本の新聞を読まれますか。

a）大変よく読む　b）時々読む　c）あまり読まない　d）めったに読まない　e）何ともいえない

⑤ 現地日本人社会での生活環境(買い物、レジャー、教育環境等)への満足度についてお答えください。

a）大変満足　b）少し満足　c）あまり満足でない　d）全く満足でない　e）何ともいえない

⑥ 現地社会での一般的な生活環境への満足度についてお答えください。

a）大変満足　b）少し満足　c）あまり満足でない　d）全く満足でない　e）何ともいえない

⑦ 現在余暇としては、主に、どのようなことをしておられますか。

（　　）

14．現地での仕事を離れてのお付き合いについてお尋ねします。

① マレーシア人（中国・インド系の人も含む）で親しくしていると考えられる方がおられましたら、その人数をお書きください。

（　　人）

② ①の中で、最も親しい人とは、月に何回くらい会われますか（ただし、仕事上でも会われる場合は、その回数は省いてください。）　（約　　回）

③ ①の方々とは、主にどのようなことを共にされますか。（例、ゴルフ、食事など）

（　　）

④ 日本人で親しくしていると考えられる方がおられましたら、その人数をお書きください。

（　　人）

⑤ ④の中で、最も親しい人とは、月に何回くらい会われますか（ただし、仕事上でも会われる場合は、その回数は省いてください。）　（約　　回）

⑥ ④の方々とは、主にどのようなことを共にされますか。（例、ゴルフ、食事など）

（　　）

以上で、アンケートは終了です。大変長いあいだ、本当に有り難うございました。
添付の封筒に入れて、封をした後、日本人学校の事務局長までお出しください。

**English translation of pre-interview questionnaire**

Questionnaire (Circle the most suitable answer to the multiple choice questions)

Below is an extract from *Japanese Education Toward the 21st Century: The Report by the Central Committee of Education of the Ministry of Education* (1997) explaining the view of the Ministry of Education concerning 'internationalization and education'. Read the extract and answer the following questions.

To respond to internationalization, it is our belief that the following points are of particular importance in educational development:

I. The fostering of people who, as well as possessing a wide range of values and an understanding of different cultures, have a respect for and competence to live alongside people from different cultures.

II. The development in members of intercultural society, of a basic communication competence in foreign languages and self-expression, as well as the retention of a respect for the opinions of others.

1. If we regard I above as describing the competence for coexistence and II as describing the competence in intercultural communication, to what extent do you think these competences are important in international society?

(1) How important do you think the competence for coexistence is?

Very important, Important, Not very important, Not important, Not sure.

(2) How important do you think the competence in intercultural communication is?

Very important, Important, Not very important, Not important, Not sure.

(3) Are there any other competences you think are important in international society? Your answer may overlap with competences discussed in (1) and (2).

(.....)

2. To what extent do you think the typical Japanese have acquired the competences mentioned above?

(1) The competence for coexistence?

Very well, OK, Not very well, Not at all, Not sure.

(2) The competence in intercultural communication?

Very well, OK, Not very well, Not at all, Not sure.

(3) The competence you suggested in 1-(3) above?

Very well, OK, Not very well, Not at all, Not sure.

3. Concerning the competence to speak foreign languages:

(1) How adequately do you think the average Japanese's language competence?

Very well, OK, Not very well, Not at all. Not sure

(2) How important do you think each language below is for the Japanese in order to promote international understanding?

i) English

Very important, Important, Not very important, Not important, Not sure.

ii) Chinese

Very important, Important, Not very important, Not important, Not sure.

iii) Other language except for those given above. (if any)

(The name of the language: )

Very important, Important, Not very important, Not important, Not sure.

iv) The local language, other than English and Chinese, of the place where they stay or visit outside of Japan?

Very important, Important, Not very important, Not important, Not sure.

4. Concerning the competence to communicate interculturally:

(1) How important do you consider communication strategies, which are often promoted in intercultural education such as eye contact, a clear 'yes' or 'no', and avoidance of vague expressions.

Very important, Important, Not very important, Not important, Not sure.

(2) Do you think such communicative strategies are universal?

Very much Fairly Not much Not at all Not sure

5. Please give your definition of 'intercultural education'.

.....

.....

6. There are many different cultures in the world. The next questions concern the relationship between these cultures.

(1) Do you think a relationship of superiority and inferiority does not exist between cultures?

Strongly agree Basically agree Basically disagree Strongly disagree Not sure

(2) Do you think all cultures should be treated equally?

Strongly agree Basically agree Basically disagree Strongly disagree Not sure

7. The next questions are about your view on ethnicity in Japan

(1) Do you think that Japan is a homogeneous country (consisting of one ethnic group)?

Strongly agree Basically agree Basically disagree Strongly disagree Not sure

(2) Three main different views on Japanese society are often mentioned. If you had to choose, which view is the closest to your own?

a) Japanese society should consist of one ethnic group as much as possible.

b) Japanese society should accept other ethnic groups to some extent.

c) Japanese society should accept other ethnic groups as much as possible.

8. In each country, there is diversity (variations in ways of thought, style of life, etc.). To what extents do you believe the following categories affect diversity in Japanese society?

(1) Academic background

Strongly Fairly Not really Not at all Not sure

(2) Status of the occupation

Strongly Fairly Not really Not at all Not sure

(3) Income level

Strongly Fairly Not really Not at all Not sure

(4) Family background

Strongly Fairly Not really Not at all Not sure

(5) Place of upbringing

Strongly Fairly Not really Not at all Not sure

(6) Gender difference

Strongly Fairly Not really Not at all Not sure

(7) Race and ethnicity

Strongly Fairly Not really Not at all Not sure

(8) Others. Please state. (  )

Strongly  Fairly  Not really  Not at all  Not sure

9. As considered in 8 above, two views about diversity are often heard among the Japanese.

(1) These differences are not so great. There is certainly an essence of Japanese culture which can be shared commonly among all Japanese.

(2) These differences are considerable. There is no such essence of Japanese culture which can be commonly shared by all Japanese.

Taking the second idea above, how strongly do you feel such differences?

Strongly  Fairly  Not really  Not at all  Not sure

10. If you think there are any, list approximately five distinctive features of Japanese people that distinguishing them from other people. You may list as many as you want.

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11. Certain tendencies exist in education of Japanese children overseas. In the case of boys, the majority go back to Japan in the early stages of junior high school to prepare for high school entrance examinations. Girls, oh the other hand, tend to stay

in the host country through high school or beyond (especially in English speaking circumstances and international school) to enhance their language ability. Which view below is the closest to your own regarding this tendency

(a) Despite the difference between boys and girls, the pattern seems reasonable enough considering that they will return to Japan.

(b) I feel these differences as problematic considering the purpose of education of Japanese children overseas.

(c) I cannot say.

(d) My opinion is

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.....

12. The following questions are about yourself.

(1) Age ranges

a) 20-29 b) 30-39 c) 40-49 d) 50-59 e) 60-69

(2) Gender

a) male b) female

(3) If you have any children, write their age and gender

( )

(4) Place of upbringing (prefecture)

( )

(5) The school you last graduated from

a) junior high school b) senior high school c) junior college

d) vocational college e) university f) post graduate

g) others ( )

(6) Concerning your experience living abroad. If you have lived overseas for more than three months, write the country's name and the length of the period of stay in chronological order. If there are any countries where you studied, circle the name of these countries

(name of the country , the length of the period )

(name of the country , the length of the period )

Concerning your experience travelling abroad. List any country you have visited on business or private trips. In the case of private trips, circle the names of the country.

( )

(7) Concerning your English competence

i) How would you rate your spoken English competence?

Good, OK, Not so good, Poor, Not sure

ii) How would you rate your written English competence?

Good, OK, Not so good, Poor, Not sure

iii) Do you do something to brash up your English?

a) private lessons b) watch TV or read news papers

c) increase opportunities to mix with friends d) others ( )

e) nothing special

(8) Concerning your Malay competence

i) How would you rate your spoken Malay competence?

Good, OK, Not so good, Poor, Not sure

ii) How would you rate your written Malay competence?

Good, OK, Not so good, Poor, Not sure

iii) Do you do something to brash up your Malay?

a) private lessons b) watch TV or read news papers

c) increase opportunities to mix with friends d) others ( )

f) nothing special

13. About your current life overseas

(1) Do you watch local TV programs?

a) very often b) often c) not often d) almost never e) cannot say

(2) Do you read local newspapers?

a) very often b) often c) not often d) almost never e) cannot say

(3) Do you watch Japanese satellite TV programs or Japanese video programs?

a) very often b) often c) not often d) almost never e) cannot say

(4) Do you read Japanese newspapers?

a) very often b) often c) not often d) almost never e) cannot say

(5) How satisfied are you with life in the Japanese community when you live (shopping, leisure etc.)?

a) very satisfied b) satisfied c) not very satisfied

d) not at all satisfied e) cannot say

(6) How satisfied are you with life in the local community as a whole where you live?

a) very satisfied b) satisfied c) not very satisfied

d) not at all satisfied e) cannot say

(7) List your current leisure activities

( )

14. Concerning non-business acquaintances with other overseas people.

(1) Do you have any close Malaysian friends? If so, how many? ( )

(2) Apart from business, how often do you meet your closest Malay friend(s) a month?

( )

(3) What kind of things do you mainly do with your closest Malay friend(s)?

(eg. playing golf, dining out etc.) ( )

(4) Do you have any close Japanese friends? If so, how many? ( )

(5) Apart from business, how often do you meet you closest Japanese friend(s) a month?

( )

(6) What kind of things do you mainly do with your closest Japanese friend(s)?

(eg. playing golf, dining out etc.) ( )

This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you so much for you time. Please put this into the envelope provided, seal it, and hand it over to the head of the Japanese School office.