

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS IN THE LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL
INTEGRATION AND REINTEGRATION OF JAPANESE RETURN MIGRANTS

By

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To Yoichi and Meg

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Return migration is a population movement where people return to their country of origin after a period of time living in another country. This study explores the linguistic and cultural roles that social networks play in return migration. Six Japanese women who stayed in the United States for less than five years and who have since returned to Japan within the last 12-18 months filled out questionnaires and participated in ethnographic interviews. An analysis of their stories suggests that due to their cyclical migration pattern, the structures and functions of the social networks for return migrants were different from those studied previously for immigrant groups. The return migrants established temporary interactive networks that were short-term, highly valued with strong ties and were accessed only for the duration of the return migrants' stay in the host culture. The study also indicated that due to the limited time spent in the host culture, the findings from the Japanese return migrants revealed that a) linguistic and cultural maintenance is not always the motivating factor for adults to establish an L1 social network; b) membership into an L1 social network is not always automatic; c) the need to have an L1 social network in the host culture is related to the values and norms of the home culture because it helps to enforce the return migrants' self-identity as Japanese; and d) L2 social networks in the host culture that are comprised of international members do not facilitate the

development of a bilingual/bicultural identity. In terms of language proficiency, this study discovered that for the Japanese return migrants, self-perception of low L2 proficiency led the return migrants to establish alternative L2 temporary social networks of international speakers of English. The international bilingual social network was not strengthened by cultural, racial, or ethnical factors but by the common trait that English was their second language. The findings confirm the importance of distinguishing social networks of return migrants and offer a challenge to reevaluate and redefine social networks in order to broaden the social network framework to include the linguistic and cultural complexity of return migrants.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Return Migration

Rapid transportation and communication systems have accelerated the speed and volume of movement of people across international boundaries, and current migration patterns are now more diverse than ever. According to the 2010 International Organization for Migration (IOM) report, the total number of international migrants is estimated to be 214 million people, or 3.1% of the world's population, an 18% increase from just a decade ago. Although the term migration describes a worldwide social phenomenon of people moving from one location to another, it is no longer considered to be a one-way population movement with the outcome that those who leave their home country will never return, as with immigration (Gmelch, 1980). There is a regular counter flow of migrants who seek to return and reestablish themselves in their home countries. This migration pattern is called return migration and it is traditionally defined as (a) the movement of émigrés back to their homelands to resettle, or (b) a process whereby people return to their country or place of origin after a significant period in another country or region (Gmelch, 1980; King, 2000). Return migrants do not include people who are returning from a vacation, holiday, or any extended visit abroad where the person is considered to be a visitor to the foreign country. Whether it is to enhance their education or to be transferred by their employer, the return migrant has a purpose for the temporary stay abroad and the return is predetermined prior to leaving their home country. This sets them apart from immigrants who move to a country with the intent to take up permanent residence or refugees who are forcibly displaced and relocated, generally through violence or civil unrest. It also separates them from transnationals, who have permanently settled in a host culture while still actively maintaining multiple economic, social, and political ties with their homeland (Schiller, 1995).

Even though global migration is increasing, return migration is one of the most neglected areas of migration research (Corcoran, 2002; Ghosh, 2000; King, 2000; Mische, 2000; Walsh, 2001). Historically, migration research usually focuses on the departure, journey, settlement, and integration of the individual in a host culture (Mukai & Brunette, 1999) or the processes and strategies involved in becoming part of the host society (Flannery, Reise & Yu, 2001; King, 2000). The dual adaptation process of return migrants in the host culture and once again in their home culture, however, has received very little attention.

For return migrants, the process of adapting to a new socio-cultural system in a host culture is a transformation process that involves the interaction of many cultural and linguistic factors. Returning home requires yet another adaptation process because the re-entry subjects the individual to a transitional experience of facing previously familiar surroundings after living in a different environment over a significant period of time (Adler 1981). Trying to readjust and reintegrate into the home culture and language again can make this transition process to the home culture just as complicated and disorienting as the initial adjustment and integration process to a new culture. Although the initial adaptation experiences in the host culture for immigrants and return migrants may be similar at first, it is important to understand that the experience and the process involved in that initial adaptation is not simply repeated during the re-adjustment upon re-entry to the home culture (Branaman, 1999). Returning to the home culture is a separate adaptation process for return migrants.

Migration and Social Networks

Moving to a new country can be conceptualized as a development of multiple pathways extending from new and established social networks. Social networks refer to established relationships of interconnected people such as family, friends, and associates who are engaged regularly on a personal or professional level. The role of social networks in immigrant studies

includes direct or indirect influence on social behavior (Mitchell, 1969), as well as influence on language choice, language maintenance, or language shift (Marshall, 2004; Milroy, 1980; Milroy & Li, 1995; Stoessel, 1998). As a migrant tries to integrate into the host society, his/her social networks may expand and contract as social networks disappear, new ones appear, and others are retained during their cross-cultural movement. This need to develop multiple pathways can stem from a feeling of personal loss an individual may feel when surrounded by a foreign cultural and linguistic environment: a loss of culture, internal sense of harmony, familiarity, significant people, or at times one's first language (Akhtar, 1999). To compensate for the loss, migrants may seek specific social networks that can provide a feeling of safety and connectedness to others. For some, having home culture and language social networks in a host culture can sometimes help offset the anxiety and emotional stress that is often associated with immigration and acculturation processes (Berry, 1999) by acting as a cultural and linguistic conduit to help "deaden the pain of migration-induced imbalances" (Rogler, 1994, p. 705). For others, being in a foreign environment affords an individual the potential for self-improvement or self-empowerment (Boesch, 1991; Lijtmaer, 2001). For these migrants, exploring in an unknown setting, reinventing oneself, and engaging linguistically and culturally with members of the host culture is viewed as a rewarding adventure, and as a result, their social network expansion in the host culture further strengthens their sense of identity and bolsters their development towards bilingualism and biculturalism.

There is a growing consensus in social network analysis literature that both linguistic and cultural factors in social networks matter to social movement dynamics, yet little is known about the cross-cultural adjustment and re-adjustment issues return migrants experience as they cross borders. Armed with the knowledge that they will return home, it is likely that the return

migrant will have a different perspective of their cross-cultural experience. Furthermore, in a world of globalization where the movements of people can be multiple and circular, the linguistic and cultural support return migrants receive and maintain from their first language (L1) and second language (L2) social networks cannot be overlooked.

There are a myriad of linguistic and cultural variables that need to be considered for the establishment and maintenance of social networks, and it is important to investigate a group of migrants who represent a substantial sector of a nation's population and who meet the criteria of a return migrant based on their migration pattern. With a steadily increasing return migration population for the past several decades, Japan is an ideal candidate to be taken into consideration to further explore this migration phenomenon. What makes the migration pattern of the Japanese returnees different from others is that the plans to live overseas for an extended period of time are preset and their return to Japan is predetermined before they leave. Understanding the experiences and challenges Japanese return migrants may face during their intercultural journey will enhance the effectiveness of the policies and practices that are applied towards this large population of people and will also give us insights into the role social networks play in the integration and the reintegration experiences of return migrants.

Japan and Return Migration

Japan is both a sending and a receiving country for international migrants. Since the 1980s, Japan's economic growth allowed the country to expand economically, socially, and politically into the international arena. Japanese companies have established businesses overseas and in order to keep a Japanese connection with the overseas markets, there has been an increase in branch offices around the world for manufacturers, financial institutions, and trading companies that are staffed by an extensive number of temporary Japanese personnel (International Student Center of Kawaijuku [ISEK], 1995). This trend of sending personnel

overseas with the majority expected to return is found in academia, science, technology, as well as research and development sectors. As a result, there is a substantial Japanese return migrant population.

Japanese Return Migrants

The Japanese government divides their overseas citizens into four major categories. The first category is for Japanese-descendant immigrants (*nikkeijin*) and their dependents, i.e. the members of the large expatriate communities found in North and South America. The second category consists of Japanese traveling as tourists. The third category is for Japanese living overseas as permanent residents, but who have retained their Japanese nationality. Most people in this third category live overseas for an extended time and may or may not return to Japan. Most often, when they do return to Japan, it is at their retirement age (Goodman, 1990). The last category refers to Japanese living overseas for 90 days or longer. They are considered to be overseas for a prolonged duration but as temporary emigrants with the intention to return. It is this category of Japanese citizens residing abroad who are considered as a return migrant.

Government Demographics

According to the last available Annual Report of Statistics on Japanese Nationals Overseas released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2004, the number of Japanese citizens residing overseas has steadily increased since 1986, with the largest increase seen in the number of citizens who are living abroad for an extended stay but who are planning to eventually return to Japan (Figure 1-1). The number of those who have requested permanent residency in the host country has remained somewhat stable, whereas the number of those who are living abroad for an extended stay has closely mirrored the overall increase of Japanese citizens living abroad (Adachi, 2006).

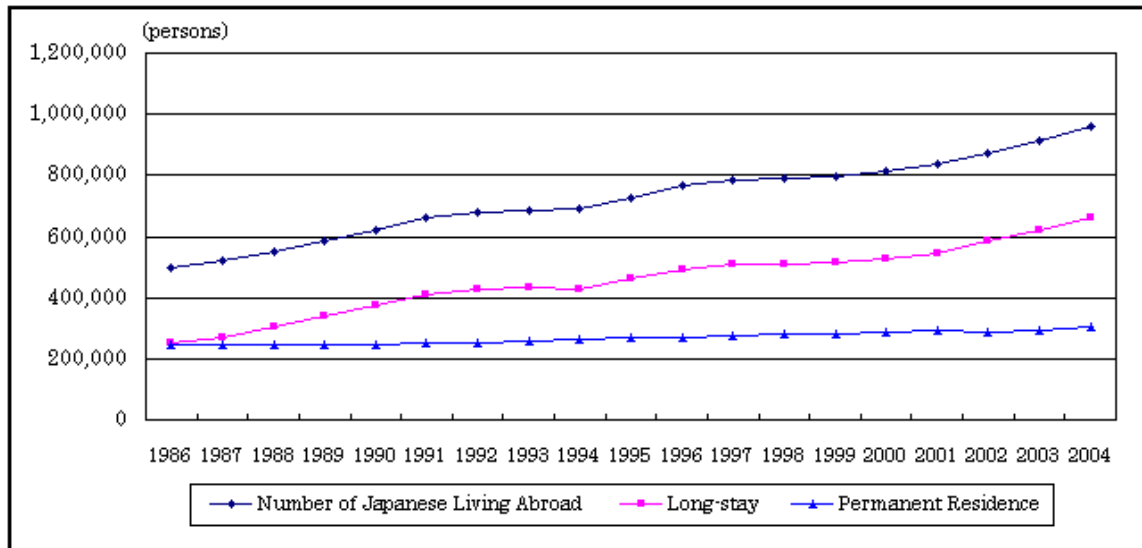


Figure 1-1. Japanese living abroad: Extended stay and permanent residence 1986-2004. (Note: From Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004 Annual Report of Statistics on Japanese Nationals Overseas, <http://web-japan.org/stat/stats/21MIG31.html>).

Since 2005, demographics on the number of Japanese who leave to go overseas with the intention to return have been difficult to obtain due to the restructuring of government agencies and the reassignment of collecting, processing, and disseminating demographic information to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications Statistic Bureau in 2004 (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, 2010). There are, however, other sources that show evidence of the rise in the Japanese population who live overseas. Before the restructuring of governmental agencies in 2004, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2004) reported that based on the total population of Japanese living abroad (961,307), the number of Japanese citizens who return to Japan after being abroad for three months or longer is more than twice (69%) the number of those who were categorized to have permanently immigrated to another country. By 2006, the Japanese media reported the overall population of Japanese living abroad had surpassed the one million mark (Japan Times; May 16, 2006). This rise in the population of Japanese living abroad continued and according to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Diplomatic Bluebook, 2010), the

total number of Japanese nationals currently living overseas throughout the world is now approximately 1.11 million people.

Although exact numbers are not available for the group of Japanese who return to Japan after an extended period of time, the returnees are still an influential sector in the overall Japanese population. Since 2005, the Japanese census has reported a net population loss due to falling birth rates and strictly limited immigration growth (Statistical Handbook of Japan, 2010). In 2009, however, a spike in the population growth was seen for a second year in a row due to an influx of more Japanese citizens returning to Japan than those who departed the country (Daily Yomiuri, August 11, 2009). This substantial number of return migrants enforces the notion that the Japanese returnees are a significant group.

Studies on Japanese Return Migration

Research on Japanese return migrants has predominantly focused on the category of children and adolescents called *kikokushijo*. The term *kikokushijo* was created by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) to describe students who have lived overseas with their parents for an extended period of time and who have enrolled in the Japanese school system upon their return. The literature on *kikokushijo* emphasizes the difficulties and the struggles that children face upon returning to the Japanese school system and draws attention to the social and educational concerns to make the children Japanese again (Yamamoto, 1995). The primary goal of these educational and anthropological studies was to find efficient resolutions to what was perceived to be a prominent social and academic dilemma caused by the children who have returned to Japan (Yashiro, 1995). The principal focus of *kikokushijo* research has been on the reintegration process of the children rather than the parents. Whether it is the assumption that adults go through a similar process as children, or that the

return migration will not affect adults, the cultural and linguistic issues relating to the parents of the *kikokushijo* have been neglected.

Statement of the Problem

Current migration patterns are diverse and the traditional immigrants' experience is no longer the only migration experience that exists. Return migration is of increasing significance in the growing global economy, yet scholars have maintained that it is one of the most neglected and hardly mentioned areas of migration studies (Ghosh, 2000; King, 2000). Research on the transition processes for immigrants may be insufficient for this group because the focus is only on one segment of their journey. In general, studies on the acculturation process of uni-directional immigrants concentrates primarily on patterns of adaptation, cultural adjustment outcomes, and culture shock of immigrants in their new host societies (Arthur, 2001; Berry, 1997; LaFromboise, Hardin, Coleman & Gerton, 1993; Ward, Bocher & Furnham, 2001). Studies on return migrants, however, have been limited because difficulties encountered by these individuals are often perceived as transitory setbacks that will easily be resolved or overcome in time. Studies that have considered the acculturation process for return migrants have mainly concentrated on identifying coping strategies used during the process of re-adjustment to the home culture or classifying the extent of integration achieved by the individual only in the host culture (Adler, 1987; Berry, 1997; Clifford, 1992; Kim, 2001; Sussman, 2000). Since the return migrants' stay is more limited, the impact of their experience on their identity, culture, and language has largely been considered irrelevant in migration studies.

Numerous studies have found that the strength of their social networks influences the linguistic and socio-cultural behaviors of an individual; however, the problem is that these studies on social networks have overlooked the linguistic and cultural experiences of return migrants. Due to the cyclical nature of a return migrants' migration journey, social ties with the

host and home cultures are disassembled, sustained, and reassembled in a similar encircling fashion. It is this unique bilingual and bicultural process experienced by return migrants that makes their phenomenon worthy of attention.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore how social networks influence the integration and the reintegration of Japanese return migrants. The study will examine how the Japanese return migrants employ their linguistic and cultural resources within their social networks to support their integration into the host country as well as their re-integration into Japanese society upon return from an extended stay in the United States. In addition, the study will examine the functions of their social networks in Japan and in the United States to see what role they played in their overall return migration experience.

Research Questions

The study will specifically address the following questions:

1. What social networks are established and maintained by the Japanese return migrants both in Japan and in the United States?
2. What roles do social networks play for Japanese return migrants in their return migration experience?

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to provide interdisciplinary scholarship from a variety of academic fields in social and behavioral sciences, which have contributed directly or indirectly to the theoretical approaches social network analysis. In order to answer the research questions about the establishment, maintenance, and functions of social network for return migrants, it is necessary to explore the theoretical background contributed by previous studies on social networks. The organization of this chapter starts by covering the definition of social networks and continues by reporting the findings from major studies through the lens of social network analysis.

Social Networks

Social networks are “informal social relationships contracted by individuals” (Milroy, 1980, p. 78). They represent links between people affiliated with an individual from a wide spectrum of relationships that are associated with different domains of that individual’s life. These groups or clusters of people include family and non-family members and are comprised of specifically designated ties or connections with that particular individual. Links between the people in the social networks can be strengthened or weakened by different factors such as the amount of contact time invested, i.e., frequency and duration of contact to the social network or whether a person’s multiple connections overlap to other social networks where members of one social network know the same people in different social networks (Marshall, 2004; Stokowski, 1994; Wierzbicki, 2004). Personal social networks can be characterized through different types and strengths of connections that determine the structure of a network.

Relationship Structures

Milroy (1992) explains how the type of relationship a person has with other people will reflect the strength and influence of that particular social network on an individual. She distinguishes three types of network structures: exchange, interactive, and passive (Table 2-1). Exchange networks are the relationship links an individual has with family and close friends. The exchange network is interacted routinely and provides direct aid, advice, criticism, and support. The bond between the members of the exchange network is close-knit and highly valued. Acquaintances are classified as an interactive network. The interaction with the interactive network can be frequent and prolonged over a period of time, but is not relied upon for personal favors or other emotional support. Even though a person may have more frequent face-to-face contact with the interactive networks than the exchange networks, the individual is not necessarily dependent on these bonds nor is there a pressing need to expand the network. The passive networks are physically distant ties, such as relatives or friends, who are no longer in regular contact due to geographical distances. Passive networks are often typical for immigrants whose close friends and family are back in the homeland. They are considered a primary network and are still valued as a connecting link to the home culture and language, even though face-to-face interaction is absent.

Table 2-1. Criteria for structures of social networks based relationship value

Networks	Members	Strength
Exchange Network	Close family and friends with frequent interactions.	Strong bonds. The relationship is highly valued.
Interactive Network	Acquaintances with routine interactions.	Weak ties. Time is not invested into the relationship.
Passive Network	Close family and friends that remain in the home culture or environment after an individual has moved to a new area. Interaction is often suspended or inactivated due to geographical distances.	Emotional bond is strong but network has weakened due to geographical distances.

Interactional and Structures Criteria

Studies in social network analysis have used a network framework to examine the relationship of the members within a social network by using criteria model as a tool to answer specific questions about the nature of said relationships. The criteria model offers two categories that help define the relationship: interactional and structural (Table 2-2). Scholars who have used this model assert that social networks of interconnected people have a definite structure with patterns of regularity and base the strength and weakness of a social network on the interaction and structure of that particular network. Boissevain (1987) believed that social network should be used as a research tool and developed interactional and structural criteria to show how people are linked, the nature of that linkage, and how it affects an individual's social behavior.

Stokowski (1994) suggests that networks exert influence directly or indirectly on social behavior and offers different social network criteria for interactional and structural networks to answer questions about the patterns of social relationships within social structures (Table 2-2). Her study was on social network and recreation and she increased the scope of one of the definition of social networks that was prevalent in leisure studies. Using Elizabeth Bott's (1957, p. 59) definition of social network as "a set of social relationships for which there is no common boundary," Stokowski argued that a network is not a structure since it has no shared boundaries that are recognized by members of that network. She states that it is the strength and weaknesses of the interconnectedness of the members that makes a social network a form of social organization. Due to her findings, she redefined some of the criteria that were established by Boissevain so that the criterion focused more on the type of relations an individual maintained based on the shared interests of the members. She further added an additional criterion of the strength of ties based on relative measure of time, affect, intensity, and mutuality for the

interactional definition and distance between the members based on the number of links between any two members and the roles of a network based on the function of an individual within a network as additional criteria that define the structure of a social network.

Social Networks and Return Migrants

Although there are immigrant studies on social networks, it is not known if the interaction and structures of the social networks for return migrants have the same linguistic and cultural supporting factors to maintain the integrity of the social network due to the cross-cultural journey that they experience. In addition, due to their limited time in the host culture, it is also not certain if the return migrant is willing to engage in the practices of either the home or host cultures network, thus making the strength and weakness of the return migrants' social networks unknown. The lack of research on social networks in return migration studies may be due to the research quagmire of investigating the multiple memberships of social networks that span multiple countries, cultures, and languages of a return migrant.

Role of Social Network and Language

In addition to the components that establish the strength and weakness of the structure of a social network as suggested by Milroy, there are also social, cultural, and linguistic features of social networks that often affect language choice of an individual. According to Milroy, linguistic and social norms tend to be enforced by the exchange network of close family and friends rather than the interactive network of acquaintances. The cohesive emotional and cultural bonds shared among the members of the exchange network have a stronger influence on linguistic and socio-cultural behaviors of an individual than the contact frequency of the interactive networks.

Table 2-2. Interactional criteria of social networks

Boissevain (1987)		Stokowski (1994)	
Interactional	Structural	Interactional	Structural
Multiplexity: Overlapping connection of the members.	Size: The number of people in the network.	Multiplexity: Redundancy of relationships.	Size: Number of relationships in a network.
Transactional: Goods, services, messages, emotional involvement & information, which move between the members.	Density: Number of members who interact with each other.	Content of Ties: Purpose & function of relations, type of relational ties, e.g. exchange, powers, sentiment, and obligation.	Density: Connectedness of network, actual links of the members.
Directional Flow: The 1-way or 2-way directional flow of the transactional content.	Centrality: How central the member is in the network.	Reciprocity: Degree of symmetry in the relations.	Centrality: Adjacency and influence between any two members of a network.
Frequency & Duration: How often and for how long people meet.	Clusters: Numbers of sub-units formed within the network.	Frequency: Number & continuity of interactions over time.	Clustering: Partition of ties into network subgroups and cliques.
		Strength of ties: Strong & weak based on relative measure of time, affect, intensity, & mutuality.	Distance: Number of links between any two members in a network.
			Network Roles: Isolate (peripheral of network), bridge (provide link to other networks), liaison (link groups without having membership), or star (multiple communication links).

Language Choice

In her landmark study in Belfast, Milroy (1980) found that the strengths and weaknesses of the social network structures were reflective of the language choice used between a speaker's networks. The view is that understanding the structure and interaction of a social network can help us understand more about the maintenance of a language. She proposes that a strong social network structure defined as the importance of the relationships, accounts for the language behavior of a person and provides a mechanism to promote language maintenance. The stronger the structure of the social network, the stronger the influence the social network will have on the individual for language choice.

Li (1994) reported similar findings in his study of Chinese speakers in the United Kingdom. In Li's study, a dialectic relationship between speakers' linguistic behaviors and interpersonal relations suggested that strong relationship ties in a social network have a greater capacity to account for more general patterns of language choice and code-switching between English and Chinese than other social variables such as generation, gender, duration of stay, and occupation. Therefore, in Li's study, a speaker who had a strong tie with a Chinese social network adopted Chinese dominant language choice pattern and had a restrictive command of English, whereas a speaker who had weak ties with the Chinese social network used the bilingual or English dominant pattern of language choice. Li's findings suggest that close-knit L1 social networks consisting mainly of strong ties appear to be able to enforce cultural and linguistic norms of an individual.

Language Maintenance

Using the pioneering model suggested by Boissevain (1987) on interactional and structural criteria for social networks, Marshall (2004) examined if a speaker's degree of integration into social networks is a reliable predictor of language maintenance. The purpose of Marshall's study

was to establish which social factors are involved in the acceptance or resistance of a language change for speakers of a Scottish dialect within a standardized English population in the United Kingdom. His findings show that the relative density (number of members) and multiplexity (number of overlapping members) of the social networks have significant implications for the social and linguistic behavior of a person. Marshall suggests that people with high multiplexity and density factors in the society's mainstream networks are more likely to conform to the mainstream culture, adopt the mainstream language more readily, and suppress dialectal maintenance based on the strength of the social network. On the other hand, a social network with low multiplexity and density factors would be weak and may not have a significant influence on cultural or linguistic choice or shift of the individual in either the dialectal or mainstream languages.

In her investigation on the relationship between social networks and language maintenance and shift, Stoessel (1998) found that monolingual social networks played a role in the degree of language maintenance and shift observed in female immigrants married to Americans living in the United States. She found that those who were active in language maintenance had more first language (L1) and second language (L2) speakers in separate social networks. She further found that those with children had a higher ratio of L1 social networks and those who had not yet started a family had a higher ratio of L2 social networks. The monolingual structure of the social networks helped ascertain the importance of the social network to an individual at a particular time in her life, e.g., whether she had children or not. In addition, the monolingual structure of the social network also influenced the individual's decision on language maintenance or shift. Those who were actively maintaining their L1 and L2 were prone to associate more with speakers of those languages than those who were only interested in maintaining L1.

Matsumoto (2010) used social networks as an explanatory framework for the language maintenance and shift of a multilingual community who spoke Japanese, English, and the indigenous language, Palauan, in the Republic of Palau, an island nation in the Pacific. Her participants were from a community of ethnic Japanese-Palauans, who were trilingual speakers due to post-colonial languages of Japanese and English that were introduced during the occupation of the island nation before and after World War II. The purpose of her study was to demonstrate the concept that social network is a useful analytical tool to examine the process of language maintenance of Japanese in contrast with the language shift of English and to examine whether the strength of the social networks could predict the function of the social network in a multilingual community. Following Milroy and Li, she adopted the three different types of social network models of exchange, interactive, and passive networks and found that the stronger the ties with the former colonial Japanese exchange network, the more Japanese is maintained. Conversely, the weaker the ties, the more the language shifts from Japanese to the more recent colonial language of English.

Language Learning

Kurata (2007) examined the social dimension that is related to second language learning by focusing on the patterns of language choice and language learning opportunities of a foreign language learner's social networks. In her study of an Australian learning Japanese, she found that a close relationship and collaborative interaction between the language learner and his social networks along with the mutual motivation to sustain the relationship were important factors in facilitating opportunities for L2 learning. Kurata's participant interacted with a male classmate from his Japanese class through an online chat conversation and a female native speaker of Japanese. Analysis of the chat script revealed that one of the most influential social factors was the participants' awareness of their own L2 proficiency. The participant's classmate was slightly

more proficient in Japanese than he was; therefore, language choice was determined by their self-perception as an adequate L2 user, as well as their perception of each other's L2 proficiency. Initially the classmates started the chat in English and negotiated language choice in a natural course of conversation until both felt comfortable in using Japanese. The classmates would adjust their L2 usage to enable the comprehension of the topic of conversation or would ask questions for corrective feedback on certain lexicon or syntax items. Because both classmates were L2 learners, feedback corrections were reciprocated and accepted as part of a collaborative learning process.

Kurata compared the interaction with a social network through on-line chatting with an interaction with a female native speaker of Japanese. In the situation with the native speaker of Japanese, Kurata's participant did not feel comfortable speaking in Japanese due to his perception that the native speaker was constantly correcting his Japanese. The overuse of corrections made the native speaker appear to be insensitive to the language learner and made the participant feel that his Japanese proficiency was inadequate or inferior; therefore, he had no motivation to use Japanese during their interactions. Kurata's study provided insight into the process of constructing opportunities for L2 use within social networks because it gave language teachers an awareness that network interaction, L2 proficiency, and sensitivity towards L2 use seemed to be the most important socio-linguistic factors that affected the maintenance of a social network.

Social Network and Language for Return Migrants

Originally developed in the field of social anthropology, social network theory tries to explain the variable social behavior of individuals in a given group situation. The theory was also used to explain linguistic behavioral changes within a speech community, patterns of language maintenance, language shift of immigrants, and language choice of L2 learners.

However, there is little knowledge on the language issues that a return migrant may face as he or she enters different speech communities, in different social networks, and in different locations.

In terms of return migration, the literature on bilingual research of Japanese return migrants has overwhelmingly focused on the process of second language acquisition or attrition of the *kikokushijo* (Hansen, 1999; Hayashi, 2000; Noguchi & Fotos, 2001; Reetz-Kurashige, 1999; Tomiyama, 1999, 2000; Yamamoto, 1995; Yoshitomi; 1999;) without factoring in the involvement of social networks. There are only a limited number of studies on Japanese return migrants that investigate specific issues involving social networks and languages for adults. Takeuchi, Imahori & Matsumoto (2001) examined the communication styles within the relationship of Japanese college-age returnees.

Returnees are an extremely varied group of people ranging from children who return before the age of six to those who return post-secondary education, and extend as well to adult returnees who have lived and worked overseas. The misconceived notion that *kikokushijo* are only school age children is due to the literature produced by educational experts and anthropologists, who exclusively wrote on the social and education problems that the children encountered once they had returned to Japan (Yashiro, 1995). The linguistic and cultural adjustments of the parents of the *kikokushijo* are neglected. This could be due to the fact that adults do not fall under the supervision of the educational system, and also because as adults, they have already reached a commanding proficiency of the Japanese language; therefore, any language attrition or maintenance issues may be considered minor or irrelevant. There is a need to conduct studies of specific language issues in the Japanese return migration context. Walker, Wasserman & Wellman (1994) state that a personal social network includes those with whom a person interacts on an informal basis, in other words, people mutually recognized enough to have

a conversation. This type of study is central to the linguistic account of social networks and would greatly enhance our understanding of the linguistic dynamics of return migrants' social networks.

Roles of Social Networks and Culture

The body of literature that exists on the cultural roles that social networks play in immigrant studies has primarily investigated issues involved with the acculturation and integration of migrants. Several acculturation models have been suggested to try to predict the outcome of immigrants' adaptation process in the receiving culture. This part of the chapter will elaborate on the roles that have been defined by those studies and how they have influenced on individuals in a different cultural context.

Definitions of Acculturation and Integration

Adapting to a new culture with the goal of being recognized as a full-fledged member of the mainstream society is assimilation (Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology, 1996). Assimilation implies identification with the mainstream culture, generally at the expense of the original home culture. Acculturation is a long-term adaptation process in which linguistic, social, and cultural transitions occur for immigrants in a new culture with the goal of assimilation. Some have described acculturation as a re-socialization process as the immigrants undergo changes in identification, social skills, attitudes, values, and behavioral norms as the contact with the host culture increases (La Fromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993; Yeh, Arora, Inose, Okubo, Li & Green, 2003). Others have described acculturation as an emotional adjustment the immigrant will experience as they are absorbed into the dominant culture (Clayton, 1996; Isogai, Hayashi & Uno, 1999; Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001).

If the desirable outcome is not necessarily full assimilation into the host culture, then the individual will experience integration. Integration means the sustained mutual interaction

between newcomers and the societies that receive them (Migration Information Source [MIS], 2004). Integration involves retaining unique aspects of cultural identity as a minority while maintaining firsthand contact with the larger majority society. It is measured in terms of a “sense of belonging to the receiving society, the occasions and qualities of cultural contact between groups, convergence of child rearing practices, and inter-group marriages, as well as by the degree to which groups remain apart (MIS, 2004, p. 2). In migration studies, integration is viewed as a parallel component of acculturation. Sometimes they are used interchangeably because both share several aspects of the process the individual will experience, such as cultural identities, values, traditions, norms, and languages.

Acculturation Models

In the acculturation literature, two general groups of models of acculturation theory for immigrants have been suggested. The first group is the unidirectional (UDM) and the bidirectional models (BDM). In the UDM, acculturation is a step-by-step acculturation process wherein an immigrant adopts the linguistic, social, economic, and civic duties of the dominant culture at the cost of the home culture. The movement is viewed in a linear manner and total assimilation is the designated desired final outcome (Flannery, Reise & Yu, 2001). On the other hand, the bidirectional model of acculturation (BDM) takes into consideration the relationships an individual has with the home and host culture as a factor that influences the final outcome of the acculturation process. BDM posits the idea that total assimilation is not the only result of acculturation. It suggests other possible outcomes that may transpire, i.e., separation, integration, and marginalization.

In Berry’s model, inter-group relations were used as predictors of the cultural adaptation an immigrant may experience. The value placed on social networks determined the approach of acculturation strategies used by the immigrant, which in turn directed the possible outcome of

the acculturation process. According to Berry (1990), the approach the individual adopts for his/her acculturation process is based on the attitudes the individual has towards cultural maintenance and the inter-group relations, e.g. social networks with the home and host cultures. Individuals who value both cultural maintenance and inter-group relations may be classified as those who support the integration (bicultural) approach. Those who treasure cultural maintenance but do not value inter-group relations are individuals who have adopted the separation approach. By contrast, individuals who attach importance to inter-group relations but are indifferent to cultural maintenance embrace the assimilation approach. Finally, those who do not value cultural maintenance or inter-group relations are said to have a marginalization approach to acculturation. Thus, assimilated and separatist individuals identify with the mainstream or ethnic culture respectively as opposed to the marginalized individual who identifies with neither culture.

The BDM model identifies a multidimensional pattern of possible outcomes by recognizing the significance of both home and host social networks' influences on the behavioral and cognitive dimensions of the acculturation process. Both models use social networks in the home culture and the host culture as the foundation of the cultural behavior patterns of an individual as he/she positions their social membership among different cultures and languages (Kanno, 2000; La Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985). Berry's model suggests that immigrants face two issues with the host culture—maintaining and developing their own cultural distinctiveness—and offers four strategies for dealing with the potential stress and tension of interacting with L1 and L2 social networks in the host culture that is often associated with acculturation. BDM emphasizes the maintenance and establishment of social networks in both the home and host cultures as vital for the acculturation experience of migrants in a permanent

host culture. Although both BDM and Berry's models are thought to have the potential to be applicable for the context of return migrants because they take into consideration that assimilation is not the only final outcome that all immigrants seek, they still only explain the possible outcomes of one segment of their acculturation process.

Integration

Wierzbicki (2004) examined the circumstances under which ethnic communities become stronger or denser (e.g. how many people interact together) as they gather more solidarity from their members. She contends that membership in social networks and other social structures, along with the strength of the bond among the networks, provide an instrument that can guide the individuals towards different degrees of integration. The bond between the social networks can range from weak acquaintanceships to strong emotional commitments with each type serving a different function for the immigrant. According to Wierzbicki, weak ties to social networks may offer information, emotional support, and social boundaries whereas strong emotional commitment could provide a lifetime network and association that may minimize any necessity for any primary relations outside of the ethnic group. This in turn may create a paradigm where the stronger the influence of the L1 social network, the less likely the immigrant will integrate.

Wierzbicki further suggests that an individual's selection process of establishing social networks in the receiving culture could be hampered due to the barriers that immigrants usually face. With the exception of family social networks, developing social networks from acquaintances in a receiving culture is not often an easy task. She posits that generally, there are three obstacles that may hinder the process of expanding social networks. These linguistic and cultural barriers include (a) social distance and shifting identities where the immigrants arriving at their destination may have to re-negotiate their identities and roles; (b) language barriers where the immigrant may not be able to speak L2 or may have rudimentary command of L2; and

(c) work settings when long working hours may prevent any leisure time or energy for socializing (Wierzbicki, 2004; p. 15-16). If the immigrant is faced with any one of these barriers, expanding their social networks in the L2 will be difficult to accomplish and may lead the immigrant to rely solely on his or her L1 social networks for support. Wierzbicki argues that these barriers may reinforce the ethnic community enclave within the mainstream culture and cause the immigrant to abandon any need to expand the L2 social networks.

Re-integration of Return Migrants

The core of cultural adaptation research for Japanese return migrants has been on the re-assimilation and re-education of the *kikokushijo* (Japanese returnees) when they are children. In the past, the children have had to conceal their overseas experience and hide any social or linguistic markers that could identify them as being different from the mainstream culture or else they were perceived by the mainstream Japanese society as a minority group drastically in need of re-acculturation. They are not treated as “third culture kids” (TCKs), a term for children who lived in multiple cultures due to the occupation of their families (i.e., military, missionary, international business), and who do not identify or consider any culture as home (Branaman, 1999). *Kikokushijo* are Japanese children who are discriminated against in Japan for not being Japanese “enough” (Yashiro, 1995). Although there are reports that the negative connotations associated with *kikokushijo* as children are fading (Singer, 1999), there are still reports of unresolved issues and dilemma faced by the *kikokushijo* as adults in the workforce (French 2000).

As seen in the demographics of the Japanese migration pattern, adult returnees are by far the largest group of Japanese return migrants, yet research on their cultural adaptation experiences is seldom investigated. The New York Times ran an article on how Japanese adult returnees yearn to live overseas again (French, 2000). The article states that as adults, the

returnees encounter problems that extend beyond the lack of language and social skills to include a whole range of human relations—“from stressful rhythms of daily life and workplace politics to a mechanical educational system and affairs of the heart” (New York Times, Section A, p.1, 2000). Just as the *kikokushijo* in the past were socially viewed with suspicion, adult returnees have also had to confront social barriers in the workforce upon return when they were faced with many companies who were reluctant to hire workers who come with a foreign high school or college education. French cites a recent opinion poll that has shown that by a substantial margin, the Japanese returnees are happier overseas than when they are back home and those who have to struggle to integrate often yearn to return to a life overseas.

Social Network and Culture for Return Migrants

Scholars who have used the immigrant’s acculturation models as their theoretical framework have found shortcomings or contradictory outcomes in the case of return migrants. Immigrants’ acculturation models are problematic for return migrants because the models represent the state and not the process of acculturation. The state of acculturation is the end result of the immigrant’s integration into the host culture, whereas the process of acculturation is the transition phase of using a variety of strategies in an effort to maneuver comfortably in a new environment (Clayton, 1996). The state of acculturation for a return migrant becomes difficult to determine because unlike the acculturation process of an immigrant, the consequence of this process for a return migrant has yet to be concluded. Their acculturation is a continuous process in which the cross-cultural adjustments and readjustments are connected. Therefore, the return migrants’ re-entry must also be viewed as an important component of their entire acculturation process.

In general, most studies on the acculturation and integration processes are primarily focused on patterns of adaptation, cultural adjustment outcomes, and culture shock of immigrants

in host societies (Arthur, 2001; Berry, 1998; LaFromboise, Hardin, Coleman & Gerton, 1993; Ward, Bocher & Furnham, 2001) or by classifying the extent of integration by the individual in the host culture through the use of social networks (Wierzbicki, 2004). Immigration research has shown that acculturation and integration of migrants are multi-dimensional and fluid, yet by examining only one segment of the return migrant's journey, these studies are restrictive for not investigating the integration and re-integration of a same return migration population.

Role of Social Network and Identity

In this section, studies of identity construction and reconstruction during intercultural migration will be presented. In order to understand the identity processes during cultural transition, a definition of identity through a social network approach will be given. In addition to the definition of identity, research on the identity construction for Japanese cultural identity, bilingual/bicultural identity, will also be provided.

Definition of Identity

Identity is a term that refers to our sense of who we are and the relationship we have to the world (Kanno, 2003). The salient features of a person's identity are subject to the social and cultural contexts in which it is presented (McNamara, 1997); therefore a person's identity is a constant dynamic process rather than a static state. Scholars have argued that the construction of identity within a cultural group is a product of socialization (Stoessel, 1998). Socialization is the learning process of acquiring the language, values, attitudes, beliefs, and roles in a society, which starts during infancy and continues into adulthood. Through the socialization process, individuals are taught what is expected of them in their families, communities, and culture as well as how to behave according to those expectations. Social networks are essential building blocks for the socialization process as well as identity development of an individual because the

linguistic and cultural tenets of a society are enforced and molded by the social networks of that particular society and the primary byproduct of this learning process is identity development.

Identity Construction

Studies have revealed that cultural identity construction is a vital component of acculturation as well as for the formation and negotiation of identities for migrant groups in host culture settings (Bennet, 1993; Cummins, 1996; Isogai, Hayashi & Uno, 1999; Kanno, 2003; Kim, 2001; Onwumechilli et al., 2003). Cultural identities of migrants are complex and multi-faceted as new social and cultural domains inevitably challenge them. This is because moving to a new culture requires a reorganization of a person's sense of self as they navigate their way through the social networks of the host culture. Migrants find that their particular ways of being who they are or what defines their identities are no longer available, useful, or valued in their new social environment. As they are faced with new challenges, concerns, and circumstances in the host culture, these situations may require the individuals to re-examine their identity and home culture in a new light. For some, the home cultural traditions may be strengthened or rejected as a way to fortify or weaken their cultural identity in a dominant culture (Roznek, 1980). For these migrants, the L1 social network becomes a refuge to shield them away from the host culture or they may prefer not to associate with the social network because it has become a linguistic and cultural liability for them. For others, new intercultural identities may emerge to redefine an individual who has been living in two or more cultures (Arnett, 2002). For these migrants, they are able to establish and maintain both L1 and L2 social networks and progress towards development of a bilingual/bicultural identity.

Japanese Identity

Ueno (1998) reports that cultural identity is considered to be dominant in the identity formation of the Japanese people. Creating groups and adjusting to the group is a significant

factor in Japanese tradition. Ueno states that the emphasis for the Japanese is a harmonious relationship within the group. The bond felt within these groups is very strong and obligation to the group is a main concern for its members. In return, the member feels stronger as an individual with the support of a group, and can depend on the group as long as their membership is in good standing.

For many returnees, Japanese identity becomes an important issue both when they are abroad and when they return to Japan. This is due to the underlying cultural belief that if a person leaves Japan, exposure to other cultures and languages will taint the cultural and social identity of the return migrant (Goodman, 1990; Pang, 2000; White, 1988). This conviction that the simple act of leaving leads to contamination of one's cultural identity can be compared to the belief system of the Hopi tribe of Arizona. Traditional Hopi believe that any Hopi tribe member who leaves the Arizona high desert mesa homeland is no longer a Hopi. Labeled as a *ka Hopi*, such individuals have "lost their Hopi hearts" because when they return, they no longer behave completely according to Hopi conventions (Seelye & Wasilewski, 1996, p. 97). Even though the social attitudes seem to be changing in Japan, the Japanese return migrants are perceived to have lost their Japanese identity, the cultural markers that are considered to make them Japanese, and their reacceptance into Japanese society is often met with skepticism.

Japanese Return Migrant Identity

A number of studies in Japanese identity have delved specifically into how Japanese return migrants negotiated their cultural identities upon returning to Japan. One domain where identity differences emerged between the Japanese who have been abroad and the Japanese who have never been outside of the country is the Japanese school system. Studies on returnee children have shown that initially the children do experience difficulty adjusting to Japan because they cannot seem to switch their behavior fast enough by the school's standards to the conventions of

the Japanese context (Yamamoto, 1995). As Kyoko Yashiro simply put it, “they fell short of being Japanese” (1993, p.139). The lack of development of their Japanese proficiency; the academic maladjustment in Japanese school settings; and the maintenance, further development, or attrition of their acquired second languages after returning to Japan were viewed as deficiencies in their identity development as well (White, 1988). The schools’ response in Japan has been to shoulder the burden of re-educating the children into acceptable social norms and behaviors of being Japanese.

Negotiating Japanese Returnee Identity

White (1988) identified three coping strategies used by Japanese returnee families to negotiate their re-entry into the Japanese society, namely, re-assimilation, adjustment, and internationalization. The re-assimilator attempts to erase all signs of their overseas experience by avoiding anything foreign which may mark them to be different from their peers. The adjustor has a relaxed and positive attitude about re-assimilation. Finally, the international is proud of their experience abroad and accepts and exhibits their cultural differences with pride. According to White, Japanese society is a demanding environment with a strong distinction between outsiders and insiders. She reports that due to the social pressure of having an untainted Japanese identity, most of the returnees fell under Category A, the re-assimilator, where the overseas experience is not acknowledged at all.

There are some scholars, however, who posit that there is a change in how Japanese returnees identify themselves. Pang (2000) investigated how a returnee family in Brussels shifted their identities within the context of the host culture and the home culture. She gives particular attention to the level of interaction the participants of her study devoted to individuals in the host culture and to their Japanese peers once they returned to Japan. Her participants were three generations of women within the returnee family: the grandmother, the mother, and the

daughters. This approach was adopted so that the participants represented three different periods in Japanese history, with each generation specifically marked with internal conflict and public debate on Japanese national identity. Pang compares her findings from her interviews with the participants with the postwar development of the Japanese ethno-national identity and how that identity still affects the personal lives of the individual Japanese even when they are overseas. She found that the grandmother, who was born during the Meiji Restoration Era (1868-1912), kept a strong national identity. This was true for people who lived through that period in time when a strong unified national identity was imperative in order to bring Japan successfully into the modern world. In her lifetime, the modernization of the Meiji Era was followed by the war period when the country demanded ultra-nationalism during the early part of the Showa Era (1925-1989). On the other hand, the mother was born during the post war period when an occupied Japan was strongly influenced by American values. The mother's identity was torn between the traditional obligations of a Japanese woman and the western ideology of personal enrichment. When she lived overseas, she was more willing to pursue her life goals, whereas when she returned to Japan, she became the devoted Japanese wife and mother again. Finally, the daughters were born in Japan at a time when the Japanese economy was starting to escalate to new heights, and they faced a fast paced advanced society where the Japanese products and people could be found beyond its shores. The daughters who lived in Brussels did not have a strong affinity with the Japanese identity. When they returned to Japan, they felt different from the other Japanese and insisted that they were a new type of Japanese with an identity that could only be shared with other returnees. Once the returnee children were back in Japan, they viewed themselves as being different from other Japanese, and at the same time found it difficult to understand a community that considers overseas education or experiences to be an obstacle or

handicap. The returnees in Pang's study did not view their overseas experience as a hindrance, but considered their self-identity as more of a new classification of Japanese: "international Japanese" for a globalizing Japan.

Bicultural Identity

When people come into contact with multiple cultural groups, they have to negotiate and reconstruct their identities according to the cultural and linguistic norms of the L1 and L2 social network communities in an L2 environment. The negotiations of bicultural identities are transformational processes of appreciating the differences between first and second culture and language and incorporating these languages and cultures into a sense of who you are. The negotiation of one's identity towards a bicultural identity is only possible as long as there are strong social networks in both cultures and languages that can help support and encourage the individual towards the development of a bicultural identity (LaFrombois, et al, 1993).

Even though some scholars have suggested that it is possible for some individuals to feel confident that they can live effectively and in a satisfying manner within two cultures without compromising their sense of identity, the ability to have a bicultural identity is sometimes a difficult concept to accept. This was true for Kanno's study (2000, 2003) where her participants thought that they could have bilingual identities but could never develop bicultural identities. They were under the impression that they could either have an L1 identity or an L2 identity but not both.

Japanese Bicultural Identity

Kanno (2003) is one of the few studies conducted specifically on Japanese return migrants and how they negotiated their bilingual and bicultural identities. The participants in the study were Japanese students who had lived outside Japan for different lengths of time. At the start of the study, they were adolescents attending a regular Canadian high school who had decided to

return to Japan for college. While in Canada, the participants were also students of a supplementary school offered on Saturdays through the Japanese Ministry of Education. All participants had multiple re-entries between Japan and North America starting from childhood. Using narrative inquiry, Kanno identified into three phases as the students moved back and forth between the two cultures: 1) the sojourn to North America; 2) the re-entry to Japan; and 3) the reconciliation. During the first phase, the sojourn to North America, the returnees assumed that a person could only keep one linguistic or cultural allegiance. Phase two was the re-entry phase and the students exhibited two models of behavior that were used as a coping mechanism when they matriculated into their respective universities. As the students tried to settle down and fit back into Japanese society, half of the students emphasized their returnee identities, whereas the other half tried to de-emphasize the fact that they were returnees. As both groups moved in opposite directions in negotiation of their identities as they navigated their way through the Japanese higher education system, they experienced advantages and disadvantages with their choices. Regardless of their approach to the initial choices they had made, by the time the students matured into the third phase of reconciliation, they realized that it was possible to be a bicultural and bilingual person. Their confidence as bilingual and bicultural people enabled them to become more positive about their overseas experience and to expand their social networks in both countries. For example, the participants felt they no longer needed to have one particular cultural group to fulfill all their needs; they were willing to actively associate with diverse groups that reflected their different interests. They also no longer worried about trying to fit in culturally with only their Japanese social networks at the expense of hiding any affiliation they had with Canada and vice versa.

Kanno remarks that the development of bilingual and bicultural identities does not happen in a short time span. The assumption that the non-permanent status of return migrants help accelerates the re-integration process into the home country was proven not to be true. Kanno reports it took her participants 12-18 months after returning to Japan before they were able to establish their bicultural identities. Through her longitudinal study, Kanno was able to follow her participants from one socio-cultural context to another, resulting in a comprehensive observation of the complexity involved in identity change. In addition, Kanno's research sheds light on the possibility of having a bicultural identity, an idea that contradicts the traditions of Japan.

Identity Models for Return Migrants

Testing Berry's model, Sussman (2002) explored cultural identities and repatriation experiences of American teachers in Japan and found that the teachers' repatriation experiences into the home culture was more related to their shifts in their cultural identities than to their overseas adaptation experiences. She found that the degree to which an individual identifies with his or her home culture can be used as a predictor of their repatriation experience upon their return. As a result, Sussman developed a Cultural Identity Model (CIM) using a social psychological framework that specifically focuses on self-concept and cultural identity of temporary sojourners.

Sussman's CIM suggests four types of post adaptation identity shifts: affirmative, additive, subtractive, and intercultural. Return migrants with affirmative identity are those whose home culture identity is maintained and strengthened throughout the transition cycle. Affirmative identity shift can be described as return migrants who evaluate themselves as having a strong common bond with compatriots, positive feelings toward their home country identity, and who perceive their compatriots as typical members of their culture. CIM predicts low

adaptation to the host culture and the return journey home would be seen positively. Additive and subtractive identities are characterized with an initial sense of shifting cultural identities with the adaptation outcome emerging later due to the behavioral choices that the return migrant makes during the migration process. For both identities, the return to the home culture is viewed in a negative manner; however, the reason for the negativity is different. The behavioral choices between additive and subtractive identities shifts are triggered during the initial recognition of the linguistic and cultural discrepancies between the home and host cultures. An additive identity shift occurs in return migrants who seek opportunities to interact with members of the host culture, e.g. embracing cultural and linguistic activities that represent the host culture. CMI predicts that as a consequence of the host culture involvement, there is an identity gain. Cultural identities are enhanced, yet there is sufficient change in the return migrants that their repatriation experience is viewed as a negative outcome. On the other hand, subtractive identity shift occurs when the return migrant only seeks to find members in his or her in-group because members in the host culture are deemed to be too culturally and linguistically dissimilar. Due to the non-interaction with social networks in the host culture, Sussman suggests that return migrants with subtractive identity shifts often feel isolated and alienated by the home and host cultures. The estrangement from the home culture enforces the suppression of a cultural identity because they feel that they have less in common with their compatriots, they are less positive about their home country, and they believe that compatriots perceive them to be less typical members of the home culture. This lack of support and contact with members of the home culture causes high distress when returning home, thus CIM forecast an overall negative repatriation experience. The intercultural identity is for return migrants who have had multiple cross-cultural experiences. The multiple international exposures expand their sense of being a world citizen in a global

community. An intercultural identity shifts allows the return migrant to interact effectively and appropriately in any culture. Return migrants with intercultural identity shifts develop relationships with individuals from multiple countries and have a wide range of international cultural and linguistic interests. The CIM repatriation prediction for an intercultural identity is a moderate or positive experience.

Using Berry's acculturation model and Sussman's Cultural Identity Model, Tannenbaum's (2007) study focused on the return migration experience of emigrants from Israel who initially intended to immigrate permanently to another country but returned back to Israel after a minimum of five years abroad. Unlike other return migration studies where the individual is aware that his or her migration experience is temporary, Tannenbaum's study is unique because the participants did not have specific intentions to return. Tannenbaum found that CIM was not a good predictor of the return experience due to the strong negative socio-cultural labels that are applied to an Israeli who leaves the country. New arrivals to Israel are not known as immigrants but are referred to by a biblical term that translates literally as "those going up". In contrast, those who leave Israel are labeled as betrayers or defectors and are referred to as "those going down" (Tannenbaum, 2007, p. 151). Due to this social stigma, Tannenbaum reports that diaspora Israelis tend to define their status as temporary, even though they have permanently migrated to another country. Tannenbaum reports that CIM was less applicable to the study because the cultural collective mentality of guilt, shame, or embarrassment upon leaving Israel, in conjunction of being viewed as defectors of their nation, outweighed any issues associated with cultural identity, thereby limiting the effect of cultural identity formation or shifts. In contrast, Tannenbaum's findings showed that Berry's acculturation model potentially was more relevant because the participants revealed that their repatriation experience shared similar

features of their initial immigration experience. This could be due to the initial mentality that the participants were immigrating permanently to a host culture and were not expecting to return to Israel; therefore, their repatriation may have been viewed as an added segment to their migration process instead of completion of their journey.

Social Networks and Identity for Return Migrants

The literature on bilingual and bicultural research of Japanese return migrants has overwhelmingly focused on the process of second language acquisition or attrition (Hansen, 1999; Hayashi, 2000; Noguchi & Fotos, 2001; Reetz-Kurashige, 1999; Tomiyama, 1999, 2000; Yamamoto, 1995; Yoshitomi, 1999;) and on the difficulties of cultural adjustment/re-adjustment into Japanese society (Goodman, 1990; Isogai, et al, 1999; Kanno, 2000; White, 1988; and Yashiro, 1995). These studies revealed that the development of bicultural identities of the Japanese return migrants was often overlooked.

Studies on the identities of Japanese return migrants by Kanno and Pang are considered to be a positive step forward because the focus of these studies was not on the cultural and linguistic downfalls of the returnees, which have been abundantly reported. Rather, the identity studies show that although Japanese society may try to be gatekeepers of Japanese culture and language, the global movement of the citizens of Japan is changing the way they self-identify themselves. In the two landmark studies on changing identity issues by Pang and Kanno, Pang did not specifically state that she examined the role of social networks nor did she include the influence of social networks on her participants. Her investigations looked into the influences that family, relationships, school, language, and culture have on the Japanese returnees--all hallmarks that are established, supported, and created by social networks. Similarly, Kanno also investigated into the realm of social networks, but looked at them from a different point of view. She referred to social network as 'communities of practice' (p. 11) and defined these

communities as the schools, workplaces and local communities where group membership and close relations between the groups are an indispensable part of what shapes our identity. According to Kanno, multi-membership is inevitable for bilingual/bicultural individuals, therefore it is noteworthy to investigate the role of social networks and the multi-membership negotiation that occurs between these social network communities.

Baxter and Krulfeld (1997) affirm that, “migration encourages exploration, innovation, and new conceptualizations of culture and identity” (pp.2-3). Yet despite a growing body of interest on this topic, there is still a void in the knowledge and understanding of the relationship between social networks and cultural identity for return migrants. The generalizations offered by the existing research are simply not suitable for the return migrant because what has been conceptualized for the immigrant is restrictive and inconclusive for the return migrant. For return migrants, their linguistic and identity negotiations do not cease just because they have returned home, nor do their social networks become static or dormant. These negotiations continue, constantly evolving in multiple communities, languages, and societies. Due to the cyclical nature of their migration journey, social ties with the host and home cultures are disassembled, sustained, and reassembled in a similar encircling fashion. It is this unique bilingual and bicultural process experienced by return migrants that makes their phenomenon worthy of attention.

CHAPTER 3 METHODS

Methodological Approach

The research questions of this study involve issues on culture, language socialization, and identity of return migrants by investigating how social networks are established and maintained and what role social networks play in the integration and re-integration of Japanese return migrants. Scholars have expounded that studies involving cultural and social factors are difficult to measure in a quantifiable manner, thereby suggesting a qualitative approach to research (Davis, 1995; Hancock, 1998). The same can be said for identity research as well. In identity research, studies have strongly suggested that identity transformation is not a neatly organized or systematic evolution of oneself. Rather, changes in one's identity are at times partial, always challenged, and rely on situational and cultural cues. Given that the research questions for this study focus on a social phenomenon, a mixed method design of qualitative and quantitative research method affords a more holistic and functional manner of investigating these dynamic areas of the return migrants' experience. In conjunction with a questionnaire that can provide quantifiable data, this study also used a qualitative method of personal interviews that was selected based on the perspective that a reflexive account may be the most powerful and persuasive means of portraying social life (Denzin, 1997).

Participant Selection Process

Several criteria were established in order to define the classification of what constitutes a Japanese returnee. For this study, the participants were members of Japanese families who had returned to Japan for at least 12-18 months and who had a minimum stay of more than 90 consecutive days with a maximum stay of seven years in the United States for the purpose of either work or study before returning to Japan. The minimum 3-month time frame was selected

to eliminate any participants who were in the United States as tourists on a 90-day visitor's visa. In addition, the Japanese government classifies a Japanese national who is abroad for more than 90 days as temporary emigrants with the intention to return to Japan, thereby categorizing the participants as return migrants. The minimum time of 12-18 months in Japan was selected based on Kanno's 2003 study, which revealed that it took that much time for the returnees in her study to reach a stage of reconciliation to the possibility of becoming a bicultural and bilingual person.

Recruiting Participants

The first contact to gather volunteers for the study was initiated through the Japanese Association of Gainesville, Florida. The Japanese Association of Gainesville (JAG) is a social network for the Japanese community living in Gainesville, Florida and the surrounding areas. The association offers the Japanese community a bulletin/message board, local information, and other useful information about living in Florida through its website called the Gainesville Walker which can be found at <http://gaines.hp.infoseek.co.jp>. Through JAG, I was able to correspond with a participant who had previously lived in Gainesville but was currently living in Japan. She was actively involved with the JAG website and would post numerous suggestions and advice for families who were new to the area. I asked her if she could introduce other Japanese returnee families who would be willing to participate in my study. In addition, I also contacted my friends and colleagues in Japan, asking them to introduce any Japanese families who had returned to Japan after an extended stay in the United States.

Having an intermediary to introduce me to prospective participants is a common practice in Japanese society. In Japanese culture, there are social conventions, manners, and language that need to be observed in order to establish and maintain social relations. The social structure unit of *uchi* (内 in-group) and *soto* (外 out-group) are observed in any social interactions that

occur between members of the society. According to Harvard University anthropologist Theodore Bestor (http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/at_japan_soc/), the Japanese place a strong emphasis on the practice of *uchi* and *soto* for any group interactions because the in-group and out-group distinction creates cultural and linguistic boundaries that will dictate how a person will socially behave and what language form (e.g. plain, polite, humble or respectful) will be used among the members of the groups. The social relations with a group or individuals that are considered to be outsiders are more distant and formal, whereas relations within the insider group are conducted in a more causal and intimate manner.

The formation of *uchi* and *soto* groups is dynamic and constantly changing, yet membership into an in-group must have the consensus of the original members of the group. Approval from the insiders is necessary in order to preserve the harmony, trust, and honor of the group; therefore any decisions or actions that may affect the group as a whole must be circulated amongst the insiders first for acceptance. This is why oftentimes it is necessary to have a third party intermediary introduce an outsider for approval and acceptance to the members of the in-group. Although I was born in Japan, lived in Japan for many years, have a Japanese surname and speak the language, I am always considered to be an outsider simply because I am an American. For this reason it was imperative that I did not directly recruit participants for this study, but used an intermediary in Japan who could vouch for my credibility, sincerity, and Japanese language ability.

Participants

From a pool of possible participants of both genders, eight women volunteered to share their information on a survey. All eight of the participants were married with children and came to the United States to accompany their husbands. Although all the participants were informed that the survey was available in Japanese and the interview could be conducted in Japanese, two

of the participants declined to engage in a personal interview because they told me they were not confident with their English ability. Therefore, six of the participants agreed to provide additional information about their return migrant experiences through personal interviews. The husbands of the six participants who participated in the personal interviews were in the United States for academic reasons. Four of the husbands were in the medical field and came to the United States as visiting researchers at large university hospitals. The other two husbands were engineers at large international Japanese firms and were sent by their companies to pursue master's degrees in the United States.

The sample of participants who volunteered to be interviewed lived in three different regions of the United States. They were in the United States for one to three years due to their husbands' purpose and/or objectives of coming to America. The women who filled out the questionnaire but declined to participate in a personal interview were in the United States for a minimum of six years. Their names are denoted with the post-nominal initials of NI for no interview. In turn, the women who participated in the personal interviews are represented with the initials of WI (with interview). All of the women had school-aged children while they were in the United States. In order to mask the true identity of the participants, the women in the study were randomly given Japanese pseudonyms that represent the names of flowers commonly associated with Japan. Detailed demographics of the participants can be seen in the Table 3-1.

Table 3-1. Demographics of the participants

Name	No. of Chld	Location	Length	Reason in US	Returned to Japan	Survey	Interview
Ajisai-WI (Hydrangea)	2	Gainesville, Florida	2 years	Work related study	Sept 2003	Yes	Yes
Ayame-WI (Iris)	3	Denver, Colorado	1 year 2 mos.	Research	August 2003	Yes	Yes
Kiku-WI (Chrysanthemum)	3	New Haven, CT	2 years	Research	Dec 2001	Yes	Yes

Table 3-1. Continued

Name	No. of Chld	Location	Length	Reason in US	Returned to Japan	Survey	Interview
Mokuren-WI (Magnolia)	2	Cincinnati, Ohio	3 years	Research	August 2004	Yes	Yes
Sakura-WI (Cherry Blossom)	3	Gainesville, Florida	2 years	Work related study	May 2003	Yes	Yes
Ume-WI (Plum Blossom)	2	Gainesville, Florida	2 years 6 mos.	Research	March 2003	Yes	Yes
Momiji-NI (Maple)	2	El Paso, Texas	6 years 10 mos.	Work related	March 2003	Yes	No
Tsubaki-NI (Camellia)	2	San Diego, California	6 years 2 mos.	Work related	July 2001	Yes	No

Research Method

Narrative Inquiry

In order to systematically monitor the nature of a group's behavior or to learn what it means to be a member of that particular group, qualitative data need to be collected through direct encounters with the participants of the study. One method used in qualitative research to describe and classify various cultural, racial, and/or sociological factors within the context of a particular culture is narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry is a research tool devoted to providing a forum for theoretical, empirical, and methodological research in identifying and explaining the complex social structures within the studied group (Davis, 1995; Ethnography, Observational Research, and Narrative Inquiry, 2003). The emphasis of narrative inquiry is to comprehend how people view, understand, and make sense of their experiences through storytelling.

Everyone has a unique story to tell and a unique understanding of that experience. Various scholars have elaborated on the definition of the narratives or life stories as an account of human experiences for incidents that have occurred (Rugumayo, 1997); as an interpretation of people's lives and their perception of the world (Alvermann, 2000); or as a reflection of people's lives as they explain themselves to others (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). It is only through personal interviews that one can gain access to this wealth of information. Narratives are collected in

narrative inquiry through one-on-one interviews, group interviews, or group observations that are highly structured, semi-structured, or unstructured (Hancock, 1998).

Data Collection Procedure

In the summer of 2007, I traveled to Japan and stayed in Tokyo for 10 weeks in order to collect the data for this study. Through my intermediaries in Japan, I was introduced to a number of families who had lived overseas in the United States. Families who had lived in Europe or in parts of Asia were excluded from the study. Only the prospective families who met the return migrant criteria that were established for this study were selected to participate. These potential participants received a packet, either directly given to them at an introductory meeting or sent by mail to their homes, which included an introductory cover letter, an informed consent form asking them for permission to use their information in the study and a questionnaire about their overseas experience. All documents were in Japanese and the participants were instructed to fill out the forms in either Japanese or English prior to the actual interviews. A sample of the cover letter in English and Japanese, the English informed consent form, and the Japanese translation of the informed consent form can be found in Appendix A. The English translation of the questionnaire is in Appendix C with the Japanese translated version of the questionnaire in Appendix D.

Scheduling Personal Interviews

In order to conduct and schedule the personal interviews at the convenience and availability of the participants, I purchased a Japan Rail Pass, which allowed me to have unlimited train travel throughout Japan. Since my travel was not restricted to the Tokyo metropolitan area, all the participants were informed that I was willing to travel to any location of their choice to meet them in person. To conduct the personal interviews, I traveled up and down the main island of Honshu multiple times from the region northeast of Tokyo to the

southern region where there is a fishing village on the Sea of Japan covering nearly 8000 kilometers. This flexibility with my mode of traveling was advantageous because it allowed me to travel to the participant's selected environment and did not burden the participant to take time out of their schedule to meet with me in Tokyo. Since all of the participants were mothers of school-aged children, it was important to schedule the interviews at a location where it did not hinder or deter any family responsibilities of the mothers, such as being available when their children came home from school. The participants determined the time and location of all the interviews. All but one of the initial interviews were conducted in public places. The selected locations for the interviews included private homes, restaurants, coffee shops, a Mr. Donut shop, a university hospital, and an historic shrine.

Research Tools

A mixed method research design of personal interviews in combination with a questionnaire was employed for this study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The questionnaire was used to examine, identify, and describe the social networks of the Japanese return migrant families. Stoessel (1998) also used a mixed method design in her study on social network and language maintenance. Stoessel reports that different factors that linked social network to language maintenance and identity development can be found in different domains of analysis. In her study, she found that personal interviews revealed more of the psychological factors that were associated with social networks, whereas the questionnaire was able to reveal social network related factors.

Questionnaire

For this investigation, the questionnaire was the standardized procedure used where each participant was asked the same open-ended or closed-ended questions in order to answer the research question regarding the nature of L1 (first language) and L2 (second language) resources,

the extent of their social network in the United States and Japan, and how they identify themselves before and after their migration experience. Since the participants may or may not be bilingual, the questionnaire was available in English and Japanese. The participants received the questionnaire prior to the interview. This allowed the participants to complete the questionnaire beforehand and also allowed the researcher to use the answers from the questionnaire to guide the discussion during the interview. If the questionnaire was not completed by the time of the initial interview, due to the need for additional information or explanation on certain items on the questionnaire that were difficult for them to understand, then the participants were given the opportunity to finish the questionnaire during the first interview or to complete it by the second interview session scheduled within 14 days.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire developed for this study is influenced by existing studies from Chung, Kim and Abreu, (2004); Yoshida, Matsumoto, Akiyama, Moriyoshi, Furuiye, Ishii, and Franklin (2002) and Stoessel (1998). Each questionnaire administered in these studies had its own merits or purpose and involved a targeted population or culture. The questionnaires employed by these studies were modified and tailored to fit the needs of this research.

The Yoshida et al. (2002) study examined the factors that affect re-entry for Japanese returnees. Specifically, they were interested in finding social and psychological factors that could predict the Japanese returnees' readjustment to Japan. Their questionnaire consisted of 74 items with 35 items as predictors and the remaining 39 items measuring social and psychological outcomes. The authors noted an important cultural difference when it concerns the use of a Likert scale. The authors purposely used a four point ordinal scale to counterbalance a possible Japanese tendency to gravitate towards the mid-point value of the scale. Likewise, the questionnaire for this study was constructed around a four-point scale.

The development of the Asian American Multidimensional Acculturation Scale (AAMAS) was guided by what the authors felt was a shortage of research tools to assess the complex bi-dimensional phenomenon of the acculturation process of Asian Americans (Chung, Kim & Abreu, 2004). Most predominant models that have been proposed are uni-dimensional where the goal of acculturation is total assimilation into American culture. Chung, et al. argues that these types of models limit the ability to represent true bi-culturation of an individual. Although the acculturation scale is for the generalized term of “Asian Americans”, the authors did make accommodations on the questionnaire by making it flexible so that the data about the country of origin is incorporated as the foundation of the acculturation process. The ethnic demographics of the participants included Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, and other Southeast Asian Americans and were surveyed for the four Asian domains of language and culture associated with acculturation, namely cultural identity, language, cultural knowledge, and food consumption. The authors report that these four factors are reliable and valid to measure acculturation for Asians. Since the target population for this study is Japanese return migrants, questions for this research were also divided into three out of the four factors (cultural identity, language and cultural knowledge) with an additional factor included for social networks.

The questionnaire for this study also focuses on the structural and relational characteristics of the Japanese return migrant’s social networks (Milroy, 1987). The survey asked them to list five social networks that they had prior to leaving Japan, the social networks they made in the United States and the social networks they have upon returning to Japan. For each of the five categories of social networks listed, the participants must also rank the importance of the social network as well as the frequency of contact of that particular social network. A listing of their social networks can be found in Appendix E.

Organization of questionnaire

The questionnaire is 15 pages long and is divided into five different sections of background information, language information, social network information, identity information, and cultural information (Table 3-2). The first section asks for the demographic information about the participants and is classified as Background Information 1. Information requested in this section included names of the participants, information about their children, reason why they were in the United States, where they lived in the United States, when did they go to the United States and the date of their return to Japan. Background Information 2 asked the participants what type of activities they engaged to prepare themselves for their life overseas. There was also a short answer segment in this section where the participants were asked what positive or negative comments they received when they announced they were going to live abroad for a while to their friends and families.

Language information

Language Information 1 concerned questions about their Japanese and English proficiency. The participants were asked to rate the Japanese and English proficiency of each member of the family. Language Information 2 asked the returnees to denote the language choice of the family and also if the children were enrolled in school when they were in the United States. If the children were enrolled, the returnees were asked to further explain if the children were placed in a special English program, if they were not placed into the English program, or if they were initially placed and then exited out of the program. There was also a checklist of language maintenance activities and practices, e.g., watched Japanese videotapes/DVD, read Japanese newspapers. The returnees were asked to go through the checklist on what their families did to help maintain their Japanese language ability while they were in the United States and responded with a four-point scale of not at all, seldom, occasionally, or often. Language Information 3

asked the same questions about language maintenance activities and practices in the same format found in Language Information 2; however the checklist now asked the returnees about what their families engaged in to help maintain their English now that they have returned to Japan. Language Information 4 consisted of statements where the returnees had to respond on a four-point scale of not at all, seldom, occasionally, or often. The option of “no answer” was added to this particular checklist if the statement did not apply to the participant’s migration experience. The statements in Language Information 4 asked the returnees about their language choice with family members and with friends, in addition to questions about activities they pursued to continue their L2 learning. The statements were divided into two segments to represent statements while they were in the United States and after returning to Japan. The returnees circled their answers using the four-point scale to signify which statement best applied to their situation.

Social network information

Information about their social networks was requested in the Social Network 1 section of the questionnaire. The participants were asked to list five family members or friends with whom they associated the most. Furthermore, they were asked to give some information about their social network, such as the duration of the relationship, the nationality of the network, the location of the network, and the rank of importance in that participant’s life. In this same section of Social Network Information 1, the participants were asked whom they turned to when they wanted information about living in the United States and had to select their answers from the responses provided of Japanese, American or other social networks. Responses were in the same four-point scale of not at all, seldom, occasionally, or often. If the participants did not seek information about living overseas, they were asked to respond by circling the ‘no answer’ category of responses. In Social Network Information 2, the participants were asked how much

time they spent with Japanese, American, or other social networks. The four-point scale was adjusted to reflect responses of no answer, not at all, seldom, or occasionally. The question was repeated for each segment of their return migration experiences of before leaving Japan, in the United States, and after returning to Japan. This section also included a short answer question asking the participants to explain how important it was for her and her family to keep a close connection with the Japanese language and culture while they were in the United States. Social Information 3 was a checklist of social network establishments and maintenance situations that applied to the returnees' social networks while they were in the United States, upon returning to Japan, and about their time in Japan now. The four-point scale was used again with an additional "no answer" selection for those who felt that the statement did not apply to their situation.

Identity information

The first part of the Identity Information 1 section of the questionnaire asked yes or no questions whether the returnees considered themselves to be a bilingual or bicultural person. This section also included a checklist representing the time while they were in the United States, upon returning to Japan, and about their time in Japan now. The checklist contained statements about their identity, e.g., "I have a lot in common with other Japanese" or "I was proud to be Japanese who had lived overseas" and once again the same 4-point scale was used. Identity Information 2 asked the participants to identify themselves with the choices of international person, foreigner, returnee, Japanese American, or others. If "other" were selected, then the questionnaire asked them to specify their identity and to write it in. The identity labels spanned their entire return migration journey by asking them to identify themselves before leaving Japan, while they were in the United States, and upon returning to Japan.

Cultural information

Yes or no answers in conjunction with short answers were the format used in Culture Information 1. The questions asked the returnees about culture shock or difficulties they encountered when they went to the United States or when they returned to Japan. Culture Information 2 asked the returnees if they observed or practiced any culturally related activities, e.g. holidays or teaching Japanese culture while they were in the United States. The same question was applied to their situations upon returning to Japan and their time in Japan now. The statements were presented in a checklist form with the same four-point scale of not at all, seldom, occasionally, or often as options for their responses. If the returnee felt that the statement did not apply to their situation, they were asked to use the “no answer” option. The final part of the Culture Information section was a short answer section where the returnees were asked to write any advantages or disadvantages of living abroad and returning to Japan. A copy of the English version of the questionnaire is available in Appendix C.

Table 3-2. Format of the questionnaire

Section	Page Number
Background Information 1	Page 1
Background Information 2	Page 2
Language Information 1	Page 3
Language Information 2	Page 4
Language Information 3	Page 5
Language Information 4	Page 6
Social Network Information 1	Page 7
Social Network Information 2	Page 8
Social Network Information 3	Page 9
Social Network Information 4	Page 10
Identity Information 1	Page 11
Identity Information 2	Page 12
Culture Information 1	Page 13
Culture Information 2	Page 14
Culture Information 3	Page 15

Organization of Japanese questionnaire

The English questionnaire was translated into Japanese with the same format, questions, and sections. All pages and sections of the Japanese version corresponded with the same pages found in the English questionnaire. No additional questions were added in the Japanese version of the questionnaire. The participants were given the choice of either completing the questionnaire in English or Japanese. All participants selected the Japanese version of the questionnaire. A copy of the Japanese version of the questionnaire is available in Appendix D.

Personal Interviews

The interviews for this study were semi-structured where a set of broad questions was used to guide the discussion and to elicit responses concerning their return migration experience. A semi-structured interview allowed the participants latitude to follow, expand, or detour from the line of inquiry introduced by the researcher. The interviews were conducted in Japan from May to July 2007. A minimum of two interviews per participant was conducted within 14 days of each other at a location determined by the participants. Interviews were conducted in Tokyo; Utsunomiya City, Tochigi Prefecture; Hadano City, Kanagawa Prefecture; Nara City, Nara Prefecture; Kyoto as well as Hagi City and Nagato City in Yamaguchi Prefecture. The interviews were recorded using two digital recording devices: one as the primary recorder and the second one as a back-up recorder.

It has been suggested that in research investigating bilingual/bicultural participants, it is important that the interviewer and the participants share the same linguistic understanding and allow communicative routines to occur naturally to ensure a successful interview (Goldstein, 1995). For this reason, the participants were allowed to determine the language of choice for the interview. All six participants decided they felt most comfortable in articulating their cross-cultural experiences in Japanese. Each family was able to review a summary of the interview, as

well as a Japanese transcript of the interview, in order for them to clarify any possible misrepresentations or to add any additional information to further illustrate their point. Through this procedure, the families were able to modify their information to be used for this study's data.

Appropriateness of Methodology

Narrative inquiry can provide a systematic investigation that will help identify and explain the complex social networks accessed by the Japanese return migrants. Unlike other qualitative methods available for ethnographic research, the focus of narrative inquiry is on the individuals and how they live their lives. According to Kanno (2003), humans experience their lives and identities in narrative form, therefore a narrative is a powerful medium through which other people's experiences can be understood and shared with others. In addition, narrative is an efficient tool, which can reveal evidence to the nature of the mind of an individual and how the world is perceived by that particular individual (Richmond, 2002). It is only through narrative inquiry that descriptive personal information can be obtained through the speaker's perspective.

Some have argued that narratives not only provide a contextual understanding of society, but they can also provide a structure for identity research. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) advocate that individuals construct their identities through stories of their daily experience, encounters, and interactions with other people. They contend that through narrative it is possible to capture and investigate experiences as human beings live them in time, in space, and in relationships. Similarly, Chaitin (2004) is a proponent of using interviews to elicit narratives as a method for personal and social identity research. In her study on identity issues of Jewish Israeli young adults, Chaitin writes that narrative is one type of phenomenological approach to research that is embedded in social and cultural contexts and which focuses on the understandings and significance that people give to their life experiences. She makes the case that people's identity is based on their life story. It is only through narratives that a researcher

can uncover the complexities of the dynamic nature of identity construction in relation to different individuals in different social settings at different times.

She writes:

Although people tend to identify with many social groups, based on factors such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, national origin, and so on, these factors become salient at different times and in different ways, thus contributing to the fluid nature of identity construction. (p. 5).

In the studies specific of Japanese return migrants, narrative inquiry methods have been used to investigate the cultural identity of the returnees (Kanno, 2003; Pang, 2000; White, 1988). The focal point of the research in all of the studies is to understand the experience of the informants/participants through their own point of view. The narratives from these studies were crucial in understanding the socio-cultural environment of the returnees' cross-cultural experiences. Therefore, for this study, the employment of narrative inquiry through personal interviews in conjunction with questionnaires is an appropriate and pragmatic research method for Japanese return migrants. The questionnaire will be used as a supplement to further augment the information collected from the personal interviews through a series of open-ended as well as closed-ended questions in order to collect descriptive statistics. The narratives gleaned from the interviews will enable us to gain personal insights into the social network structures of Japanese return migrants as well as to investigate the dynamics of cultural and social factors that may affect identity development issues of Japanese return migrants.

Data Analysis

Final analysis of the data was based on the narratives of the interviews and the data collected from the questionnaires. In narrative inquiry, the initial data collected from the personal interviews are called field texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). For data analysis, the data collected from the interviews was initially transcribed from the audiotapes (field texts),

translated into English by me, and documented into what is referred to as research texts or transcripts of the interviews. Once the English transcription was complete, a native Japanese speaker affiliated with the University of Florida was asked to translate the English transcription into Japanese in order to verify the accuracy of the Japanese translations. The Japanese speaker randomly selected pages from the six interviews and translated the English back to Japanese and determined that the translations were faithful and true.

Data Analysis Methodology

The data collected from the Japanese returnee's questionnaire and interviews were subjected to a thematic content analysis for patterns that emerged from their cross-cultural experience. Due to the cyclical nature of the return migrant's journey, three sub-categories of the social networks were defined to denote a chronological timeline of social network interactions before leaving Japan, while in the United States and upon returning to Japan. The data was also marked to distinguish the returnees who participated in an interview with those who only filled out the questionnaire. The six participants who provided additional data through personal interviews will have post-nominal initials of WI (with interview) after their pseudonyms. Conversely, the two participants who provided data only through the questionnaire will be represented with the initials NI (no interview) after theirs. All the quotes throughout this paper are my translations, unless otherwise noted. The social networks identified by the returnees and their answers to the questionnaire can be found in the appendices. The tables to identify the social networks are descriptive, whereas the tables that show the results from the questionnaire will report the findings in three categories: a group of six with interviews, a group of two returnees with no interviews and the collective results.

Organization for Data Analysis

Responses provided on the questionnaire were organized into categorical data and discrete data. Similarly to the research text from the personal interviews, data from the questionnaire was also examined for reoccurring themes and patterns. Data analysis included descriptive statistics such as the answers provided by the participants on the rating scale, frequency of the answers as well as the mean and averages of their answers. Personal information that may identify the participants was not included in the data analysis.

Organization of content

In order to organize the transcribed data (research texts) into a database to observe for themes, patterns or categories for content analysis, special attention was given to various sections of the interviews during the reading of the English transcriptions of the interviews. The data that were salient and relevant to their return migration experience and were marked and labeled. This allowed me to filter out any unnecessary transcribed data that were a result of casual conversation, e.g., small talk or third party interruptions during the interviews. As an example, if the participants were talking about a particular person, that section of the transcript was initially marked as SN for social network. In the same manner, if the participants were talking about anything related to languages, that conversation was initially marked LG for language. This was done for classification purposes only.

Organization of participants

Once the transcription data was examined for content, I assigned each participant a color to help organize her data. Since the pseudonyms of the participants with interviews are floral representations of Japan, a color that is generally associated with that particular flower was assigned (Table 3-3). The corresponding colored paper was used to print the excerpted segments that were lifted from the transcription. The data from Momiji-NI and Mokuren-NI who did not

participate in the interviews but who completed the questionnaire were both assigned the same color.

Table 3-3. Participants' color assignment chart

Name	Color
Ajisai: Hydrangea	Blue
Ayame: Iris	Ivory
Kiku: Chrysanthemum	Yellow
Mokuren: Japanese Magnolia	Green
Sakura: Cherry Blossom	Pink
Ume: Plum Blossom	Lavender
Momiji: Japanese Maple	Golden Rod
Tsubaki: Camellia	Golden Rod

Organization of data

Relevant information found throughout the entire transcriptions were extracted and grouped together into the various classification labels that were temporary assigned. Since the interviews were conducted in a causal manner, the participants did not talk about their return migration experience in a rigid chronological order. Similar to a natural conversation, topics changed constantly in the course of the interview or were re-visited again when the participant suddenly remembered another episode that she would like to share. Sorting the shared themes and patterns of their return migration experience from the informal interview allowed me to consolidate the participants' information about their return migration experience into comparable groupings.

Organization of patterns and themes

The scope of the temporary grouping labels for the initial classification were further narrowed to allow selective answers pertaining to the research questions to represent the three different segments of their return migration experience. For example, for the category of languages (LG), it was first divided to represent L1 or L2. Then it was further divided based on the activity or practice that were performed or executed by the Japanese returnees and in which

country these were undertaken, i.e., L1 maintenance, L2 acquisition, L2 learning, and L2 maintenance.

Organization for final analysis

The discourse from the participants on information that were deemed to be important were lifted verbatim from the transcription and were then rewritten in narrative form before it was printed on the assigned colored sheets of paper. In addition, the participants' answers from the questionnaire that correlated or corresponded with their narratives were also placed together on the same page, thus data from the interviews and the questionnaire were merged together for explicit and systematic exposition.

The colored pages were collected, sorted, and consolidated into a large binder. The binder represents the chronological journey of the participants' return migration experiences with seventeen groupings of pivotal and germane information that was inferred from the interviews (Table 3-4). Each grouping was composed of narratives and answers from each of the participants.

Table 3-4. Organizational groupings for data analysis

Prior to Departure	In the USA	Returning to Japan
Social Networks before Leaving Japan.	Cross Cultural Experiences	Preparation to Return to Japan
Preparation Before Leaving Japan.	Social Networks in the USA.	Returning Experience
	L1 Cultural Maintenance	Social Networks After Returning to Japan.
	L1 Maintenance	L2 Cultural Maintenance
	L2 English Learning	L2 Maintenance
	Children's Adaptation Experience	Identity
	Children's Education Experience	Children's Returning Experience
		Reliving American Life Through Shopping

Organization of the narratives

Once the transcription was transformed into narrative forms and divided into seventeen groups, I further refined the groupings in order to present the participants' return migration experience so that it would read as a story. Individual's narratives were organized into eleven story chapters (Table 3-5) starting from an introduction to the participants with some background information on how we met, and continuing from the beginning of their journey to their reflection of their return migration experience after their return to Japan. The chapters in their narratives reflect the research questions of the functions of their social networks, in addition to other cultural and linguistic developments that were revealed during their interviews. The narratives can be found in Chapter Four.

Table 3-5. Table of content for the chapters in the narratives

Chapter Titles
Introduction
Pre-Departure
Arrival
Social Networks
Children
English Language
Family Life
Returning to Japan
Back in Japan
Identity
Reflections

CHAPTER 4 NARRATIVES

The following six narratives are the stories of the six Japanese return migrants. All of the participants were surprised at why anyone would be particularly interested in their stories for academic research. They felt that everyone shared the same experience of going overseas and returning to Japan, therefore, they did not view their stories to be exceptionally unique. To the contrary, the narratives are fascinating and allow us to peek inside the entire return migration experience from the start of their journey to their return. A set of interview questions was used to guide their storytelling; however, no restrictions were placed on the topic they wanted to share. The women were willing to share with the author their personal travails as well as their triumphs. They talked about their embarrassing episodes and their unknown fear of living with their families in a foreign country that spoke a different language. The women were very candid and open about their return migration process and graciously shared their experiences for this study.

Ajisai

Introduction

I had contacted Ajisai (hydrangea) before I left for Japan to let her know that I would be visiting the country. I first met her when her husband was attending the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida. Ajisai was born and raised in Osaka, which is located in the Kansai region (western plateau) of Japan and has the characteristics many Japanese people associate with the Kansai area: loud, down to earth, and humorous. She has a vivacious personality and is the type of woman who easily makes friends. I thought she had moved back to Osaka, Japan when she left Florida and was surprised to hear that she had moved closer to Tokyo and now had a third son who was barely a year old. I traveled on the Tohoku Shinkansen Line or the high-speed

bullet train to Tochigi Prefecture's capital city of Utsunomiya located about an hour northeast of Tokyo. Unlike its older sister, the Tokaido Shinkansen Line (Japan Rail West) that is the iconic image that most westerners associate with the bullet train--the streamlined white train with a blue stripe down the side streaking by Mt. Fuji in a blur--the Tohoko Shinkansen (Japan Rail East) is a flamboyant younger sister that has a more aerodynamic design with blue and white two-toned bi-level cars trimmed in either yellow, pink, or green pinstripes. It is colorful, sleek, and has a more futuristic appeal.

It was the start of the rainy season where the days are usually cloudy, gray, and wet. It rained the entire train trip with raindrops splattering on the window and then quickly rolling off in a stream as the train made its way through the hills and mountains. Ajisai picked me up in her candied apple red family van at the Utsunomiya train station with her husband and three sons in tow. As part of the usual greeting custom in Japanese, she commented about the weather and apologized for not being a clear day. She suggested that we meet in Utsunomiya so that we could spend the day touring the famous sites of Tochigi. Her family had moved from Osaka to Tochigi about a year ago and the family had been so busy with the new baby and getting settled into their new home and schools that they had not been able to go sightseeing around their new area. Since it was a Sunday and according to Ajisai, it is a day when her husband has to perform his obligatory "family service" where the whole family goes on an outing, she wanted to go to the famous Buddhist temple and Shinto shrines of Nikko National Park. Designated as a World Heritage Site from UNESCO (United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), Nikko is the famous 17th century shrine well known for the transom panel carvings of the three monkeys that represent hear-no-evil, speak-no-evil, and see-no-evil. Nikko is located about an hour drive away from the train station on the Nikko Scenic Highway. I climbed into the van and

sat next to Ajisai and the baby in one of the second row seats with her two older boys occupying the far backbench seat. Ajisai's husband, sitting by himself up front, drove through the winding roads and hairpin curves through the misty fog covered mountains to reach the entrance to the National Park. He initially told me that he would not participate in the interview; however, occasionally he did join in on the conversation when we talked in the car.

Pre-Departure

Ajisai's husband works for a global Japanese construction and mining equipment manufacturer that sells its products worldwide. Every year, 10-20 employees from Japan are sent overseas for one reason or another. Some of the workers or administrators go overseas to study for an MBA (Master of Business Administration) or for an advanced degree in engineering. Others go as a job deployment because they have been transferred to one of the many international satellite offices around the world. Some for short term, some for long term, either way there is a continuous flow of personnel from this company making their way to city or town somewhere in the world. After working for this company for almost a decade, Ajisai's husband applied to the rotation pool of employees who wanted to go overseas to study. He was curious to see what locations people generally chose to go study abroad, so he looked into the graduate programs where other employees had previously enrolled. Although the company does not restrict its employees as to where they want to go, he found that most people's first choice was the United States, with China and England coming in second and third respectively. He read the required reports the other employees submitted upon their return to Japan and found that within the United States, Cincinnati, Ohio and Boston, Massachusetts were popular destinations. Those who went to Cincinnati and Boston, however, often wrote about the living conditions, especially during the winter months, and would report the frigid winters they had to endure instead of evaluating the schools or the programs they attended. Since his company gave him the

freedom to choose any place in the world to study, he decided that if possible, he was going to avoid anywhere with a cold climate. He randomly searched for a university that offered an advanced degree in civil engineering and found information on the University of Florida (UF). He thought the program looked promising and more importantly, he knew Florida is known to have nice weather. He felt that Florida was calling his name and decided to submit his application.

Although her husband's company did not have a designated time limit to study abroad, there was a general guideline in place that was accepted and understood by all the employees. The employees who were sent to study abroad would receive eighteen months of paid work leave. In addition, the company provides an overseas living expense stipend, moving expenses, full tuition, and book expenses to study at private universities. According to Ajisai's husband, the study abroad business protocol was that his company would give a large donation to a private university, and in return, the university would accept one of its employees into its graduate program. Since the University of Florida is a public school, the standard protocol method of sending an employee to study abroad was no longer applicable and for the first time the company had to change its policy. Ajisai believed that "UF only accepts people they can trust," and this was her reasoning on why the company had to deal with UF in a different manner. According to Ajisai, UF only requested that her husband donate the computer he would use while he was there when he leaves. This was unprecedented for the company. No large donation? No strings attached? That was all? "The company even asked him if a zero was misplaced for the amount of money needed." This unusual situation got Ajisai's husband to think of other possibilities. If UF has only one request to his company, then Ajisai's husband thought that maybe he could put in another request of extending his time abroad. He approached his company and made his

argument. Since his study abroad program would cost the company less money than those who attend schools that require a large donation, was it possible to extend his work leave for two full years instead of the standard eighteen months? Surprisingly, the company agreed. “The other families who were studying overseas could not believe it! They were jealous.” As it turned out, her husband’s was the first and the last in his company to be awarded a two-year overseas assignment. After that, the maximum amount of time to study abroad was strictly limited to a year and a half.

Ajisai knew that the important criterion for her husband was to find a graduate program that would suit his educational goal, but she still wanted to express her opinion on where they should go overseas. She had to think about living in a safe environment because for Ajisai, they were not going overseas just as a couple, but as a family with two young children. Her request was that they go somewhere that had fair weather and was a good environment for their children. When she found out that Florida was a warm place to live and that Gainesville was a small college town, she was very happy with her husband’s decision and thought it would be a perfect place for them.

No one from her husband’s company had ever been assigned to work or study in Florida. For Ajisai and her husband, their image of Florida was a popular retirement location for senior citizens or a place where people go on vacation. Evidently, his company had the same fun-filled image of Florida as well and when her husband was awarded his overseas assignment, he was instructed by his company not to tell others that he was going to a place like Hawaii or to tell them that he was going somewhere known to be fun and entertaining. Furthermore, his company informed him that since he was going abroad as a student, it would not disburse the additional overseas living allowance that those who are deployed overseas receive. Ajisai’s husband will

only receive his regular salary because this was not a company overseas transfer assignment for him; it was a requested leave of absence by an employee. At first, this bothered Ajisai. She worried about the financial strain it would place on them to be gone for two years, but since this was her husband's decision, she wholeheartedly supported his desire to go overseas to study and started to prepare her family for their departure.

Ajisai found out from the other wives in the company that there are family program workshops offered for those who are about to go and live overseas by Japan Airlines (JAL) and All Nippon Airways (ANA). The workshops were held in the morning and the programs were designed to help women prepare for their life overseas. She found the information on the internet and registered for both workshops. The first workshop she attended was offered by JAL. Prior to attending this program, she did not have a good impression of JAL because the airline was not very family friendly when she was told that children were not welcome to accompany their mothers to the workshop. "We were told that we needed to have someone look after them." Fortunately, her parents lived nearby and they were able to take care of her two boys while she attended the session. She knew that she was lucky to be able to leave her children with her parents and wondered how many women could not attend because they did not have anyone to help them with childcare. ANA, on the other hand, had a much better impression for Ajisai. They offered free babysitting service and also served refreshments: something JAL did not do. "That's probably why I liked the ANA seminar better."

The ANA and JAL programs consisted of Japanese women volunteers who had lived overseas for an extended period of time and had since returned to Japan. These women would register their names with the airlines in order to share their international experiences with other women through these workshops. The content of the workshop was very similar for both

programs. The program divided the volunteers into various groups representing different regions of the world. This was organized so that the attendees who were about to go to a particular location, e.g. United States or Australia, would be assigned to a group that could provide them with local information about the area. The workshop opened with a general assembly where the *sempai* (mentor) mothers would present miscellaneous topics, e.g. time differences, cultural differences, what type of clothing you should wear, or explanation of holidays, in a lecture format. Ajisai thought these presentation topics were practical and useful. “They were about little things, but they were real things that exist or occur.” The second half of the workshop was for the regional group discussions, which allowed the attendees and the *sempai* mothers to talk with each other and to ask questions on a more personal level. Ajisai was looking forward to the small group discussion because she was eager to learn a lot from the *sempai* mothers and was ready to ask them detailed questions about living overseas.

During the ANA general assembly session for, Ajisai perused the pages of the guidebook provided by the airline to see if there was any information on Florida. “Well, for Florida...Florida was really not mentioned at all.” The only information she found about Florida was about Walt Disney World and Universal Studios in Orlando. She was hoping to gather useful information about living in Florida, but all she could find was tourist information for those who are vacationing in Florida. This lack of information about Florida was the same problem she had at the previous JAL workshop. No one from the JAL family program or from the ANA workshop had ever been to Florida to live? Not to be too discouraged, Ajisai was hoping that when it was time for the regional group discussions, this time she would be able to find someone who had lived in or visited Florida before and would be able to give her more information about the area.

When it was time to break out in regional groups, Ajisai found her way over to her assigned group table: the East Coast. Disappointed that Florida was not represented, she settled down into her seat as the *sempai* mother for the East Coast table introduced herself and started to tell the group her background story. As the *sempai* mother was giving her talk, the other attendee mothers at the table started to pepper her with questions on various random topics. The topics were rapidly shifting from describing the large size of the American vacuum cleaners, discussing kindergarten, to caring for bedding. When the topic of bedding in the United States came up, a firestorm discussion of cultural differences developed at Ajisai's table. Traditional Japanese futon mattresses used to sleep on the floor require a certain maintenance routine that is not normally associated with a mattress from a bed. Since the mothers at the table were going to the United States and most likely would be sleeping in a bed, one particular mother asked specific questions about the care and maintenance of the mattresses used for western beds. All the attendees at the table were stunned to learn that Americans do not air their bedding outside.

In Japan, on a clear sunny day, you can see Japanese futon mattresses hanging from the balconies of tall buildings or the verandas of private homes as if they were swatches of colorful fabric used to make a large quilt to cover the whole nation. It is a daily ritual that everyone must do in order to maintain the hygienic integrity of the futon mattress, because if you do not air out your futon, it will quickly become a source of mildew and dust mites. There was a mother at Ajisai's table who was going to go to New York and she became very upset when she was told that she could not air her bedding in America. This was totally absurd to her. She was very adamant that she needed to air her bedding: She needed to place it out in the sun in order to disinfect it. She became more irate when she found out that people in America do not air-dry their laundry outside either. She started to ask the same questions over and over again. If she

could not air out her bedding or if she could not dry her laundry in the sun, then how else would she be able to kill the bacteria? You need to kill the bacteria! For Ajisai, this other mother was becoming annoyingly obsessed about the issue. At first, this mother's idiosyncratic fixation on killing bacteria was entertaining for Ajisai, but after a while it became a nuisance. "Bacteria! Bacteria! She talked so much that I thought her bacteria were spraying on my face!" After listening to this woman's long rant, Ajisai decided that she was probably just nervous about going to New York and was looking for an excuse to find fault in anything that was said about America. This put a damper on Ajisai. Did everyone at her table have anxiety about going overseas too or were they actually looking forward to their trip? Ajisai had mixed feelings about leaving Japan and wanted to talk to the *sempai* mother more about this, but instead the bacteria phobic woman who was going to New York did all the talking. She was talking loudly and hysterically, not really making any sense. Though the other mothers tried to reason with her, she was definitely not the type of person who would listen to other people's advice. Ajisai sat back and lost all interest in the workshop. It was not what she expected and as the New York bound mother dominated the conversation about bacteria, it was also becoming a waste of time and money. Disappointedly, Ajisai sat there and ate the cake that was served.

The focus of the workshops was more on the preparation to leave Japan than on returning home. Ajisai was under the impression that since it was a workshop offered by an airline company, that it would provide information about returning to Japan too, but this was not the case. "The understanding was that if you go abroad, then you always come back. That is why the seminar gave you information about topics such as what to do before leaving Japan, what to do when you first get there, what to do with your house while you are gone, or what you need to do if you want to sell your car." There was no discussion about returning to Japan until the end

of the workshop, where it was briefly announced that if anyone needed help finding housing when they came home that they could contact the airlines. This service was provided by the airlines, but of course, it was available for a separate charge.

Since the workshops were not exactly what she expected, Ajisai turned to a person she knew who had previously been overseas. A year before, a co-worker of hers when she worked at *Ito Yokado*TM, a Japanese department store that also sells groceries, went to live on the West Coast of the United States for about half a year. Her co-worker happened to be married to her husband's colleague and she viewed the couple as veterans of international travel. Ajisai wanted to know more about the different places this couple had visited or lived so she secretly contacted her co-worker. Ajisai was very cautious about this. Even though she was asking mundane questions such as where is it cheaper to buy household items, Ajisai tried to ask questions quietly so that other people, who were not going overseas, would not hear her. She was cognizant that people may be jealous of her husband's overseas assignment and did not want to appear as if she were boasting about it to others.

Arrival

Although Ajisai felt that she needed more time to truly prepare her family to live in Florida, before she knew it she was on the plane with her family. When they first arrived, it became very obvious that they would need a car to get around town. Ajisai does not drive in Japan and relied on public transportation to get around the city. She had no intention of getting a driver's license in Florida, but with no commuter trains available, her husband needed a car to go to school. They went to the dealership together so that they could mutually agree on a color. Ajisai noticed a tendency that the Japanese people living in the United States would always buy a Japanese car. She did not want to do this. She felt that if they were going to live in America, then they should drive an American car. "If (American) people saw a Japanese driving a

Japanese car in America, then we will be told to go back home.” She reasoned that since they were in America, they should drive an American car in order to “appeal to their senses that we like Americans”. This was Ajisai’s attempt to make a diplomatic contribution to international relations between Japan and America. “It is not that the Americans would be angry if we drove a Japanese car, it is just that it made more sense if we did not.” Another argument to buy an American car was that it would be a good opportunity for her family to ride in a car that they would not be able to own or drive in Japan.

Ajisai took a mathematical approach to help her decide what kind of car her family needed. They have two children who need car seats so she needed a car with a lot of room. Also, if they should have guests from Japan, then they would need a larger car that could accommodate more than four people. After much consideration, they decided on a burgundy colored Chevrolet Astro™ mid-sized van. For Ajisai and her family, this was part of their American dream: drive a large American car and go on road trips throughout the United States. She had visions of her family exploring the vast lands of America as they drove along the black ribbon highways in their large Astro™ van. For Ajisai, it was a car that epitomized the American car culture--a car that only exists in the United States. After all the energy and time Ajisai spent to plan and dream about this America-only car, much to her dismay, when they returned to Japan, they saw their same Astro™ van everywhere.

Now that they had a car, they needed to find an apartment. Since Ajisai did not have a driver’s license, their priority was to find an apartment in a nice area that was located on the bus route. Her husband took his time and went “round and round in circles” all over town to find a good place for his family. “We lived in a hotel for a month and a half. We probably set a record for that.” Ajisai and her family arrived in Gainesville, Florida before the beginning of the fall

semester and the beginning of the big football season. Several times during their stay at the hotel, they were told that they would either have to check out and leave the hotel because the hotel was booked with college football fans or if there were any vacancies, they could stay and pay the premium football weekend prices for their room. “We were told on that day that we could not stay for the price that we were paying.” Having to pack up and check out of their hotel during home game weekends became such an annoying nuisance for Ajisai that she wanted to find an apartment as soon as possible. Since they were new to the town, Ajisai had no one whom she could consult for apartment advice so both Ajisai and her husband had to search all over town “literally step by step with our legs.” Ajisai would load up the van with their kids and the four of them would cruise around town looking at apartment complexes. It was only by chance that they happened to drive by an apartment complex that was under construction. When they had first arrived six weeks prior, the building constructions had just started and all Ajisai could see was the construction crew working on cement skeletons of the buildings. Now, there were six completed apartment buildings with a makeshift leasing office housed in a pre-fabricated structure in the parking lot. “We were able to move into a brand new apartment.” There were more apartment buildings still under construction and Ajisai would jokingly tell her relatives in Japan that the apartment has a wonderful changing view whenever they stepped outside of their door. They could either see a view of a new construction site or a completed new building. “We laugh at it now, but it turned out that a lot of people from Japan ended up living there. It was convenient, safe, and clean.”

Social Networks

When Ajisai first arrived, she did not know anyone in town and admits that she was lonely. Since she did not drive, she strongly believes that it was her lack of transportation that hindered her ability to meet others. “I would hear that so and so would have a gathering, but since I did

not have a way to get there, I was alone for a long time.” Being homebound with her two children and no car, Ajisai was beginning to feel isolated. Ajisai decided that this situation could not continue and decided to place her two boys into preschool. This was not an easy decision for Ajisai to make and even now she apologizes to her then youngest son for sending him to school when he was barely one year old. The problem was that the older brother refused to go to school unless his younger brother came with him. She originally was thinking of just sending her oldest son to preschool, but since he was insisting that he did not want to go to school alone, she reluctantly decided that she would have to send both of her sons to school. She rationalized her decision by convincing herself that it will be a good way for both of her sons to learn English, even if they forgot it later. “I was hoping that English would be something that would remain dormant in their minds so they could use it when they were older.” Her husband’s company paid for her oldest son’s tuition to attend preschool because he qualified as being of school age. Ajisai did not receive a stipend to pay for the younger son’s tuition because he was much younger and the company did not consider sending him to school as a necessity. When Ajisai paid for the younger brother’s portion of the tuition, she was surprised to find out that his tuition was more expensive than her oldest son because he was still in diapers. Although she feels guilty for sending her children to preschool at a young age, she is still glad that her children were able to go to school. “I knew that we would be in America for two years and I wanted to be able to say later that we did this, that we sent them to an American school.” With her boys being taken care of at preschool, Ajisai was able to attend Japanese gatherings during the day. She learned the city’s bus system and would either ride the bus or rely on others to give her a lift around town.

In the beginning it was hard for Ajisai to fit in with the local Japanese community. She first assumed that it was just the transient nature of a college town. With people constantly arriving and then returning to Japan, Ajisai felt that this transitory characteristic discouraged anyone from meeting people or forging and sustaining friendships. “Everyone is there for such a short time, so if you are not friendly with anybody, it is not a big deal since they will leave anyway.” She thought that it was only the Japanese community in her town of Gainesville that had antisocial tendencies until she met another Japanese woman who had lived in Texas before she came to Florida. According to this woman, the Japanese community purposely ostracized her when she lived in Houston. This woman described Houston as an unwelcoming city because she received the cold shoulder treatment from the Japanese community. When she moved to Gainesville, it was such a different atmosphere for her because everyone was very friendly to her. Because the Japanese community in Gainesville treated her nicely, she decided to treat the newcomers kindly in return. Ajisai admired this woman for her positive attitude towards her fellow Japanese even after she was mistreated in Houston. “There is no manual to teach you things like this.” Ajisai also felt that this woman’s kindheartedness towards the Japanese in Gainesville was unusual because she did not personally feel overly welcomed by the same Japanese community. Ajisai thinks that showing kindness should be the best way to treat other people, especially among the Japanese who are living overseas. “We are all away from home and are adjusting to a new culture and a new language.” She does not understand why anyone should be treated differently within the Japanese community.

Ajisai tried to understand why the Japanese community would snub certain Japanese in the United States, and after much observation, she formularized her own theory. Ajisai speculates that the Japanese women brought with them the vertical social stratification system from Japan

and they modified it before applying it to the Japanese community in America. Ajisai explains that the social hierarchy system of Japan is based on factors such as seniority (age), gender, education, occupation, or place of employment, however, since all of the Japanese wives do not work when they are in the United States, their social rankings are based on their husband's work and social status in Japan and the United States. Modification to the Japanese social hierarchy with additional tiers was necessary to further classify the social ranking of the husbands while they were in the United States.

According to Ajisai, the highest tier is reserved for the women who are married to the men who are affiliated with the embassy. The wives are regarded to be superior to any other Japanese living in the United States; therefore, they are viewed with the respect of the diplomatic status of their husband. Next are the women who are in United States because of husbands' work-related overseas assignments, such as car manufacturers' or electronic firms' company transfers. Within this business tier, it becomes even more complicated than the social hierarchy in Japan because other business factors need to be considered such as brand recognition of the business or the prestige of the husband's business in the global market. In addition, the universities where the men graduated from as well as the colleges or universities the wives graduated from are taken into consideration to boost the ranking of an individual. Ajisai was cautiously mindful that one must be careful about revealing their educational background because you cannot be from any school in Japan. The universities and the colleges need to be well known and highly ranked. National universities are always considered to be superior to private universities and if you happened to attend a private university, it needs to have a famous name. If an unrecognizable school is named, then the other Japanese will immediately comment that they have never heard of such a school, thus giving them a reason to keep their distance. If the explanation is that it is a

local regional school, then it makes matter worse and the other Japanese keep their distance even further. On the other hand, if a person happens to be from a rural area and the other Japanese know that she is from a wealthy family or she has a husband who is wealthy, then they may let her join the community, but if she is not, then she is looked down upon “just like they do in Japanese society.” The people on the bottom tier of this modified social hierarchy are those who are studying abroad as students, those who have married an American, or those who own a business that caters to the Japanese in the United States. If a person has permanent residency status in the United States, then the tier is divided again. Professional jobs, such as medical doctors, are respected but other jobs are ranked lower. “A doctor is okay but a sushi chef is not, but if you are a popular chef and you have your own restaurant, then it is different.” Ajisai initially felt categorized in the business tier due to her husband’s company, however, when it became known that her husband was currently a student, she was pushed down to the bottom of the social hierarchy. Once she was in the bottom tier, it became harder for her to join the various women’s groups within the Japanese community. She did not understand why the Japanese women would want to recreate a Japanese social system in America. What was its purpose? She felt that there is no place for a Japanese feudal tradition in modern America and if it were up to her she would change this.

Ajisai sadly admits that she never had an opportunity to speak or associate with Americans. She did not meet with other American parents from her sons’ school or have an American friend. “I was hopeless.” It was not that she did not want to meet Americans; she simply did not feel that her English was adequate enough to hold a conversation. “My stay was short so I did not have the words to speak with them.” As a stay-at-home mother; the only interactions she had with Americans were when she said good morning to the schoolteacher;

when the cashier at the store asked her if she wanted paper or plastic bags or if she needed cash back, or when the maintenance man came to make repairs.

For Ajisai, it was a language barrier that prevented her from meeting Americans, but she knew of others who purposely did not associate with Americans because of their ethnocentric attitudes. They saw no need to learn English because “Japanese is the most beautiful language to know” or to meet other people because “Japan is the only country with diligent people”. Ajisai viewed this as stubborn Japanese pride and was appalled how narrow-minded some Japanese could be. “There are honest people in other countries too!” Ajisai was perplexed why some of the Japanese in Gainesville would feel this way. She felt that these people were selfish and was embarrassed by their ethnocentric attitudes.

She missed her family back in Japan and she was hoping that members of her family would come visit them while they were in Florida. After all, they did buy a large mid-sized van to accommodate multiple people just for such an occasion. In the end nobody came from Japan to visit Ajisai and her family. No one. “I guess we must not have been very popular,” she jokes. Ajisai’s father wanted to come and visit but told her that he was scared to make the journey because he would need to make several plane changes in order to get to Florida. He was afraid that he would not be able to make the correct connecting flights. “He wanted to come, but I knew that he could not do it. Nobody came to visit us. It was the same for my husband’s mother as well.”

English Language

As soon as her boys were secure and settled at their preschool, Ajisai would ride the city bus in the morning and go to an English class held at the local church. She always had the bus guide with her at all times and would follow the bus route mapped out on the page with her finger as the bus rambled its way to the downtown area. A couple of days prior to the start of the

English classes, she asked her husband to help her practice riding the bus by having her husband drive from their apartment to the church following the exact same course the bus would use in order to familiarize herself with some of the landmarks she would need to look out for when she took the bus for the first time. Being housebound for so long, riding the bus by herself to English classes was a big adventure for Ajisai. After her initial trepidation of using public transportation in America, she became more confident and was able to go anywhere using the city bus.

The English classes at the local church were free and this gave Ajisai the impression that everyone in America is very kind and generous. “There were all these old ladies teaching at the church who were so kind. It was really nice.” Speaking in English, however, made Ajisai very nervous. It was easier and less stressful for her to speak to other international mothers in her English class than it was to talk to an American. “I would only speak to others like me. People from overseas.” She enjoyed meeting other international mothers and would especially talk with the Korean mothers during class breaks. When Ajisai left Japan, there was a big boom on Japanese television of Korean dramas and many of the Korean actors became popular celebrities in Japan. Ajisai is a big fan of Korean drama on Japanese television and she would talk with the Korean mothers to get the latest gossip about the popular Korean actors.

Family Life

Ajisai also met other Japanese women who attended the same English classes offered through the local church. These women would often meet after class to have lunch together. For these women, meeting after class was a social reason to get together and share a meal before the children came home from school or before they had to go home to prepare dinner. The Japanese mothers would casually say to anyone around them “let’s go eat lunch” and would head out to the parking lot. Initially Ajisai did not join the lunch group. Since she had to rely on the city bus

service, she felt that she would be a burden if one of them had to drive clear across town to take her home, especially if the driver had other errands to run after lunch. She was in a dilemma. “If you want to have close friends, then you have to make the time to do so or you will end up being the housewife just ferrying the children to and from school.” She had placed her sons in school so that she could participate; therefore, she decided that she was not going to let this opportunity slip by her anymore. Ajisai tackled her transportation problem by studying the layout of the town and memorizing the locations of various apartment complexes where the Japanese women lived. This way she did not have to feel uncomfortable to ask for rides because now she knew who did not have to go out of their way just to take her home. With the transportation problem resolved, Ajisai no longer had to exclude herself and was able to join the other ladies for lunch.

As more people joined their lunch group, it became logistically difficult to organize transportation for everyone, not to mention the chaos that ensued when the group was deciding where they would like to go for lunch. It came to a point where Ajisai and another Japanese mother took the leadership role of the group and decided to change the venue of their luncheons to their apartments. “We would announce that on a certain day at so and so’s house, people are invited to get together for lunch.” Ajisai liked this idea much better because it was not limited to only those who attended the English classes at the church. Anybody who wanted to come was welcome to join them. It was determined that lunch would not be elaborate because preparing a meal each time for such a large group would place a heavy responsibility on the two hostesses, therefore, it was agreed that everyone would bring something to eat with them when they came over, either their own lunch or a dish to share with everyone. In addition, Ajisai’s co-hostess of the luncheons was very talented at creating beautiful ornaments and jewelry with beads. This was a hobby of hers and when she offered to teach others her beading craft, everyone expressed

interest in learning from her. As a result, the luncheon evolved into a beading class plus lunch activity.

Meeting every week would be too much for everyone, so the women scheduled the beading group to meet every other week and notified people through e-mail with information on whose apartment was going to host the beading group for that particular week. Ajisai's luncheon and beading group idea was a big hit in the Japanese community. Her beading group became known to those who were new to the area as a place where they could learn a lot about living in America. "I thought it would be easier for people to come if our group had a name, so I jokingly called it the Beading Guild." There was another separate group of Japanese wives who practiced the traditional art of Japanese tea ceremony. The Tea Ceremony Artist group was already established with a licensed teacher when Ajisai arrived in Gainesville and had a similar format of practicing the art of tea ceremony followed by a lunch afterwards. When the tea ceremony teacher had to return to Japan, the group was looking for a replacement teacher. When they found out that a member of the Beading Guild had a license to teach the tea ceremony, they asked her if she would be willing to teach them. She agreed with one stipulation. She would like to continue with the Beading Guild so she asked the Tea Ceremony Artists if they would be willing to change their schedule so that the tea ceremony classes could be held on the alternating week of the beading classes. Both groups agreed, thereby creating a rotating schedule of tea ceremony classes and beading classes every other week. The new teacher for the Tea Ceremony Artists promoted the Beading Guild to the newcomers to her tea ceremony class while Ajisai and the beading teacher would encourage their members to also join the tea ceremony group. In a very short time, the two groups grew in membership and became a formidable force within the Japanese community. At one point, there would be so many wives, mothers and young children

congregated at one home that often times the hostess did not know over half of the people who came to her home that day. Ajisai amusingly observed, “It was her house, but it was as if she were the stranger.”

There were other interest groups throughout the Japanese community that were available. The oldest Japanese group that existed before the Tea Ceremony Artists was a tennis club, which played tennis at the tennis courts on campus. The tennis club consisted of mainly men with a few women who played the sport when they were high school or college students. The other sport club that was open to both men and women was the golf club; however, this was short lived because “everyone was not a good golfer.” The Tea Ceremony Artists, the Beading Guild, and the hula dancing class as well as the flower arrangement group that was established later on were only open to the Japanese women.

Ajisai felt that the Beading Guild was the only women’s group that could sustain its membership and grow. The Tea Ceremony Artists relied on licensed tea ceremony teachers from Japan. There are several different schools of tea ceremony, each with different procedures that need to be observed in order to perform the ceremony. Whenever a new teacher from a different school was selected, the group had to learn the steps in a different manner forcing “everyone to learn from the beginning again.” The lack of continuity caused some members to drop out of the group. “The senior members are all gone and the group is dwindling.” The Beading Guild, on the other hand, was loosely organized. It was not a group that relied on a certified licensed teacher. The art of beading is very popular in Japan and anyone who had created a piece of jewelry or a Christmas ornament would voluntarily share with the group how it was done. Everyone would sit around the table with their selected loose crystal beads and work on their individual project. As they were beading, the women would talk about the previous day’s

events, ask for help on a certain knot to tie the end of the beading line, and monitor their children as they deftly used their hands to create beautiful works of art. The Beading Guild became a popular and comfortable place where everyone could go and spend the day.

Returning to Japan

Ajisai was not expecting her husband's request for moving expenses to be approved from his company so she first divided her household and personal belongings into two groups: one group was to sell and the other group was to take back to Japan. Just in case they had to pay for shipping, Ajisai further divided the second group of items into things that she would like to take back and things that she really wanted to take back. Luckily, the company came through. The company treated her husband's return to Japan as an official transfer assignment and paid for all of their moving expenses. Ajisai was able to ship back everything she wanted from the United States. Everything.

When Ajisai returned to Japan, she returned to Osaka City. It is where they lived before their departure to Florida and it is also their hometown where their parents and siblings live. Returning to Osaka was the perfect homecoming for her. They had lived in a small apartment near both sets of grandparents but had terminated that lease before they left. Now that her boys were older, Ajisai wanted to move to a larger place and settled in a different part of Osaka. She did not mind being a little further away from her parents because "my husband's work was the same and we lived in the same city." Ajisai cannot imagine coming back from the United States to a different location. It would have been harder on her if they had moved to their current location in Tochigi straight from Florida. "It is not our hometown or where our parents are. At least Osaka was inserted between America and Tochigi."

Ajisai is getting used to moving around due to her husband's work. She left for America during her fourth year of marriage. They were in Florida for two years and came back to Osaka

and lived in Osaka for two more years. Then her husband's company transferred him to the Tochigi office a year ago. Now Ajisai is not sure of their future. Her husband thinks that he may be transferred again to the Ibaragi office because a larger factory was recently built there. "It has not been decided yet, so there is really nothing I can do now." She wants to prepare the children that they may have to move again. It would be unfortunate for her sons, because the children are happy at the school they attend now. They will have to learn to make new friends and she is worried that it may not be easy to do, as they get older. "When you go to school, it is your friends who are important to you. You are influenced by your friends' opinions as you grow up." She has a feeling in her heart that the next move may not be their last. With the non-stop moving, Ajisai worries that her children may not be able to have close childhood friends, and that the only constant friend for her boys will be her. "Basically, their mother becomes their number one friend."

When Ajisai left for Florida, her sons were three years old and 10 months old. When they returned to Japan, it was just after her oldest son's fifth birthday and her youngest son had just turned three. Ajisai is mindful that her oldest son can remember little things, but her younger son does not try to remember anything at all about America. "That is the difference between them. Why does he not remember?" Ajisai makes a mental note that she will have to tell her younger son about their overseas experience when he is an adult, just to remind him because as it stands, he has no memory of where they lived. He has no memory of speaking English.

The older brother spoke English at his kindergarten and remembers speaking English to his friends. Ajisai remembers being astonished that he could use words that she has never heard of before. She recalls a time at a bookstore where they met a friend of his from school. She was taken aback, "Wow, he can speak English!" She had no idea how much English her son

understood. She was impressed. She was also amazed when she attended the graduation ceremony for his preschool. Her son was up there with the rest of the class, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, “the pledge to America,” with the rest of his American classmates. It made her very proud that her son was able to do things just like the other Americans.

Now her oldest son seems to be forgetting his English. She understands how easy it is to forget and how difficult it is to retain his English if he only tries to speak English every once in a while, but this was not the case for her son. She sends her son to an English conversation class once a week. Ajisai believes that he seems to understand English, but has more difficulties speaking in English because he cannot think of the words to say. She enrolled her children into an English conversation class that charges a higher fee because a native speaker of English teaches it. “If the class is taught by a Japanese teacher, then it is a little cheaper.” At first Ajisai assumed that perhaps her oldest son was embarrassed to be talking in English. She realized that it would be difficult to maintain his English, especially if her son is too embarrassed to even try to answer in English in class. Now she thinks differently. She speculates that the other children are bullying anyone who can speak English. “If it is a class where everyone tries to speak English, then it is not a problem. But when it is boys, especially boys, they try to show off and act tough. They would relentlessly tease others in Japanese if they know the answer in English.” She is sure that her son wants to do what the teacher asks him to do but the other children are interfering with his learning process. “I wonder if it is better to try later, when he is older. I know that it is better for him to continue now, but I also feel that it is a waste of time for him now.”

Back in Japan

Ajisai has an obsession. Her obsession is kitchen appliances and gadgets. Ajisai waited with bated breath to hear from her husband’s company about their decision to approve the

moving expense back home. When the company generously approved, Ajisai was elated because that meant that she could return to Japan with a number of Kitchen Aid™ cooking appliances. Unfortunately, the kitchen in her current home does not have the counter space to display her entire appliance collection. “I have carefully put everything away.” She has stored her collection in the far back section of the bottom cabinets in the kitchen and takes them out to use about once or twice a year. Before she left Florida, others warned her that she should not bring back electric appliances from America because the voltage is different. So far, Ajisai has not had a problem with the electrical differences. She would take out her large freestanding mixer and would create Christmas and birthday cakes made from recipes she acquired in Florida for her family and they would tell her “how delicious it is.” Now that her boys are older, they do not seem to appreciate Ajisai’s baking efforts anymore. “My son has told me that a store bought cake was fine for him.” Ajisai is disappointed. All she can hope for is that when her sons are older, they may become nostalgic for their mother’s baking.

Ajisai still keeps in contact with friends she made in Gainesville. They try to get together at least once a year at Ume’s house near Kyoto so that they can “breathe in Gainesville air.” She cherishes the people she met in Florida and hopes that their friendships will continue to grow for a very long time. “When you have this type of opportunity that fate has given to you and you meet people who share the same experience of living overseas, of course you want to meet with them again and see them as much as possible.” She knows that she is fortunate because she enjoyed her stay in Florida. She knows of other Japanese wives at her apartment complex who wanted to return to Japan as fast as they could. Those wives did not have a good time and would always complain that they wanted to go home to Japan straight away. For Ajisai, it was not like

that at all. “I really enjoyed my stay over there. And even now I enjoy seeing the people I met over there. I am friends with them still.”

There are a lot of returnees who live in the Tochigi area, but Ajisai does not associate with them. Close by in her neighborhood, there are several returnee families in her neighborhood with one returnee family living about two houses down; another family living across the way; and a third family living one street over. Although they all live in close proximity, Ajisai is not particularly friendly with her returnee neighbors. She has heard of the other returnees celebrating an American style Halloween where the children dress up in costumes and go door to door trick-or-treating. Many aspects of Halloween have been imported to Japan and in October the stores would be stocked with many decorations and other merchandise for Halloween. The two customs that were excluded from the observance of this American holiday are dressing up in a costume and going door to door to receive candy. Halloween candy is available, but it is not available in bulk to share with the trick-or-treaters who come to your door. It is packaged in single portions as if you were going to give it to a special friend instead of an entire neighborhood of kids. Ajisai at first thought it was a great idea for the returnee families to get together to celebrate Halloween for their children. Ajisai loved celebrating Halloween and brought back a lot costumes with her, especially “when they were 75% off” at a post-Halloween sale. She has enough costumes to dress herself, her husband, and her children. She bought several of the same costumes in different sizes for her boys so that if one should become small, then it can be passed down to the younger brother. She is very proud of the fact she can dress all three boys in Spiderman costumes at the same time. Initially, she wanted to meet her returnee neighbors and join in with the Halloween party celebration so that her children could participate in the fun. As it turned out, she never did. She never felt comfortable enough to approach them.

She does not think that she is the type of person to go over to the other returnee families and say, “hey, let’s do this” on her own. If someone else were planning to do something for Halloween and she was invited to help, then she would love to be involved, but until then she will do her own celebration with her family. She did express that she does not like the way the other returnees are celebrating Halloween, therefore she feels justified for not allowing her children to participate with the other families. “As the children get older, the costumes are becoming uglier. The children would tell me that they were scared.” She has heard that the other returnee families have recently stopped doing Halloween, but Ajisai still celebrates Halloween with just her family. All of them would dress up on Halloween night and have a small party on their own.

Nowadays, when Ajisai shops at stores that sell imported foods, she is amazed that her children remember things that they use to like to eat when they were in Florida. “They would find things like snack foods that I never personally bought, but they had elsewhere, such as foods that they ate at snack time during school.” It made her realize that they had a strong association of Florida with these snacks and she would buy them whenever she could. The one store that the entire family enjoyed shopping at is Costco™, a large warehouse discount store from the United States. Ajisai describes the store as “a mini vacation abroad” because it is a store where she goes to recapture the feeling that she is overseas again. “It is not just for shopping. It is also for entertainment”. Now that Ajisai has three children, the prospect of going overseas becomes financially daunting. “If you travel alone, you can go for several hundred dollars, but if you want to travel with the family, then it will cost several thousands of dollars.” For her, Costco™ is an ideal location that is easily accessible to her family and once you enter the store, it effortlessly gives you a taste of being overseas. Costco™ carries Japanese and Korean products as well as American products and Ajisai would come home with their van loaded with items that

she needed along with items they bought on a whim. One of the items she purchases consistently at Costco™ is American laundry detergent. “I use it all the time. I also like the smell of Downy™ fabric softener.” For Ajisai, the scent of fresh laundry from these products brings back the good memories being in Florida. With the pleasing floral aroma enveloping and lingering on her laundry, every time they change clothes or every towel they use became daily reminders of their life in Florida.

Identity

Before Ajisai arrived in Florida, the people around her would often tell her the same thing about what to expect in America: things break easily, poor quality of the electrical appliances, or how Americans never respect time. “I heard this so often that I had the same viewpoint for a very long time.” Through her experience in Florida, Ajisai’s viewpoints of Americans have changed. She describes Americans as being disciplined where time was always respected. She surmises that the Japanese image of Americans comes from a misunderstanding of the culture. “Americans go to work on time. They would go in early and come home early, so it appears that they are not working seriously.” She thinks it is ironic for Japan to be able to criticize other countries, especially since the Japanese image is also changing. “It is often said that it is the Japanese who take their work seriously and others do not. But lately, I think that there are more Japanese who are undisciplined now.” She is becoming wary how some Japanese generalize other nationalities when it is Japanese society which is increasingly becoming disorganized and unstructured. “We cannot say disciplined people are of a certain nationality. There is no reason why we should group people that way.”

Another image Ajisai had was that foreigners would frankly say whatever is on their minds. They were lacking in polite manners because they did not have the refinement to be diplomatic around people. They did not care if it disrupts the harmony of the group. When she

went to Florida, however, she noticed that the Americans were very careful in what they say. “For example, if something does not taste good, I thought they would just fire off expression like ‘this is awful’ or ‘I do not like this,’ but instead they would say things like ‘it is a very unique taste’. Ajisai was impressed. The Americans express things differently, more in a complimenting manner. She used a Japanese analogy to further communicate her observation, “It is almost like the old saying of *ocha wo nigosu* (Literally: making hot water look like tea. An expression used to describe a situation where the issue superficially appears proper), but for them it is not an act, they are expressing genuine interest.” This observation was mind opening for Ajisai and it strongly influenced her integrity and self-efficacy. She learned that there are different ways to express oneself. “You can give positive comments. It does not always have to be malicious.” Of course Ajisai is aware that there are Americans who would only make negative comments, but “overall, I would say that everyone is careful in what they say.” This experience has also taught her to be patient and to think before speaking instead of “just blurting anything out”. Now when she meets a negative person, her assessment of that person is that it is just part of his or her personality and not because of the person’s nationality. “Other foreigners probably refer to this person in the same manner. You have to look at it as that particular person’s character.”

When pressed to further elaborate about her newfound self-affirmation, Ajisai uses her hand to wave it off as if she was shooing imaginary flies away from the food. For Ajisai, she does not think that she has changed. She is still a Japanese who happens to be a returnee. She sees more changes in her sons than she does in herself. “It is interesting to see how children, even when both parents are Japanese, become Americans.” But now that her family has returned and has had time to adjust, she is confident that things are back to normal, except for one area.

“Have I changed? Before this, I have always liked Western things, such as household items and American things. I guess after living over there my anglophile tendency has simply become stronger,” she shyly smiles.

Reflections

Before Ajisai and her family moved to Tochigi, her husband was with the planning and designing department of his company. When he was with that department, they would often say to each other that it would be great if he were to be transferred again by the company to the Chattanooga, Tennessee office. Her husband was vying for a different position within that department, a position that had an overseas assignment, but the company gave him a different job instead. “We knew that an overseas position was not going to happen.” Ajisai guesses that he will most likely be sent abroad only if the company needs to send an expert to an overseas office. Sadly, she accepts the reality that he probably will not have an extended overseas transfer anymore. “We would really like to go overseas again and we often talk about it.” But as the children become older, she feels that it is becoming more difficult because of their schooling. “I do not think I have the knowledge to help them with their education if they were in American schools.” If her children ask her later for permission to study abroad, then she would gladly give them permission only if they become responsible enough to do things for themselves. “They cannot just go and be a burden. They have to have a goal. They need to be responsible to be able to do things without being told.” Ajisai’s wish is that her boys would seriously consider studying abroad as their educational goal. She wants them to become English-speaking adults who can positively embrace their overseas experience. She is placing her hope the English seed that was planted in her two older boy’s hearts when they were in Florida will one day awaken from its latent state and grow.

For now she is satisfied that she has been able to make short visits overseas. Since their return, Ajisai has traveled to California with her husband when he attended a conference that was held in Los Angeles. It was the first time she had been on the West Coast and it struck her how different the topography was from Florida. “They had mountains!” The family also went on vacation to the island of Guam in the United States Territory of the Mariana Islands. She enjoyed traveling to Guam because it was only three hours away by plane and she was able to stock up on American goods, such as DVDs, toys, and other miscellaneous items. Two years ago, Ajisai also went back to Gainesville, Florida alone for a week’s visit. The trip was a gift from her husband. She stayed with some Japanese friends and visited the Japanese family who bought their American car. They took her out to dinner and it was surreal for her to be able to ride in their old burgundy red Astro™ van again. Since Ajisai was the first member of the Beading Guild, the group that she helped establish, to make a return visit, the current members from the Beading Guild all got together and decided to have a ladies only sleepover. New friends and old friends were able to welcome Ajisai back to Gainesville as they talked well into the night over some wine. They listened to her stories and asked questions about any difficulties she had in returning to Japan. Ajisai could not believe the irony of it at all. It had come full circle. She was the *sempai* mother now. Here she was the expert returnee, giving advice to others, the *sempai* mother every one turned to with their questions about living in America. “It was like a dream.”

Ayame

Introduction

Ayame (Iris) is a licensed pharmacist who is married to a medical doctor. A friend of mine who teaches private English lessons at a university hospital in Yamaguchi Prefecture, introduced me to some of his medical doctor students who had lived overseas. I met with the doctors in his

class, and Ayame's husband as well as Mokuren's husband promptly deferred me to their wives to participate for the interviews. Ayame and Mokuren agreed to participate in the interview and requested that I conduct the interview at the hospital on the same night their husbands met for their English lessons.

The hospital building was large with the exterior made from thousands and thousands of white ceramic tiles. The area is renowned for *hagi* ceramics, opaque glazed ceramic wares that are molded into simple and humble designs and the use of these ceramics can be found throughout the hospital. In the evening, all of the general sections of the hospital are closed by six o'clock, but the front entrance remains unlocked until nine. The only public parking area available was by the emergency room that was still open to receive patients. We walked around the hospital to get to the main entrance of the building. I entered the large glass entryway and was instructed to remove my shoes and placed them in the shoe lockers. My friend had brought his own indoor shoes so he sat on the bench to switch out his shoes. He is very tall, even by American standards, and complains that Japanese shoes could barely fit over his toes. Since I did not bring any indoor shoes, I had to wear the guest slippers that were provided by the hospital. The shoe lockers consisted of small numbered cubbyholes with keys dangling from the locks on each door. I randomly opened a locker and took out the green slippers, which were inside and marked with big Japanese characters prominently identifying them to be property of the hospital, replaced them with my shoes, and locked the door. Exchanging outside shoes with indoor slippers is a common custom in Japan. It is a custom that is observed in the private homes as well as large public areas such as schools and hospitals. My friend put his outdoor shoes in a bag and carried them with him, mumbling how he could not close the locker door and lock it because of the size of his American shoes.

The hallways were dark and lonely with light only coming from the exit signs planted above the doorway and sporadically on the side of the hallway walls. There was no one else in sight as we made our way to the pulmonary department on the third floor. The only sound that echoed in the desolate hallways were the sounds of my slippers flapping underneath my feet with every step I took. We reached a seminar room where my friend held his class and Ayame's husband escorted me to one of the examination rooms where his wife and Mokuren and Ayame were waiting. The examination room had a large window with a lattice of white bricks partially blocking the overlooking view of the physicians' parking lot. The walls were lined with x-ray illuminators, all of them still left on with one glowing with a forgotten chest x-ray. I set up my digital recording devices on one of the examination tables, which was protected by a paper sheet, and sat on a small black stool on wheels. With no other chair in sight, Ayame and Mokuren sat side by side on the second examination table, making crinkling paper sounds as they tried to get comfortable.

Pre-Departure

Ayame is a working mother who worked at a pharmacy near her home. She is thin and tall, taller than most Japanese women, and was often teased by the other children throughout her childhood by being called a giraffe for her height. She started the interview in English with the introduction of her name and by telling me in English, "I am a pharmacist" then quickly reverted to speaking Japanese. She is a mother of three children whose oldest was in his first year of high school (10th grade) with the youngest still in elementary school (6th grade). Her husband is a pulmonary specialist at the private university hospital in Yamaguchi prefecture and was assigned to conduct research at a university hospital in Denver, Colorado. Ayame and her husband are from Yamaguchi Prefecture and they met when they were both in college. They had worked together at the same hospital before they left for Colorado, but now she is with a private

pharmacy where the hours can be long. With both parents working long hours, the children stay with the grandparents after school and have dinner with them until one of their parents gets off work and comes to take them home.

Ayame's husband's overseas assignment was determined fairly quickly and Ayame had only two to three months to prepare for their departure. Since she was working full time, she was given the option of letting her husband travel to Colorado ahead of the family. This way she could have more time to get ready and her husband could get things settled in Denver before they arrived. The problem with this arrangement was that she did not want to fly separately, alone with the children. She wanted the family to stay together. "We all left together, all five of us." She was toying with the idea that she could take a leave of absence from her job, but found out that it would take months for the paperwork to be approved. If Ayame wanted to go to America together with her husband, she had no recourse but to quickly resign from her pharmaceutical position at the hospital pharmacy and leave for America.

To get some idea of where they should live in Denver, her husband received information from people at the university hospital who had prior overseas assignments. His university hospital had a long history of sending staff members overseas, and Ayame's husband was able to gather local information about the schools and accommodations available near the hospital in Denver. She did not want to rely solely on their information because she was not sure if the information could still be beneficial for them. "The previous, previous, previous people will tell us what is available and would introduce us to it." She did not know how old the information was or if it was still accurate, but information is information so she kept it under advisement.

Arrival

Ayame wished she had more information about the four seasons in Colorado before she left Japan. Although she was leaving in the spring, she packed more for the winter because her

image of Denver was that it was very cold, with a lot of tall mountains and a lot of snow. Someone even told her that it would get so cold that the lakes would freeze solid. She had envisioned dark bleak weather with bitter cold winds whipping the snow around, blocking the sun. Expecting to face the worst weather she had ever experienced, she concentrated on taking as many winter items as could fit in her suitcase. Complaining that winter clothes are bulkier and take up more space in the luggage, she managed to squeeze in the necessary items that would be able to keep her family warm. When they arrived it was not what she had envisioned at all. It was cool and clear and during the day it became balmy and comfortable. The weather was actually quite pleasant. She could see flowers blooming alongside the wide-open trails that were surrounded by snow-capped mountains. She was expecting a harsher climate, she was ready for the worst, but once she arrived she found the spring season to be comparable to Japan. She now regrets the way she packed their personal items. She could have packed differently; she could have brought other things that they could have used instead of just winter clothes.

Ayame was not aware of Denver's high elevation. She had heard that Denver was called the mile high city, but she was not familiar with the American measurement unit of distance and did not know how far or how high a mile was. It was not until she was told that it was still possible to go snow skiing late in spring, or even early June that she found out that Denver's elevation was almost half the elevation of Mt. Fuji. She described the high altitude by saying, "When it rains, the clouds are lower than you." She did not have any problems adjusting to the high altitude and she was the only person in her family that did not suffer from altitude sickness when they first arrived. She laughs with irony when she thinks of how her husband, the pulmonary specialist, was affected by the thinning air and told her that it was hard for him to breathe.

Social Networks

When asked to name five of her close social networks, Ayame drew a blank. “I can’t think of five people!” She was not familiar with any organized Japanese associations that other American cities have and did not know why they were even necessary. It took a while in the interview for Ayame to reveal that she did make some friends while she was in Colorado. She remembered that all the international parents became friends through the children’s ESL (English as a Second Language) class. If there were events planned for the children, all the parents would get together and participate, but they would not necessarily meet outside of the classroom. There was one exception, however, and Ayame became especially very close with a woman from Ukraine whom she met from her children’s ESL class. Ayame liked the fact that the children were close in age and could get along with each other: a feat that is oftentimes hard to do, even if all the children were Japanese. Ayame would visit her home many times and their children would go off and play together as the two mothers would talk over a cup of coffee. Neither of them spoke English very well and they did not understand each other, but that did not really matter. They were friends. Ayame often looked with wonder at the children. The children did not seem to have a language barrier and if they did, that did not stop them from having fun. “It was not a problem for the children, but sometimes it was a problem for us.” One time, her eldest son came home and told her that she was not really communicating well with the Ukrainian friend. Her son simply said, “Mama, she really does not understand you.” This surprised Ayame. She knew she struggled with her words, but she thought she was at least communicating with her Ukrainian friend. “I really thought that I was speaking English to her, but I guess not.” The lack of English skills most likely affected them both, but that did not deter their friendship. “We both probably did not understand each other very well, but we were still friends.” Through this relationship, Ayame was able to learn more about the Ukrainian culture. She was able to try

Ukrainian food, a type of cuisine not readily available in Japan, especially not where Ayame is from in the Yamaguchi area. Her Ukrainian friend would make homemade bread and would serve it with exotic cheese and fruit. She learned how to eat and appreciate fruit in a different way. In Japan, the skin of the fruit is not eaten. It is peeled and only the flesh of the fruit is served. For her Ukrainian friend, however, eating the whole fruit was common for her and she did not hesitate to serve it in this manner to Ayame. “She served sliced apples and they were not peeled!” Ayame enjoyed the company of her Ukrainian friend because it was a nice casual relationship. It was a different kind of friendship than the ones she had in Japan. Ayame did not feel that the Ukrainian friend was trying to impress her, something she often observed with her Japanese acquaintances. Ayame viewed this friendship to be truly genuine and mutual.

Children

When Ayame’s family first arrived in Denver, they looked at several places until they found a school they liked for their children. It was by chance that they found a school that had a teacher who used to live in Japan and could speak Japanese. Ayame was further elated when she found out that the teacher had lived in Yamaguchi Prefecture, the same prefecture where they were from. “We thought this was a good sign.” Ayame and her husband immediately decided to enroll the children in that particular school. When the other Japanese families found out about their school selection, they cautioned Ayame that the school had a large population of African American students. Ayame commented: “They would tell us that the school had a lot of black people there and told us that it would be better for our children to be at another school, but we felt we made the right decision.” She was pleased with the school choice she made for her two older children and was not swayed by what the other Japanese families told her about the school.

When they were submitting all the paperwork to register for the school, Ayame learned that in order for all three of her children to be enrolled in school, they would have to be

immunized again. Her husband's colleague at the hospital in Japan translated her children's shot records into English before they left and her children were all up to date on their vaccinations. When she presented the medical records to the school, however, it was rejected and she was told that her children would have to receive all the immunizations again: every single one of them. It took three months for her children to receive all the necessary vaccinations. It was a traumatic experience for the children because each time the child would cry and would ask Ayame why they had to receive the shots again. She was upset with the school because she could not believe that a school would torment her children in this manner. She was disenchanted with the school and started to regret that she selected this school in the first place.

Later during the school year, Ayame and her husband were invited to one of their children's schools to explain about Japanese foods. By now, the tears and pain of the vaccination fiasco had become a faded memory and she had a change of heart and was ready to accept the invitation. She decided that she was going to explain about one of the children's favorite food items and made rice balls (palm sized balls of rice salted and wrapped in seaweed) while her husband would explain about ramen noodles. When she first passed out a few of her samples, many of the children could not eat the seaweed. She was shocked to see the children put the rice balls in their mouths, gag, and spit it out. Ayame tried to pass the rice balls around the class after her talk but after seeing their classmates' initial reaction to the rice balls, the children were not really interested in the rice balls anymore. It did not occur to her that seaweed could be a problem for the children because she knew that sushi was popular in Denver. It was not until later did she become aware that eating sushi is more for adults. "It's an expensive dinner at a restaurant with a trendy bar with jazz music playing." After her talk on rice balls, the children were eager to listen to her husband's presentation on ramen noodles, but midway

through his talk, the children became bored and were no longer paying attention. Ayame felt that their effort to share Japanese culture with the children was a failure, but all was not lost. She was not discouraged about giving a talk at the school. Ayame enjoyed talking to the children, “it was fun”, and was hoping to have another opportunity to do it again.

Ayame’s youngest child was in preschool and because he did not speak English at all, he really could not communicate well with the other children in his class. Unlike his older siblings, he was not placed in an ESL class because he was not yet in kindergarten. Because of this, there were a lot of misunderstandings between her son and the other children and he would often get into fights at school. It did not matter who was wrong or who started the fight. The problem was that her son was not able to tell his teacher about it because he could not speak English. The other child involved in the fight, on the other hand, was able to talk to the teacher so no matter what had happened, her son was the one who would always get into trouble. He would come home from school frustrated and would tell Ayame about the fights. He would cry and was inconsolable because he felt that it was unfair that he was always blamed for starting the fights when it was not really his fault. All Ayame could do to soothe him was to tell him that his teacher was watching the whole class and that he should just do his best. Everything would work out. “That is all I could tell him to do.” She felt hopeless and did not know how to help him. She knew the fights were a result of her son not being able to speak English, and she knew that in time her son would also understand why this was happening to him. It would just take some time. As her son slowly began to learn to communicate in English, his days of fighting began to wane. Instead of coming home every day miserable and sad, he started to have fun at school.

English Language

Ayame’s older children were in the 2nd and 4th grades and were placed in the school’s ESL program. She would drive them to school in the morning and would often join her children in

class. The ESL program was held only during the morning session of class and the international parents were encouraged to join their children and participate in the class together. The school used a video teleconferencing method to reach the ESL student population through the use of a “TV teacher”. To teach the class, an ESL teacher would appear on the television that was mounted in the corner of the classroom. Communication with this teacher was accomplished through the use of a telephone that was on the classroom teacher’s desk. Ayame joined her children in learning the alphabet, vocabulary words of the day, and children’s songs. Ayame thought that this was a strange impersonal way to teach, but since she had to drive the children to school anyway, she continued to go to class with her children everyday. At the end of the school year, the class went to visit the TV station to see how the ESL TV teacher’s lessons were broadcast to their classroom. They also learned how the weather forecast was broadcast over the news and the children were amazed that the meteorologist stood in front of a blank blue screen. When the studio staff offered to give a demonstration for the children, Ayame volunteered to stand in front of the blue screen. When the children were instructed to look at the monitors, they were able to see her standing in front of a map of the United States. For Ayame, she would tell her friends and family that this was her one and only big debut on American television.

On September 11th, Ayame was in the morning ESL class with her children when the attack occurred. She saw the disastrous news with her children and wanted to go home and find her husband so that he could tell her what was going on, but Ayame and the children were not allowed to leave the school. The school went into an immediate lock down and all of them were instructed not to leave the building. All the information was in English and she did not understand what had taken place. She knew that people in tall buildings were warned, but she did not understand why they were warned in Denver. It was a tense time. She stayed with the

children until the school thought it was safe for everyone to go home. That night, Ayame received worried calls from Japan. She assured her callers that they were far from New York, but that did not stop them from constantly checking up on her. Ayame was concerned about her safety and how this incident could jeopardize their stay in Colorado. With an attack like September 11th, she was afraid that her husband would be ordered to return to Japan immediately.

The following year, there was a new mother from an Arab country who joined the morning televised English lessons. Ayame's perception was that the other parents were not friendly to the new mother because it was difficult for people to understand her. It was certainly difficult for Ayame to understand the Arabic speaker's English, but she also thought that this new mother was probably having a difficult time understanding her as well. For Ayame, understanding Americans was not really the problem, because for her, people in Colorado did not have a strong regional accent. She had difficulties speaking English and understanding the English of people from other countries.

In the beginning, American English was very fast for her. It would confuse her because she could not catch everything that the speaker was trying to express. Everything was a blur for her and she could not even pick out words that she knew. On one occasion, an American, who was well known among the Japanese community, told Ayame that it was a disservice if she spoke slowly to Ayame because it is a sign of being rude. The American said, "I consider you as a friend so I will speak to you normally." Ayame could not understand the American's logic. Whenever she had a conversation with this American, all Ayame could do was repeatedly apologize to her. Ayame apologized because she could not understand the topic of conversation

when the American talked normally to her. All she could say over and over again during their talk was “I’m sorry.” It was a difficult situation for Ayame and she was frustrated with herself.

Family Life

Being a pharmacist, Ayame was surprised that supermarkets could have an in-house pharmacy on site. She thought that it was an outstanding idea because it was convenient for mothers with sick children, especially for working mothers like herself. She also felt comforted how approachable and friendly the pharmacy staff was to her. “I had to go to the pharmacy several times to pick up medication and they would explain it to me in English that even I could understand.” She was amazed about the variety of medication available over the counter and was able to tap into her pharmaceutical training to read the labels. “You can get most any kind of medicine, medicine that you cannot get in Japan.” In the past, dispensing medication in Japan was under tight government control and the patients could only receive prescription medication directly from the prescribing doctor or at a hospital pharmacy. Now, it has become a little more convenient for the patient because prescriptions can be filled at any local pharmacy, thereby making the price of the medication more competitive. People have a choice to go to private pharmacies now for their medication, but the drug stores are still located in busy business areas, such as around the train station or the busy shopping district. Ayame wondered why pharmacies in Japan were not located in areas that would be convenient for their customers who are mostly mothers. “Japanese pharmacies are changing, but they are not in the supermarkets yet.”

Buying groceries, however, proved to be more challenging. In the beginning she was not sure what the cashiers were asking her. When they showed her paper bags or plastic bags, she pointed at the plastic bag and said, “*bi-ni-ru*” (foreign adopted word in Japanese for vinyl). They gave her a puzzling look but somehow understood that she was requesting the plastic bags. After several trips to the grocery store, she learned that they were asking for paper or plastic. “I

learned that it is called plastic. Who would have guessed that *bi-ni-ru* was for vinyl!” Another confusion she encountered during her first visit at the supermarket was in the parking lot. She was not sure what to do with her empty grocery cart once her groceries were loaded into her car. She looked around and noticed that others were leaving the cart next to their cars. This cannot be right? She did not think that it was socially correct to just abandon the cart outside. She was relieved when she saw a young man going around the parking lot collecting the carts. Not only was this convenient service provided by the supermarket, it was also provided at no extra charge. “Such service!”

Through time, she became more at ease with her shopping experiences, but there was one interchange at the grocery store that she was not looking forward to. She remarked that she was a bit nervous whenever she was ready to make her purchases at the registers. The cashiers would try to start a conversation with her and she was always at a loss how to reply back to them. Since Ayame went to the grocery store several times a week, she decided that she needed to have set phrases that she could use. She did not want to say the same thing each time so she would rehearse what she would say to the cashiers before she got to the checkout counter. “I always had to think beforehand what I would say that day.”

Ayame was fortunate to live only thirty minutes away from a Japanese store. The store was a market for Japanese products as well as a video rental shop and Ayame would go to this store at least twice a month to buy Japanese ingredients and to rent Japanese videos. She was surprised at the selection of videos and how fairly recent the programs were. She could even rent *Kohaku Utagassen*, an annual music competition show where the men, the white team, try to out sing or outperform the women’s red team. The show first aired in the 1950s and has long been a staple of the Japanese New Year’s Eve festivities and the current episode was available in less

than a week after New Year's for her family to watch. Ayame appreciated that she was able to keep up with her dramas through this small video rental shop, but sometimes she would also wonder about the source of the programming. She felt ashamed that for her to keep in touch with Japan, she was somehow contributing to video piracy. "I'm sure it is illegal, because they were just tapes someone had recorded off a TV." Nevertheless, her family would often rent from the store.

A reality that many Japanese face when they come to the United States is the strong reliance Americans have on their cars for transportation. With her husband doing research at the hospital all day, Ayame became the daily chauffeur for her family when they were in the United States. She thought it was easy to adapt from driving on the opposite side of the road--that was an easy hurdle. It was the driver's license test that loomed above her head that had her worried. When she went to get her driver's license, it was rumored that there was a Japanese version of the exam, but when she arrived at the motor vehicle office, this was not the case. "It is America after all, I really was not expecting it to be true." Ayame planned to take the exam together with her husband. She knew that they would have to stand apart from each other during the test, but Ayame thought she would be okay because she had her dictionary with her. Ayame and her husband strategized before the test reassuring each other that if by chance they received the same exam questions then they would use hand signals and help each other pass the test. In the end, she does not believe that they received the same copy of the exam, "When you look at the exam questions carefully, you realize the answer that is being signaled can't be right." Without relying on their hand signals both of them passed their driver's exams and became licensed drivers in the state of Colorado.

Cooking meals on an electric stove for her family was not too difficult to adapt to. In Japan, she cooked on a gas stove, so she just had to learn how to readjust the timing of her cooking. “When a gas stove is off it is off. Electric stove lingers. It has residual heat.” She did have to adapt to cooking at high altitude. She did not know that adjustments were needed to cook normally in high altitudes, but once she became familiar with these additional steps she had to take, it did not bother her. She did have difficulties, however, using the garbage disposal. Garbage disposals are not used in Japan and Ayame was not comfortable throwing away food scraps down the garbage disposal. “It was hard to get used to it. You won’t believe how many times I got it clogged.” Japan may not have garbage disposals, but when it came to waste management, Ayame thought that Japan was way ahead of the game. In Japan, she had to separate burnable garbage from the non-burnable garbage. In America, Ayame was flabbergasted that she could dispose everything either in the large dumpster or in the garbage disposal. “We were able to throw away a chair and a sofa in the dumpster. It is very convenient, but it makes you wonder what happens to the items later.”

Ayame’s first Thanksgiving was problematic for her. Several of the Japanese families decided to get together and celebrate the holiday. Since Ayame was the only one without a busy schedule, she decided that she would try to roast a turkey for the first time. She found a recipe on a piece of paper that she does not remember where she got it from, but it was in English. She knew that she could at least read how many minutes it would take to cook a turkey. She soon found out is that it takes a while to cook a turkey, hours not minutes, and because sometimes the heat does not easily go all the way through it could be a dangerous to eat. She carefully followed the directions from the recipe and her turkey came out well. “It was delicious,” she boasts. Ayame does not quite remember the other dishes that were served with her turkey. Someone

brought what she described as “cranberry juice, no maybe jam” that Ayame did not particularly like. She also remembers “something that was thrown together.” Tapping the top of her thigh, searching through her memory, it comes to her, “Mashed potato. I felt that it was choking me when I was eating it, but it was good.” She is most proud that she was able to provide the main dish for their Thanksgiving dinner, “We presented the turkey just like the movies, arm stretched, on a big plate with everyone clapping.”

People in Japan would send Ayame rice. She would tell them that there is *koshihikari* and *kokuhomai* (different short grain rice varieties from California) available in America, but to no avail--her family would send her cooking items that were readily available in the United States. “The California short grain rice was delicious and it was not a problem for us, but I guess they were worried.” The one item that she wished people would send to her was salad dressing. Her family enjoys having a daily salad with their meals and they kept buying different types of dressing each time they went to the supermarket. “Everyone I bought, we did not like.” It turned into a challenge for Ayame to find a dressing her family would like and she found herself constantly going to the supermarket to conquer this quest. She knows for sure that she does not like any of the dressings from Paul Newman’s™ line of salad dressing. “I often struck out with Paul Newman’s™ brand. I did not like any of the dressings from that brand.” She went down the aisle and one by one through trial and error; Ayame found a dressing that was tolerable for her family.

Returning to Japan

Ayame was only gone for a year so she did not notice much of a difference when she returned to Japan. She was too busy getting things resettled at home, her children’s school, and with her job. Before she knew it, time had passed and living overseas became just a memory. When they were in Colorado, she had to return to Japan briefly because her mother passed away

unexpectedly. She came straight home and went directly to the funeral from the airport. When she was in Japan for that short visit, she realized that she only had a couple more months in America. With the sorrow of her mother's death still lingering and the sadness that their life in America was ending soon, everything was a blur for her. Thinking back, Ayame said that she probably felt a lot of things at the time of her return, but she simply cannot think of anything now.

Back in Japan

Ayame divulges that she goes to Costco™, an American style warehouse store every couple of months for a shopping frenzy. She found out about Costco™ in Japan on the internet and the stores carry both American and Japanese products. She read about the membership requirement and found out that the annual membership dues she paid while she was in Colorado were still valid for the stores in Japan. She was excited when she looked through the list of the branch stores around Japan and discovered that the closest Costco™ was less than an hour away from her home. So one afternoon she took off on her own and drove to Costco™. When she arrived at the store and flashed her Colorado membership card, she was amazed. "I entered the store, it was the same store! Just like the one in America." When she returned home, she excitedly told her family. "I had to tell my family. It was so much fun." Now going to Costco™ is a family event. What she likes about Costco™ is that they sell the exact same items that she used while she was in America. "Even the shopping carts are American size." She likes to buy a large bottle of liquid laundry detergent and other cleaning supplies because in Japan, these products are in small containers so they do not last as long. Their big shopping day at Costco™ is very nostalgic for Ayame and her family. It reminds her of their time in Colorado and it also allows her to shop in Japan for American products without the linguistic hardships she had in the United States.

When Ayame first returned, she tried to be in contact with the people from their apartment in the United States, but now she does not correspond with them at all. She knows that her husband still corresponds with a few American friends by e-mail, but she thinks they are more like colleagues than friends. The only American contact they have in Japan is her husband's English conversation tutor. He has been in Japan for over 21 years and when he sees them, she observed that he would speak Japanese to their children, but will only speak English to the adults. "I want to talk to him, but I do not feel proficient enough in English to hold a conversation with him. I am always uncertain." When their American tutor calls the house, her child would remind her that he can speak Japanese, but when Ayame gets on the phone, all she can say is "hello". This is as far as she can carry an English conversation on the telephone because she becomes too nervous and cannot understand the rest of the conversation. She realizes that he speaks very slowly for her and she really appreciates it because it is easy for her to understand, however, she is frustrated that she cannot reply in English. Her husband, on the other hand, can speak to him in English with no problem. It is also only her husband who continues to study English after their return from Colorado. In the beginning, the American tutor was hired for English conversation lessons, but lately, the American also helps edit her husband's research papers and would spend a lot of time together outside of class. Sometimes the two men will go to a yakitori bar, a small casual restaurant that serves grilled meat on skewers and alcoholic beverages, just to have an opportunity to speak in English outside of their usual lessons. She watches them leave the house together, wishing that she could join them, but with three children to care for, she knows that will not happen anytime soon.

Reflections

Ayame was still mulling over the question about her return to Japan. She had to pause and think about her experience but she still drew a blank. "I have been sitting here thinking about

that, and I'm sure I felt a lot of different things back then, but I just can't remember. I can't think of any." She mentions wistfully that she does not see herself living in the United States for an extended period of time again. For Ayame, living in the United States was a once in a lifetime opportunity for her. Ayame appreciates the hardship she experienced in Denver because it made their stay worthwhile. She now knows that you really do not have to have perfect English to live in America. "It is not a worry that will prevent you from living your daily life." She now respects an old adage her mother told her before she left for Colorado that no matter what country you are in, if you were hungry enough, you would find a way to eat and survive. It will work out somehow. If she could return to America, she would definitely like to go back to Denver, Colorado, but with the children in junior high and senior high, she knows that this is only a dream. In addition, she is back at work at a different pharmacy, working her way up to seniority again, and feels that she probably cannot take a leave of absence for an extended period time just as she did before. Perhaps when the children are on their own and she is retired from her job, she might change her mind, but until then she is satisfied that living overseas was something she had done in her past rather than something she wants to do in the near future. Ayame hopes that her children share her dream of going back to live in America. She thinks that if it were financially feasible, it would be a great idea for all of her children to study abroad. She realizes that since the children were there for such a short time, that they probably would not remember their time over there. Her hope is that when her children are older, they will want to go over there again.

Kiku

Introduction

I traveled by train down to a small fishing village in Yamaguchi, a rural southern prefecture located at the tip of Honshu, the main island of Japan. Unlike the large metropolis

cities in Japan, where your senses are bombarded with throngs of people, congested traffic, and tall skyscrapers piercing the clouds, Yamaguchi is less evasive and more subdued from the stressful rhythm of big city life. Famous for its jagged cliffs and rocky shores, the coastline borders both the Seto Inland Sea and the Sea of Japan. Away from the capital city, the prefecture is very mountainous, covered with red pine trees, with villages nestled in the valleys surrounded by rice paddies. The small fishing village I was traveling to faces the Sea of Japan and at its height had a thriving whaling industry. The whaling ships at the piers have now been replaced with large commercial fishing boats with only a whaling museum as a reminder of its heyday.

An American friend of mine who has lived in Japan for the past 21 years introduced me to Kiku (chrysanthemum). My American friend teaches English at the local schools and also holds private English conversation classes in her home for children and their mothers. Her husband also teaches English at the high school every day and one night a week, he teaches doctors at a public university hospital located in a neighboring city. It was the children that brought these two women together. One day, my friend's daughter came home from playing at the nearby park, announcing that she met a girl who could speak English. My friend, who was trying to clarify the facts of this information from her young child, suggested that maybe the young girl was studying English at school and she wanted to practice talking in English with her, but her daughter quickly replied, "No mom, she really does speak English, real English."

Kiku is a thin petite woman with short hair and a mother of three children. Kiku and her husband are from very different parts of Japan. She is originally from Kyushu, the southern island of Japan known for its subtropical weather and numerous hot springs and her husband is from Hokkaido, the large northern island with its icy winters and unspoiled nature and wildlife. "A type of international marriage without having a real international marriage," she explains.

They currently live in Yamaguchi, where he is a vascular surgeon at a university hospital and she is a full time housewife. Kiku and her children take English lessons from my friend and my friend's husband tutors Kiku's husband at the hospital. It is a family affair all around. I met with Kiku when she stayed after one of her English lessons at my friend's house. Since this was our first meeting, Kiku asked if my friend could stay with us throughout the interview, in case another translator was needed. My friend quickly commented knowingly, "Doesn't she realize that you are speaking Japanese now? You can tell she doesn't know you well." To which I replied that if it would make Kiku feel more comfortable, then it was fine with me. Although she was given the Japanese questionnaire prior to my arrival, Kiku preferred to fill out the questionnaire as we talked just in case she could not understand the questions on the Japanese survey.

Pre-Departure

When Kiku found out that she was going to go to the United States, she was able to divide the people around her into two groups: they were either very happy for her or they were very worried about her. Those who were positive about her news would tell her how lucky she was to be able to go overseas or that they were jealous of her for having this opportunity. They also told her how wonderful it would be for her children because her children would be able to speak in English. The negative comments came from those who had never been overseas before, and they would speak ill of the United States based on the information they saw on television. She was cautioned about the violence in American culture and how too much freedom in a society would not be good for her children. The American images that are portrayed on television also prompted others to tell her of the differences in child rearing practices and how her children would learn to give her hardship and trouble.

Kiku's husband spent a short time of his childhood in the United States. He was very young at the time but he has distinctly fond memories of his time there and he always wanted to return to the United States again one day. Many years later, an opportunity came his way. Kiku's husband wanted to do post-doctoral research at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. He selected Yale because there was a medical program there that he wanted study and also because his professor in Japan, who had previously been at Yale, highly recommended the school. This was a dream come true for her husband and he was excited and looked forward to moving his family overseas.

Kiku first thought that she would have about six months to prepare her family for their departure, but in reality it was more like three to four months. "The day I heard that we were leaving, I started to pack." Kiku thought that the best thing for her to do to prepare for her departure was to talk to some people who had been in America before. There were several families at her husband's department or university who had been overseas before, so she would ask them for advice for things she should take with her. Kiku also turned to the only two people she personally knew who had had prior experience living abroad. One was a family who had lived in America for business purposes and had just returned to Japan several years ago. This family had children who were close to her children's ages, so Kiku was able to talk to them about the schools and what she could expect for her children. The other person she knew was her mother-in-law. Even though it had been several decades since her husband's family returned from their stay in the United States, her mother-in-law was still able to give her useful information about the necessary items they would need. Kiku found solace when she spoke to her mother-in-law. She knew that her mother-in-law had experienced what she was about to embark on and more importantly, she was also comforted to know that her husband's family

survived the ordeal and was able to return to Japan safely. Kiku kept the advice from these two sources in her mind and in her heart as she packed for their departure.

Arrival

When Kiku and her family first arrived in Connecticut, a Japanese colleague of her husband greeted and welcomed them to the United States. Her husband's colleague was from the same Japanese university and having been in Connecticut for a few years, he and his family were scheduled to return to Japan. In order to insure a smooth transition to America, Kiku's husband contacted this family before they left for Japan and negotiated to buy the basic necessities for transportation and living accommodations. Her daughter's welfare was her utmost priority and with everything that she needed to do for her daughter and the second child on the way, she was relieved to know that certain aspects of their new life, such as getting quickly settled, had been taken care of before she left Japan. "We just took his place at the new university, so the car, house, and everything were just passed down to us." She also felt lucky about the location of the neighborhood because it was by chance that they happened to move into a safe area in a quiet neighborhood with good schools. Knowing that reputation and the location of the school was a priority for Kiku, especially after the other Japanese mothers told her that because her daughter was very young, her daughter would be able to attend the neighborhood school instead the school across town that had an ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) program. Her daughter entered preschool when they arrived and during Kiku's stay in the United States, her daughter finished a full year of kindergarten and a couple of months in first grade.

Social Networks

Kiku had heard that other cities with a large Japanese community would also have an organized Japanese association, a supplementary Saturday school, or a Japanese church available

for the Japanese living there. For Kiku's area, however, this was not the case. In her town, there was only a small Japanese neighborhood network. This was not an organized association with membership dues, but a group of families who happened to live nearby and would get together for family outings or children's activities. It was also a casual assembly for the wives and mothers to meet while their husbands were away from the home working and the children were at school. Members in the neighborhood network were recruited through the children. "Our children would come home and tell us about a Japanese family who lives nearby." Kiku admits that she associated a lot with the other members of her neighborhood network, especially with the mothers who had children similar in age to hers. She liked the fact that the mothers all had similar concerns and that she was able to discuss her interests and problems with them in Japanese.

Kiku would also get together with international mothers from her English class at a local church. The international mothers would meet at a local park once a week for a children's playgroup. As the children would play on the swings and the jungle gym, the mothers would sit at a picnic table nearby and would be able to chat with each other. All the mothers would keep an eye on the children and they were quick to respond to a child's cry, whether it was to referee a playground dispute or to help ease a scraped knee. Kiku liked this community feeling she had with the international mothers. It was a casual, relaxed atmosphere and Kiku preferred this type of setting because it was very different from the classroom at the church. The church scheduled or sponsored many gatherings like this and Kiku tried to participate as much as she could because she enjoyed the company of the other international mothers and was always looking forward to getting together with them. "It was fun, busy, but fun."

Although she became friendly with the Japanese and international mothers, Kiku did not think that she had many opportunities to meet Americans. Her neighbors were friendly, but Kiku's immediate family did not really associate with them. Sometimes she would go over to her children's friend's house, but that was about it. If anyone had a relationship with an American, it would be her mother. Kiku did not keep in close contact with her in-laws as she did with her mother. "It is the notion that if you are healthy and well, then you will not be contacted." Kiku, however, kept in close touch with her mother through the telephone. Her mother did not use e-mail, so the quickest way to contact her mother was to call her long distance. Since her mother had never been to the United States before, Kiku invited her parents to come visit them. Kiku was concerned, however, about her parents traveling over to the United States without being able to speak English. She was struggling with her English ability and she knew that for her parents, it would be an even more arduous journey for them. She was not as concerned when her mother-in-law came for a visit. Since her mother-in-law had lived in America before, her mother-in-law was familiar with America and knew what to expect. Her mother had traveled to Southeast Asia before, but that was different for Kiku because there are many places in Asia where they understand Japanese. This was America, and Kiku was anxious for her parents. She sent them note cards in English so that her parents could just show the cards to the immigration officer or customs as well as the gate agent for their connecting flight. Her parents safely arrived, and they stayed with Kiku for an extended period of time. One day her mother commented to Kiku how blessed she was to have such friendly American neighbors. She described that it was not just one neighbor, but that a lot of the neighbors would come over and talk to her. Of course, Kiku's mother did not understand them at all, so since she could not communicate with them, she decided to be polite and just smile at them whenever they would

talk to her. Kiku's mother enjoyed her exchange with the neighbors and when she returned to Japan, she would often boast to other people how friendly Kiku's neighbors were. The following year, Kiku's mother came back for another extended stay. When she came back to visit the second time, she was pleased that the neighbors remembered her and would tell her that it was good to see her again. Kiku's mother was simply overjoyed by this gesture. She was very happy that the neighbors remembered her and talked to her again.

Children

Kiku wanted to make sure that her children maintained their Japanese culture. She did not necessarily think it was important for her as an adult to celebrate their culture, but she felt strongly that it was essential for her children to know about Japan. "I wanted to teach them about it, I wanted them to know about it. I thought it would be good to know as Japanese." Because her children were so young, they rarely watched videos from Japan. Instead, she liked observing the Japanese seasonal and holiday celebrations that are enjoyable for her children to participate in, such as the tradition of *osechi ryouri*, traditional Japanese food eaten on New Year's Day; displaying *hina* dolls (Emperor and Empress dolls) on March 3rd for girls' day festival; or decorating for the *tanabata* star festival on July 7th. The grandparents would send the necessary decorations or foods for the celebration so that her children could participate in the festivities of these celebrations in the same manner as their cousins in Japan. Kiku did her best to teach these traditions to her children and to incorporate them into the daily lives of her family.

One item that the grandparents could not send was fresh cut bamboo for the star festival. Kiku had a hard time finding bamboo in Connecticut and ended up buying potted bamboo at the local nursery. Depending on the regions, there are different variations of the *tanabata* legend, but according to most, the star festival is about a princess who fell in love with a commoner. This displeased the King greatly and he forbid them to be together and had them separated by the

Heavenly River (the Milky Way) in the sky. When the King saw how despondent the princess became, he felt compassion for his daughter and allowed the couple to meet once a year on the seventh of July. To commemorate the meeting of the star-crossed lovers, children would decorate a fresh cut bamboo branch with origami cranes, paper chains, and other paper artwork. They would write their *tanabata* wishes on a narrow slip of paper and tie them to the bamboo. The wishes are written in the hope that the starry couple would grant them their requests. The popular wishes from Japanese children are for good grades or for the ability to pass a certain entrance exam and of course, there are some who will wish for a new bicycle or the latest electronic gadget. After *tanabata*, the decorated bamboo is either burned so that the smoke can carry the wishes to the stars or set afloat on a river so that symbolically the wishes are carried to the starry couple on the River of the Milky Way. Since Kiku had a potted bamboo plant, the post festival ritual was not possible, especially not in Connecticut. Not knowing what else to do, she decided to leave the decorated bamboo tree out for the rest of the year. When other Japanese families would inquire why they have not properly disposed of the bamboo with the *tanabata* wishes back in July, Kiku would tell them it was an American way of doing things. “We called it our Japanese Christmas tree.”

English Language

Kiku attended free English classes offered by a church affiliated with the university. The classes were open for the international wives of the husbands who were studying at Yale and were held once a week and taught by volunteers. She particularly enjoyed the international setting of those classes and had an opportunity to meet people from other countries. In Japan, she would occasionally see foreigners, but they were strangers to her. Her English class was the first opportunity to actually get to know someone from a different country. In one of her classes, the students were assigned to introduce their home country to their fellow classmates. She liked

this assignment because it gave her a chance to learn more about the countries of her classmates. She felt it was the best education for her to learn about countries she had never studied before and to enhance her knowledge about the countries she knew. When it was her turn to represent Japan, she demonstrated to her classmates the art of flower arrangement or *ikebana*, a skill she acquired as part of her preparation for marriage. Before Kiku got married, she observed the social trend for the bride-to-be to be schooled in one of the Japanese traditional arts of flower arrangement or tea ceremony as well as cooking classes. *Ikebana* is not simply arranging the flowers into a pleasing display; it is based on a Buddhist philosophy of appreciating the simplicity and beauty of nature. Kiku described to her class the meaning of *ikebana* and explained the spiritual reasons for performing *ikebana*. She also explained that choosing seasonal flowers makes one feel closer to nature, and how the arrangement is designed in a triangular formation with the flowers, stems and leaves representing the earth, the sky and man. She also immensely enjoyed the international food assignment, where she could sample food from her international classmates. When she had to give a presentation on Japanese cuisine, she taught her classmates how to make *gyoza* (dumplings) and was pleased that everyone thought they were delicious.

Kiku had to stop going to her favorite international class when her second child was born because she found it difficult to complete her English assignments while tending to the needs of a newborn. She redirected her energy and devoted her free time to her daughter by becoming a parent volunteer at her daughter's kindergarten class. Through this connection she was told about an ESL (English as a Second Language) class offered through the local high school and was able to attend the night class when the baby was a little older.

Family Life

Cooking in America was sometimes a challenge, but Kiku thought it was manageable. Meals were a little difficult at first. Her priority was the health of her family and she wanted her family to eat healthy Japanese food, but sometimes they could not eat what she wanted to serve her family. She learned to make dishes using different vegetables and ingredients available in the United States. They were often times not the best substitutes, but were reasonable in taste. Kiku had to go to New York City in order to go to a Japanese market. There were Chinese markets in her town, which stocked a few Japanese food items; however for most items her family would make a day trip to New York City. For the items that she could not find in New York, she would ask her mother to send them to her from Japan.

There was a time when she was craving to eat curry bread, a yeast roll filled with meat and vegetables cooked in a curry sauce. She does not know why but she was really craving for it and was searching high and low to find it but it was not sold in America. She finally realized that if she wanted to eat it then she had but no choice but to make it herself. “I could not go buy them, so I learned how to make curry bread. As a result, my cooking did improve.”

Kiku remarked that American foods have strong flavors for her taste. She liked cooking that uses a variety of seasonings, such as pasta, or a spicy taste that is very different from Japanese cuisine. She considered herself to be adventurous in her eating style; however, her first taste of an American cake surprised her with its abundant use of sugar. “When you eat cake it is very, very sweet!” Compared with Japanese baking goods that are just lightly sweetened, the American counterparts were inedible for her. The sweetness initially shocked her and she was a little taken aback that that it did not agree with her palate. Even the same products that she could eat in Japan were unpalatable for her. As time wore on, however, the more she tried to eat American sweets, the initial shock slowly wore off. “The more you eat, the more you get used to

it.” Towards the end of their stay, she grew so accustomed to the sweetness of American baking goods that they became edible for her. “We were even able to say that the American Dunkin Donuts™ are tasty.”

One of the first things Kiku knew she had to do when she arrived was to learn how to drive in the United States. She had heard from others that a Japanese test was not available; therefore, she would have to take the paper test in English. This did not intimidate her at all because she was very determined to get an American driver’s license. She found out that she was able to use a Japanese-English dictionary during the test and with her dictionary in her hand she marched into the New Haven Department of Motor Vehicles. Although she was a seasoned driver in Japan, she was still unsure of herself and was nervous about all of this. What would happen if she could not understand the multiple questions on the paper test? She was thrilled when she was told that she passed and was issued a license. She was very proud of herself for taking the Connecticut driver’s license test in English and to be able to understand what was asked of her during the road test. Although she had to relearn how to drive on the right, she felt that driving was an easy adjustment for her. Unlike the narrow roads of Japan, she liked the broad American streets and the fact that she only had to pay attention to the other cars on the road. “There are no pedestrians on the road!” She also declared, “If you ask me what was the easiest thing to do in my American life, then I would say it would be driving a car.”

Kiku and her family had opportunities to travel to other parts of the United States. They flew to Miami and drove down to Key West. She liked Key West because the palm trees reminded her of her hometown in Kyushu. Their trip to Anaheim, California afforded them the opportunity to see a different landscape from the East Coast. They flew out to California with its mountains and coastline on the Pacific Ocean and marveled how it made them feel closer to

Japan. The big road trip Kiku took was to Ottawa, Canada. They had to change their visa status and decided to drive to Ottawa via Niagara Falls. Unlike today where visa applicants are required to return to their home country to change the status of a visa, at that time, applicants just needed to exit the United States and re-enter under the new visa. For many, Canada and Mexico were common destinations to accomplish this and living in Connecticut, Kiku thought it was a good idea to see the scenic sites of New England and make their way to Canada. Kiku and her husband loaded up the two young children into the backseat of the car and drove for ten hours to reach Ottawa. It was the very first time either of them had driven for such a long duration. “We let the children sleep as much as they wanted in the car” and with an English map, they drove to Canada without any problems.

Things were settling down nicely for Kiku. She was into her daily routine with her children and the relationships she had formed with her Japanese and international friends. Her only disenchantment was when she observed that compared to Japan, New Year’s in the United States is a minor holiday. “When I experienced my first New Year’s there, I felt disappointed when I found out how quiet it is. No celebration really.” Other than that, everything else was fun and entertaining for Kiku and her children. “It was fun! Halloween was fun. Easter was also fun. The children especially enjoyed the Easter egg hunts. There are a lot of American childhood traditions we participated in.”

She was busy with her second child and her confidence in her ability to live in a foreign country grew until the tragic day on September 11, 2001. Due to the proximity of New Haven to New York City, on the morning of the attack multiple people from Japan called her to make sure she was all right. She had the internet and she would scour the Japanese news sites for any information about that attack and was relieved to know that the Japanese media had more

information about what had happened than what was being released in the United States and that she could be informed during uncertain times. Kiku's family in Japan knew that she did not get an American newspaper or a Japanese newspaper and that she could not watch Japanese television to get any information about the attack. As soon as new information was released, her family would call her and say, "Let me read the newspaper to you." Being able to talk to her family was reassuring for her. Living in New Haven, the attack in New York was too close for her and she feared for her family. She relied on her family in Japan to keep her informed of the events that transpired just south of their town. As the days went by, she would hear stories of people from her area who were in New York at the time of the attack. Her daughter's elementary school teacher's son worked at the World Trade Center and her daughter's friend's mother worked three blocks away from ground zero. She would hear from their families that they had no contact with them; that they were missing. Knowing someone who has a family member still missing made September 11th became a harsh reality for her. It was not just a terrible event that she saw on television, but also a devastation that affected the people around her and this made her scared.

As the months passed by, Kiku did not feel less secure for her wellbeing, but noticed that the surroundings became scarier and less safe. For her, the people's attitude changed. She did not have any direct information about this because she had a void of any information from the United States concerning the attack so she had to rely on what other Japanese people had told her. She did not realize that things were changing, but she is sure that the Americans who had access to a lot of the information probably noticed a change: a change that she would not exactly describe. She heard rumors of retaliation and was told that a war would start at any time. She felt as if the United States would be attacked again and she was in shock. She wanted to return

to Japan, but decided to stay. Her husband needed to finish his work at Yale and she wanted her family to be together.

Returning to Japan

Although Kiku's husband stayed in Connecticut for three years, Kiku returned to Japan after two years. She had two reasons for her early return. One was that her daughter was starting first grade and she wanted to enroll her into a Japanese elementary school. The second reason was that she was about to have her third child and she thought it would be better for the child to be born in Japan. It was not that she distrusted the American hospitals. Her second child was born in Connecticut and she was familiar with what to expect. It was just that she knew if she returned to Japan, then her family could help her with the newborn as well as the two older children. She returned to her hometown of Saga in Kyushu with her two children to be with her family. After the baby was born, she stayed with her parents for about a half a year until her husband returned.

Kiku was happy to return to Japan. She was happy because she knew that her life would be more financially stable now because her husband was assigned to perform surgery at a hospital in Yamaguchi. When they left for Connecticut, her husband was working towards a post-graduate degree. He had already received his medical degree and was now pursuing post-graduate training in surgery. For Kiku, this meant that they were classified as students and not respectable working members of society. When they were in Connecticut, Kiku and her family returned to Japan for a short stay during the month of February in order to attend her husband's graduation ceremony. When she returned to Japan that time, it was not a particularly a joyful homecoming for her because she was still uneasy about their future. Although her husband had finished his studies and was no longer a student, his job perspectives were still unknown, leaving Kiku in a state of uncertainty. This time, however, she felt that they could settle down and have

security; “unlike our student life.” Having job security was even more important for Kiku at this juncture because now that they had three children to support and she felt that at their age they needed to be respectable working members of society. At the same time, though, she views their student life with nostalgia, “I wanted the enjoyment of student life to continue. My feelings are half and half.”

Back in Japan

Kiku brought back with her recipes that she learned during their stay overseas. Among her friends, she is known for her minestrone soup and pizza, both recipes she created when she was in America. Kiku did not bring back a Christmas tree but brought back her collection of Christmas decorations instead. She was amused that the Christmas decorations were really large for her Japanese-sized Christmas tree.

Kiku could not believe that she forgot her home address when she returned to Japan. “I completely forgot it.” Not being able to quickly recall or retrieve information from her memory was becoming a common occurrence for her. She comments that it was often very confusing for her in Connecticut because she could not speak the language and not knowing words or information about certain things had become the norm. Now, she does not understand why it is still confusing for her when she is in Japan where she understands the language. “It was confusing for me in both places.” Just as she tried to incorporate Japanese culture while they were in Connecticut, Kiku also tries to incorporate American customs with her family. “I like the American custom of hugging when you greet each other. I think hugging is really nice. Japanese mothers will hug their children when they are small, but then they stop. I have seen neighbors hug, friends hug and people hugging other children.” Kiku plans to hug her children as long as they will allow her to continue.

She saw some struggles with her children when they returned. Life was easy in small town America. Connecticut was nice and slow, unlike the hustle and bustle of Japan. “They had to learn to live at a different pace from when they were in America.” It was also difficult for her children to adapt to Japanese schools because they had attended school in Connecticut. When Kiku returned with her children, her daughter had never been to a Japanese school before. According to her daughter’s teacher, Kiku was briefly told that her daughter was more independent when compared to the other children, a stronger personality. Kiku attributed the differences to their American experience. “She is probably more Americanized because she always spoke her mind, so the others thought of her as being brash.” This affirms Kiku’s belief that when it comes to children’s education, it is best that they are educated in Japan, especially from first grade. She saw her daughter struggle with her Japanese. Her daughter was not used to speaking Japanese in an academic setting and was often taunted because her verbs and nouns were in English. This phenomenon did not last very long, however, because “before we knew it, everything was in beautiful Japanese.”

Kiku’s family mainly speaks Japanese all the time. She thought it was strange when she heard stories of Japanese children returning to Japan without being able to speak the language at all. How could this happen if they have Japanese parents? She knew that her daughter’s Japanese was not perfect, but at least her daughter understood Japanese. Kiku says that her daughter has now forgotten her English but has managed, unlike the adults, to retain good pronunciation. “Adults cannot do it. It is difficult for them.” She laughingly admits that the only time her family speaks English is when they are having their English lessons for one hour once a week. “I guess you can say that my English is not progressing much.”

Identity

Kiku finds it difficult to answer the question about her identity. She thinks there was not a major transformative change about her, but if she has changed then it was in small increments. She does not think that others around her can see any change, “but I feel different inside.” When she compares herself before she left Japan and after she came back, especially in the way she looks at things, she can tell that there is something a little different. The fact that she was able to go live overseas changed her view of herself. She cannot believe that she was able to live in a different country, in a country where she did not speak the language, yet she was able to function on her own. Overall she still views herself first and foremost as Japanese and not as a returnee.

Reflections

If Kiku has a chance to go overseas again, she wants to go back to Connecticut because of the wonderful experience she had over there. The winters were cold but around May, everything turns into a beautiful green and nature comes back to life. “The summers were clear and refreshing, unlike Japanese summers, it was not humid, just clear blue sky. Just beautiful!” They have traveled to Hawaii and New York, but much to her dismay did not have a chance to go back to Connecticut. “Close, so close.” If she had to select a different location to live other than Connecticut, she would prefer to go somewhere on the Eastern Seaboard. Her husband would like to go back to the United States after he retires. Her husband’s wish to return to America again is the same as hers, but that is where it ends: He would like to go out west somewhere. If they do have a chance to go live there again, Kiku predicts that they will most likely be scattered from the West Coast to the East Coast but “next time I go, I will prepare differently. I would study English more.” She now knows what to expect and thinks that her next time in American will be different. “I won’t have that strange worrying feeling that I had about everything when I first went over.” America was more than what she expected it to be,

especially since she hear a lot of negative opinions before her departure. She confessed that she had images from Seven (also known as Se7en), a Brad Pitt movie about a detective searching for a serial killer but was extremely satisfied that it turned out to it be very “different from the movies” once she was over there. Kiku is opened to the idea of allowing her children go to the United States to study, well at least when they are in college. She predicts that her eldest daughter would be the one who most likely would want to go back to America. “If that is her wish, I would support her.” Since Kiku’s daughter was very young when they were in Connecticut, she would like her daughter to have an overseas experience that she will be able to remember. Also if her daughter lives overseas again then “we will all be able to speak English and then we would be an international family.”

Kiku has a secret dream. Her dream is to drive across the United States and her plans are to leave for America as soon as she turns sixty. She realizes that driving long distance at that age will not be easy like when she lived in Connecticut, but she is looking forward to traveling with just her husband, just the two of them, because by then her children would be adults and on their own. She is envious of people who can speak English because they can travel anywhere in the world with ease and knows that in order to fulfill this dream of hers she will have to study English harder. She continues with her English conversation lessons to reach her objective, though she wished she had more time to devote herself than once or twice a week. At this rate, Kiku believes that it will be a while for her to be able to comfortably speak English. It is a long-term goal for her and she plans to proceed until she is able to accomplish her goal: “I want to be fluent at the age of 60.”

Mokuren

Introduction

Mokuren (Japanese magnolia) is a part-time pharmacist whose husband works for Ayame's husband in the pulmonary department at a university hospital in Yamaguchi prefecture. She has two children close to Ayame's children's ages and works at her parent's pharmacy near the hospital where her father is the head pharmacist. Because it is a family owned business, she is able to have a flexible working schedule that best suits the needs of her family and that of the parent's store. Both women agreed to participate in the interview as long as they could do it together and were silently waiting for my arrival when I entered the room. Since they knew each other only through their husband's work, they were just passing acquaintances and were not familiar with each other's story.

A first, Mokuren was very quiet, allowing Ayame, who was several years older, to take the lead. When I asked if Mokuren was there during the September 11th attack on the World Trade Center, she meekly replied, "Yes, I was there." and did not care to elaborate on it at all. In the beginning, she answered my questions in a soft voice, looking down with halting and terse answers. Her demeanor was tense as if she were holding on to her overseas experience as if she were playing high stakes poker, guarding her winning hand. As the interview progressed, however, Mokuren began to feel at ease; especially when she found out that Ayame had similar experiences and hardships during her stay in America. Once Mokuren was able to stand on the common ground that they shared, she was able to open up and reveal her story. The atmosphere of the interview flipped from a tense, stoic meeting of strangers to an overdue reunion of fast friends catching up on each other's lives over tea. There were times when they would forget that I was the one who was conducting the interview and would start to compare their overseas experiences with each other and would ask each other the follow-up questions to my original

questions. The two women became quite animated and lively as they listened to each other's adventures with understanding laughter, knowing affirmations, and keen interests.

Pre-Departure

Mokuren was under the impression that everyone studies and gathers as much information as possible about the United States before departing from Japan. She assumed that other people in a similar situation were doing this type of pre-departure research and she felt uneducated and unprepared for her overseas journey because she did not have enough time to do any of it. "I should have talked to people who had been to America before, but there really was not a whole lot of time." Her husband's overseas assignment was commissioned at a time when he was very busy with his pulmonary research in Japan. He only had time to handle the paperwork necessary for his work position at a university hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio, and left everything else up to Mokuren. "All he did was buy the airline tickets and apply for the visas. That's all."

The logistic details of moving a household to the United States for an extended period of time fell to Mokuren. Her first step was to find a moving company that would transport their personal items overseas. She contacted several companies and found out that not all moving companies in Japan offered an overseas service. This limited her choices to find a competitive moving company. "I decided on a company only because they could do it. I did not even know how much it would cost." All in all, Mokuren had about six months to prepare for their "big move." She was familiar with the standard protocol of Japanese families who go overseas for business purposes. For them, the father would be sent to the United States first with the responsibility of finding a place to stay, buying a car, and getting insurance. The family would join him only after everything was ready and in place. This would not be the case for Mokuren. Her husband is a medical doctor who specializes in pulmonary diseases and he was going to America as a visiting researcher at a university hospital. They were not going to America for

business purposes; therefore they could not follow the usually accepted business protocol. Their objective was to go overseas for her husband to study, so for Mokuren they were going to go as a family, “all four of us together.”

Arrival

When Mokuren and her family first arrived in Cincinnati, Ohio in late August, the first thing on their agenda was to enroll the children into the schools. They did not have the luxury to shop and compare a variety of schools because in Ohio schools started in September. “We were told to arrive early because school would start soon.” It was only after they found the school of their choice that they could go apartment hunting so that they could live near that particular school.

They did not know anybody in Cincinnati and did not have reliable information about the area. Initially their main source of information was from a Chinese researcher who was in the same university hospital program as Mokuren’s husband. The Chinese researcher knew in which apartments the Japanese usually congregate and would give them advice on which areas were safe or not. He told them where his children went to school, a different school than the one they decided on, and recommended that they should do the same. With little information about the Cincinnati area, Mokuren and her husband started their apartment search.

Mokuren first went to see the apartment complex that was known to house a large group of Japanese. She did not immediately sign a lease to live there because she was not sure if she wanted to live in a “Little Tokyo”, furthermore she wanted to exhaust all possibilities before she made a decision. They were still living at a hotel when school started on September 5th. After taking the children to school, Mokuren and her husband would continue searching during the day for the next two weeks to look for a place to live. After going around to several more apartment complexes, asking each other what they thought of each place, disagreeing about the price of the

rent, they decided that the first apartment, the one with a large Japanese community, was the one after all. “It looked good and it was a price we both could agree on.”

After Mokuren moved in, a Japanese woman who lived near their apartment unit took her shopping to the local supermarket. This Japanese woman was in America on an international exchange program and she had been living in the States for some time. As they walked through the supermarket, going aisle by aisle, she would teach Mokuren which items most Japanese would buy or which items probably agreed with the Japanese palate. Mokuren learned useful information and thought that the other woman was very kind to take time out and show her around. Not only did this Japanese woman give Mokuren a tour of the store, she would graciously point out on which shelf Mokuren could find her recommended items and tell her which brand to buy. Mokuren was thankful for the Japanese woman’s guidance in food shopping and went home to tell her family the generosity of their Japanese neighbors. Mokuren found that every Japanese there would do things like that for any newcomers. “They will take you around town to different supermarkets and also show you where you can buy Japanese food. That type of information is always given to newcomers.” Mokuren appreciated this gesture so much that later on when a new family came to their apartment complex, she returned the favor.

The experience that rattled Mokuren the most when she first arrived was when she was told that her children would have to get several different vaccinations for school. She took her children to the university hospital to receive their shots and was very upset about the entire episode. First, she was appalled at the selected injection site, “The immunization location was in the upper thigh!” Her children were scheduled to receive four different vaccinations that day and instead of receiving two injections in each arm, her child was jabbed in the upper thigh four times. “Of course after four separate injections in the same area the leg became swollen.”

Secondly, she did not understand why the immunizations her children received in Japan were not recognized in the United States. The only explanation Mokuren received was that it was because of their Japanese insurance policy or coverage, “it needs to be for school so that insurance would cover it later.” Finally, she was shocked at the medical fee that was charged. Because she took her children to the hospital to receive their injections, this turned out to be a very expensive cost for her. “For one visit, the four immunization vaccines for two children cost about \$700 to \$800.” She was hoping that insurance would cover the cost up front, but her husband told her that they would receive a reimbursement after he filed the paperwork. After just spending a lot of money to get settled into an apartment, money was tight for them at that time and all Mokuren could do was to tell her husband to file the claim as quickly as possible. “\$800 hurts. The children were hurt. It was a difficult situation all around.”

When asked why she took her children to the university hospital instead of going to a public health clinic, she explained that it was her husband’s decision. She received a list of clinics from the school with schedules when immunization vaccines were available for \$5.00. Since her husband is a medical doctor, he questioned Mokuren about having their children immunized at a public health clinic. “He said that they could catch some strange disease. He was very adamant about things like that.” Her husband insisted that Mokuren take the children to a proper hospital. When her husband heard what had happened to the children at the hospital and was told about the cost of having the injections given at a hospital, he had to rethink his position. Mokuren took her children to the public health clinic for their additional vaccines. “It was \$5.00 a visit, no matter how many immunizations you needed.” And more importantly, “the sterile condition of the clinic was the same as the hospital!”

Social Networks

This was Mokuren's first trip to the United States and she did not know what to expect. She had some ideas about Americans. She describes Americans as being big, gregarious people who do not pay attention to detail. Her general assumption was that overall Americans are just friendly people. When she arrived in Ohio, however, the friendly image she had of the Americans was completely different. Ohio was a cold region for Mokuren. The winters were bitterly cold where winter storms can dump several meters of snow on the ground in a short amount of time. This was very different from the climate of her hometown in Yamaguchi prefecture. Yamaguchi region is surrounded by water on three sides so the warm currents of the seas keep the winters fairly mild when compared to the rest of Japan. Mokuren was not used to cold snowy winters and she compared the people in Ohio to be just as frosty as their harsh winters. "Maybe the people in the north are different, but some of the people were really not friendly." The children were just as cold and not open and friendly. She called the children introverts and held their parents responsible, "when you meet their parents, they are unfriendly as well." When her family had an opportunity to travel to Florida, she noticed that the people in the south were more laid back and were not preoccupied with details or about small things. Mokuren does not want to use the term "unorganized", but perceived the people in the south as not having a set schedule that they needed to keep. "I guess you can say that they are loose with time." She decided that this was all due to the influence of the climate of the regions and declared, "People who lived in the hotter regions are different from the people up north." She realized that she was making broad generalizations and she knew that everyone individually has his or her own personalities, however, she cannot get over the irony that the people whom she thought had a friendlier culture was actually the mirror opposite. "Even among the Japanese, there are some who are much friendlier than the Americans."

Mokuren mainly associated with the Japanese mothers at her children's American school as well as the mothers of the children who attended the Japanese school on Saturdays. Mokuren felt that she had more in common with the other Japanese mothers. A lot of them lived at the same apartment complex and she was able to spend her days doing various activities with them. The Americans she was able to meet were through her children when they were invited to go over and play at their classmates' houses. Mokuren noticed that the Americans were a lot more informal in their approach to friendships. When she would visit an American home, she would be asked to make herself comfortable in a casual manner. The Americans did not prepare anything special to serve or eat; they would just serve her things that were already available on hand. It was different when she visited a Japanese home. "When the Japanese entertain someone, they really work hard to impress the guest. In America, you really don't have to work hard at impressing someone." This was also true for the children, especially when her children would go over to spend the night at a friend's house. Her children would be asked to come over after they had their dinner at home. Mokuren did not have to worry about sending an appreciation gift to the other mother. The children, often already dressed in their pajamas, would just take their sleeping bags, toothbrush, and a change of clothes with them to stay overnight. In the morning, the children would be served something simple like pancakes for breakfast or "simple frozen foods that you can place in the microwave." For lunch, the children might get to eat a large pizza and then come home. The casualness and the simplicity of the sleepovers made it easier for the children to just have a lot of fun together. This was unheard of for Mokuren, because in Japan any guests who came to her home were treated with the utmost care. When it came to keeping someone else's child in your home, then the responsibility became heavier because the mother would make sure that the child went home with raving reviews to his or her

parents about what they had to eat and what activities they did together. “But over there you don’t get that impression. It was nice.” Mokuren’s children really loved to do sleepovers with their American friends, but because they had Japanese school on Saturdays, weekends were still school nights for her children. She had to limit their interactions with their American friends. She allowed her children to do fun things such as sleepovers with their American friends only during summer vacation.

Unlike many other states, the state of Ohio offered a Japanese version of the driver’s test. Mokuren was able to take the paper test in Japanese, although she said, “It was in strange Japanese. Not perfect Japanese, but a Japanese exam was available.” Mokuren was used to having an active busy life in Japan, but when she was in Ohio, she was not working; therefore, she had free time to pursue other interests when her children were in school. With the ability to drive a car, Mokuren was able to become more involved with other Japanese mothers whom she met at her apartment and at the Japanese school. The Japanese school was held every Saturday from two to three o’clock and was taught by a Japanese teacher; although she quickly pointed out that the person was “not a certified teacher from Japan.” In addition, she was able to attend a free English conversation class while her children were studying Japanese.

Children

On their arrival to Ohio, Mokuren’s oldest child was placed into a mainstream 2nd grade class with a pullout ESL (English as a Second Language) program. Soon after school started, the regular teacher informed Mokuren that her daughter was becoming a problem because she cried a lot when she was at school. Her daughter would be so distraught that she would cry and cry and become inconsolable. The regular teacher would summon the ESL teacher to come and comfort her so that she could return to class. Mokuren theorized that the problem with her daughter was her age. If her daughter were in the first grade, then it would have been different

for her because she would have started learning her ABCs at the same time as the other American children. She would have learned the pronunciation of the alphabet with her American classmates and it would not have been difficult for her because everyone would have been on the same level. Since her daughter was in the 2nd grade, math and language arts lessons were instructed in English so she was confused because she could not understand the language. All she could do was cry. This happened so often that the ESL teacher wrote a note asking Mokuren if there were any problems at home. Although she continued to be miserable for a very long time, Mokuren thinks that her daughter still enjoyed school because she always wanted to go to school. “She never said that she would not go to school.” Mokuren is proud how brave her daughter was to stay in school. She was worried because she did not want to leave her husband in Ohio and go back to Japan for the sake of the children’s education. “When the children cannot cope, that is when the mother and children go back to Japan.” She was determined to stay.

Mokuren did not realize that homework was not assigned over summer vacation like they do in Japan. Not knowing how to keep the children entertained so that they were not bored over the long summer months, Mokuren turned to the Japanese mothers for advice. Many of the mothers, who had experiences from the previous summer, shared with Mokuren the variety of summer camps available around the city. She wanted her children to relax and enjoy themselves over the summer holidays because during the school year her children attended a Japanese school once a week on Saturday afternoons. Having to go to school six days a week, the children did not have a lot of free time to play with the other children. She did not want them to go to any of the academic camps, so she looked into the various sports camps that were offered and made her decision to enroll them into a tennis camp once or twice a week. She was happy with her choice

because the children had a grueling study schedule during the school year. They would spend Monday through Thursday evenings doing homework for their American school. Friday night and Saturday morning was devoted to studying for their Japanese school that started late in the afternoon. Sunday was once again time to study English and get ready for Monday. Mokuren was concerned that the children were spending too much time studying at a desk and wanted them to be able to do outside activities for a change. The tennis camp was a perfect choice because it allowed her children to get some exercise and also learn English at the same time.

Mokuren was once invited by her children's school to give a talk about Japan. She could not imagine herself talking in English in front of a class. She had heard of other mothers who had given presentations at the school and considered these mothers to be very bold and brave. "There was an invitation but since I could not speak the language, I never participated."

Sometime later, however, Mokuren was asked to help give a demonstration to a different school. A Christian school in the area was hosting an international fair for their students. There were several students from Japan attending that particular school and the students' mothers were asked to give a demonstration. Mokuren was invited to join their presentation and she accepted. She showed the class how to do origami and how to write their names in Japanese. Mokuren placed white sheets of paper on top of newspapers she had spread on the table. With a thin brush and a container of calligraphy ink, she wrote their names in Japanese. She showed them how to write their names using *katakana*, a Japanese syllabary used to write foreign words and also wrote the word *kokoro* (feelings of emotions, heartfelt) or *ai* (love) in *kanji* (Chinese characters). She did not mind participating in the demonstration because she was not doing this alone, she was with a group of other Japanese mothers. She really enjoyed giving this demonstration for the children

and she was pleased that it was entertaining for the children as well. “The children told me that it was really cool.”

Family Life

For Mokuren, everything was larger in America. From the size of the shopping carts at the stores, to the way Americans buy milk by the gallon; everything was just bigger. She remembers when she first saw the size of the dumpster at her apartment complex. “It was the size of a house!” The dumpster at her apartment had an opening on the side with a latched door. It was the size of a small window and it was for people to be able to throw their trash inside the dumpster. One time, when Mokuren went to put out the trash, she saw a sofa in there standing in a vertical position. “Not only was I surprised to see a sofa in there, but I also wondered how they got that sofa through that small window.”

Mokuren marveled at the many appliances, household items, and services available in the United States that make a housewife’s work easier and more convenient. She appreciated the sturdiness of American products and referred to the Japanese counterparts as “thin and flimsy.” She was curious about the garbage disposal, an appliance not found in the Japan. She was not sure where the garbage drained and asked, “Where does the garbage go from your sink?” The apartment gave her a list of things that should not be ground in the disposal. “Hard things were forbidden.” She posted the list in her kitchen and tried to avoid getting it clogged, because if that happened, that meant that she would have to talk to the maintenance crew. Mokuren thought that it was an efficient and more hygienic system than the one used in Japan where raw garbage is collected in a basket in the sink and disposed of later. Whenever possible, she preferred not to interact in English, even if it was just for simple conversation at the grocery store. She liked using the self-checkout system at a store. She had never used it before in Japan and was amazed that she could scan her purchases by herself and pay an automatic cash register that resembled an

ATM machine. She thought this was a great time saver for her, especially when she just needed a few items at the store and the fact that she did not have to speak English to accomplish the task. “I understand what is written in English. If I have the time to read carefully what is written, then I am fine. However, when it comes to speaking, the sounds just pass by me.”

There was one Asian market located about thirty minutes by car from her apartment. She was surprised at the store’s prices and felt that it was too expensive for her to shop there all the time. She was even more disgusted when she saw that most of the Japanese food items sold at the store were already past their expiration date. “And they still sell them!” It did not sit well with her when the owner of the market explained that there was nothing the store could do because the products arrive from Japan already expired due to the enormous amount red tape that is required to import the items into the United States. Being mindful that she was on a tight budget, she decided to allot a portion of her grocery money to buy basic necessities at the Asian market namely rice, miso paste, and imported soy sauce. She did not consider these items to be luxury goods because only Kikkoman™ soy sauce and long grain rice were sold at the regular supermarket. Although Kikkoman™ is a Japanese brand; Mokuren prefers to buy imported soy sauce because her family thought that the soy sauce brewed in the United States tasted different than the ones from Japan. Having Japanese style rice for her family was important for Mokuren. Before she knew about the Asian market, she first tried the instant rice from the grocery store, “the one where you just add water,” but found it inedible. “I bought that first. I thought that was a typical American way to eat rice.” When she was able to buy California short grain rice at the Asian market, the whole family was elated when she brought it home and cooked the rice in a rice cooker she brought with her from Japan. Eating Japanese style short grain rice made her family happy and it made life easier for Mokuren. Rice was such a central part of their daily

meals that when they drove 18 hours to visit Florida for 10 to 14 days, she packed the car and of course she took the rice cooker with them.

There were some other food items, however, that her family had to learn to eat. Her philosophy about buying American food items was that everyone should at least try it once. “Even if you don’t know what the food item is, you need to buy and try it. I think that is a good way to do it.” She bought American mayonnaise in the large jars that took two hands to open. “Some have said that Japanese mayonnaise tastes better, but for our family we used the one that is sold at the local supermarket. We ate a lot of it.” She thought it was less difficult to prepare meals for her family because her family also preferred to have more meat in their diet than most Japanese. “We don’t eat fish. My family prefers to eat meat.” She was very happy to receive care packages from Japan. They would send her Japanese seasonings and other sundries. Receiving these additional ingredients from Japan made cooking meals easier for her because she thought that as long as she had rice and Japanese seasonings, her family would be able to survive.

Mokuren brought videos with her from Japan for children to watch. She was glad she did this because they could not afford the Japanese channel that was only available through a satellite service provider. She knew other Japanese people who were in Cincinnati on business could afford premium channels because their company was paying for their living expenses. For Mokuren and others who were financially responsible for their life overseas, they had to be frugal. Mokuren could not even afford cable television, so her children would watch the three channels that were available through their TV antenna. “You can watch three channels, but sometimes it will depend on the direction of the wind.” When the children were tired of watching the same video over and over again, Mokuren asked her relatives to send more. She

saw that the Korean, Chinese, and Indian markets that sold Asian food would usually have videos too, but they were not in Japanese. She asked her parents to tape her children's favorite shows or animation that they were watching when they were in Japan. She did not ask for any television shows for herself or for her husband even though they were addicted to the historical dramas produced by a public broadcasting station. The videos were basically for the children and the adults hardly watched them at all.

Returning to Japan

Mokuren feels very fortunate because she was able to return to their same house in Yamaguchi. "We literally came home so it was emotionally easy." Their house had not changed while they were gone, but the neighborhood was definitely different. The main difference Mokuren felt when she returned from Ohio was that the children in the neighborhood were now three years older. Her family had a three-year blank from the neighborhood, but life in the neighborhood had continued without them. During their time away, the neighborhood children were able to form close bonds and relationships. "All the neighborhood children are able to grow up together. Friendships are already established." She was sympathetic for her children, especially for her daughter. "This is especially true for girls, who have a tendency to think that having childhood friends is important"

When Mokuren first returned, adjustment was easy for her, but she did notice that her children had difficulties adjusting back into their Japanese schools. When she asked her children, initially they told her that they had problems that needed to be resolved. Now her children think that maybe it is not a problem, it is just that they have changed somehow. They cannot pinpoint what is different, but something is different." Mokuren's daughter was in the 5th grade when she returned to her elementary school. Her classmates from first and second grades at the school had already established their circle of friends and Mokuren's daughter had a hard

time re-establishing their friendships. “When you are gone for three years, then it is difficult to rejoin the same group again.” Interestingly, Mokuren’s daughter developed a new circle of friends consisting of transfer students who transferred to the school when they were in the 3rd or 6th grade. It is not exactly the same as going overseas, but for Mokuren, these children share similar experiences. All them were considered outsiders from the children who were at school longer so they were able to band together to form their own circle of friends. They were not particularly close or distant. Mokuren’s daughter and her friends did what they wanted to do independently, but when they had a common goal, then they got together and supported each other. “It was that type of relationship.”

Mokuren’s son also had a hard time making friends with the children at school. “I am sure it was difficult for him to fit in socially with the other Japanese children.” She admits that even when they were in America, he did not make any effort to fit in with the people around him; therefore this is probably just a characteristic of his personality. She believes it was slightly easier for him to adapt into the American culture where independence is nurtured and respected. In Japan, however, he is viewed as a child who purposely chooses not to conform to the rest of the group. His classmates considered him to be arrogant and rude, “but my son did not care. He just did what he wanted to do at his own pace.” Mokuren also thinks that he acquired this type of attitude from America, commenting that, “he was able to adapt naturally, without realizing it.” She describes her son as more independently mature than other Japanese children and she sees evidence of this in his language use. “He couldn’t always say what he truly felt in Ohio, but since we have been back, he can say whatever he wants because it is in his native language.”

Back in Japan

After living in Ohio where everything was sold, bought, and accomplished on a large scale, Japan felt very small to her. “The streets are so congested. There are people walking in the

streets and people riding bicycles. It is so dangerous!” Even the items at the grocery store were small and toy-like, as if they were more for children playing house than for real people to consume. She was used to buying half gallon sized milk for her family, but when she went grocery shopping in Japan, she came back with a one-liter carton of milk. “I couldn’t get over how small it was. It looked like it is a soft drink size! It was just so small.” Even the cuts of meat were sold in small portions. She complained that the meat is sold in 100 gram or 200 gram packages and not in the large blocks that she would buy in Ohio. “It is so inconvenient because my family eats a lot of meat. And they only have these small packages in Japan.” She was keenly interested when Ayame described her shopping excursion to a Costco™, an American style warehouse store, which is located about an hour away. Upon hearing about the store, she asked for directions to the store, for the store’s inventory, and the membership fee. She carefully wrote down the information a scrap piece of paper and boldly announced that she was going to tell her family about Costco™ as soon as she got home. “It sounds like Costco is a whole lot of fun!”

Identity

When Mokuren was in Ohio, she called herself a Japanese and after returning to Japan, she would still say that she is Japanese, “but a little different, maybe more like a returnee.” Her experience in Ohio influenced her to become an independent thinker. “I was dealing with a different language and a different system and I was too busy to care what other people thought of me.” This was a different perception for Mokuren. In Japan, she needed confirmation from the people around her for any decision that she made because she worried about what other people would think of her actions. Oftentimes, she felt she was forced into a decision or had to agree with other people’s opinions in order to maintain the harmony of the relationships with her family and friends. Nowadays, she does not care what people think of her anymore. When

people ask for her advice, even though she can tell them directly what she would do, she is still very cautious in her approach. “I can give them my opinions, but I still struggle. I still ask myself if it is okay for me to say things so directly.” She is sure that people around her have not noticed any changes in her, especially her children. Her children were young when they were in Ohio, so they may not remember the type of person their mother was before she left Japan. “If you ask my family what I was like a long time ago, they would not be able to answer.”

However, Mokuren feels that her overseas experience has enriched her in a positive way and she now sees personal growth within herself, “I think I became a stronger person because I know who I am now.”

Reflections

Mokuren really enjoyed her stay in America. Unlike her husband’s work in Japan, when he was in Ohio he had more free time and they were able to spend more time together as a family. She is keenly aware that due to their limited time in the United States, her family made more of an effort to become a closer family. “If you were working and living in America, living a normal life, then I am sure the father would be busy and come home late too.” She also thinks that her children’s school schedule afforded them more opportunities to spend time and work together. “The children would be more involved in a lot of activities on a daily basis, which would cut down on the quality time with the family.” She understands why other returnees always seem to be traveling overseas with their family once they return. “You just don’t want to see what is only in Japan anymore.” She suspects that more likely they are trying to fortify the bonds of the family again, to recreate the closeness they had when they were living overseas.

Even though Mokuren did not speak English well, she considers her first experience living overseas to be a big success. She knew that she could survive even with her lack of English ability when her parents came over to Ohio for a visit. Mokuren bought them tickets to fly from

Osaka, Japan to Cincinnati, Ohio with a transfer in Chicago. Her parents could not read or speak any English at all. Since this was her parent's first visit to the United States, Mokuren requested a passenger escort service from the Japanese airline where a Japanese speaker would help passengers transfer from the international to a domestic flight. When her parents arrived, she was very proud that they accomplished their journey, "without being able to speak a word of English." On their return flight, Mokuren's parents did not need any additional help from the airline. They managed to find their connecting international flight in Chicago with no problems. "When I saw that, I knew that anyone could do it."

In the beginning, she did not view herself as an adventurous type of person, but she knew she would be able to sustain herself because of her personality. "I am the type who figures it out once I am there." She did worry about her children more than she did about herself or her husband and admits that most of her bravery and adventuresome spirit came from her devotion to her family. Mokuren hopes her children will have an opportunity to become involved in a study abroad program. And if they do, she wants the ambition to leave Japan to come from the child because she does not want her children to go against their will if they are not interested. "You can't force it on the child. You just can't tell them to go out in the world."

Mokuren is grateful that she had an opportunity to go overseas with her family. Living overseas has given Mokuren courage that she did not have before. She would like to continue to travel and see the world but would prefer to do it a little sooner than later. "I am no longer afraid to go to a new country now, but maybe 20 years from now, I will not be so brave." If an opportunity presents itself, Mokuren is definitely ready at a moment's notice because in her heart, she already has her bags packed. She does not care if it is a different place than Ohio, it

could even be Europe, but if an opportunity arises, she is willing to meet the challenge again. “I don’t know if I can live there and I might come home after three months, but I’m willing to try.”

Sakura

Introduction

Sakura (cherry blossom) lives about an hour and a half west of Tokyo in the city of Hadano, located in Kanagawa prefecture. Once an area that grew tobacco and has since switched crops to green tea and ornamental flowers, Hadano City is at the foot of the mountain regions that connects to a national park and the historic hot springs of Hakone. On a clear day, the people of Hadano have a wonderful view of the snow-capped top of Mt. Fuji. “From our veranda upstairs, you can just see a little bit of the top peeking through.” Sakura suggested that we meet at a Mr. Donut™ shop, which was located on the first floor of the train station. Mr. Donut™ is a large franchise from North America that can be found at most train stations throughout Japan. Although in North America the franchise has mostly disappeared, in Japan it still holds a robust presence in the donut industry. The interior of the shops is usually decorated light and airy with vivid colored furniture. Pictures of Boston, the original flagship store’s location, and San Francisco, to tie in with the Chinese menu the donut store also offers, are plastered on every wall. Sakura needed time in the morning to get her three children off to school before catching the train, so we decided to meet mid-morning. Since I had never met Sakura before, I asked for some description that would help me find her, but she asserted that there would not be that many foreigners “at that time” so she would be able to find me with no problem.

It was the start of the summer rainy season and the skies were gray with low clouds showering the city below. My train arrived at an adjoining train station and instead of finding my way through the confusing maze of tunnels and stores of the underground city, I decided to

make my way up to the street level and walk to the doughnut shop. As I stepped into the shop, an electronic musical doorbell announced my arrival and the staff in unison chirped *irashaimase* (welcome) while continuously doing their work. I was putting my wet umbrella into a plastic umbrella sleeve courtesy of Mr. Donuts™ when Sakura approached me. She introduced herself and said, “You look so American. I was told by Ume that you were half Japanese.” I explained that often times when I am in Japan; my American side seems to be more pronounced. She nodded in agreement and showed me to the table where she was sitting.

The shop was long and narrow with the doughnut display case taking up most of the floor space. The shop only had five small tables that were placed extremely close to each other. The shop was bustling and noisy with high school students, dressed in their summer nautical themed uniform, discussing which doughnut they were going to order and then going off topic about something that had happened at school. American music was blaring in the background as staff members served each customer in a systematic, almost robotic manner. When a customer entered the shop and placed an order at the counter, the staff would repeat the request out loud; box up the order; tally the order out loud; exchange money by voicing the amount received and change given; hand over the purchase and receipt; and finally bow and thank the customer. In the background of the recording, it was possible to hear the incessant doorbell chiming every time the automatic glass door opened; the singsong chorus of the donut staff and customers, the endless beeping of the cash register as well as the conversation of the high school girls who sat at the table next to us. It was a cacophony of jarring sound overlaid with the comforting aroma of freshly made doughnuts and coffee.

Pre-Departure

When Sakura found out that her husband’s company was assigning him to go overseas for two years to study for a graduate degree in engineering, the first thing she wanted to do was to

get information about Florida. She went around and asked for advice from various people who had experience living overseas, but she soon found out that none of them had lived in Florida before, and those who had been to Florida were there as tourists. For Sakura, Florida was the furthest you could be from Japan and all she knew was that they were going to a small college town of Gainesville, Florida. She wanted more information about living in Florida than about popular theme park attractions or the best season to travel to Florida. Her husband talked with some people at his company and also talked with a colleague of his who was already in the United States, but the colleague was currently living on the West Coast. No one had been to Florida to live there. Sakura found some books at the local bookstore about living overseas and also used the Internet to gather additional guidance but the books or websites just gave out general information and did not cater to people who were moving specifically to Florida. As she suspected, there was an abundance of facts and information about visiting the theme parks and beaches of Florida, but not much about actually living there. Her husband's company is an internationally well-known Japanese electronic firm that has offices in North America, Southeast Asia, and Europe. Sending the Japanese staff to overlook the international office branches or factories was the norm for his company. Due to the sheer number of Japanese staff constantly being deployed overseas, the company offered classes for those with international assignments. Sakura had two small children at that time and without anyone to care for the children while she was at class, she could not participate in the special program offered by the company. She did wonder if she missed her only chance to learn more about Florida, that perhaps they gave out important information about Florida in class and she was not there. Since she could not attend and did not know anyone else who attended, she sighed and accepted the fact that she will never know. Not to be deterred, if she could not find anyone who lived in Florida, then she still wanted

to speak to someone who lived close to Florida. She did not know any Americans to ask for advice, so the closest person she could think of were some relatives who had lived in Texas a long time ago. She corrected herself and said, “Actually they were my husband’s relatives. I don’t remember where they lived, but I would ask them a few questions about living overseas.”

Arrival

Sakura’s husband arrived in Florida one month before the rest of his family. His company did not provide an apartment for them, so her husband had to search and find one on his own. He bought a car and got everything ready for his family to arrive. Since her husband did not travel with them, her in-laws flew with Sakura to help manage the children over the long flight. “So a group of five of us came to America together.” When her husband received his overseas assignment, Sakura was in the early stage of pregnancy with their third child. “When I became pregnant, I told my parents that I would have the baby in America and they were all very concerned for me.” With two young children and with her husband taking classes, Sakura knew that she would need help when the baby arrived. Her mother worked full-time, so she could not really go over to America to be of assistance to Sakura. Knowing that having another adult around when the baby arrived would be helpful, Sakura’s husband asked his mother if she could come and help. “I was nervous that she was coming with us, but I had two other children and I needed help with them.” Her in-laws decided that it would be a good opportunity for her mother-in-law to practice flying to Florida so that she would be prepared to fly back when the baby was due. Sakura was not sure how she felt about the entire situation. Her emotions were mixed with leaving Japan, going to a place she had never been before, and on top of that having her in-laws there with her.

Sakura was exhausted after the long flight from Tokyo. Her legs became swollen balloons from her pregnancy and also from being immobile on the long international flight. Her body

ached as she looked over to her children, who were making their own journey though the land of dreams. At least the children slept most of the way. That was helpful. They arrived in Gainesville, Florida on a small turbo propeller airplane. Sakura was not too thrilled when she saw the small airplane, but when the plane taxied to the small regional airport her heart sank. “What have we done?” Tired and relieved to have finally arrived, her husband met them at the airport and headed towards the apartment. He talked to Sakura and his parents about his month alone and how he had everything under control. When she entered through the front door, much to her dismay, there was nothing in the apartment. She brought a few things with her from Japan, but she did not bring household incidentals or large items such as furniture. “Little by little we started to buy things for the apartment. We went shopping a lot.” She also had to purchase many things to prepare for the baby’s arrival. “There were a lot of things to buy” and she would often go to Toys-R-Us™ with her young children to buy baby things. She found that the cost of living was much cheaper in Florida. She would buy things at Walmart™, a large American discount store, but she quickly learned that the items did not last long. “I remember in Walmart™, they would sell things cheap, but they would also break easily.” She was surprised to learn that items could be returned to the store for an exchange or a refund. “It was so nice of them. You don’t need a reason. Sometimes the reason is that you don’t like the color, but they will change it for you up to 90 days after purchase. In Japan, you have to give a very good reason and you only have a week to do this.” Perhaps it was a nesting instinct, but as Sakura became more settled in her new American life, she was able to create more of a home atmosphere with their apartment for their children and the new baby. It was much better than the Spartan bachelor apartment she entered when she first arrived.

A month after Sakura arrived in Florida, the terrorist attack on September 11th occurred. “Our parents were really worried about us. They thought we were in danger.” She was asked many times by their relatives if living in America was dangerous or unsafe. “I did not feel unsafe, but I did not go out early in the morning or late at night.” She assured her family that she would be fine and reiterated that New York was far away from Florida, and that they were not affected. However, with the devastating pictures constantly broadcast on television around the world, it was difficult to make her parent’s understand that Sakura and her children were indeed safe. “That is something I will never forget. It caused my parents to worry so much.” Although she initially was not too thrilled about her in-laws traveling with her to Florida, reflecting back, it was in a sense helpful for Sakura that her in-laws were still with them in Florida when the attack occurred or else she would have had two sets of grandparents worrying about them and insisting that they return back to Japan.

Social Networks

Her mother-in-law returned one month prior to the baby’s arrival and stayed with Sakura to help with the baby for a month after his arrival. Sakura felt obligated and indebted to her mother-in-law for coming all the way to Florida to help with the baby. “I apologized for the inconvenience and hardship it must have been for her.” Her mother-in-law did not see it as an intolerable experience. Sakura’s mother-in-law had traveled abroad a couple of times before as a tourist and this was her first experience of being able to live overseas. Although it was only for two months, she actually enjoyed her stay in Florida and kept telling Sakura that she would never have an opportunity to live overseas like this again so she was having a good time and was enjoying every minute of it.

Sakura met a Japanese woman soon after she arrived who became a very good friend. This woman had been in the United States for about five years and understood some English. Her

first child was born in Gainesville, Florida and she was expecting her second baby. “I asked her a lot of questions. She could explain things very well.” It also soothed Sakura to know that she was not the only Japanese mother who was going to have a baby soon. “Without her, I do not think I would have been able to have my child there.” After their babies were born, the two women would get together a couple of times a week to share stories, and experiment with cooking and baking as their children played together. Sakura respected her Japanese friend because her husband had lived in the United States when he was a child, and for Sakura they were the most familiar with American culture. “I did rely on her a lot. She can do anything.”

Sakura met this woman in an unconventional manner. It was about the third day after Sakura had arrived in Florida and she was with her family at Toys-R-Us™. She heard another family speaking Japanese and approached them by asking if they were Japanese. “I never thought that I would approach strangers and ask them if there were Japanese. Especially, asking them if they were Japanese in Japanese!” The families exchanged e-mail addresses and the other family told them about the Japanese association, which holds meetings twice a year. Sakura’s husband knew about the Japanese association before he left Japan because he found their website online. The bi-annual meeting was a good source for information, especially for newcomers to the area, thus Sakura and her husband were encouraged to join the association. She credits this good friend for making their experience in America wonderful. “We were very fortunate to meet her.”

Sakura expressed that it was a little difficult for her to adjust in Florida because besides her good friend, she did not know anyone in Gainesville. Although she did ask for information from both Japanese and Americans she met, she came to rely on the Korean community the most. “There was a person from Korea who helped me a lot.” Sakura felt uneasy with the Japanese

community. Although Sakura's family joined the Japanese association, it was not easy for her to make friends. "It was difficult to join the Japanese housewives groups over there." She thinks that she was ostracized from the groups because she would forget proper Japanese customs and manners. She could not remember the correct protocol to introduce herself to the group, "I could not remember what to include in the greeting. I was really bad at it. I was hopeless." Because of this social faux pas, many of the Japanese groups were not particularly welcoming to her. With a baby on the way and no one to really talk to now that her good friend was busy with a newborn at home, Sakura felt alone.

Sakura did not make any American friends either. Opportunities to meet with Americans were limited. She would sometimes talk with her son's teacher about educational matters or maybe say a few words to her son's classmates, but that was about it. Her son's kindergarten teacher was perhaps the only American adult she had an opportunity to converse with. They had moved to a relatively new apartment that still had sections under construction. There were not that many tenants living in the complex, therefore, Sakura did not really meet her neighbors or even have a chance to talk to them. "Come to think of it, we really did not associate with the Japanese either." Their association with either Japanese or Americans was on a limited basis. "Limited is limited. Other than that, there was really no one else."

Sakura heard about free English lessons offered to international adults at a local church that several of the tea ceremony group mothers attended. She regrets that she did not participate in these classes, but at the time it was not necessarily a practical endeavor for her to do. She was busy caring for a newborn and two other children all under the age of four. Her hands were full tending to the little ones and she had little time to pursue any interests outside of the home. The one activity she regularly participated in was getting together with a group of Japanese wives to

study and practice the traditional art of tea ceremony. She had briefly studied the art of tea ceremony when she was in Japan, a class she took in high school, but did not pursue it any further. It was not until she came to Gainesville, Florida that she became involved again with tea ceremony. She was invited by her good friend to join a class and quickly became a regular member of the group. The tea ceremony group met mid-morning and would first practice tea for two hours and then eat lunch together. It was easy for Sakura to go to this class because there were other young children there and the mothers would take turns watching the children as they took turn partaking in the tea ceremony: a rotation of mothers, children, and tea. “Everybody was so nice.” To be able to get out of the house and to be able to talk with other Japanese adults was a therapeutic outlet for Sakura. More importantly, she was glad that she finally was able to become a welcomed member of a Japanese group.

Children

It was imperative for Sakura that her children learn Japanese. She knew that since they would be in Florida for two years, her eldest son would be old enough to enter kindergarten when they returned. She wanted him to be prepared to go to school in Japan, so she was not particularly interested initially for her children to learn English. To maintain her children’s Japanese, Sakura used books, videos, and music. She would show her children Japanese videos. “Now that I think of it, we would watch them a lot.” When the videos reached a saturation point and the children would no longer watch them, she asked her relatives to send them videos from Japan. Some of the videos were TV programs directly recorded off television while others were commercially produced shows or movies that were purchased from stores. She read Japanese books to her children in order to teach them vocabulary and how to write. “They needed to know Japanese words,” she said. Sakura also sang traditional Japanese children’s songs to them as well as songs from popular Japanese children’s shows because she wanted them to share the

same musical background with the children in Japan. On occasion, Sakura and her husband would try to speak English. She admits, “I guess we tried to make an effort to use both languages.” Because Sakura’s focus was to teach her young children Japanese, her effort to speak English was not consistent and the children’s English did not necessarily progress to the point where the children were code-switching the languages in their speech. “Since we were in America for only two years and the children were really young, English did not really affect their Japanese.”

Sakura’s oldest child was three years old when they arrived in Florida. Sakura decided that it would be best if they could send their son to nursery school, which she refers to as kindergarten, for a couple of hours a day. Sakura also had a one-year-old daughter who was with her all day. With a third child on the way, Sakura knew from past experience that the further along she was in her pregnancy, the more difficult it would be to run around and care for her daughter who was now an active toddler. She thought that it would be helpful if her older son could be at school so that she could concentrate on her one year old and her pregnancy. Sakura and her husband had a difficult time selecting a school for their son. “We had to look at a lot of them.” Sakura decided to enroll her son in a private nursery school. Sakura knew how clingy her son could be and would act up whenever she was not around. Her son was fine whenever he was with her and could go anywhere she took him as long as she was around. Since this was a big step for her son, she tried to prepare him so that he understood that he would have to go to school alone. The first day, Sakura told him that he was going to go to kindergarten. Her son was happy about it because he was a big boy now, and big boys go to the big school. The second day, he was okay about school, but the third day he was not okay at all. After the first three days at school, Sakura’s son was not able to adjust to his new school. “He cried every day for an

entire month!” Sakura’s husband would go visit him everyday during his lunchtime so they could have lunch together, but as soon as his father had to leave, her son started crying again. Sakura and her husband looked earnestly for another place and decided to transfer him to a different school. The second school informed Sakura that it was all right if her son cried for the next two weeks, however, the policy was that the parents must go home. The school explained that the problem becomes worse if the parents are there, so Sakura and her husband had no choice but to trust the school. It was very hard for Sakura to take her son to the new school for his first day. “It was hard to leave him when you can see him crying and crying.” Her son cried for a long time. “In the end, my son attended four different kindergartens.” Through time, however, her son slowly adapted to his school and was fine. “I feel that I traumatized my son that way.” Her son remembers his first day at both schools. He remembers crying a lot. He remembers the first month. “He was only three years old and just didn’t understand the language, the English words. He was really scared.” Even with his language barrier, towards the end her son enjoyed every minute of his time in the schools. At that time though, Sakura did not feel that he was in the American schools long enough to learn English. “He played a lot but the school did not teach him any English.” She was expecting special English lessons for her son, but instead noticed that the school treated him the same as the other children.

One time when Sakura went to pick up her son from school, she saw that he had a bite mark on him. A boy from his class had bitten him. “It was probably a joke. You know, boys being boys.” The teacher explained to Sakura what had transpired at the playground that day. While the teacher was explaining to Sakura, the boy that bit him came running up to them and told Sakura that it was an accident several times. The father of the boy had just arrived and when he was told about what his son had done by another teacher, he came running up to Sakura as

well and extended an apology to her first. “He apologized in English!” It really was not a big injury, but Sakura was impressed that the father apologized to her, a parent that she did not know. She was not used to seeing this type of contrition from a parent. In Japan, the usual experience is that the parent would scold the child first by telling the child that he or she should not be doing things like that. In America, the parent apologizes to the other parent first. Sakura wanted to let the father know that she knew that it was an accident, so she told him, “It’s okay,” but he quickly replied, “It’s not okay.” Sakura had never experienced anything like this before. She was letting the father know that an apology was not necessary, but he insisted that it was. “I am saying that it is okay, but he decided that it really was not.” It was only later did she find out that when the father said that to her, it meant that he was teaching his child that it was not a nice thing to do.

English Language

Sakura did not take any English lessons before she left for America. She had ample opportunities to take lessons, but decided against it. “I was hoping to just go overseas and come back speaking English.” Since she had a toddler with her at home while her oldest son was away at school, she bought American videos of children’s shows and movies and would show them to her daughter. “We watched them at home. Disney tapes and the other popular show called the Wiggles™.” Wiggles™ is a popular musical television show for pre-school children, which originated from Australia. Sakura enjoyed the shows because the English was easy enough even for her to understand. Once in a while, Sakura would try to speak English to her family but the conversation would not get very far. “We would try to explain something in a lot of different ways, but instead it would just be random words strung together.”

The English spoken in the United States was very different from the English Sakura learned while she was in school. “I heard a lot of English phrases or expressions that were never

taught in school.” Sakura remembers asking her husband about the English phrase heard quite often, ‘that’s it’. She did not understand what it meant and could not find it in the dictionary. Her husband told her that she did not learn the phrase in school because it is not in the Japanese textbooks. “The phrase is used often, yet you would never find it in English classes at the junior high school level.” Sakura learned many useful phrases that were never taught to her at school. She wonders why the English taught from textbooks is stiff and formal. Before leaving Japan, Sakura was afraid of English, because the focus was on English grammar or this set phrase has to go with this expression. There was no flexibility. “They really do not say, ‘I’m fine, thank you’. You really do not need to know things in such a formal manner.” She also had horrible experiences when she was a student when her English class focused on translating the works of Shakespeare. “My teacher really liked it. The teacher would point out and say that this is English.” It was not until Sakura lived in America, that she became aware that she no longer needed to perceive English as a difficult language to learn. It is not something that cannot be attained. She now thinks that those who have been overseas should start a campaign to inform the English language learners in Japan that many of the expressions and phrases they are studying are not really useful in America. “We should tell others that they do not use those expressions in America now.”

Family Life

Although Sakura put in a lot of effort to maintain Japanese language for her children, she acknowledges that she did not do anything to maintain Japanese culture. “We did not take a lot of Japanese things with us so we really did not celebrate Japanese traditions.” She wanted her family to enjoy their stay in America and learn everything they could about the country. She stated that she would rather take advantage of their stay in Florida and study about American culture while they were in America. This was because they were going to return to Japan

anyway, therefore observing Japanese cultural traditions would be something they could do when they returned to Japan. “I thought that we could do that when we returned so I did not really think about observing Japanese tradition.” Sakura decided that if they were in America, then her family would do American things.

Sakura’s decision to have a baby in the United States did not bode well with her family. They were worried for Sakura. Their worry did not stem from their concern over the medical facility, but the fact that the entire delivery would be in English. Would she understand what the doctors and the nurses would instruct her to do? Sakura, on the other hand, was not anxious about the birth of her third child. “After all, humans all over the world have babies the same way.” She asked around and talked to Japanese women whose children were born in America. She had met several more mothers who were members of her tea ceremony group who also had children born in Gainesville. The Japanese mothers recommended the university hospital for her delivery rather than the county or regional hospitals that were also available in town. According to the mothers, the advantage of having a baby at the university hospital was that there is a Japanese organ transplant surgeon who is licensed to practice in the state of Florida. If anything should happen, they would be able to summon this surgeon, and he would be able to explain any of the necessary medical procedures in Japanese. Everyone who had their babies at the university hospital told her the same thing and this gave Sakura and her husband a sense of security and relief. This information also helped appease Sakura’s family, especially her mother who could not be close by when the baby arrived. It gave both sets of parents reassurance knowing that a Japanese doctor was close by just in case. Once the hospital was selected, then Sakura contacted an obstetrician affiliated with the university hospital, a doctor who was also recommended by the Japanese mothers. Everything was in place for the big event. In addition,

with the baby coming, Sakura and her husband decided that they should move to a different apartment that had fewer students. Their family was about to grow, and Sakura wanted to live in an area that accommodated more families.

Sakura was not expecting any cultural differences when it came to giving birth; however, she was surprised how the mothers and babies were treated at the American hospital. She was in the hospital for only one day after her son was born. This was different from when she had her children in Japan where she was hospitalized for a full week after the birth. Also when her son was born, the obstetric nurse gently took him and wrapped a warm blanket tightly around him and placed a little cap on his head. Sakura was impressed with what the nurse did for her new son. She took many pictures. Sakura liked the idea of swaddling the baby. She remembers when her son was crying just after he was born, the nurses wrapped him up and he stopped crying, just like that. She thinks that her son must have felt a sense of security that way, wrapped up so tightly. Her other children were not treated in the same manner when they were born. In Japan, the nurses would place the baby on his or her back and just cover them with a blanket, more like a baby doll than a real baby. She was curious about American babies because of the comments she kept receiving from the hospital staff. The nurses would compliment on her son's thick long hair. Her other children were born with an overabundance of hair in Japan and no one commented that her babies had a lot of hair, but she was repeatedly told at the American hospital, "wow, your baby's hair is long." When she went to see her son in the hospital nursery, nestled side by side with the other American babies, she immediately understood why she was receiving the comments.

Sakura's mother-in-law arrived a month before her son was born and was able to take care of the older children when Sakura went into labor. When Sakura came home from the hospital

after the birth of her son, she was resting when Grandmother came into her room and asked her where she kept the burdock root because she was preparing dinner for the family. Sakura told her that burdock root was not really available at the local grocery store. If she needed a daikon radish, then that was available, but a burdock root was out of the question. “When we went to the market, she would complain that they do not have this type of vegetable or that type of vegetable.” Sakura had been in Florida long enough to know what was available at the local market and she had learned how to cook without certain ingredients. Grandmother, however, could only cook with Japanese ingredients she was familiar with and had been cooking with for a long time. After Grandmother returned to Japan, she would send Sakura care packages. Knowing that many Japanese ingredients were not available, Sakura was looking forward to the packages from Japan. It turned out, however, that her mother-in-law was “the type of person who would send silly stuff.” Sakura could understand when Grandmother would send her dry ingredients such as *wakame* (kelp) or their favorite brand of Japanese style curry mixes. Those items were useful and she appreciated the effort her mother-in-law made to send her Japanese ingredients. What Sakura could not understand is when she received shampoo from Japan. “It made me gasp when I opened the box from her.” Sakura tried to tell her that shampoo is available in America and that since it is heavy to send, that it really was not necessary. “Receiving the shampoo in the mail was memorable. It was the large family size shampoo too.” In the end, Sakura just had to give up. No matter how many times she told Grandmother, her mother-in-law continued to send them trivial things. She suspects that Grandmother now thinks that there is nothing available in the United States.

One time Sakura and her husband had to go somewhere and they asked Grandmother if she would stay with the children. They told Grandmother that if anybody came or if anybody called,

that she did not have to talk to them. “If the doorbell or telephone rings, just ignore it.” Sakura happened to forget that the maintenance man was scheduled to come to their apartment that day. After Sakura and her husband left, Grandmother heard a strange noise. It was someone trying to open the door. She grabbed the children and went to hide in the back bedroom closet. After twenty minutes or so, Grandmother came out to check on the situation, leaving the children safely behind in the closet. Much to her surprise, it was a man. The maintenance man tried to talk to her, but she could not understand a word he was saying. She told him in Japanese that she could not understand him and continued to talk to him in Japanese. “I did not tell her about it so she was really terrified. I apologized so many times.” Grandmother never imagined that the maintenance man would have a key. “She was so surprised. I did a terrible thing to her.” Sakura did not realize that she had forgotten about the maintenance appointment until she came home. “She probably thought a really bad person had entered...thinking she would be killed! She never actually said that but...I was strongly scolded when I got home.” Not only did he scare Grandmother to death, he also came inside wearing his work boots and tracking dirt from the outside. After the man left, Grandmother quickly cleaned the apartment with the vacuum cleaner because he came into the room wearing shoes.

Sakura and her family often went to Disney World in Orlando, Florida. They had heard from other Japanese families that they could buy annual passes to Walt Disney World, allowing them unlimited visits to the theme parks for one year. It was an easy drive for them, only two hours away by car, and her family would often spend a fun filled day at Disney. Sometime they would hop in the car on a whim and head to Orlando. “Oh, we have some free time this morning? Let’s go to Disney!” Sakura’s children were still young, so she would pack pajamas for them to change into for the return trip home. This way the children would already be ready

for bed if they should fall asleep in the car when they returned later that night. On weeknights, Sakura tried to be back by 6:00 p.m. She needed enough time to give the children their baths and get them ready for bed because they would have school the next day. Those were memorable times for Sakura and her family. “It was so much fun and the people were so nice.” It never once crossed Sakura’s mind that she should come home and visit Japan while they were staying in Florida. “We never returned once when we were overseas. We were having too much fun.”

Sakura did not have difficulties with the food in America. After her mother-in-law returned to Japan, her husband would often stop and pick up food on his way home from class. They did not go out to eat often because of the children and the baby, but she thought that the food her husband brought home was not that bad. She was fond of western style pastries and was well known among her tea ceremony group for baking cakes and cream puffs. “I made the cream puffs because it was something you can make with ingredients available in America.” For certain Japanese ingredients, she would shop at the Chinese or Korean markets in town. There was not a Japanese market nearby, but the Chinese and Korean markets carried some Japanese items at their stores. “I was amazed how much you could find at the Asian market. They had a lot of the ingredients in stock.” Sakura was impressed with the taste of American rice. She liked that after you cook the rice, there was not a strong smell. “I thought the rice in America tasted much better,” and would often tell her relatives how rice in American is delicious.

Returning to Japan

Sakura knew they had to return soon but did not know exactly when they would depart for Japan. Her husband suggested a date for their return to his company, but his company told him to return to Japan a week after he graduated with his master’s degree. He told his company that it would be impossible and tried to negotiate an extension because he needed more time to prepare for their move back to Japan. He was still taking classes and did not have time to devote

to selling their belongings and moving his family back to Japan. He compromised with his company and suggested that they leave around a certain date and it was accepted. Sakura was preparing to return in mid-August. Towards the end of the semester, he reported to the company that he was going to graduate and requested money for their moving expenses. The company was strict, it was the company's money after all, but his request was granted. When the date of departure was confirmed, Sakura's life became very hectic. They had to sell the car and their belongings. The apartment was furnished with a washer and dryer, but all other items such as TVs, beds, and many other things needed to be cleared out. They needed to find people who would want them so they decided to advertise their moving sale. The Americans who inquired about their items for sale would rapidly asked her questions about certain items. "I could speak a little, but it was difficult to understand them." Sakura managed to get rid of many things from her household, often times simply giving them away, and was concentrating on the items she wanted to take back with her to Japan.

"Oh, the packing! I could not remember what I packed." With three young children and her husband finishing the semester, the burden of packing up the household fell on Sakura. One special item she could not remember packing was a digital camera. She could not find it anywhere in the apartment. "I searched all over for many hours but still could not find it." She regretfully decided that it was lost. "There were so many pictures on it, I thought it might be fate that it was gone." It was not until she returned to Japan that she found it. She had packed it after all. She thinks that the moving was perhaps a bit overwhelming for her. "I just could not think normally." This was the first time her youngest son would go to Japan. With everything packed or sold, the five of them flew home together.

Back in Japan

Sakura arrived back in Japan on the 17th of August. Once again, she was hard at work getting her children ready for school, which started in September. Her children were not entering school at the beginning of the academic year, which starts in April. They were entering at the start of the second half of the school year, right after summer vacation and there were many things that needed to be done. “We only had a week to prepare the children for school. I was very busy again.” A week after they returned, Sakura’s son started kindergarten and she noticed a difference in the school culture immediately. At her son’s American school, when he entered the classroom, the teacher and his classmates would give him a cheer for arriving to school. The schools in Japan, on the other hand, were a lot stricter. The school made her son line up with the rest of the class and with each child raising one hand in the air; the children would march into the classroom. “I was thinking that it was incredible. What kind of school is this?” Another feature she saw at the American school was that the children had more freedom to express themselves, especially when she compared the artwork produced by the children. She explained that in America, when the children are asked to draw pictures, they are probably given a theme to work with, but it really does not matter what type of picture is produced as long as the child draws his or her interpretation of the theme. In Japan, however, everything needs to be the same. This was especially evident the following year when the children drew portraits of their father for Father’s Day, which is celebrated in June. During art time, the children were instructed by their teacher on how to draw the pictures of their fathers. Each child was sitting at his or her desk with a large sheet of sketching paper positioned in the center of its desk and a box of oil pastel crayons placed on the top right corner of the desk. The teacher stood in front of the blackboard and drew an oval shape to represent the face, telling the children that the face needs to be long as the children copied the oval shape on their sketching paper. The teacher reminded

the children that fathers do not have long hair or facial hair; therefore, these things should not be included in their picture. Since the portrait was for Father's day, the teacher told the children that they would now draw pictures of things that their father liked or enjoyed, such as beer and cigarettes. Even though Sakura's husband does not smoke, her son had drawn a picture of a pack of cigarettes on his portrait. This was telling to Sakura because it was clear to see who told her son and the rest of the class to draw the cigarettes. The teacher assumed that all fathers smoked and since her son was young, he could not disagree with the teacher. This incident was the major catalyst that made Sakura re-think about the merits of Japanese education. She does not want to say too strongly that the children in Japan do not have any freedom, but yet she still has these lingering thoughts now that her son is in junior high school and is required to wear uniforms. "The curriculum has to be enforced, everything has to be the same, the uniforms, the school bag, their shoes...everybody has to be the same."

Sakura was the only one to recognize that she went through reverse culture shock when she returned to Japan. "Re-culture shock? There were many." She was able to recalibrate herself to driving on the left again. That part of her adjustment was fairly quickly achieved. What she had forgotten was how narrow the roads in Japan were and that there were always people walking in the street. She was amazed when she was in America that people do not walk in the streets because American streets have sidewalks. Driving in Japan made her nervous because now she had to dodge people just to drive down a regular road and she had to swerve around the telephone poles, which jutted out into the streets, making the streets feel even more cramped and crowded. For Sakura, the streets in Japan were more of an obstacle course than a thoroughfare. "Oh the telephone poles. They are in the way! Such an eyesore." Her husband had a harder time to adjust to the driving. Since his initial return he has had to travel overseas a lot and has

had more opportunity to drive on the right than Sakura, therefore, he often “gets confused” when he drives in Japan, “especially when he makes a right hand turn.”

She had also forgotten simple things such as placing the shopping baskets into the grocery cart. In Japan, hand held shopping baskets are placed inside the large grocery cart so that it is easier to place the basket at the counter of the cash register. Sakura would only remember to do this when she was already in line for the cashier, “I would get out of line and go get the baskets to transfer my purchases into the basket and go back to the register.” With three children in tow, this was a hassle for her. She also missed the service she received from the supermarkets in Florida. “Why do we have to bag our own groceries?” She likes that America is a “ladies first” culture because the people working at the grocery store would not only bag her groceries, but would also kindly take them to the car for her.

There was one embarrassing topic for Sakura that bothered her the most when she returned. “It is not a polite topic of conversation, but the Japanese style toilets were a problem.” Although the majority of homes have western style toilets, the Japanese style toilets are still common for many public restrooms. Since it is a squat style toilet, often time, one western toilet stall would be available, and it would always be clearly marked in English for the non-Japanese to use. After two years in America, she could not use the Japanese toilets. “It was uncomfortable and difficult to use.” Whenever she was outside of her home she would purposely search for a western style toilet. At her children’s school, only the Japanese style toilet was available and her children could not use it as well. “They had to practice.” Sakura felt that their time away from Japan had affected their perception of conventions that were common to them before. “What kind of (Japanese) person says that a Japanese style toilet is

uncomfortable?” The family is used to the system now, but in the beginning it was a struggle for all of them.

Sakura, who initially thought that she would automatically come back to Japan speaking English, admits that her English did not really improve. “I have returned and you guessed it, I still cannot speak English.” They brought back with them an American DVD player so that they could specifically watch region one coded DVDs. “We brought back a load of ‘Wiggles’™ tapes from America. Also whenever my husband travels overseas, he buys English DVDs for us.” When they first returned, Sakura hired a private tutor from Great Britain for her two older children for English conversation classes. They continued with the private tutor for some time, but later decided to quit. She wanted to maintain her children’s English, especially for her oldest son who attended kindergarten when they were in America. He was able to speak English when they returned, but decided on his own that he would no longer speak it. Her son proclaimed, “In Japan, we should speak Japanese. Since my friends speak Japanese, I will not speak English.” Even now, if you speak English to her son, he understands but will only reply in Japanese. While she was in Florida, she tried her best to speak in both languages, but her conversation would not get very far. “We would try to explain something in a lot of different ways, but instead it would just be random words strung together.” She knows that she should have put more effort into it, thinking that her son would feel more comfortable speaking in English if she had. “It is terrible. Now we just use Japanese to our children.” She wished she had taken more advantage of improving her English language skills while she was in Florida. Now that she has returned, she claims to have forgotten the little she was able to speak when she was there. “I would have been happy to learn how to speak English. It would have been nice.”

Identity

Sakura is unsure how to identify herself. “Basically, I am Japanese, but I want to also answer international person...returnee, maybe that is a better answer than an international person.” She would never consider herself bilingual, although she thinks that others perceive her to be bilingual simply because she lived in the United States for two years. “People where I live may think that I am bilingual because I can speak a little English. It is only a couple of words, but they are from the small city of Hadano. By Hadano standards, I guess you can say that I can speak English.”

Living in Japan has made Sakura feel the same as other Japanese. “I often feel that I am Japanese now, but when I first returned to Japan, I felt different. I thought I had changed somehow.” After leaving Japan and coming back, she thought that she had altered her views on life in some way because “things were different.” The differences she felt were changes she saw in herself and in her family. “The use of our time had changed. Our lifestyle had changed. The way I socialized with my friends has changed. We socialize with Japanese who have lived in America now.” When pressed, Sakura answered, “I sometimes feel that I think differently. Especially when we first returned, but now I feel more settled. I guess I have changed.”

Sakura never tried to hide her overseas experience from other people. She is, however, cautious when she talks to people who have never lived overseas. “You are talking about a world that they have never seen or experienced before, so you have to be careful.” She does prefer to talk to other people who have been involved with living overseas. “We share the same experience. We understand what the other is saying.” Her oldest son, on the other hand, hides his American experience because he refuses to speak English anymore. She believes that peer pressure is part of the reason for her son’s personal decision not to speak English anymore.

Sakura does not agree with her son's action, calling his decision "such a waste." She wished that he were proud of his American experience instead of being stubborn about it.

Reflections

Sakura remembers the fun times she shared with her family. Driving two hours to spend a day at Disney World "was so quick and easy back then." She wonders why driving two hours in Japan feels so much longer. "I don't know why? Could it be due to the heavy traffic?" She savors the time they were able to spend as a family. After their return to Japan, her husband is very busy with his company now. His work keeps him late at the office and he does not seem to have much time for the family anymore. When he was in Florida, he was a student with flexible time. His schedule was busy with classes, but he could at least have dinner with the family every night. Now, he comes home late, after Sakura and the children have finished dinner and he often has to eat alone. Sakura sits with him to keep him company and they are able to have an adult conversation at the table, but she feels that it is different without the children around. "I feel sorry for him eating like that." When her husband is home on national holidays, the children are concerned and ask him if anything is wrong. "Did something happen? Are you sick?" Sakura did not foresee that her husband would have less time for the family. She thought that since he did not have a long commute, that he would be home more. They had moved into a house that is very close to her husband's workplace. She knows that some of his colleagues have to commute 90 minutes one way by train to Shinjuku in Tokyo, but for her husband, he can walk to work. "My husband changed offices so now he is able to walk to work. It is good exercise for him." Though she wistfully adds, "but he is now too busy to do anything else."

Sakura fondly remembers her friends in the tea ceremony group when she was in Florida. She appreciated the friendship they extended to her and wished that she could have close friends near her in Japan now. When Sakura returned to Japan, she was able to reunite with one of her

closest friends. The two families were very close and would often visit each other's houses. Since their children were of the same age, the two women were actively involved with the schools and were dealing with the same school issues that involved their children. "We would do beading together. We used to go camping together. Her children would stay with us and my children would stay with them. We did a lot together." In order to be closer to her parents in Osaka, her good friend's husband took a job that transferred him to Nagoya, a little over a hundred miles away from her friend's childhood home. Sakura tries to call her, but admits that it is not the same. "Those were good times, but she has moved away, so I am a little lonely now." Though she tries to see her good friend when Sakura travels to her parents' house in Osaka, it is not the same. For Sakura, her good friend's move created a distance between them physically and emotionally.

Although Sakura has struck up friendships with other mothers from her children's school in the past, they no longer get together outside of school activities. She was more active when her children were in kindergarten and elementary school, "as parents, we are required to do so much for the school," but now that she has children in junior high school and upper elementary school she is not as involved with school activities as she was before. She misses getting together at someone's home and just spending the day talking to other mothers over tea. Her opinion is that Japanese houses are just too small to entertain people at home. There is barely space to park the homeowner's car, much less a guest's car. She guesses this is why the Japanese prefer to entertain people at a restaurant instead of inviting them to their homes. On the other hand, American homes with spacious rooms are more conducive to entertaining. It is easier to invite the whole family to come to your home because there is enough room for the children to play on their own while the adults are able to mingle without any interruptions. "In

America, it was not a problem to get together like that.” She also misses the time she shared with friends from the tea ceremony group. Although the tea ceremony practice was scheduled to be for two hours once a week, it often turned into a whole day affair. “Sometimes, we would get together in the morning until it was time to pick up the older children from school.” After the mothers would pick up the children from school, they would return back to the house that was hosting the tea ceremony practice and would stay there until it was time for them to prepare dinner for their family. “I do not have that type of get-togethers anymore.”

Overall, it was absolutely a good experience for Sakura. She is proud of the fact that she lived in a different country and did not just travel to a different country because “living there is different from vacationing there.” If you are traveling, then you worry about buying souvenirs; however, if you are living there you have other things to worry about. According to Sakura, living in America is different because you have to do daily activities like shopping, buying necessities, and not just souvenirs. You have to cook and do laundry and learn to eat unusual things, or buy clothes that are unfamiliar in size to you. “You may think it is trivial, but things like that made it a good experience.”

Another positive point for Sakura was the opportunity to learn a new culture. She thought that Christmas in America was simply enchanting and when they returned to Japan, she shipped back a large Christmas tree with all the decoration. The first year she returned to Japan, she submitted a photo of her Christmas tree to a contest held by a large department store and won first prize. She tries to do other American traditions as well, especially observing the festive holidays for the children, and asks her husband to bring back any holiday items or candy whenever he goes on an overseas assignment. Sakura thinks it is ironic that she puts in more of an effort to practice American customs in Japan when she rarely observed Japanese customs in

America. She surmises that living overseas was so enjoyable that she is trying to re-live it as much as she can. “I really do not have anything negative to say about my experience. It was very positive and so enjoyable! Nothing negative. Absolutely nothing.”

Sakura hopes that her children will want to study abroad when they are high school. None of her children right now have the inclination to study abroad; especially her oldest son is strongly against the idea. Her son told her, “Japan is better for me. When I’m over there, I can’t see grandmother, so I want to be here.” She thinks it would be very beneficial for them to go and her hope is that they will eventually change their minds, as they get a little older. If they do want to go, Sakura has only one criterion: they are free to go anywhere as long as she is allowed to tag along with them. Then she laughs when she realizes that at that age, her children probably would not want a parent to travel with them. Her children are busy now with a lot of after school activities. Her oldest has started attending a cram school, a supplementary school that meets after school until late at night. The cram school’s objective is to enhance the school curriculum and to give the students a slight advantage by further delving into the academic subjects they learn at school. When Sakura saw the schoolwork that her son had to accomplish at his regular school, she realized that he has to think a little more than others. He always tells her, “Mother, I don’t understand the assignments.” Since she said that she no longer could keep up with the academics of her children, she decided to send him to cram school. Her two younger children go to Kumon™, a learning center that offers supplemental school help in various subjects. Kumon™ is not as intensive as the cram school so her daughter goes to ballet twice a week and her youngest son is busy with swimming classes.

Her husband has told her that when the children are older, he plans to immigrate to America. “That would be so nice. I would be prepared to immigrate.” Her youngest son was

born in Florida, thus he has dual citizenship with Japan and the United States. “I think we can use him somehow to live over there.” If they do go, she wants to go either to America or maybe Australia, just as long it is somewhere warm like Florida. “That would be a life that I want, a life that has big dreams.”

Ume

Introduction

Ajisai was the person who introduced me to Ume (plum blossom). Both Ume and Ajisai met when they were living in the same town in Florida and although they returned to Japan at different times, they managed to keep in touch with each other and would meet at least once a year. The town where Ume lives now is a new suburban area known in Japan as a “bed town” because it is conveniently located for those who commute to the cities of Nara, Kyoto, or Osaka, the cultural heart of Japan. When we scheduled the interview, she offered to pick me up at the train station. When I asked her on the phone where I should wait for her, she replied, “I will know who you are, after all not many foreigners come to our small town.” As I was walking towards the ticket turnstile, I saw someone frantically waving at me just beyond the exit. It was Ume, and she said proudly, “I told you that I would be able to find you.” Her car was one of those popular “*kei*” cars in Japan, mini subcompact cars that are known more for their fuel efficiency than for their legroom. She opened the back door for me and I climbed inside. She told me that it would be safer for me if I rode in the back because she was not a very good driver. “Driving in Florida was so much easier,” she sighs.

As we drive towards her home, she gives a short tour of their community, pointing out where she shops and what type of restaurants are available and more importantly, whether or not the restaurant is good. The development of the area started about five years ago. The buildings, the shopping areas, and even common green areas or parks were ultra-modern, sleek, and well

planned, as if you were on a movie set for a futuristic community. When we turned into her neighborhood, it was quite obvious that the urban planners were creating a romantic version of the houses found around the Mediterranean. The roofs were made with Mediterranean terracotta tiles, and the exteriors were painted in the hues of burnt orange, rust, and dark brown. It looked more like a neighborhood in the hills of the Tuscany, than in the hills of Kyoto.

The interior of the house was very western with hardwood flooring everywhere. In the living room, there was a single sofa with a pale blue slipcover on it. Against the corner of the wall were low-rise L-shaped wooden bookshelves for their television. A collection of DVDs was carefully placed on the top shelf in sequential order. The collection consisted of two complete sets of the American television shows of Full House, a situational comedy about an American family (1987-1995) and ER, a long running medical drama (1994-2009). Her husband had purchased a region free DVD player so that they could watch the shows and he bought DVDs whenever he traveled overseas so that he would have every episode from every season in his collection. The whole family would watch the episodes together, although Ume confessed that she is not really watching the show because she has to rely on the closed captions. “My husband and children will laugh as they are watching it, but I can’t laugh with them because I am busy reading.”

The living room opened into the dining room where there was a round wooden table with four chairs. On the wall between the living room and the dining room was an electric fireplace. “It really doesn’t give off much heat,” she explained as she turned it on even though it was June. In an instant, the logs started to flicker and glow. You could distinctly hear the crackling of the wood as the red light glimmered to give you the illusion of a roaring fire. On each side of the fireplace were large sliding glass doors, which were treated with curtains and valances with

sprigs of silk flowers used as accents. Outside, the back garden was overrun with big vines with very large leaves. “That’s my husband’s project. He brought seeds over from America and is growing American size pumpkins here.” What struck me about the interior of the house was that there was not a single item that is commonly found in a Japanese home. No tatami mats (straw woven mats) or floor cushions to sit on. There were no Japanese figurines, vases, or artwork on display. Her rooms were adorned with Americana-themed accessories and framed scrapbook pages, which captured a glimpse of their lives in America. Her home was decorated in what can be best described as a cross between French country and shabby chic.

I had mailed the questionnaire to Ume prior to our interview. She had promptly filled it out and sent it back to me before my arrival. She was a little taken aback when she saw that I had placed two recording devices on the coffee table. I explained to her that I had two just in case the battery should run out. I assured her we would talk in the same manner as we were talking just now: causal and friendly. She giggled and repeatedly told me how she could not get over the fact that I could speak Japanese “with a face like yours”. I also told her that I spent eight years in the Kansai (western plateau) area, so she was free to speak in the Kansai dialect. She was relieved to hear this because she thought she would have to use standard Japanese and be formal in her replies, “I thought I have to say intelligent things.”

I was briefly introduced to Ume’s husband. Ume’s husband was trained to be a medical doctor and instead of going into private practice, he decided to go straight into scientific research. He is affiliated with a large private university hospital and was usually not at home on a weekday. Her husband declined to participate in the interview because he said that his time abroad was just typical therefore, not very interesting. He did not join us in the living room when we started the interview and instead decided to sit at the dining room table and read the

morning newspaper. He seemed to be very curious about our conversation, however and would pop out of the room every now and then to bring various things that they had brought back from the United States. For an example, when Ume and I were talking about a family road trip they took while in the United States, her husband quietly entered the room with roadmaps and souvenirs they had purchased at that time, and passed them to Ume without a word. She would bow her head slightly to acknowledge the items without pausing and would then show them to me, continuing with her explanation about their trip. If they had any objects or item associated with the topic we happened to be discussing, he would quietly enter the room, hand them over to Ume, then turn around and leave. He repeated these interruptions throughout the interview, each time offering a silent contribution to Ume's talk.

Pre-Departure

Ume's plan to live in America started early in her marriage when her husband announced that he wanted to go to the United States to do research. When the children came along, Ume decided to tell their children from an early age that they would one day live overseas, so that "they had time to prepare in their hearts" for this big move. Her husband would often come home in the evening and would excitedly say, "we are going, we are going," but then his transfer orders would suddenly change and they would be transferred somewhere else in Japan instead of overseas. There were several times when Ume's family was told specifically what area they would be going to in America. She would pull out the large world Atlas from the shelf and with her children at her side they would look up the location on the map together. They would make comments to each other that it was near a certain city or region and together they would daydream what it would be like to be living there. Unfortunately, their daydreams would often evaporate when her husband would later disappointedly announce that someone else was

selected to go in his place. To the chagrin of the family, their overseas plans were pushed back repeatedly for a very long time.

Ume thought that it was perhaps the spirits who had a hand in delaying their time of departure from Japan. She did not understand the reason why the spirits would control their fate but she knew that if they had to wait patiently until it was their time, then that is what they would do. Since her husband was determined that one day he and his family would be living overseas, they would practice their overseas experience by going abroad for short vacations. It was an exercise to get a glimpse of American culture as well as to enjoy a tropical paradise with its floral soaked air and cobalt blue ocean. Many Japanese consider Hawaii to be a good location to visit if you have never been outside of Japan. Due to its proximity to Japan and the large Japanese presence that caters to the Japanese tourist, Hawaii is an innocuous exotic locale highly suitable for travel beginners from Japan. Ume thought so too and made several trips to the islands with her family. After multiple visits to Hawaii, Ume's husband decided that it was time to tackle the mainland and to go somewhere on the American continent. An opportunity arose when Ume's husband decided to attend a medical conference hosted in Orlando, Florida. Her husband told her that since they would eventually go overseas to live, they should take this opportunity and go to Orlando together to see what it would be like. The Orlando trip was a memorable vacation for Ume. She enjoyed visiting the theme parks and other Orlando attractions with her children and returned to Japan with a heavy suitcase full of Florida souvenirs and oversized Mickey Mouse dolls. Little did Ume know at that time that later on when her husband's overseas transfer finally would come through, that she would end up just two hours north of Orlando.

She knew it was fate that directed them to go to Florida, but was not sure how she felt when their opportunity to go live overseas finally arrived. She realized that her children would be able to have experiences that they could not have if they stayed in Japan and when the children found out that they were finally leaving, both of her children were looking forward to their departure. Ume, on the other hand, was not so sure. Having to experience so many false starts before, so many broken promises of an overseas transfer, she faced her departure with trepidation. Her worries were not about herself or her children. They had been preparing for this moment for a long time so she knew that somehow they would survive. Ume's primary worry was her parents and she wondered if her parents would be able to survive without her while she was gone. As an only child with elderly parents, Ume has a strong sense of filial piety, namely the Confucian teachings where the elders are obeyed, respected, and cherished. It is also the obligation of the adult child to take care of his or her parents once they have entered their golden years. At her parents' ages, it was a transitional time for Ume as the adult child to become the head of the family and take on more responsibilities as her parents became more and more dependent and childlike. She would often go into blind panic thinking that if something should happen to one of her parents, she would be too far away to return to Japan in time. She was horrified to think that she would not be able to be at their side when they needed her. Since her parents had never been outside of Japan, she was also troubled that she would cause her elderly parents to worry sick about her and her family while they were overseas. With images that America was a dangerous and unsafe country, she was not sure how she could pacify her parents. How could she instill in them that they should not be anxious about this and that they should not worry about them too much? How was she going to make them understand that it would be

okay? With everything to consider about her parents, Ume was excited to start her American life, yet was still burdened with their upcoming departure.

Ume had one full year to prepare for the move. Initially, her husband received his overseas assignment to go to Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Just prior to his departure, however, his university in Japan informed him that the sponsoring professor at Harvard had fallen ill. The University of Florida was suggested as an alternative location, but once again fate played a hand and Ume's husband was told that he could not leave immediately because he could not quit his current job at his university. He had to wait another year before he was allowed to go overseas. "For many people, going overseas for research is usually scheduled when you are in your early thirties. For my husband, he was past 40 when he was finally able to go." She was disappointed that they were not able to go to Cambridge, "Harvard is extremely well known. People would have been impressed if we were going there. When we told people we were going to Florida, they just thought that we are just going on vacation." She was also concerned about other people's opinions, especially about the people who thought that they were going to the southern part of the United States where it was more rural than the bustling metropolitan cities around the Greater Boston region.

Since Ume had a year before her departure and this was her first time to go live in the United States, she decided to take action and became very proactive in her preparation to move. She realized the importance of linguistic and cultural differences that her children might face and she poured her energy into enrolling them in programs that would expose her children to the challenges that they might experience. As she often had to do because of their father's assignments to different laboratories within Japan, she explained to her children that they would be changing schools again. She regretted that she always had to put her children through this

time after time. She was always the one to break the news to her children that they would be moving again and they would have to transfer schools. Her son and daughter were used to being transfer students by now, however, this time it would be different. This time they would be going to a place where they would not understand the language.

She reasoned that having English conversation classes at least once a week was better than doing nothing at all so she enrolled both her children into a *juku* or a cram school, a private tutoring school that offered supplemental academic classes after school and on the weekend. Her daughter was in the 4th grade, and since there were no English classes offered through the elementary schools, Ume did not have to think twice about sending her daughter to an English conversation class at the *juku*. Her daughter was placed in a class that met once a week and was taught by a Japanese teacher. Her son, on the other hand, was in junior high school, so he had an English class once a week with a native English speaker at his school. Would that be sufficient? No. She was determined that the more English classes her children could attend, the more beneficial it would be for them, so Ume also enrolled her son at the *juku*. She was glad when she found out that the *juku* offered a special class once a week designed to prepare students to live overseas. Although it was heavily advertised and promoted, in the end it turned out to be an unpopular class with her son as the only attendant. She did not mind about this, as it was a bargain for her. Her son was able to receive private lessons for the price of a general class. “It was not supposed to be a man-to-man type of class, but it was.” She guessed that the *juku* probably wanted to test market the student population to see if that type of class would be an attractive offering, but there really were not that many junior high school students who were planning to study overseas, at least not in her area. In his class, her son would sit at the table with his three teachers: a native English speaker teacher, a Japanese teacher, and a Japanese

teaching assistant. He told her fretfully that his heart was always pounding when he went to his lesson because as the only student, he had to always face so many teachers. To make matters worse, once in a while there would be a fourth teacher in training who would join his lesson as well. When she inquired about what he did with all the teachers, he reported that they would often just play cards using only English. Although the tuition for the *juku* was very expensive and Ume was disappointed with her son's class, she still thought that it was well worth it because it was a good experience to prepare the children's "hearts" to live overseas.

To prepare herself for her new American life, she found a group that offered a class for both parents and children called the Organization for Education to Live Overseas. Although a local worker's union provided this program free to its members, it was open to anyone who wanted to attend for a \$200 fee. The program was offered over the summer so that the children could also attend. The mothers and children were in separate sessions with each session consisting of other mothers or children who would share their experience of living overseas. Ume took notes during her session and quietly absorbed the stories of mothers who had been overseas. She also contacted other Japanese who were living in the United States at that time as well as talked with other Japanese returnees from her husband's department at the university hospital to gather information and to seek advice of what to pack as she prepared for their departure. She thought she did the best that she could, especially when it came to her children, to prepare for their new adventure in America.

Arrival

Another Japanese family of an international researcher at the University of Florida introduced Ume and her family to an apartment complex that was within walking distance to a shopping center. Although the apartment was far from campus, the other Japanese family highlighted the three advantages of living at that particular location: the area was zoned for one

of the preferable elementary schools in the city, it was within walking distance to the grocery store, and there were several Japanese families already living at that particular apartment. With those recommendations, Ume decided it would be a good place to live. Her apartment was roomy and not too old with a lot of nice amenities that would not be available in a Japanese apartment, such as a workout gym, clubhouse or pool. She called their trips to the pool the “day trips to Hawaii” because the pool area was lined with palm trees and it reminded her of her time in Hawaii. She was introduced to all of the Japanese families in her apartment complex and the mothers would often get together to go shopping together, prepare and share meals, or just relax by the pool with their children. She did not particularly become friendly with her American neighbors and blamed it on the transient nature of a college town, “I was friendly with the neighbor across the way. They would greet me with a hello, but they later moved away.”

Social Networks

Ume chose not to associate with Americans. She preferred to interact with other members of the Japanese community and purposely did not make any effort to meet Americans. “We did not socialize with other American families. That was my responsibility.” When her children were invited to a birthday party or a sleepover, she only allowed them to participate if the invitations came from other Asian families, such as Chinese, Koreans, and Vietnamese. Her interactions with Americans were limited to her children’s teacher and the small talk that occurs when she paid for her purchases at the cash register. Her children would tell her that she could only say, “Thank you very much for your kind teaching,” but she felt that it was an obligatory part of her greetings to the teacher, just as she showed her appreciation to her children’s teachers in Japan. She would occasionally speak to the volunteers who work for the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) program, but that was not a regular occurrence, just every now or then when they approached her.

Ume loved to dance ever since she was a little girl. She started classical ballet when she was very young and gradually progressed to ballroom dancing as she became older. When her youngest child entered elementary school, she did not know what to do with her newfound free time. She happened to see a flyer on a community bulletin board advertising a hula dancing class. Hula dancing was becoming popular in Japan at that time and since she had been to Hawaii before, the idea of dancing again appealed to her so she decided to sign up. Ume felt that hula dancing was more forgiving on your body, especially if you had health issues. She had injured her knees and ankles in classical ballet and this forced her into early retirement from her beloved dancing by the time she was in high school. Hula dancing gave her another chance to reclaim her love of dancing because with hula dancing you dance in your bare feet, therefore the need for high-heeled shoes that are required in ballroom dancing was not necessary. Also, it was not as physically demanding because you just bent your knees at a comfortable level of your choosing and used your arms to express your dance. In addition, and this is what appealed to her the most, there was no age or weight limitation to dance the hula. She could grow old and still be able to dance the hula. This is what made hula dancing an ideal recreational activity for Ume.

Galvanized with her strong passion for hula dancing, Ume decided that she would start a hula dancing class for the Japanese wives so that she could share with them the aloha spirit of Hawaii. It would be held every “happy Friday” and it was not only a dance class, but also a social gathering for the wives to get together and spend the day with each other until it was time for them to pick up their children from school. As the class grew in popularity, other Japanese would often ask Ume if an American could join their class. She would at first hesitate and mull over her answer but decided that she needed to be firm with her convictions: No Americans. Ume was apprehensive of having to interact with an American. It made her feel uneasy and

anxious. She was willing to accept Mexicans because they were also foreigners and would communicate in an “English that a foreigner would use.” She wanted to share her joy of dancing with as many people as possible and after some thought she decided that teaching non-native speakers of English would be less stressful for her. She was particularly open to accept other Asians, especially the Koreans, because they were easy to understand. “They speak a form of English that is easy for Japanese to understand. It sounds like ours. I like them.”

Despite her self-restrictive practice of trying to avoid Americans, one summer Ume did have an opportunity to interact with an American. That summer, another Japanese woman was looking for someone who could come with her to her private painting lessons, which she was receiving from a local artist. This Japanese woman did not want to take the lessons alone, so she was searching for a companion who would just accompany her to the lessons. Ume volunteered to be the other woman’s moral support and would sit in the back of the room during the lesson and watch her friend paint. The more she attended the lessons; however, the more interested Ume became about learning painting techniques and wanted to paint too. The two women negotiated with the artist and Ume was allowed to join her friend’s lesson as a student. She decided to try her hand at landscape painting and selected the water fountain that was the centerpiece at the entrance of her apartment complex as her first subject. She continued her lessons until her painting was finished.

Children

Upon their arrival, Ume quickly realized that her children could not speak English very well and agreed to place them into schools that offered ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) programs. Her daughter was in elementary school and Ume described her daughter’s English ability as being very low. “She could only say some greetings in English.” The school that was near their apartment did not offer an ESOL program, so her daughter was

assigned to a school that was located in a quiet neighborhood near the university campus. It was a large two-story red brick building with a tall brick smoke stack, a chimney that has long been dormant for many years, extending from the roof. The schoolyard is dotted with live oak trees, heavy with Spanish moss and surrounded by a chain link fence. It was an iconic image of a traditional American schoolhouse. “I took picture after picture of that school so that I can show other people that my children went to a school like this. I was happy that they went to school there.” Ume was also glad the school held graduation ceremonies just as they do in Japan at the end of the school year. It made her feel better knowing that some school traditions were the same in either country. It was a different situation for her son. “It was sad and lonely,” she said wistfully. Her son’s middle school just had a pool party and a simple good bye.

Her son was in his second year of junior high school (8th grade) when he came to America, so he had some English background from his school in Japan. Ume was a proud mother when she spoke of her son. He had started school a little earlier than the rest of his class so she was quite certain that he had the English ability of a 9th grader even though he was in the 8th grade, therefore he most likely had less trouble reading his American textbooks than his younger sister. When she looked at other Japanese families, especially those with younger children, she thought that they had a much easier time with their children’s schoolwork. She felt that if you have children in kindergarten or even first or second grade, the younger children are not burdened with a heavy homework load like her children, “When you are starting in the first grade, the children are learning to read and write with the other Americans. Speaking would be separate, but they learn the same level of ABCs.” She agonized that it was especially hard on her children because they had to keep up with the academic studies as well as their English. “By the time you are in the 4th or 5th grade, Americans already have reading and writing skills. Our children had to

cope with that type of learning environment.” She was also jealous of other families who were able to do family activities on the weekend. “Even though we lived near Orlando, we did not visit Orlando as often as the other young families. On the weekend, our children had homework to do.”

Ume and her husband would stay up late with her children to help them with their homework. She encouraged her children to do every extra credit project and report that were available so that they could succeed in that particular class. She is a firm believer that her children’s effort to do the extra credit work made it possible for them to achieve academic excellence. The sacrifices they made as a family made it worthwhile. She sheepishly explains, “the last two years we were there, the children did receive all A’s on their report card.” She credits her husband for the academic success of her children, especially when it was time for science fair projects. “All because of Papa,” she said proudly. She was pleased when she realized that they were not the only parents who helped their children and she knew at a glance, who had a father that was a dentist or a medical doctor. Even though she could not understand many of the science fair presentations, she said it was easy to spot if an adult had helped the child. “You just want to ask, did the children really come up with this?”

Ume asserts that she does not know what kind of difficulties her children had at their American schools. She speculates that they probably did not tell her because her children did not expect her to understand. Having two children at two different schools was not reassuring for Ume. Having her children at the same school would have been easier because the siblings could support each other when they were at school. “They could ask for our help when it was available but when they were at school, they had to fend for themselves.” At her daughter’s school, Ume noticed that there were two types of American girls: those who freely say things that are on their

mind and those who cannot speak for themselves. Japan is no different, but for her daughter, she was not able to express herself because she did not understand the language. Since she could not speak for herself, all Ume's daughter could do was observe in silence. Ume believes that this is also related to the fact that her children are older than most Japanese children in such situations. Her daughter would not have had to suffer if she were a couple years younger; "they probably would not have the same type of problems at school, especially when it concerns English conversation."

Between her two children, Ume noticed a change in her daughter the most. Her daughter was a student who was very secure about herself when she was in Japan. She was the type of child whom other mothers could trust because they felt that their children were in capable hands. However, when they came to the United States, her daughter was thrust into an environment where she suddenly could not speak the language. "She was treated like a baby," Ume observed, "the Americans would take care of her and do everything for her." For a long time, her daughter let others help her and she never tried to do things on her own "because she could not express herself." Ume is of the opinion that being able to speak to your friends is an important leisure activity for children. "It is not as if you could express yourself with physical motions all the time. You need words." Because of her inability to communicate in English, Ume believes her daughter became more of an introvert when she was in the United States. "I feel deep regret in allowing her to experience that," she said softly. After a period of time, her children were able to express themselves in English. It amazed her when she saw her children laughing and talking to their classmates in English. She was overjoyed and hoped that her children would one day forgive her for making them suffer with their language difficulties.

Ume was astonished when she first found out that the children had a very long summer vacation. Not wanting her children to go two or three months without using English, Ume made it her mission to make sure her children were going to take the maximum advantage of their summer vacation. First, she found a private tutor who could give English lessons for her children. According to Ume, Sally-*sensei* (teacher) was a famous teacher in the Japanese community because she had lived in Japan before; therefore she could understand some Japanese. Sally-*sensei* charged \$20 a lesson for the children and Ume would drive her children over to the tutor's home every week. It was Sally-*sensei* who suggested that the children should not just stay in the house all summer long and encouraged them to get involved with other activities. Based on the tutor's recommendation, Ume decided to enroll her children into a tennis camp and a zoo keeping camp offered through a community college in town. Deciding on which camps to send her children was the easy part, the hard part was to figure out how to register her children. She was not sure where to register nor did she know how to do the registration. When Ume inquired about this to the tutor, Sally-*sensei* picked up the phone and dialed the program's registration number. When the staff asked for Ume's address, Sally-*sensei* handed the phone over to Ume and told her to tell the recipient her address. "I really didn't know our address correctly, but Sally-*sensei* allowed me to do the talking." Once the zoo keeping program started, Ume was hoping that the children would have an opportunity to work with the animals. She had visions of her children communicating in English with their fellow campers as they tended to the animals. When the parents were invited to come and observe the children, much to her dismay, her children's responsibility turned out to be not very glamorous. They were in charge of cleaning out the pond. Unfortunately, "it smelled bad too." Not to be undermined, Ume also contacted another Japanese family who had a son in high school who happened to be a very good

musician. She asked their son if he could teach her children how to play the saxophone. The teenager graciously accepted and when Ume inquired about his fee, he said he would do it for free. When she insisted on paying him, he told her that he did not mind teaching her children for free because it would count towards his volunteer hours he needed in order to graduate from high school. Ume admired the generosity of this young man and considered him to be an honorable son of a fine Japanese family.

When her son was about to enter 10th grade, Ume knew it was time to send her son back to Japan so that he could attend high school. Ume wanted her son to graduate from a Japanese university and for her the best way to do that was for her son to graduate from a Japanese high school. Ume enrolled her son in a private boarding school that is well known to produce graduates who can matriculate into prestigious universities throughout Japan. Thinking of her parents' best interest, she decided that a boarding school would be best for her son. She did not want to burden her elderly parents with the care of teenager, nor did she want to limit her son's college prospects because he had to attend a school closer to her parent's home. Only Ume and her son traveled to Japan together. She wanted to see the school and to also help him settle into his dormitory. Ume was numb when they flew to Japan. She could not erase from her mind the vast distance that would soon separate her from her first born. She knew that her son must have been scared too and she sought for the proper words to reassure him that everything would be fine. She had to be strong for both of them. When she finished helping him set up his room, she had to muster all her strength and willpower to make her way back to the airport. She wanted to stay in Japan, but she also had obligations to her husband and her daughter who were waiting for her return to Florida. Her flight back to the United States was somber and her heart was filled with despair. Ume did not know which was worse, worrying about her elderly parents or

worrying about her son being alone in Japan. She cried and sobbed the entire trip back to Florida.

English Language

Ume found out that a local church offered free English classes every Monday and Wednesday. For the first half of year of their stay, Ume would diligently study and review the English lesson in order to improve her English conversation skills. “I had to do my best for the children’s sake.” Her husband’s research often kept him at the hospital so it was Ume’s responsibility to tend to the needs of the children. One time she received a call from one of her children’s schools requesting she come to the office. Her husband could not go with her that day, so arming herself with a Japanese English dictionary, she marched into the school to accomplish her tactical mission. Once she arrived at the school, she was told that a form was missing and that she just needed to fill it out. She took her time, carefully looking up the words in the dictionary, and was able to fill out the necessary form for her child. She did not feel intimidated since there was an ESOL program at that school. She assumed that the school was used to international parents because the office staff never pressured her by asking if she was finished yet. “They watched me with understanding eyes. So even though I was in the office filling it out for a long time, they never once thought that it was strange.” She turned in the completed form and patted herself on her back for accomplishing at least one parental duty on her own. Mission accomplished! It was indeed a proud moment for Ume.

As the school year progressed, she learned that the forms were basically asking for the same information and she was able to fill them out a lot quicker because she did not have to rely on her dictionary to look up every word. She was becoming confident in her English reading and writing, however listening and speaking was still a challenge for her. When she went into the school’s office to register her children for after school programs or activities, she could only

communicate by stringing words together to let the school know what she wanted to do. “All I wanted to say was to please allow my child to participate.” Often times she could not understand what the school was trying to tell her but instead of backing down she would just repeat her request over and over again, wearing down the office staff until her request was approved. “They were probably denying my request, but I’m proud that I really did do my best.”

Ume was aware that she was weak in her English conversation skills, but she thought that she could manage because as a housewife, she did not need to use English to accomplish her daily chores. She soon found that this was not the case when she went shopping. “Even the workers at the supermarket would talk to you. I could understand what they are saying if they were asking routine things like paper or plastic, but sometimes all I heard was a blur, so I didn’t know what they were talking about.” Ume also challenged herself to establish eye contact when she greeted someone. This is a custom that is not found in Japan and Ume had a hard time remembering to do this when she spoke to someone in English. She would be embarrassed to look into a person’s eyes and would instantly avert her eyes to another focal point away from the person’s face. She was pretty sure that it made her appear to the American that she was not paying attention to them because her eyes were randomly looking around the person instead of at his or her face.

Even with her limited understanding of English, when her children were craving fast food, she was brave enough to use the drive-thru at a hamburger joint that was located near their apartment. At this particular fast food restaurant, the drive-through was not the typical two-way intercom system of a microphone and speaker, where communication is often muffled, making it difficult to understand even for a native English speaker. This particular fast food restaurant located near Ume’s apartment, allows the driver to pull up to a window where you place your

order to a person. “It was convenient because it was a person and you could use hand gestures to communicate. All you had say was double cheeseburger and show two fingers and then say burger and show only one finger.” She was pleased when they received the correct order because it was proof that the American worker was able to understand her. As they would drive away, it was always her young daughter who would point out Ume’s mistakes. She would remind her mother that she needed to have flat intonation and to remember to try to enunciate the R’s. “Mother, it is burger, not *baa-gaa*.”

After half a year, Ume noticed that her children were able to understand English better than she did so she decided it was time to give her children the translation responsibilities that she had to carry until now. At the school’s open house, she instructed her children to write down anything that the teacher announced and to make sure they translated the important points for her so that she could follow the teacher’s presentation. The problem with this was that her children now understood English through English, and no longer had to translate what they heard in English into Japanese in order to understand. This was very different from the way English was taught in Japan when Ume went to school. Grammar translation was the method often utilized, and the students were trained to translate English into Japanese. Her children, on the other hand, were taught English through English so they did not have the skills nor did they need to translate everything into Japanese for comprehension. This frustrated Ume. It was wonderful that her children understood English but it irked her that they did not know how to translate. “They were unreliable. Why were they going to school?”

Family

Her family enjoyed living in a college town. She was proud of the college sports teams and the nationwide recognition of the team’s mascot. When her daughter’s friends who lived in various parts of America would recognize the team’s mascot, she was not the least surprised.

“Everyone should know about the Gators.” As a true sports fan, she planned for her family to attend a college basketball game. She donned her family with the school colors and they all went to root for the college team. They were impressed with the college’s sports facility and agreed that it was much better than many of the professional sports arenas in Japan. She made sure to remember to bring back the college team flags that you often see around the town on game day. They are usually attached on the windows of a car, one on each side, sticking out like the horns of a beast and driven down the road with the flags proudly flapping in the wind.

Ume did her best to cook Japanese food for her family. She took a rice cooker with her from Japan hoping to be able to find Japanese ingredients there. She ended up buying ingredients from a Chinese market, because a Japanese store was not available in her area, and had to be creative with her cooking when certain ingredients were not available. She viewed the younger mothers with disgust when they would complain that their relatives in Japan would send them a care package filled with many Japanese things. She was annoyed when the younger mothers would find fault in what their relatives would send them because for Ume, she did not receive any packages from home at all. “When I heard that, I would think how unappreciated they are.” Since her parents were elderly, they either did not have the energy or could not remember to do things for her like the other families. She also suspected that her parents probably could not write in English, thus they could not address the package to her.

A friend in Japan contacted Ume while she was in Florida for some advice about Japanese cooking. Her friend’s daughter was leaving as an exchange student to America and wanted to cook a Japanese meal for her host family. Since rice is a staple for a Japanese meal, the mother was worried that the host family may not have a rice cooker. Ume advised her friend to buy a portable microwave rice cooker in Japan but to buy the rice in America. It would be too heavy

for the daughter to bring an electric rice cooker and rice in her luggage. Ume assured her friend that the California short grain rice was just as delicious as the rice in Japan and the portable microwave rice cooker will do a good job. When her friend could not find one at the store, Ume allowed her friend to borrow the one she had in Japan. Her friend explained that her daughter did not know what entrée to make to complement the rice. Ume knew that Americans who have an interest in Japan would be willing to try anything, but the problem was that her friend's daughter did not know her host family assignment yet. She advised her friend to make any type of teriyaki skewers because most American would eat them. It would be a good choice if her daughter used chicken or beef because the flavors are not too exotic for them. Ume was pleased to know that her friend turned to her for advice and she was happy that she was able to give expert advice to someone who was about to depart Japan.

When they first arrived in America, Ume's husband was intrigued with a cooking appliance that is often advertised in the middle of the night when infomercials rule the airwaves. The features that were introduced through the impassioned sales pitch by a charismatic salesman mesmerized him and he promptly ordered a rotisserie oven. It was a convenient small electrical appliance that would perfectly roast a beefsteak or grill Japanese style yakitori chicken. Ume often used this appliance when she prepared her family's dinners. It was one of the marvels of American ingenuity and Ume highly recommended it to other Japanese families.

Around Thanksgiving, Ume was invited by her English teacher at the church to celebrate Thanksgiving with the teacher's family. Inspired by the Thanksgiving dinner she shared with her international classmates, Ume decided that they would also roast a turkey at home. Her husband wanted to start roasting the turkey in the middle of the night because he heard that it took a long time to thoroughly cook a turkey. He brought out the small rotisserie oven and as

usual placed the large turkey inside. It was quite evident very quickly that a large turkey would not fit inside the rotisserie oven. Bang! Bang! Bang! The turkey legs kept hitting the side of the oven as it was spinning on the rotating skewer. Ume held the legs down and forced the turkey into the rotisserie, slightly damaging the heating elements. Deciding that it could be a health hazard if the turkey was not cooked properly, Ume transferred the turkey into the kitchen oven. Her husband jabbed the turkey with a thermometer and monitored the temperature of the bird as it was roasting in the oven as if the turkey was a critical patient of his. Even though he started early in the morning, Ume said that she did not know that it would literally be an all day affair. They did not have their Thanksgiving dinner until very late at night.

Another Japanese family convinced Ume that she should buy a live tree for Christmas. Lured by her friend's description of the wonderful aroma emitted from a live Christmas tree, Ume also wanted to get into the American holiday spirit and seized this opportunity to buy a real Christmas tree instead of an artificial tree. Not realizing that the supermarket, which is located only five minutes away by foot from their apartment, also sold Christmas trees, Ume heeded the advice of the other Japanese family and went across town to a home improvement store to make their purchase. They rummaged through the stacks of trees and selected a very large tree. After all, she was in America where the bigger the better is the norm. They carried the tree to their car and were faced with a dilemma. She did not know how to get the tree home. Her husband somehow managed to shove the tree into the car, which was fine for her, however, the problem was that now her daughter did not have any room to ride in the car. Not knowing what else to do, she made her 5th grade daughter wait at the store all by herself until she could return to pick her up. She needed her husband's help to get the tree out of the car when they got home, so her daughter had to wait. On their way home, Ume noticed that other people had their trees mounted

on top of their cars. Every car she saw had the trees tied down onto the roof of the car. They were the only ones who had a tree inside of the car, with branches sticking out of the windows. Ume did not realize that the store would help you mount the Christmas tree on top of the cars. The following year, however, she was much wiser and knew what to do. She just pointed at the tree and then to the car and said “please”.

Ume’s family also decided to go to Key West, Florida during their first Christmas break from school. They looked at the map they brought from Japan and determined that it was not too far away. They hopped in their car and started to drive. The children constantly peppered them with the universal question whenever a family travels by car: “Are we there yet?” When they reached the half way mark after driving for over several hours, they came to the realization that the Japanese map was perhaps not to scale. When they finally arrived, it was a little cooler than they expected. They were disappointed that the weather was not milder since it took them an extremely long time for them to drive down there. “It was really as far south as you can be in America.” In addition, the color of the ocean was winter gray and the weather was bad. Ume was beginning to think that this Christmas holiday trip was a mistake. When they woke up on Christmas morning, the staff at the hotel did not greet them with the usual good morning, but with a Yuletide greeting of Merry Christmas. Ume observed that the people around her were in very good spirits, and everywhere they went they were greeted with this holiday cheer. “It suddenly struck me. Just by that Christmas greeting alone, I thought this is America!”

Returning to Japan

Ume’s husband was given a time limit of two years to complete his research in Florida. This time limit was set by his research supervisor in Japan and Ume initially agreed to go to the United States with the understanding that they would absolutely return to Japan after two years. As fate would have it yet again, two years later that supervising professor transferred to another

university taking with him his grants and funding for the lab. It took a long time for the university to find a replacement, placing Ume and her family in limbo. Her husband no longer had a lab to which he could return and continue his research, which means they could not go home. Six months later, another professor from a different university accepted her husband as a member of his research team and was able to provide funding. Finally, they were told that they could return. That half-year extension was financially difficult for Ume. They used their own savings to finance their stay in the United States, and they had only budgeted enough money to support them for two years. Also during this six month waiting time, Ume's husband did not have a research job to return to in Japan, so their financial future was also unknown. It was a financial and emotional relief for Ume when they were told that they could go home.

After being in Florida for two and a half years, Ume had accumulated household goods that she needed to sell. Luckily, another family was due to arrive from Japan, so Ume was able to sell kitchen items and their car to the new family even before that family departed Japan. The other household items were either donated or sold to other Japanese families, "With a small exchange of money. Very smoothly." She became a bit melancholy when she talks about her move back to Japan. There were many items that they wanted to ship back with them, but financially it was not feasible for them at that time so Ume had no choice but to leave them. Her husband's books took priority and they were shipped back to Japan. "Yes, because we are not with a company! It is at our own expense!" She was jealous of the business families who were transferred overseas by the company. She heard from these returnees that they were actually able to save money while they were in America. It upset her when she heard that other families were able to achieve financial gains while they were overseas. For those returnees, their husbands received a higher salary and an extra stipend to live overseas. For Ume's family, they

went overseas with their own pocket money. “We lost all our savings,” she complains, “It couldn’t be helped.” She refers to the families who went overseas with the company’s money as “the rich families” who had no problem flaunting their overseas experiences.

Besides the monetary issues, Ume did think that the extra half-year was beneficial for her daughter. “It was good for her progression in her English ability.” Also it was helpful for her daughter, because now when they return she can be classified as a *kikokushijo* (returnee student). Ume explains that in order to be classified as a *kikokushijo* from an educational standpoint, a student needs to be overseas for a minimum of three years. She was worried that her daughter would not be able to gain access to the special curriculum that schools offer for returnee students. “Fortunately, by luck of the Japanese academic calendar, we were told that two and a half years would be okay.” Her daughter was deemed eligible to take the placement test and she was able to enter a special school for returnees.

When they first returned, the three of them stayed at Ume’s parents’ house near Kansai International Airport in Osaka. Her son was a senior in high school now and was still away at the boarding school, so it was only Ume, her husband and her daughter who returned to Japan after two and half years. Within a couple of days, Ume went to look for a place of their own. Her husband’s new position was at a university in the city of Nara, and her daughter was accepted at a private school well known for its international curriculum at Tambabashi City, in Kyoto. Ume decided to rent a house that would be a good central location between the two cities and then take her time to find a home they could buy. After renting for a year, they bought their current house three years ago.

Since she was only away for two and half years, Ume did not really see any big changes in Japan, except for the names of the banks. While she was gone, there was a governmental

financial reform and all the banks had either merged or had changed their names and she found this to be an inconvenience. She did notice however, that there were more smokers in Japan than in the United States. Since no one in her family smoked, she felt that it was more comfortable for her in the United States because of the no smoking policy that is enforced in many areas. When it came to smoking, Japan was lagging behind. She wished Japan would be like other health conscience nations and become more assertive with the enforcement of a no smoking policy. Overall, Ume did not experience any difficulties readjusting back into her life in Japan.

Back in Japan

Reflecting back, Ume is amazed that she was able to live in the United States even though she could not speak the language. When she initially returned to Japan, she was so happy that she could communicate in Japanese. She became aware that she was more comfortable speaking in Japanese and how effortless communication had become since she had returned to Japan. “I was astonished that I could speak a lot of Japanese.” She describes her conversations in English at best to be short lived. She liked to go shopping at Victoria’s Secret™ and the number one difficulty she had was not selecting the merchandise, but the fact that she did not understand English. If a sales clerk would ask if she needed help, Ume could only reply that she was just looking. But in Japan, it was a different matter. She could talk as much as she wanted with a Japanese sales clerk. “When shopping in America, I would become small emotionally and I would have anxiety about shopping. It was not until I returned to Japan that I realized this.”

Shopping became pleasurable for Ume again and when she moved into her new home, she immediately started to buy furnishings and decorations for the house. Her inspiration came from a home décor magazine that she subscribed to from the United States. When she found out that the magazine would not mail issues overseas, she searched the internet and found a company that for a fee would lease a post office box in Tampa and would send the mail to your Japanese

address once a month. It was through this magazine that she ordered the slipcovers from America to cover her new Japanese sofa.

Ume was relieved when she found out there was an American warehouse style store called Costco™ not too far away from her home in Amagasaki City. When she went to the store, she was able to replenish many of the American items she had left behind. One item that she really regretted leaving was an artificial Christmas tree that she bought specifically to bring back to Japan. Her daughter was now used to always having a large tree at Christmas time, so Ume bought the largest one available at Costco™. When she got it home, the shape of the tree was fine, but her daughter complained that it was not tall enough. Ume went back to the store and bought a second tree. Now at Christmas time, they display two trees at the same time. One is placed on the floor and the second one is placed behind the first tree on a tall table so that vertically it would look like one large tree. Another custom they enjoyed at Christmas time was to decorate both inside and outside the house with twinkling lights. Decorating for Christmas is more of a commercial enterprise in Japan where many large stores and downtown areas will create breathtaking winter wonderlands with beautiful illuminated designs. Decorating private homes is very unusual, but on Ume's street, using multiple strings of lights they purchased at Costco™, her whole family would pitch in and help decorate the outside of their home.

Ume has influenced some of her neighbors to join in on their festivities. She has a neighbor at the end of her street, who has never had an opportunity to live overseas. She has never been abroad, not even as a tourist, therefore she does not share the same cross-cultural experience as Ume. However she embraced Ume's American influenced lifestyle and tries to experience American culture vicariously by participating in Ume's festivities. This neighbor

adorned the outside of her house with illuminations at Christmas time as well as carved jack-o-lanterns for Halloween.

Like many of the holidays imported from the west, Japan has been selective, often times for commercial purposes, in which traditions of a particular holiday will be celebrated. At Halloween time, for example, you will see myriad of black and orange merchandise of Halloween themed decorations, t-shirts, socks, handkerchiefs, and office supplies at many of the stores in Japan. In addition, the confectionary shops will display delicious Halloween themed cookies and cakes in their glass showcases to appeal to the sweet tooth of their customers. What you will not see is Halloween candy and costumes. Small bags of Halloween candy are available, but it is more for personal consumption than to share with the little spooks and goblins that come knocking at your door. The traditions that were not imported or celebrated for Halloween are to carve a pumpkin, dress up in a costume, and go door to door for trick-or-treating. To counter the lack of fun Halloween activities her children enjoyed while they were in Florida, Ume gave it her best to recreate an American Halloween experience. Because the Japanese pumpkin is much smaller and denser than its American cousin, her husband bought seeds from America and grew American pumpkins and other vegetables in their backyard. He was cognizant of the planting time for the pumpkins and made sure they were perfectly ripe in time for Halloween. At Halloween time, Ume, her neighbor across the street, and a third neighbor who lived in England before would get together at Ume's house for a pumpkin carving party. Afterwards, their children would dress up and go trick-or-treating, but only among their three homes. Though only the selected few participated, Ume's effort to continue the Halloween her children experienced while they were Florida has been admired by others. Although none of

the other neighbors participate, “The neighbors have told me that they look forward to our activities every year.”

Her daughter is now enrolled in a secondary school that is affiliated with a large private university in Kyoto. Her high school now is a lot closer than the junior high school she attended when they first arrived. It is now only three train stations away: a seven-minute train ride and a 10-minute walk to get to school. Two thirds of the student body consist of *kikokushijo* (returnees) with the remaining third comprised of students who have never lived overseas. Ume’s daughter thinks that the reason why the one third who have never been abroad are at her schools is because they just have a strong interest in English. Ume does not think that this is the only reason. She speculates that the non-returnee children only think that they can speak English, but when they study in the same classroom as the returnee children, they realize that they really do not speak English at all. “They give up. They know that they have lost to the returnee children. At lunchtime, the students are speaking in English. Speaking in English is the norm. The non-returnee students are usually very surprised.” The school seems to be a good match for her daughter. She is thriving well and any concerns Ume had for her daughter when they were in Florida have dissipated. “She is a lot better now, she is like the person she was before.”

Ume is often asked for advice from parents of the students at her daughter’s school. Every year, her daughter’s school will have a big senior school trip overseas and the school sends out a list of items that the student should pack to take with them. She could not believe that the information she was told when she was in high school was still being dispensed to the parents of today. Some of the common questions she annoyingly receives every year are about hair products. The school advises the students to take Japanese hair products with them because they

are more agreeable with Japanese hair and parents would ask her if packing shampoo and conditioner for their children is a necessity. She tells the parents that it is not necessary to take hair products like that because they are available in the United States, often times the exact same brands. Parents would also ask about packing rice in their children's suitcase so that they will have rice to eat on their trip and she would tell them that they do not need to because there is delicious rice in America. She shakes her head just to think of all the students who have packed heavy unnecessary items in the luggage. "Even now they are giving this kind of precaution in the school trip instructions." She is embarrassed for her daughter's school, especially since it is considered to be an international school. These international school trips are taken every year, yet the questions are always the same. She does not understand why the school never learns.

Every year, the other returnee wives who Ume met in Florida get together at Ume's house. The other returnees now live throughout Japan and sometimes it became a hardship for many of them to travel to visit their friends. Since Ume is near Kyoto, she is considered to be centrally located and has easy access to the train systems. When a long term Japanese resident of Florida visits her family in the city of Kobe, she makes a conscious effort to visit Ume and spend a day with her. Once Ume is notified when her Florida friend would be in the Japan, she sends out invitations to her group of returnee friends to coordinate a big reunion at her house. She always looks forward to seeing her Florida friend because, "whenever she comes back for a visit, I can feel the breeze of Gainesville." She also looks forward to seeing her returnee friends and catch up with their lives.

Identity

Ume thinks she has changed in a positive way, especially her perspective in life has grown and she knows what is important in her life now. When she was in Florida, the volunteer spirit of the Americans made a lasting impression on her and she wished that Japan would also share in

this giving spirit. “The Japanese are not like that. They often think more about the money or about receiving money for their work.” Ume first witnessed American volunteerism when she attended the free English classes that were offered by the local church. She was amazed that the church would be willing to offer classes for free. “The volunteers from the church would offer outstanding English classes at no charge. And they even serve you tea!” Often times when the volunteers would be taking their children to the park, they would call and invite the students to join them. Ume would also be invited to the homes of the volunteer teachers when they hosted Christmas and Thanksgiving parties. “They did everything and we did not pay them anything. I thought it was amazing.”

Now that she has returned to Japan, she has much more appreciation of what the church was able to offer her in terms of English education. In Japan, she sends her daughter to a commercial English school where one lesson is 45 minutes long and is held four times a month for a fee of about \$120. Compared with her free lessons she received from the church, this was now an outrageous price for her. “It makes you wonder about our country,” she complains under her breath. Ume was not familiar with the protestant religion before she went to the United States and she still is not quite certain what it means to be a member of a church, however, she did notice the strong influence the church had over its congregation. “I was also surprised at the power of a church, a Christian church.”

Due to her admiration of the volunteers she saw in the United States, Ume feels very strongly that she wants to contribute as much as she can for Japan. She reminisces about a time when her hula dancing class in Florida was invited to a retirement home and to a kindergarten class. Initially, she did not want to perform in front of an American group; however she finally relented and had a wonderful experience of performing their hula dances. What influenced her

to change her mind was that another Japanese woman married to an American, pointed out to Ume that the Japanese are viewed by Americans as usually too quiet and reserved. Ume was told that if the Japanese could shed that image and become livelier and be more dynamic, then the Japanese in the United States could be the foundation to build a bridge between Japan and America. The other Japanese woman told Ume that her group could be an agent to help build this bridge. This comment made Ume change her attitude and she was able to embrace any opportunity to be able to dance for others. Through her dance group, all of them were able to have a lot of different but enjoyable experiences that would not have been possible. She was also glad to know that the students who took her class in Florida have continued to study hula dancing at various dance studios in Japan. It was satisfying for her to know that her goal to share the joy of hula dancing with as many people as possible was still growing and thriving.

Ume was impressed with the way American society accommodated those with physical disabilities. In addition, she admired how active and independent people with disabilities are in America. There are modes of transportation, such as buses and cars, specially designed to accommodate someone in a wheelchair. Wherever she went, not only did she see handicap parking spaces, they were all located nearest the entrance of the building. For Ume, this was a sign that even those who are physically challenged are not just homebound, they are able to go anywhere with a wheelchair. In Japan, there are some handicap parking spaces, but often times a non-handicap person would park there. “I shout to them that I think they should be penalized financially for doing that.” Ume remembers seeing people in wheelchairs at the airport. They were not just at the airport to see someone off, but were travelers themselves, people going to different places. “People in wheelchairs are filled with life as they travel.” For Ume it was a sight that you do not see in Japan. She described it as having the mentality that “I am

handicapped so I should stay inside my house.” This compassion for those who have disabilities moved Ume that she wrote about it in an essay she had to write in her English class at the church. It is framed and displayed in her house.

Reflections

When asked if she would like to go overseas again, she smiles sadly, and says no. Ume is an only child who married the eldest son. This means that there are two sets of grandparents whom Ume and her husband need to provide support and care. Ume’s mother is not doing very well now and it takes Ume two hours by train to go to her mother’s house. Going overseas at this time, even for a short vacation is out of the question. “If anything should happen, I could get there quickly now, but if I were in America, it would be a little too far to be practical.” If she did not have this situation with her parents, then she would like to go again, but as her parents grow older year after year, her dream to return to the United States become dimmer and more discouraging. “This is my reality now.” The years are passing by her too and the older she gets she is becoming more convinced that a person should be young when they live overseas. “When you go overseas when you are young, you have no fear, but when you are older, you can’t speak English and you have to think how you would adapt.”

Ume has fond memories of her time in Florida. The Japanese people she met there all agreed that there is not another town more livable than Gainesville. For Ume, the Japanese community there was a place where people were able to get together, share, commiserate, and help each other embark on new adventures. Ume strongly believes that the friendships she established in Florida further enhanced her American life and made her stay there more enjoyable. Ume’s daughter was little at the time, so Ume does not think that her daughter really understood or appreciated her overseas experience. Now that her daughter is older and has met

other returnees, Ume thinks that her daughter has finally realized what she has been saying all along. “There is no other place like it.”

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS

The research questions that were investigated were to explore what social networks are established and maintained for cultural and linguistic purposes both in Japan and the United States and to examine what role social networks play for Japanese return migrants in their cultural identity in both countries. This study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to collect and analyze the data to examine the role that social networks play in the migration process of Japanese return migrants. This chapter reports the results from the data analysis. A full report of the results from the questionnaire can be found in the tables located in Appendix E. The chapter will present the findings in the same order that was formatted in the questionnaire starting with responses about their language information, with continuation of their social network information, identity information, and ending with their culture information.

Language Information

Language is crucial to the very existence of social networks. Without communication between individuals, social networks cannot be established or maintained. The two language issues the returnees faced while they were in the receiving culture were maintenance of L1 and the acquisition of L2.

Japanese Language Maintenance in the United States

Six of the returnees did not view efforts at language maintenance as a necessity for the entire family, especially not for the adults. The returnees made no conscious effort to maintain their Japanese language; therefore, none of the returnees were specifically involved in language activities or educational programs that were designed for adults to maintain their Japanese. The returnees, however, did exhibit behaviors that supported language maintenance through the access of their social networks (Table 5-1).

In terms of language usage, the primary language spoken in the family while residing in the United States was Japanese for all the participants. All of them spoke Japanese to their husband and children 100% of the time. Sakura-WI responded by saying that she occasionally spoke English to her husband and children, but only when she was in a situation that required her to do so, e.g., in front of other English speakers. The children of the returnees did not speak English to their parents. Three of the returnees reported that their children would seldom speak English to them, and the remainder said that they did not speak to them in English at all. All of the children spoke Japanese to their parents.

Table 5-1. Japanese language information

In the USA	N/A or Blank	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
<hr/>					
I spoke JPN with my spouse.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					100%
No Interviews (2 Total)					100%
Collectively (8 Total)					100%
I spoke JPN with my children.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					100%
No Interviews (2 Total)					100%
Collectively (8 Total)					100%
Our children spoke JPN with us.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					100%
No Interviews (2 Total)					100%
Collectively (8 Total)					100%
Our children spoke ENG with us.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	50%	16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)			100%		
Collectively (8 Total)	25%	37.5%	37.5%		

In addition, the questionnaire results from Social Network Information 3 revealed that five out of eight returnees were in contact with their social networks in Japan while they were in the United States by writing letters, talking to them on the telephone or through the Internet (See Table 5-2). Furthermore, seven out of eight returnees also occasionally or often chose to associate with other Japanese speakers in the United States (JSN2). Ume-WI was the only one to express that she seldom did this; however, this was contradictory to her interview where she stated she preferred to be with other Japanese, thereby making a possibility that her answer was most likely an error.

Table 5-2. Japanese social network language information

In the USA	N/A or Blank	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
<hr/>					
I kept a close connection with JPN through my family and friends.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		16.6%	16.6%	33.3%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%		50%
Collectively (8 Total)		12.5%	25%	25%	37.5%
Associated with JPN speakers.					
With Interviews (6 Total)			16.6%	16.6%	66.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)				50%	50%
Collectively (8 Total)			12.5%	25%	62.5%

Table 5-3 shows results from the questionnaire about the language skill activities the adult returnees engaged in in order to maintain their Japanese while they were in the United States. The findings revealed that the returnees were not highly interested in most of these activities for language maintenance. There were only three activities that were participated in to a certain extent by two or more of the returnees. The highest participation figure was watching Japanese videos with five out of the eight (62.5%) returnees responding that they did do this in their families. Reading Japanese books or magazines and newspapers on the Internet came in second

and third respectively. Four out of five of the returnees answered that they read books or magazines with two stating that they read a Japanese newspaper on the Internet. The purpose of these reading activities was for information purposes only. Ayame-WI was the only one to respond that she occasionally listened to Japanese radio on the Internet. For the rest of the language skill activities suggested on the questionnaire, all of the returnees responded that they did not participate in those activities at all.

Table 5-3. Japanese language activities

In the USA	N/A or Blank	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
Watched JPN videos/DVDs.					
With Interviews (6 Total)			50%	16.6%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)					100%
Collectively (8 Total)			37.5%	12.5%	50%
Read JPN books or magazines.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		16.6%	33.3%	16.6%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%		50%
Collectively (8 Total)		12.5%	37.5%	12.5%	37.5%
Read JPN newspapers on the Internet.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		33.3%	33.3%		33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)		50%	25%		25%
Listened to JPN radio on the Internet.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		83.3%		16.6%	
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)		87.5%			
Engaged a private tutor.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		100%			
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)		100%			
Maintained a blog on the Internet.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		100%			
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)		100%			

Table 5-3. Continued

In the USA	N/A or Blank	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
Maintained a website.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	100%				
No Interviews (2 Total)	100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	100%				

Japanese Language Maintenance for the Children

The focus on first language (L1) maintenance was directed to the children. As mothers of school-age children, the returnees were very active in trying to support and maintain their children’s Japanese while they were in the United States. Because all of the participants knew that they would have to return to Japan and enroll their children into Japanese schools, they expressed that some disadvantages of living in the United States were the children’s lack of Japanese-speaking ability and a delay academically in their Japanese language development. Tsubaki-NI wrote: “My children are not proficient in either Japanese or English.” Due to this common belief that living overseas was detrimental to their children’s language development among all of participants, it was a priority for their children to learn or maintain their Japanese. Ume-WI elucidated, “As an adult, I already know Japanese. It is the children’s Japanese I worry about.” Similarly, Sakura-WI, who had a toddler and a baby, was not concerned about her language maintenance, and focused on teaching her children Japanese instead. Four of the returnees (50%) with school-aged children sent their children to supplementary Japanese schools that were held on Saturdays. These families were able to enroll their children into these schools, which are sanctioned by the Ministry of Education (MEXT), due to their close proximity and driving accessibility to a Japanese school nearby. Only Sakura-WI in her interview stated that she occasionally home schooled her children in Japanese.

The returnees were very vigilant in trying to expose their children to Japanese through videos, books, and Japanese playgroups. All of the participants engaged in showing Japanese videos or DVDs to their children. Due to the cost, no one had a satellite service for a Japanese channel, but Ajisai-WI and Sakura-WI stated that they occasionally watched Japanese television at other people's homes. The majority of them responded that they asked their relatives in Japan to tape children's shows for them and had them sent to the United States on a regular basis. Mokuren-WI initially brought some videotapes with her when she arrived in the United States thinking that it was sufficient for her children to watch. She said that since they were on a tight budget, they could not afford to pay for cable television, so her family was limited to watching three channels that could be obtained through the TV aerial antenna. She realized that she needed more Japanese videotapes when her children became bored with the American television shows and asked her parents to send some them more. Sakura-WI, whose children were under the age of three, also reported that they watched a lot of videos. She comments, "The children were so young and they were learning Japanese words all the time, so I had videos sent over from Japan." Ayame-WI was the only one who had access to a small Japanese shop just thirty minutes away from their home in Colorado. In addition to Japanese food items, the shop also rented videos to their customers. As Ayame described the video tapes, "I am sure they were illegal recordings because they were just tapes that someone recorded off the television, but we would often rent those tapes."

English for Adults in the United States

When asked to rate their English speaking ability on a 4-point scale (poor, fair, good or very good) all of the returnees rated themselves as poor speakers of English. Sakura-WI revealed that when she was in Japan, she was afraid of English. Sakura also did not take any English lessons prior to her departure from Japan, although there were plenty of opportunities to

do so. Her rationale was that she expected to just travel overseas and come back speaking English. “I have returned” she said, “And you guessed it, I still cannot speak English, only a little.” When Mokuren-WI arrived in the United States, she took English classes because she felt the need to improve her conversational skills. She said, “If I have the time to carefully read what is written, then I am fine. However, when it comes to speaking English then I am useless.”

As previously reported, all of the returnees attended an English class to help them learn English. Their commitment to learning English, however, did not seem to be very strong with five of the returnees (62.5%) stating that they occasionally went to English class and the rest of them seldom attended class. Since all of the returnees were mothers, the children’s schedule took priority over their second language acquisition efforts. Ume-WI’s had the oldest children in the group and she diligently pursued her English education, as she explained it, “for the sake of my children” during the first six months of their arrival. Ume’s children were in the 4th and 8th grades and would often stay up late into the night to complete their homework assignments. Ume lamented, “When you are starting in the first grade, the children are learning to read and write with the other Americans. Speaking would be separate, but they learn the same level of ABCs.” Ume’s children had to study with older American children, “by the time you are in the 4th or 5th grade, the Americans already have reading and writing skills.” She would stay up late with her husband to help them with their assignments. In half a year, she explained that her children could understand English better than she could so Ume was able to cease her English education and pursue other interests with her free time.

English for the Children

When the returnees were in the United States, there were a total of 19 children with 15 of the children belonging to the returnees with interviews and four children belonging to the mothers with no interviews. The ages of the returnees’ children ranged from newborns to age 14

with no child enrolled over the 10th grade (Figure 5-1). The longest enrollment in an American school was by children of Momiji-NI and Tsubaki-NI, who were enrolled for six years. Each line in the figure represents one child and the arrowhead on the left denotes when the child entered school with the arrowhead on the right representing the time the children left. A compilation of the children's schooling is on the bottom third of the figure. These lines with a single arrowhead represent the age groups of the children. As seen in the figure, out of 19 children, eight of the children did not go beyond kindergarten while they were in the United States. The remaining eight of the children were in elementary school (K-5) when they arrived in the United States, with five of them matriculating from elementary school to middle school and one who made it to the high school level.

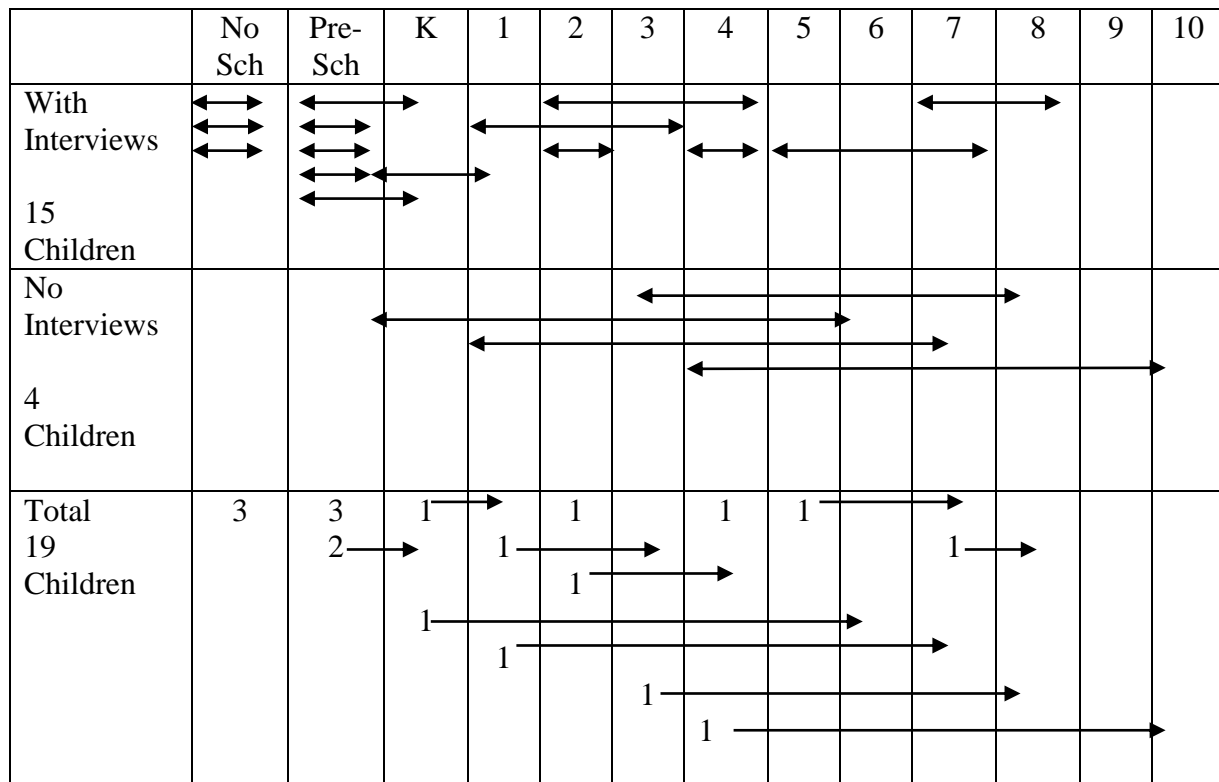


Figure 5-1. Duration of time spent in American schools

The majority of the returnees (seven out of eight) enrolled their children into local American schools with four out of five of them enrolling their younger children into a local American daycare center. A little less than half of the children of the returnees with interviews (Table 5-4) who were enrolled in kindergarten or higher were enrolled in special ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programs. The other eight children were not enrolled because an ESOL program was either not available at their schools or the child entered kindergarten or first grade after spending time in an American pre-school. For the children of the mothers with no interviews, one child did not enroll and was directly placed into a mainstream kindergarten class. Three other children were initially enrolled, but then exited out of the ESOL program and were placed into a mainstream classroom. Ayame-WI had the most unusual arrangement where she was allowed to join her children in their morning ESOL class in Denver, Colorado. All parents were encouraged to attend the class together with their children as an ESOL teacher broadcast on a television monitor in the classroom taught the class remotely.

Table 5-4. Children enrolled in ESOL programs

	Did Not Enroll	Initially Enrolled and Exited	Enrolled and remained
With Interviews (6 Total) 15 Children	8 Children 53.3%		7 Children 46.6%
No Interviews (2 Total) 4 Children	1 Child 25%	3 Children 75%	
Collectively (8 Total) 19 Children	9 Children 47.3%	3 Children 15.7%	7 Children 36.8%

Ajisai-WI, Kiku-WI, and Sakura-WI placed their young children into daycare. One reason all three of them placed their children into an American daycare center was to expose their children to an English-speaking environment. These returnees wanted their children to take advantage of living in the United States and to learn how to speak English. Ajisai-WI explained,

“I knew that we would be in America for two years and I wanted to be able to say later that we did this, that we sent them to an American school.” Another reason for Kiku-WI and Sakura-WI was that they were both pregnant during their stay in the United States. Kiku’s second child was born in New Haven, Connecticut and Sakura’s third child was born in Gainesville, Florida and they needed childcare help for their older children when their babies arrived. Ajisai-WI placed her two boys into daycare so that she would have more time to associate with other Japanese mothers. Ajisai did not drive in the United States and felt housebound and isolated from other Japanese women. Due to maternal guilt, she decided to place her two young boys into daycare in order to attend English conversation classes and meet other Japanese women.

The returnees were cognizant of the language struggles their children were having at school. Ume-WI and her husband helped their children with their assignment late into the night as well as on weekends. Ume was envious of other families with younger children who were not burdened with academic work. Ayame-WI’s oldest son often got into fights with his classmates at his daycare because he could not communicate well in English. Her son would often come home from school miserable and crying because he could not explain to his teacher that he did not start the fight. The schoolyard fights ceased only after his English proficiency improved.

The children were encouraged to play with other English-speaking children. The returnee mothers would allow their children to visit other classmates’ homes for birthday parties, sleepovers, or play dates. Some of the classmates were Americans and others were international children from the children’s ESOL class or from the mother’s English conversation classes. Ume-WI, on the other hand, preferred that her children associate with other Japanese or Asian children. She was not comfortable with her English language proficiency and preferred to associate with families who spoke English as a second language. Ayame-WI marveled how

quickly her children were able to speak in English when she did not feel that she had made much progress in her own L2 acquisition.

Languages upon Returning to Japan

English in Japan

Upon their return to Japan, the primary language spoken in the family was still Japanese. This was the same result that was found for the language use of the families while they were in the United States. There was no increase of using English among the family members upon their return to Japan, although some did report that their Japanese was sprinkled with English. Upon return, the children were speaking only in Japanese to their parents. Any effort to continue with their English education waned when they returned back to Japan. It was revealed that all of the returnees sent their children to English conversation classes when they returned but did not further pursue any English programs for themselves. Only one returnee sought to continue her study of English by meeting with an American teacher for an hour once a week.

Table 5-5 shows the results from the question items that asked the returnees about their English language use and maintenance now that they had returned to Japan. Overall, there was a noticeable decrease in the undertaking of maintaining their English. Unlike the strong push of showing Japanese videos to their children while in the United States, only two returnees responded that they would often show American DVDs to their children. Ajisai-WI and Sakura-WI would buy American children's videos whenever they had a chance, i.e. when their husband, any family member, or friend would travel overseas. The highest participation figure was found for reading an English newspaper on the Internet with 37.5% of the returnees reporting that they occasionally or often engaged in this. For the rest of the activities listed in Table 5-5, the findings show low responses or no responses for any participation or engagement in English maintenance activities.

Table 5-5. English language maintenance activities

In Japan	N/A or Blank	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
<hr/>					
Watched ENG videos/DVDs.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)		50%	33.3%		16.6%
Collectively (8 Total)		37.5%	100%		12.5%
			50%		
Watched ENG TV through cable or satellite.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)		50%	50%		
		87.5%	12.5%		
Read ENG books or magazines.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)		66.6%	16.6%		16.6%
Collectively (8 Total)		50%	50%		
		62.5%	25%		12.5%
Read ENG newspapers on the Internet.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)		33.3%	16.6%	16.6%	33.3%
Collectively (8 Total)		100%	12.5%	12.5%	25%
		50%			
Engaged a private tutor.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)		83.5%		16.6%	
Collectively (8 Total)		62.5%	100%	12.5%	
			25%		
Listened to ENG radio on the Internet.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)		100%			
		100%			
Maintained an ENG blog on the Internet.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)		100%			
		100%			

There were also low responses in accessing English speaking social networks when the participants returned to Japan (Table 5-6). For the returnees with interviews, only Ume-WI hired a private English tutor for her children and enrolled her daughter in a *kikokushijo* school (provisional schools with special programs for returnee children). The purpose of these provisional schools is to provide Japanese linguistic and cultural accommodations to the *kikokushijo* as they transformed back into the mainstream culture. The two returnees with no interviews both enrolled their children into *kikokushijo* schools. Momiji-NI and Tsubaki-NI were in the United States the longest, averaging five to seven years, and returned to Japan when their children were in secondary education. The majority of the returnees seldom associated or did not associate with English speakers in Japan.

Table 5-6. English social network language information

In Japan	N/A or Blank	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
Associated with ENG speakers.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		62.5%	16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)		50%	50%		
Collectively (8 Total)		75%	25%		
Enrolled in English conversation schools.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		83.3%			16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%		50%
Collectively (8 Total)		62.5%	12.5		25%
Enrolled children in <i>kikokushijo</i> schools.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		83.5%		100%	16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)				25%	
Collectively (8 Total)		62.5%			12.5%
Enrolled children in international schools.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		100%			
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)		100%			

Summary on Languages

The primary language for the families while they were in the United States was Japanese. Although some of the participants did try to use English in their family, it was not sustainable and did not continue. The focus of first language maintenance was directed to the children. Language exposure for the children thus was accomplished through videos, books, and music. There was a strong dependency on videos and this was often supplemented throughout their stay with additional shipments from Japan. Mokuren-WI was the only one to report that she regularly visited a Japanese video rental shop near her town in Denver for her family. Half of the participants sent their children to a Japanese Saturday school. These participants lived in metropolitan areas and lived within close proximity to the school. The other half of the participants either lived too far away from a school or had children who were not yet of school age at that time. The returnees who did not enroll their children into supplemental Japanese schools were aware of the linguistic and cultural challenges their children were facing when they attended school in the United States, however, they considered these difficulties to be part of their families' integration process and expressed hope that in the end there would be a beneficial outcome for the children later.

While the returnees were in the United States, all of them attended English classes that were offered by the local churches and taught by volunteers. The draw to these classes was that they were offered free of charge, free babysitting service was provided and membership in the church was not required. The attendance to these English classes did last long due to family obligations and was subsequently stopped. Once the participants returned to Japan, they did not pursue any additional English courses for themselves. They did, however, enroll their children into English conversation classes. For those who were able to acquire a region free DVD player in Japan that was capable of showing non-Japanese DVDs, American and Australian DVDs were

shown to maintain their children’s English ability. Additional English DVDs were collected whenever a person they knew would travel outside of Japan.

Social Network Information

Identifying Social Networks

In order to identify the social networks for the participants, the returnees were asked on the Social Information 1 section of the questionnaire to list five family members or friends with whom they associated the most and to provide some information about them. The returnees had to determine the structure of the relationship, whether they were good friends, acquaintances, minor acquaintances or family and they also ranked the strength of the relationship based on the importance of their close ties. The results show that all the individuals listed Japanese friends or family members as their top three social network ties with whom they had the most direct interactions and close-knit bounds (Tables 5-7 and 5-8).

Table 5-7. Social network information of Japanese return migrants with interviews

Social Network	Relationship	Duration	Nationality	Distance	Rank of Importance
Ajisai-WI					
1	Good friend	5 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
2	Family	33 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
3	Good friend	8 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
4	Good friend	8 yrs	South Korean	Lives out of town	Average
5	Good friend	5 yrs	Japanese	Lives overseas	Important
Ayame-WI					
1	Good friend	10 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
2	Good friend	4 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
3	Family	40 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
4	Family	15 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
5	Good friend	15 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
Kiku-WI					
1	Good friend	7 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
2	Good friend	22 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
3	Good friend	27 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
4	Good friend	22 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
5	Good friend	6 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important

Table 5-7. Continued

Social Network	Relationship	Duration	Nationality	Distance	Rank of Importance
Mokuren-WI					
1	Good friend	6 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
2	Good friend	7 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average
3	Acquaintance	3 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average
4	Acquaintance	25 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
5	Good friend	30 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
Sakura-WI					
1	Good friend	9 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
2	Good friend	6 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
3	Good friend	6 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
4	Good friend	4 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
5	Family	12 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
Umi-WI					
1	Good friend	13 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average
2	Good friend	10 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
3	Good friend	2 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
4	Good friend	30 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
5	Good friend	2 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Minor
1	Good friend	13 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average

Table 5-8. Social network information of Japanese return migrants with no interviews

Social Network	Relationship	Duration	Nationality	Distance	Rank of Importance
Momij-NI					
1	Acquaintance	40 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
2	Good friend	4 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average
3	Good friend	2 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
4	Good friend	15 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
5	Good friend	32 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
Tsubaki-NI					
1	Acquaintance	10 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
2	Good friend	6 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average
3	Good friend	20 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
4	Good friend	12 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
5	Minor Acquaintance	1 yr	USA	Lives out of town	Important

Most of the participants identified their important social networks as good friends or family members. Mokuren-WI, Ume-WI, and Momiji-NI also listed people as good friends but whose relationship was ranked as average instead of important. Except Ajisai-WI, everyone else

listed their social networks as currently living in Japan. Ajisai was the only one to list a Japanese friend who still lives overseas. Only two participants, Ajisai-WI and Tsubaki-NI, listed a non-Japanese member. Ajisai-WI included a South Korean friend whom she has known for eight years as her fourth listing. She listed that particular person as a good friend, but ranked the strength of their relationship as average. Tsubaki-NI described an American person as her fifth listing. She has known this person for a year, rates the American as important, but defined her relationship with the American as a minor acquaintance. Another relationship that Tsubaki-NI describes as important is categorized as an acquaintance.

Pre-Departure Social Networks

In the questionnaire, the returnees were asked who they had turned to the most for information about living in the United States (Table 5-9) and were asked to rate their response on a 4-point scale (Not at All, Seldom, Occasionally or Often). Five out of the eight responders (62.5%) noted that they often relied on a Japanese social network for this information. Sakura-WI and Momiji-NI answered that they seldom turned to their Japanese social network for this type of information. None of the returnees sought to obtain information about living in the United States from American social networks. The majority of the returnees (75%) also expressed that they did not contact people from any other nationality about living overseas. Only Ajisai-WI responded that she seldom did this. Momiji-NI stated that she had often turned to books for information about living overseas.

Returnees were also asked how much of their time they spent with certain people before leaving Japan (Social Network Information 2). The purpose of this question was to see if the returnees sought to establish a relationship with Americans or other international social networks living in Japan before their actual departure for the United States. All of them revealed that they did not associate with any Americans or any other nationalities before leaving Japan. This

response was also supported from Social Network Information 1 of the questionnaire (Table 5-10), where seven out of eight of the returnees replied that they did not seek advice from Americans living in Japan and 100% of them did not correspond with Americans in the United States. A summary of the findings can be seen in Table 5-9 and Table 5-10.

Table 5-9. Social networks consulted for information about living in the USA

Social Networks Before Leaving Japan:	N/A	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
Japanese					
With Interviews (6 Total)		16.6%			83.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)	50%		50%		
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%		62.5%
American					
With Interviews (6 Total)	66.6%	16.6%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	75%	12.5%			
Others					
With Interviews (6 Total)	83.3%		16.6%		50%
No Interviews (2 Total)	50%				(e.g. books)
Collectively (8 Total)	75%		12.5%		12.5%

Table 5-10. Pre-departure social networks

Social Network Before Leaving Japan:	N/A	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
Japanese					
With Interviews (6 Total)			16.6%	16.6%	66.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%	50%	
Collectively (8 Total)			25%	12.5%	62.5%
American					
With Interviews (6 Total)	83.5%	16.6%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	87.5%	12.5%			
Others					
With Interviews (6 Total)	100%				
No Interviews (2 Total)	100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	100%				

In preparation for their departure, seven out of eight returnees indicated that they talked to Japanese people who had lived overseas to ask for advice (Table 5-11). Within that group, half of them corresponded with Japanese who had specifically lived in the United States, with five out of eight returnees reporting that they contacted Japanese who were currently living in the United States. Tsubaki-NI was the only person to say that she did not talk to anyone who had had overseas experiences before her departure. All responded that they did not contact any Americans who were living in the United States for advice. Only Mokuren-WI reported that she did seek advice from Americans living in Japan.

Table 5-11. Social networks for pre-departure preparation

		Yes	No
Talked to people who have lived overseas?			
With Interviews	6 Total	100%	50%
No Interviews	2 Total	50%	
Collectively	2 Total	87.5%	
Talked/corresponded with Japanese who were living in the USA at that time?			
With Interviews	6 Total	66.6%	33.3%
No Interviews	2 Total	50%	50%
Collectively	2 Total	62.5%	37.5%
Talked/corresponded with Americans who were living in the USA at that time?			
With Interviews	6 Total		100%
No Interviews	2 Total		100%
Collectively	2 Total		100%
Talked/corresponded with Japanese who have lived in the USA before?			
With Interviews	6 Total	50%	50%
No Interviews	2 Total	50%	50%
Collectively	2 Total	50%	50%
Sought advice from Americans who were living in Japan?			
With Interviews	6 Total	16.6%	83.3%
No Interviews	2 Total		100%
Collectively	2 Total	12.5%	87.5%

Kiku-WI indicated that she often relied on an American about questions pertaining to the United States, although she did not offer any further evidence if she actually did this in her interview. When pressed to elaborate further, Kiku-WI chose not to provide any more information about the matter. Kiku-WI and Sakura-WI both stated that they first talked to people who had been to America and had since returned to Japan. Around the time of Kiku's departure, she knew of two people who had been overseas. One was her mother-in-law and the other person was from a family who lived overseas for business purposes. Sakura went around and asked for advice in Japan from people who had lived overseas and her husband talked to people who were currently living overseas. There were others who contacted with Japanese currently residing in the United States. In addition to their social networks in Japan, five of them corresponded with Japanese who were living in the United States at that time through e-mail or a local Japanese community website.

Japanese Social Networks in the United States

In order to ascertain which social networks the returnees depended on to help them adjust to their new life in the United States, the same questions that were asked about who they turned to the most for information about living in the United States, and who they associated with for an extended period of time, were asked as a second part to Social Network 1. Once again the returnees were asked to rate their response on a 4-point scale (Not at All, Seldom, Occasionally or Often). The difference this time is that their response now reflects the social networks they interacted with once they arrived in the United States (Tables 5-12 and 5-13).

Concerning the question of who they would turn to the most while in the United States when they needed information, the questionnaire data revealed that all the returnees often or occasionally relied on their Japanese social networks within the United States for information about cultural and linguistic issues and would seldom approach an American for this type of

information (Table 5-12). Prior to departure, social networks in Japan played a prominent role whereas once they arrived in the United States; the Japanese network within their local area while they were in the United States took over as their major source of information. Reliance on any American social network was not evident in the first part of the question, however on the second part of the question, the time spent associating with their non-Japanese social networks showed a difference in responses once the returnees started their lives in the United States. Four out of eight returnees stated that they occasionally or often spent time with Americans. The rest of the group, five out of eight, changed from not associating with Americans at all while they were in Japan to reporting that they seldom associated with an American social network in the United States. Seeking advice from other nationalities in the United States also showed a slight difference in response with two of the returnees now responding that they occasionally or seldom reached out to other international social networks.

Table 5-12. Social networks consulted for information about living in the USA

Social Networks in the United States:	N/A	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
Japanese in the US					
With Interviews (6 Total)					100%
No Interviews (2 Total)				50%	50%
Collectively (8 Total)				12.5%	87.5%
Americans in the US					
With Interviews (6 Total)			50%	33.3%	16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%		50%
Collectively (8 Total)			62.5%	25%	12.5%
Others in the US					
With Interviews (6 Total)	66.6%		16.6%	16.6%	
No Interviews (2 Total)	100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	75%		12.5%	12.5%	

The returnees were asked to further break down which social network they would access for certain types of information while they were in the United States in Social Network Information 2 (Table 5-13). For information about adjustment, seven out of eight of the returnees reported that they accessed their Japanese contacts in the United States for information about adjusting to their life overseas. Mokuren-WI was the only returnee who responded that she seldom accessed her Japanese contacts in the United States for this type of information. This could be a reflection of Mokuren's situation since she arrived in Cincinnati, Ohio without knowing anyone or contacting anyone there and would often depend on her husband's Chinese colleague for information about the area. The response on the reliance for advice on problematic matters from their Japanese networks in Japan changed while they were in the United States with seven out of eight of the returnees reporting that they would not consult with their Japanese network at all about problems in the United States with one returnee responding that she would seldom contact her Japanese network in Japan. As seen in Table 5-7, a change in the responses can be seen when the same question is posed about consulting Japanese networks in the United States for problematic matters. Once again, seven out of eight expressed that they would seek consultation on problematic matters in the United States from the Japanese network in the United States with one returnee, Ume-WI, stating that she seldom did this. There was also a change of accessing their American social networks in the United States with two out of eight reporting that they occasionally consulted Americans for problems and three of them reporting that they seldom did. A change in their access pattern can be seen as the returnees modified their reliance on the exclusive Japanese-only networks in Japan prior to departure to the Japanese social network in the United States with periodic access to their American networks. In terms of emotional support, the majority of the returnees (seven out of eight) responded, ranging from

seldom to often, that they would turn to their family and friends in Japan. However a higher majority (100%) also reported within the same response range that they would turn to their family and friends in the United States for emotional support.

Table 5-13. Social network information in the USA

While you were in the USA	N/A	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
I relied on my JPN contacts in the US to help me adjust.					
With Interviews (6 Total)			16.6%	33.3%	50%
No Interviews (2 Total)				50%	50%
Collectively (8 Total)			12.5%	37.5%	50%
When there was a problem, I consulted with other JPN living in Japan.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	50%	16.6%		16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	62.5%	12.5%		12.5%
When there was a problem, I consulted with other JPN living in the USA.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%		16.6%		66.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)				50%	50%
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%		12.5%	12.5%	62.5%
When there was a problem, I consulted with Americans living in the USA.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		50%	33.3%	16.6%	
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%	50%	
Collectively (8 Total)		37.5%	37.5%	25%	
I turned to my family and friends in Japan for emotional support.					
With Interviews (6 Total)			33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)		50%			50%
Collectively (8 Total)		12.5%	25%	25%	37.5%
I turned to my family and friends in the USA for emotional support.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)				50%	50%
Collectively (8 Total)			50%	37.5%	50%

The Japanese social network became a default American information source for the majority of the returnees. Although the social network that played an active role in providing information about living in the United States was predominantly a Japanese social network, a different access pattern can be seen depending on where the Japanese social network was located, either in Japan or in the United States. Once the returnees arrived in the United States, access to the Japanese social network in Japan lessened as the Japanese social network in the United States became increasingly prominent (Table 5-13). The returnees relied more on their Japanese social network in the United States when they needed advice or information about living in the United States or when they encountered a problem while in the United States. In addition, the returnees stated that they associated mainly with other Japanese in the United States with half of the group joining a local Japanese social association (Table 5-14).

In their narrative, they described how a Japanese family already living in the United States would initially help them adjust to their American life. For some, the initial contact with a Japanese social network was predetermined through the husband's work or occupation. In Kiku-WI's case, a person from the same Japanese university where her husband worked in Japan was already living in Connecticut on the same exchange program. Kiku's husband was his replacement, so his apartment, car, and all the necessary items were passed over to her family. Ume-WI also established contacts within the Japanese community in Florida through her husband's workplace. Her husband was a visiting researcher at the university hospital, and the families of other visiting physicians from Japan banded together and would help each other get settled into the local community. Ume said that through this connection, her family was introduced to an apartment complex with a large Japanese presence of temporary sojourners. An

established Japanese community at her particular apartment complex was able to give them information about the local schools, shopping, and other general cultural advice.

Table 5-14. Japanese social network information when in the United States

In the USA	N/A or Blank	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
<hr/>					
I socialized mainly with other Japanese.					
With Interviews (6 Total)				16.6%	83.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)				50%	50%
Collectively (8 Total)				25%	75%
I joined a Japanese social association.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%		16.6%	16.6%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)	100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	50%		12.5%	12.5%	25%

In an indirect manner, Mokuren-WI expressed that when she first arrived in Ohio, a Japanese woman who lived in the same apartment complex took her around town to different supermarkets to show them where they could find Japanese food and ingredients and to give them a brief introduction to American food products. She mentioned that the Japanese community that lived in her apartment complex would provide this service to newcomers in the area but was not sure how or if it was coordinated.

For two of the returnees, access to the Japanese social network was not easily obtained. In Sakura-WI's case, her husband left for the United States one month prior to her departure in order to scout out living accommodations for them. His company did not provide an apartment for them, so her husband had to search and find one on his own. Ajisai-WI also mentioned that when her family arrived, they did not know anyone in town and lived in a hotel for a month and a half until they could find a place to live. It was by chance that Ajisai and her husband happened to drive by a new apartment complex that was partially completed. She was able to

move into a brand new apartment and recommended her apartment complex to other Japanese wives and mothers she met at a free English as a second language class offered through the local church. As a result, Ajisai started a trend of other Japanese families moving into the same apartment complex.

Throughout her stay in the United States, Ajisai took on a leadership role of establishing social groups to be more welcoming to Japanese newcomers to the area. This drive stemmed from her personal experience when she first arrived to the United States. She voiced her bitter experience on how difficult it was for her in the beginning to be accepted by the women in the Japanese communities. She explained that within the Japanese community, the social hierarchy that is based on factors such as the ranking of the university that you attended, the status of your husband's work, and the region where you come from (e.g., a metropolitan area or a more remote area) determined which social circle within the Japanese community you are eligible to join. She could not believe that the social hierarchy system that exists in Japan was transplanted and observed by the Japanese community in the United States. For Ajisai-WI, being in a different country should be an opportunity to appreciate and learn about another culture, not a time to apply social customs from home. She viewed her fellow returnees as "narrow minded" and was appalled by their ethnocentric views. Sakura also echoed this sentiment by saying it was very difficult for her to join the Japanese housewives group in her area of Florida. Others perceived her as a rude person because she kept forgetting proper Japanese customs. She said that she would forget how to properly introduce herself, and her greeting style would offend the other members of the community. She explained that it made it harder for her to adjust to her American life as fellow Japanese ostracized her; this action denied her any means to approach an active Japanese community. With no Japanese social network to access, she felt very isolated.

American Social Networks in the United States

Although the returnees responded in their interviews that their children had American friends, it was not the same result for the mothers (Table 5-15). Four out of eight of the returnees stated that it was sometimes difficult to meet Americans and five out of eight marked seldom on the questionnaire when asked if they had made any American friends.

Table 5-15. American social network information in the United States

In the USA	N/A or Blank	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
I made American friends.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		16.6%	50%	16.6%	16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)			100%		
Collectively (8 Total)		12.5%	62.5%	12.5%	12.5%
It was difficult to meet Americans.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	16.6%	16.6%	50%	
No Interviews (2 Total)			100%		
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%	37.5%	

Ume-WI took full responsibility for not associating with Americans. She would briefly greet her children's teacher at school or would say hello to a friendly neighbor across the way, but other than that, she purposely did not become socially involved with Americans because she felt that she could not communicate in English well. Kiku-WI also reported that she did not associate much with her American neighbors nor did she feel that there were a lot of opportunities to meet Americans. Others would also mention that they would greet their children's teachers in the morning, but would not establish a relationship with any of the other American parents. Ajisai-WI said, "I never had an opportunity to speak or associate with Americans. It was not that I did not want to associate with many Americans. I did not have the words to speak to them." Ajisai also speculated that she was not successful in meeting Americans because she did not earnestly put any effort into it because she was housebound with

two young children and no car. Others also expressed that they really did not have a good opportunity to meet with Americans. Their interactions with Americans would be limited to the public domain such as with schoolteachers, the apartment's maintenance man, or the cashier at the store. When they did have an opportunity to associate with Americans in a social setting, it was generally through their husband's contacts and it was usually for a social gathering of other people from their husband's workplace.

International Social Networks in the United States

Another social network that played an important role for the participants in the United States was an international social network. This type of network was not covered in the original questionnaire, but surfaced in their narratives. This social network was comprised of people who were not originally from the United States and they were all international speakers of English. All of the returnees who participated in personal interviews attended free English classes offered by the local religious organizations in their area. These classes are popular with the returnees who have children. In addition to the free English lessons, the church also offered a free babysitting service and membership to the church was not required to attend the English classes. Ajisai-WI felt at ease to speak to other people from her English class and would sometimes get together for lunch with the other international women after class. As she said in her interview, "I would only speak to others like me. People from overseas." The international classmates of Kiku-WI would meet once a week for their children to have an international playgroup. She also became a parent volunteer at her daughter's ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) kindergarten class and was able to meet other international parents through her involvement. This was a similar situation for Ayame-WI. She said that all the international parents became friends through their children's ESOL class. She became particularly friendly with another mother from Ukraine. She was able to visit the Ukrainian's home many times, share meals, and

their children would play together. As she remarked, “We both did not speak English well and we really did not understand each other, but we became friends.”

Ume-WI was more proactive in her choice of social networks and would consciously select her associations with various members of different social networks in order to avoid Americans. Ume stated that when her children were invited to birthday parties, she would only allow them to go to the party only if other Asian friends invited them. Invitations from her children’s American friends were declined. In another example, Ume, who is an avid dancer, started a free hula dancing class for the other Japanese wives in the area. The class was held at her apartment every Friday and it provided an occasion for the Japanese women to get together as well as learn a tropical dance skill that was not commonly taught in Japan. A couple of times, she would have other international wives participate in the class, but she would not let any Americans join her class. She said in her interview that when Americans would ask if they could join the class, she always refused their request. She asserted in her interview, “Not Americans. They could be Mexicans because they are foreigners and it would be English that foreigners would use. It would be less stressful. Koreans are easy to understand. They speak a form of English that is easy for the Japanese to understand. It sounds like ours.” Sakura-WI also felt at ease talking to other visiting Koreans when she trying to adjust to her American life. Sakura, who felt that the Japanese community was excluding her to a certain extent when she initially arrived she said, “Sometimes I talked with Koreans. There was a person from Korea who helped me a lot.”

Social Networks upon Returning to Japan

Follow up questions of the questionnaire in Social Network Information 4 concerns social networks of the participants upon their initial return to Japan. The format is very similar to the questions they answered prior to departure and once again the returnees were asked to rate their response on a 4-point scale (Not at All, Seldom, Occasionally or Often). Survey results showed

another change from the reliance of the non-familial Japanese social network in the United States to more dependency on the social network of family and friends in Japan (Table 5-16). Their response in regards to the consultation with the Japanese living in the United States modified with 100% of the returnees responding with the answers of not at all or seldom. The same results held true for consulting with the Americans living in the United States with 100% of the returnees reporting that they no longer accessed their American social networks. For the question item of who would they turn to for emotional support, seven out of eight of the returnees responded that they would look to their social networks in Japan. On the other hand, there is amendment in the number of returnees who would still access their friends and families in the United States once they have returned to Japan. Five out of eight answered that they would still access their friends and families in the United States with three of the returnees closing their access completely. This is a change from the six of the returnees who reported that they would reach out to friends and families in the United States when they were living there.

Their answers for participating in a social association or organization for returnees were spread out. Only two returnees responded that they were actively involved, two more stated that they seldom were involved with the remaining four answering not at all. Unlike the active involvement in the various social networks of Japanese returnees in the United States, the participants of this study did not necessarily join a returnee social network once they returned to Japan. Instead, the friends and families of the returnees prior to their initial departure once again became important social networks for them.

The last part of the Social Network Information 4 section in the questionnaire also asked the returnees to comment on their social networks now that they had been in Japan for a minimum of 12-18 months. Keeping with the same format of questions the returnees were asked

to rate their response on a 4-point scale (Not at All, Seldom, Occasionally or Often) with the results shown in Table 5-17.

Table 5-16. Social network information upon returning to Japan

Upon Returning to Japan	N/A	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
When there was a problem, I consulted with JPN living in the USA.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	50%		
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	50%	37.5%		
When there was a problem, I consulted with Americans living in the USA.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	50%	50%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	50%	50%			
Collectively (8 Total)	50%	50%			
I turned to my family and friends in Japan for emotional support.					
With Interviews (6 Total)			12.5%	12.5%	75%
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%		50%
Collectively (8 Total)			25%	12.5%	62.5%
I turned to my family and friends in the USA for emotional support.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%		33.3%	50%	
No Interviews (2 Total)	50%	50%		25%	
Collectively (8 Total)	25%	12.5%	25%	37.5%	
I meet/joined a social association for returnees.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	16.6%	33.3%	16.6%	16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)	100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	37.5%	12.5%	25%	12.5%	12.5%

In the question items of consultation with Japanese friends and family whom they met in the United States or with their American friends or family in the United States or Americans living in Japan, all of the returnees once again responded with seldom or not at all. These figures have not changed from the returnees' initial return to Japan. Similar findings were reported for

the question item about consulting American friends or family in the United States. Once again, there were no differences in the reported figure with 100% of the returnees not accessing their American social network at all. A possible new social network of other returnees in Japan was introduced into this section of the questionnaire to see if the participants associated with other Japanese who have lived overseas. When asked if they consulted with other returnees in Japan, all but one (seven out of eight) of them said seldom or not at all. In their interviews, the returnees stated that in regards to membership in a returnee association or organization, there was no change in the involvement of the participants from when they initially arrived back in Japan. The findings showed that there was no difference in the social networks established or maintained from their initial re-entry to Japan and their time in Japan now.

Sakura-WI mentioned that it was difficult to meet with other returnees. She thought that the reason was due to the housing situation in Japan. Japanese houses are small and often times do not have any parking spaces for visitors. She felt it was easier to get together at someone's house in the United States than it is in Japan. In addition, she observed that since American houses have more space, there is enough room for the children to play on their own in another part of the house, thus allowing the adults to interact with limited interruptions from the children. Ajisai-WI mentioned that there were three other returnee families living in her neighborhood. She explained that one family lives about two houses down from her, the second family lives across the way, and the third family lives one street over. Even though there are other returnee families living nearby at a walking distance, she did not associate with them.

Table 5-17. Social networks in Japan

In Japan Now	N/A	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
When there was a problem, I consulted with JPN living in the USA.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	50%		
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	50%	37.5%		
When there was a problem, I consulted with Americans living in the USA.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	50%	50%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	50%	50%			
Collectively (8 Total)	50%	50%			
When there was a problem, I consulted with other returnees living in Japan.					
With Interviews (6 Total)		33.3%	50%		16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)		50%	50%		
Collectively (8 Total)		37.5%	50%		12.5%
When there was a problem, I consulted with Americans living in Japan.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	50%	16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	50%	37.5%	12.5%		
I am active in a social association for returnees.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)	16.6%	16.6%	33.3%	16.6%	16.6%
Collectively (8 Total)	37.5%	12.5%	25%	12.5%	12.5%

Maintaining the relationships that were formed while in the United States also became a weaker the longer they had been back to Japan. On the survey in Social Network 4, only three responded that they maintained contacts with the Japanese still in the United States and no one sustained any connections with the Americans they met in the United States. Ayame-WI said

that she was in contact with the Japanese people from her apartment complex in the United States when she first arrived in Japan, but now she does not correspond with them at all. Just as Ayame, Mokuren-WI did not keep in contact with the people she met in America. Kiku-WI also reported she does not keep in touch with her friends in America due to the time difference between Japan and the United States. Ajisai-WI and Ume were the only two returnees who kept in contact with the Japanese friends they made in Florida. They tried to get together at least once a year with their group of Japanese friends whom they met in the United States. They would travel from all over Japan to Ume's house near Kyoto because it is a centrally located area of Japan to reminisce and catch up on their lives. Ajisai elaborates, "When you have this type of opportunity that fate has given to you and you meet people who share the same experience of living overseas, you want to meet with them again. I really enjoyed my stay over there and even now I enjoy seeing the people I met over there again. I am still friends with them now."

Summary of Social Networks Information

Upon arrival, the participants relied on a Japanese social network in the United States for information about cultural and linguistic issues. Americans were initially seldom consulted, however, as the participants started to adjust to their lives in the United States, three of them reported that they occasionally spent time with Americans. The majority of the participants did not make any American friends because it was difficult to find opportunities to establish relations with Americans due to their lack of English skills. For the majority, a Japanese social network was prevalent even in the United States.

In lieu of establishing American social networks while they were in the United States, the interviews revealed that the returnees built a cross-cultural network of other international migrants. This international network comprised of other migrants to the United States and the returnees encountered the other migrant women through their children's school or at the English

classes they attended. The common themes that cut across the international network was that all members of the intercultural networked shared similar migration experiences, were all mothers of similar aged children, and were not native speakers of English. The findings showed that the returnees identified more with the members of the international network and found communication in English with other international migrants to be easier than communicating with Americans. In addition to the Japanese network in the United States, the international networks were well regarded by the returnees to provide information, emotional support and cultural support in the context of their migration experience.

Over all, the social networks for the participants in the study prior to departure were comprised of only Japanese members. Before embarking on their journey overseas, the participants sought information regarding living overseas only from other fellow Japanese. The majority of them talked to other Japanese who had lived overseas before and half of them specifically contacted Japanese who had lived in the United States before. None of the participants established any relations with Americans or other international people in Japan or in the United States prior to departure.

Upon arrival, the participants relied on a Japanese social network in the United States for information about cultural and linguistic issues. Americans were initially seldom consulted, however, as the participants started to adjust to their lives in the United States, three of them reported that they occasionally spent time with Americans. The majority of the participants did not make any American friends because it was difficult to find opportunities to establish relations with Americans due to their lack of English skills. For the majority, a Japanese social network was prevalent even in the United States.

Identity Information

Self-Identification

The questions in the survey in Identity Information 1 asked about their identities and how the participants perceived themselves before leaving Japan, while they were in Japan and upon returning to Japan. The results revealed that all of the returnees identified themselves as Japanese before leaving Japan, while they were in the United States and upon returning to Japan. When asked on the survey if they considered themselves to be a bilingual person, no one identified herself to be bilingual at any point in time. Sakura-WI said that she would never consider herself bilingual. “The other Japanese may think I may think I am bilingual because I can speak a little English but it is only a couple of words.” When asked if they consider themselves to be bicultural, the majority of the responses were negative but there were some affirmative answers. Ajisai-WI considered herself to be a bicultural person when she was in the United States, but did not view herself in that manner now that she had returned to Japan. Sakura-WI also considered herself as a bicultural person and continued to identify as a bicultural person even in Japan. She did emphasize, however, that she only considered herself bicultural when compared to others in her small town. Since the question allowed multiple answers, two of the returnees also labeled themselves as foreigners while they were in the United States.

Returnee Identity

For the response in Identity Information 2, two of the participants considered themselves as a returnee even when they were in the United States while six of the participants identified themselves as returnees when they returned to Japan. Tsubaki-NI was the only person to refer to herself as a returnee before leaving Japan. In a second part of Identity Information 2 where the returnees again had to choose from a 4-point scale, three participants identified themselves as a returnee now that they had been in Japan for a while. When the question was re-worded and

instead of using the word “returnee” for their identity, they were asked if they are glad to be considered as an international person, five of them agreed while three of them seldom gave it any consideration. The term “returnee” was perhaps easy for the participants to identify because there is a specific word in Japanese (*kikokusha*) to describe a person who has been overseas and now has returned. *Kikokusha* (帰国者) is a common word in the Japanese vernacular to use when any Japanese travels overseas and returns. *Kikoku* is a verb that means to return to one’s country and *sha* means someone of that nature. Together, the compound word becomes a noun for returnee.

Cultural Identity

Identity Information 1 also asked the participants to describe their overseas experience while they were in the United States and their re-entry experience when they returned to Japan. Their re-entry experience once they were in Japan was further divided into their initial return and how they view themselves now. While in the United States, seven of the participants strongly identified themselves as Japanese with Ajisai-WI reporting that she seldom did. When asked again if they still identified themselves as Japanese now that they have returned, seven of them affirmed that they did with Kiku-WI now reporting that she seldom does. One item in this section of the questionnaire showed a remarkable swing in the returnees’ responses. Seven of the returnees (87.5%) felt that they had a lot in common with the other Japanese while in the United States. Upon their initial return, however, a big change can be seen with only two responding that they still felt this way. Now that they have had time to resettle in Japan, the number of affirmative responses have changed again with eight returnees reporting that they have a lot in common with their fellow Japanese.

Six of the returnees were proud to be Japanese and five of the returnees were glad to be born Japanese. Upon returning to Japan, only five of the returnees felt this way. None of the returnees tried to hide their overseas experience from their Japanese peers, but that was not the case of other family members. Sakura-WI said, “I do not hide my overseas experience from other people, but my son is probably hiding his experience because he has decided not to speak in English anymore.” The majority of them had no negative feelings towards other Japanese while in the United States with Momiji-NI responding that she occasionally did. The results were the same for the returnees beginning stages of their return and continues even now, however, the one person who responded that she occasionally had negative feelings toward other Japanese had changed to Tsubaki-NI.

On the topic of if they were treated differently in the United States because they were Japanese, one answered occasionally and another answered that they seldom felt they were treated differently. When they returned to Japan, the question asked if they were treated differently now that they are a returnee, only one responded that she occasionally felt that she was when she first returned, but no longer feels that way. Half of the responses indicated that they tried to conform to their American peers while in the United States and two of the returnees felt that they had a different way of thinking than the Americans. On the question that asked if the returnees felt they had a different way of thinking than other Japanese in Japan, only one replied that she occasionally thought so when she first returned, but after being in Japan for a while, no one noticed any differences. Kiku-WI in her interview said, “When I compare myself before I left Japan and after I came back, especially the way I look at things, there is just a little something different.” Sakura also felt a shift the longer she was in Japan. “When I first returned

to Japan, I felt different. I thought I had changed somehow. But now I feel more settled. Living in Japan again, I feel the same as other Japanese.”

When I asked them in their interview if they felt different upon their return to Japan, the majority of them said yes, but could not specify exactly how they had changed. As Kiku-WI said, “Just the fact that I was able to go live overseas, maybe there is something a little different. Just a little... just a little bit of something different.” Ajisai-WI did not think she had changed per se, but felt that her attachment for American household items and American things intensified, “I guess after living over there my anglophile tendency simply became stronger.” Ume-WI agreed that she had changed and that she also now has a newfound respect in the volunteering spirit of the American society. “Because of that, I tried to volunteer by teaching hula dancing here in Japan. I think it is wonderful when people can teach each other their specialty.” Kiku-WI did not think that her demeanor or mannerism changed and declared that she guesses she is Japanese afterall, however she also said, “Others around me probably do not think that I am different, but I felt different inside.” Mokuren-WI noticed that she became a stronger and more independent person who no longer felt she needed approval from others. “People around me may not have noticed a change in me, but I have. I think I became a stronger person because I know who I am now.”

Summary of Identity

All of the returnees identified themselves as Japanese in each segment of their overseas experience. Only two of the participants considered themselves to be bilingual or bicultural. Ajisai-WI considered herself bilingual while she was in the United States, but no longer thinks she is now that she has returned. Sakura-WI thinks that others may perceive her to be bilingual and bicultural simply because she has lived overseas for two years. All of the participants identify themselves as returnees. This could be due to the availability of the word *kikokusha*

(returnee) that is often used in the Japanese vernacular for anyone who returns to Japan. It could also be a way to identify themselves to others for any linguistic or cultural misunderstanding that might occur due to their time abroad. Interestingly, Tsubaki-NI was the only person who identified herself as a returnee before her departure from Japan.

The participants were asked if they strongly identified themselves with other Japanese, and an interesting shift occurred when they moved between the two countries. When they were in the United States, seven out of eight felt that they had a lot in common with other Japanese they met in the United States. This perception lessened when they initially returned to Japan; with only two of them stating that they felt they had commonalities with other Japanese around them. After some time had passed since their initial return, another shift in perspective can be seen with all eight now feeling the same way, although not at the same level as when they were in the United States. When asked on the questionnaire if they thought they have changed in any way, only one replied that she occasionally thought so. The others did not perceive themselves to be any different, but when pressed further on this topic in the interviews, they all agreed that they had changed, but only minutely, and they would often refer to physical changes in mannerisms or appearances. However, the examples they cited during the interviews reflected a psychological change where they stated that their perspectives on life in general were more open and flexible than their original Japanese views.

None of the participants tried to hide their overseas experience from others. This was a different finding from Japanese returnee children's studies where the *kikokushijo* would purposely hide their overseas experiences (Goodman, 1990, Isogai, et al, 1999; Kanno, 2000; White, 1988; and Yashiro, 1995). However, half of the participants have mentioned that they are cautious when they talk to others about their time abroad. Results from the survey reveal that

five out of eight returnees were barely comfortable sharing their experience overseas upon their initial return. Now, when asked if they were willing to share their experience with others, the numbers are the same; however, more of them have embraced their overseas experience and would often or occasionally speak to others about it. There appears to have been more trepidation upon their initial return; however as they re-adjust to their lives in Japan, they become more appreciative of the experience.

Culture Information While in the United States

Japanese Culture Maintenance for Children

Table 5-18. Japanese and American cultural information

In the USA	N/A or Blank	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
I observed the traditions and holidays of Japan.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	33.3%		16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)				50%	50%
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	25%	25%	12.5%	25%
I wanted my children to know about Japanese culture.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)			33.3%		66.6%
Collectively (8 Total)			25%	50%	50%
I observed the traditions and holidays of the U.S.					
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%	33.3%	16.6%
Collectively (8 Total)			50%	25%	25%
I wanted my children to know about American culture.					
With Interviews (6 Total)			33.3%	16.6%	50%
No Interviews (2 Total)				50%	50%
Collectively (8 Total)			25%	25%	50%
I wanted to learn about American culture.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%			33.3%	50.0%
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%	50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%		12.5%	37.5%	37.5%

In a similar fashion as first language maintenance for the benefit of the children, first culture (C1) maintenance was also mainly targeted towards the children. Kiku-WI remarked, “It was not important for me to maintain Japanese culture, but it was important for the sake of the children.” In Kiku’s family, they would celebrate seasonal festivals and holidays because she felt that it was vital to teach her children these traditions and incorporate them into their daily lives. “I wanted to teach them about it, I wanted them to know about it. I thought it was good to know as Japanese.” Two returnees reported that they sang traditional childhood songs or had their children keep a diary in Japanese. On the question for Cultural Information 2 (Table 5-18), the returnees responded regarding their experience of maintaining Japanese culture. Six out of the eight returnees felt that it was essential for their children to know about Japanese culture, but only three out of the eight observed the traditions and holidays of Japan. Sakura-WI explains, “We did not take a lot of Japanese things so we really did not celebrate Japanese traditions.”

Japanese Culture for Adults

Despite the fact that the celebration of holidays and seasonal festivals were mainly in the interest of the children, three returnees practiced a Japanese traditional art that traces its roots to the 15th century. Ajisai-WI, Sakura-WI, and Ume-WI each participated in a Japanese tea ceremony group, which consisted of Japanese wives. The tea ceremony was an informal class, often times without a licensed instructor, with an annual fee of ten dollars to cover the cost of the tea. For most, it was the first time they had ever studied and learned about this traditional Japanese art. They would gather twice a month and meet in rotation among three Japanese family’s homes. The women would practice the art of tea ceremony for two hours and then have lunch together. Sakura-WI said, “I studied the Japanese art of tea ceremony when I was in America. I learned a little of the tea ceremony when I was in Japan, but it was fun to learn it with others over here.” It was a gathering not only to learn the traditional art of Japan but also to

receive information about the area. Ajisai-WI, who helped establish a Beading Guild for Japanese wives' when she was in Florida, also had a similar routine of hosting meetings bi-monthly for Japanese women to learn how to do Japanese beading. The beading group was open to any Japanese in the area and it also became a source of information for newcomers. The Japanese tea ceremony group and the Japanese beading group coexisted in the same college town, and together they became a formidable social network force in the Japanese community by becoming a popular epicenter for Japanese women to gather and exchange information.

American Culture in the United States

Six of the returnees with interviews (100%) responded that they had no difficulties adjusting to American culture. Momiji-NI and Tsubaki-NI were the only two returnees who responded respectively that they occasionally and often had difficulties adjusting to American culture. It must be noted that they were also the two participants who had been in the United States for the longest duration of time, five and six years respectively. Yet when the returnees were asked to compare which was more difficult, going to the United States or returning to Japan, all of the returnees expressed that it was more difficult for them to go to America. Comments such as: "English language and American food"; "because it is a different country"; "there were a lot of things that I did not know or understand"; and "it was harder to go to America because in the beginning I was confused" were written by some of the returnees to further explain their answers.

Six out of eight (75%) felt that they wanted to learn more about American culture for themselves and for their children. Furthermore, four out of the eight participants observed American traditions and holidays with the other 50% reporting that they seldom observed American culture. Sakura-WI commented on why she aspired to participate in American culture. "It was more like we are in America, so we should do America things. We wanted to enjoy

America and learn everything we could about America.” Sakura’s attitude towards culture is similar to the findings in acculturation studies where the immigrant actively seeks to adopt and to adapt to the host culture (Berry, 1990, Sussman, 2000). Sakura’s reason for her view towards maintaining her home culture in a host culture, however, is different than immigrants. She explained why she did not feel that it was necessary to maintain Japanese traditions. “I thought that we could do that when we return, so I did not really think about observing Japanese traditions.”

Culture Information after Returning to Japan

Adjustment to Japan

Once the participants returned to Japan, most responded that they did not have difficulty re-adjusting to Japanese culture with Ume-WI reporting that she occasionally had difficulties. Ume returned to Japan with her husband and daughter and had to live with her parents until they were able to find a house. Her son had returned to Japan a year earlier to attend a boarding school for high school, and this broke Ume’s maternal heart because she felt guilty that he had to be on his own in Japan while the rest of the family was in the United States. She was looking forward to re-uniting her family when they returned, but due to the Japanese academic year, her son was still away at his boarding school when they arrived. It was not until she was able to reunite with her son in her own home that she felt resettled into her Japanese life.

When asked if they shared their overseas experience with other Japanese when they first arrived back in Japan, the majority of the responses indicated that they had not done so, with two returnees selecting “seldom” and “not at all” and three returnees selecting “no answer” for their answers. When the same question was asked about their time in Japan now, the returnees replied that they often or occasionally enjoyed sharing their American experiences with others.

American Culture in Japan

Once the participants returned to Japan, only two returnees denoted that they occasionally or often incorporated American customs and only one person wanted her children to know more about American culture. All of them wanted their children to remember the American culture they had learned. After some time has passed, their responses slightly decreased with now only one returnee stating that she often incorporated some American customs into her family life. This change could be attributed to the wording of the questions because on the next question, two of the returnees reported that they occasionally or often mixed Japanese and American customs. The majority of the returnees felt that it was important to be bicultural. Similar responses were recorded for their children as well. These six of the returnees occasionally and often thought that it was important for their children to remember they have a bicultural life, with two of them indicating that they seldom felt this way.

Low responses were recorded for observing American traditions and holidays. Upon their initial return to Japan, all of them responded that they seldom or did not observe American traditional holidays. After some time has passed, however, their responses changed and now two of the returnees indicated that they seldom observe American traditions and holidays with six of them answering not at all (75%). Although the returnees did not feel that they observed American or Western traditions and holidays, their interviews revealed evidence that they do, namely Halloween and Christmas. In Japan, the secular celebration of Christmas is widely promoted by the businesses that cater to consumers. Stores and famous downtown areas are decked with Christmas decorations and Christmas-themed consumable goods and merchandise are readily available for the buying public. December 25th, however, is celebrated only as a Western festival. Christmas day is a regular workday in Japan. Halloween is also viewed as a

Western festival that is celebrated through the sale of merchandise and Halloween themed confectionary.

Ajisai-WI is a mother of three boys and she would celebrate Halloween just within her family. As she described herself, “I am not the type who would say let’s do this! Not on my own, but if someone else is planning to do something, then I would get involved.” Before she left the United States, Ajisai planned ahead for her collection of Halloween costumes by buying multiple sizes at an after-Halloween sale. “I bought several for the boys, so that when one becomes small it is passed down to the younger brother.” She also bought several costumes for herself and for her husband. “For our family, all three boys can dress as Spiderman at one time.” In Ume-WI’s family, Halloween was a time to get together with two other returnee families near her home. They would carve pumpkins and all of the children would go trick or treating among the three homes. She remarked, “The neighbors have told me that they look forward to our activities every year.”

Ume’s family also decorated for Christmas with a Christmas tree and outdoor illuminations. She said that when they were in America, they had Christmas lights twinkling both inside and outside their apartment, so they have continued this American tradition. She thinks she has been an influence on her neighbor at the end of her street. Although this neighbor has never had a chance to live abroad, she would join in on Ume’s Halloween festivities and would also decorate the outside of her home with lights at Christmas time. Sakura-WI was able to bring back a large Christmas tree from the United States. “We decorate a Christmas tree and sometimes we would do other customs.”

Another question that garnered low responses from this section of the questionnaire in Cultural Information 2 was their response to trying to recreate their American lifestyle. Half of

the returnees answered that they seldom tried to do things American style with the second half indicating that they did not do it at all. In their interviews; however, it was clear that the returnees did practice various American customs they acquired overseas. Kiku-WI explains,

I try to incorporate American customs with our family. I like the American custom of hugging when you greet each other. I think hugging is really nice. Japanese mothers will hug their children when they are small, but then they stop. I have seen neighbors hug, friends hug, and hugging of other children.

The participants also expressed their fondness for shopping at Costco™, a large American warehouse style store. Costco™ has nine stores located throughout Japan, and the returnees who live near a Costco™ would often go to the store as a family outing. Ayame-WI is a frequent shopper at Costco™ for laundry detergent and cleaning supplies. Ayame excitedly said, “We go to Costco™ every couple of months for a shopping frenzy. They sell the same exact items that we had in America. Even the shopping carts are American size!” Ajisai-WI also prefers to buy American detergent. “I use American laundry detergent all the time. I like the smell of the Downy™ fabric softener. It is a nostalgic smell for us.” Ajisai described shopping at Costco™ as a mini vacation abroad. “It is a way to return to that feeling you had over there. It is not just for shopping, it is also for entertainment.” Ume-WI, who was on a limited moving budget, was dismayed when she had to leave a lot of items in the United States, especially the items she wanted to keep. When they returned to Japan, she quickly replaced those items at Costco™.

Summary of Culture Information

All of the returnees with interviews expressed that they had no difficulties adjusting to their American lives. Momiji-NI and Tsubaki-NI, who were both in the United States the longest, responded that they occasionally had difficulties adjusting to their lives in America. The cultural factors often faced by immigrants (Berry, 1990; Sussman, 2000; Wierzbicki, 2004)

during their adaptation process were not a concern for the return migrants with a duration of time of less than five years in the host culture.

The returnees were surprised that even with their linguistic challenges, living in the United States was not as difficult as they thought it would be. The only issue that many of them often talked about was their personal preference for food. Difficulties in acquiring Japanese ingredients and acquiring a palate for American style food was very challenging for them; however, the returnees felt that eating non-Japanese food was a component of their American experience and were willing to try American cuisine at least once. Those who found American cuisine unsuitable to their taste were able to adapt and substitute their Japanese cooking with the available ingredients that they could find.

The majority of the returnees were keen to learn more about American culture for their children and for themselves. Half of the returnees answered that they still participated in the observation of American traditions and holidays. The maintenance of Japanese culture while they were in the United States was directly specifically to their children. Three of the returnees responded that they engage in Japanese cultural activities and practices, though these were mainly limited to the traditional celebrations of holidays and festivals that are mainly for children. On the other hand, for the adults, half of the returnees with interviews reported in their interviews that they learned a new traditional art while they were in the United States. These returnees studied and learned the art of Japanese tea with other Japanese returnees and articulated that they were not involved with this cultural practice while they were in Japan.

The participants responded that they did not have difficulty re-adjusting to Japan when they returned. All of the participants described that their school-aged children had more difficulties than they did. Re-adjustment issues seem to be prevalent in the school system for the

kikokushijo (returnee) children with difficulty adjusting (Goodman, 1990) and being ashamed of their overseas experience (White, 1987). Only one child, according to her mother, was adjusting well and has a strong association with other returnee students by attending a special high school for returnee children (Kanno, 2003; Pang, 2000).

After their return to Japan, the women continued to observe American holidays and traditions they thought would be more enjoyable for the children. Twenty-five percent of the women continued to celebrate Halloween by hosting small parties. Most of the participants decorate small trees at Christmas time, with 37.5% of them decorating large American size Christmas trees they either brought back with them or specifically bought in Japan. To recapture the feeling that they were still in America, 37.5% specifically shop at an American warehouse style store called Costco™. The women who lived less than an hour away from a Costco™ would buy American products that were nostalgic for them. Going to Costco™ was a family outing for them and the entire family would participate in the shopping spree.

CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION

The objective of this chapter is to use the findings to address the research questions that were asked in this study about the establishment and maintenance of social networks and to examine what roles social networks play in the Japanese return migration experience. The content and organization of this chapter represent the discussion of the findings through the theoretical social network framework and is organized by the research questions of this study. The first part of this chapter elaborates on the research question pertaining to what social networks were established and maintained by the Japanese return migrants. The findings show that each network that was established and maintained by the Japanese returnees raises important questions about how we define and describe social networks; therefore each network will also be discussed in terms of its structure and functions and the issues that emerged through social network analysis. The second part of this chapter explores the roles the social networks played for the Japanese return migrants. The investigation offers new interpretations of the role of social networks for return migrants and the sources of these discovered variances are discussed through the theoretical social network framework found in the literature. In addition, other novel developments that have transpired in the course of the investigation will also be reported. The study shows that 1) the Japanese returnees established and maintained four different major networks during different stages of their return migration experience, 2) shopping was used as a social network replacement, and 3) the purpose of these different social networks varied and depended on the location, needs, and language proficiency of the networks.

Social Networks that Were Established and Maintained

In order to discuss the findings from the structural and functional analysis of the social networks of Japanese return migrant, it is necessary to first identify and describe the networks

that were established during each segment of their return migration journey, as well as the relational ties the members of each social network have. The Japanese return migrants established four major networks during the course of their migration experience: a Japanese Social Network 1 (JSN1), a Social Network for Specific Purposes (SNSP), a Japanese Social Network 2 (JSN2), and an International Bilingual Social Network (IBSN). According to the social network typology, JSN1 is classified as an exchange network and SNSP, JSN2, and IBSN are classified as interactive networks. A table outlining the four major social networks that have been established by the Japanese return migrants in all phases of their return migration journey is available in Table 6-1. In addition to the four major social networks, the findings indicated that the Japanese returnees substituted shopping at an American-based retailer as a social network replacement when they returned to Japan.

Exchange Network

The returnees primarily accessed their Japanese family and close friends in Japan (JSN1) and this network was the only prominent long-term active network that was established and maintained during each segment of their return migration process. This type of social network is classified as the exchange network (Milroy, 1992; Matsumoto, 2010; Stoessel, 1998) and is designated as a high-ranking social network that has an important role of enforcing the linguistic and social norms for an individual. As seen in Table 6-1, the returnees' exchange network of JSN1 was the constant social network that was continuously active and involved with the returnees by acting as a cultural and linguistic link of the home culture while they were in the United States. For the Japanese, the exchange network was the only network with permanency because it was maintained and continually accessed as a cultural and linguistic link of the home culture throughout each stage of their return migration journey.

Interactive Networks

The findings also showed that the Japanese return migrants established temporary social networks during various phases of their migration process and this process was dependent on the support that the networks could provide to the returnees during a particular stage of their return migration journey. A temporary social network that was quickly established and accessed prior to their departure to the United States was SNSP. This was a network of Japanese acquaintances, whose members had lived overseas before and were knowledgeable about the logistics of moving overseas. Once the returnees arrived in the United States, they established two new temporary social networks: a second Japanese social network (JSN2) that was comprised of other Japanese return migrants and an international bilingual social network (IBSN) that was composed of migrants from other countries who were in the United States at the same time as the Japanese return migrants.

The temporary social networks of SNSP, JSN2, and IBSN were established and maintained only when the Japanese returnees were in the United States. These networks were no longer active or accessed when the usefulness of the network was depleted because those networks were established and maintained mainly as a source to retrieve information that would help them settle and integrate while in the United States. Once the returnees departed and returned to Japan, the practicality of the information became obsolete, thus the networks ceased to exist. A more detailed discussion of the similarities and differences found in the structure and functions of the Japanese return migrants' social networks of JSN1, SNSP, JSN2, and IBSN are provided in the next section.

Social Networks after Returning to Japan

Upon returning to Japan, the JSN2 and IBSN that were established while the returnees were in the United States were dropped, leaving JSN1 as the prominent social network for the

Japanese returnees. Although half of the participants initially relied on the JSN2 for emotional support when they first arrived in Japan, the interaction with JSN2 slowly waned and disappeared. Communication and contact with IBSN, which was a prevalent non-Japanese network for the returnees, also ceased. These social networks in the United States were deleted from the returnees' lives and gently faded into fond memories of their overseas experience.

The participants did not actively seek to replace similar social networks, e.g., other returnees or internationals living in Japan after their return to Japan. Although they shared similar experiences, much like the JSN2 and IBSN social network paradigm establishment, they showed no interest in interacting or establishing new social networks based on their return migration experiences. Only Ajisai and Ume actively kept in touch with each other, even after their return. They have theorized that they are different from other returnees because of the friendly environment and atmosphere they experienced when they were in the same college town. The rest of the participants in this study did not make an effort to contact or keep in touch with members from JSN2, nor did they have any interest in creating a new returnee-only social network in Japan. Furthermore, the shared international migrant experience and English as a second language factors that were the driving force for the establishment of the IBSN in the United States did not carry over when the participants returned to Japan. The returnees also did not seek to associate with any internationals living in Japan, unless the person was their hired English tutor for their family.

Shopping and C2 maintenance

This study found that in terms of American cultural maintenance, the majority of the returnees did not rely on their social networks but rather utilized a large discount warehouse store from the United States. Shopping at Costco™ helped them relive their migrant experience without having to leave Japan again. Since the Japanese returnees did not establish any ASN

while they were in the United States and dropped JSN2 and IBSN when they returned, they did not have a resource in the United States to ask for various items to help support the maintenance of C2 for their children.

For the returnees, buying American products helped enforce the American customs they acquired and practiced during their stay in the United States. Celebrating and observing American holidays and festivals were the prevalent cultural activities that were observed after their return to Japan and many of them brought back American-sized Christmas trees to decorate or observed the American custom of Halloween for their children. Those who wanted to continue to participate in these American activities were able to supplement Christmas and Halloween products and items through Costco™. Other household items, e.g. children's snacks, laundry detergent, and other cleaning supplies, were also purchased at Costco™. The findings revealed that for the returnees who had access to a Costco™, shopping became their resource to maintain and continue their cross-cultural experience.

Shopping as a social network replacement

The findings from this study show that the Japanese return migrants used shopping as a social network replacement. The gravitation towards shopping to re-experience their time in the United States rather than establishing new social networks underscores the perspective that the shared return migration experience factor that helped strengthens the ties and the structures of the temporary interactive networks in the host culture did not transpire in the formation of new social networks in the home culture. JSN1 was tapped as the sole information provided about reintegrating into the Japanese culture, therefore there was no need to establish or create new social networks. However, the Japanese returnees had fond memories of their stay in the United States and wanted to maintain a cultural connection with the life they lived overseas. Without a social network to give them support or camaraderie, the returnees turned to shopping.

Table 6-1. Social networks of Japanese return migrants

Name of Network	Type of Network	Location	Longevity	Strength	Members	Functions
Japanese Social Network 1 (JSN1)	Exchange Network	Japan	Long term	Strong ties. High-ranking network throughout their entire migration experience.	Japanese family members and close friends.	Teaches and validates social roles and language use according to the norms established by society. Indirectly supported L1 maintenance for adults. Support L1 and C1 maintenance for children.
Social Network for Specific Purposes (SNSP)	Interactive Network	Japan	Short term. Active only prior to departure.	Weak ties, but highly valued for the information that was provided.	Former Japanese returnees.	Provided information about living abroad prior to departure. Members were specifically targeted for their knowledge.
Japanese Social Network 2 (JSN2)	Interactive Network	USA	Short term. Active only during their time in USA.	Strong ties with high density (multiple members). Highly valued due to the location.	Other Japanese return migrants in the USA.	Prominent source for information about living in the USA. Provided a sense of solidarity in their migrant experience through companionship & camaraderie. Supported L1 acquisition & maintenance of children. Indirect L1 support to adults.
International Bilingual Social Network (IBSN)	Interactive Network	USA	Short term. Active only during their time in USA.	Strong ties. High-ranking network during their time in the United States.	International migrants who were in the USA.	Generated an international network for adults and children. Established comfortable safe haven to interact and communicate in L2. Provided friendship outside of JSN2. Gave a sense of community and belonging due to their shared migrant experiences and level of English proficiency.

The process of encountering and purchasing American products was an entertaining family affair and these shopping expeditions became the only routine that helped all members of the family relive their cross-cultural experiences together. Trips to Costco™ were the only time the families were able to contextualize their overseas experience together as a family without leaving Japan. Costco™ stores in Japan afforded the returnees an outlet to recollect, recall, and reminisce about their life abroad without any language barrier or the expense of traveling as a family.

Structures of the Social Networks

This section will discuss the similarities and differences found in the structure in the Japanese returnees' social networks of JSN1, SNSP, JNS2, and IBSN as they apply to the social network theory that is found in the literature. As seen in Table 2-2 in the review of literature, social network analysis often uses criteria models as a research tool to help clarify the relationship between the members of a network in order to determine the structures of a social network. These models define structures by looking at the size, density (number of members who interact with each other), multiplexity (overlapping members), and frequency of contacts (Boissevain, 1987; Stokowski, 1994). The strength and weakness of the ties within a network are based on the longevity, value, and type of relational interactions members have within a network. The strength of ties between members is considered to be part of the foundation for the structural integrity of a network that ascertains its sustainability or stability of a network. Differences in the social networks of the Japanese returnees were found in a) the passive network typology that defines strong and weak ties; b) the construction of an interactive network for specific purposes; and c) the lack of stability in the networks due to rotating members despite a robust sustainability. An outline of these patterns can be found in Table 6-2.

Table 6-2. Structures of the Japanese return migrants' social network

Network	Location of Returnee	Social Network Typology	Findings From the Study	Social Network Strength	Findings Strength	Social Network Longevity	Findings Longevity	Social Network Stability	Findings Stability
JSN1	Japan	Exchange Network	Exchange Network	Strong	Strong	Long	Long	Robust	Robust
JSN1	USA	Passive Network	Exchange Network	Weakened/ Suspended	Strong	Long	Permanent	Weakened due to distance.	Active and robust. Integrity intact.
SNSP	USA	Interactive Network	Interactive Network	Weak	Strong	Long	Temporary	Weakened due to time limitation.	Robust during the short duration of activity. Then dropped.
JSN2	USA	Interactive Network	Interactive Network	Weak	Strong	Long	Temporary	Weakened due to lack of long-term residents.	Robust with fluctuating membership. Strong sustainability during the returnees' stay in the US. Then dropped.
IBSN	USA	Interactive Network	Interactive Network	Weak	Strong	Long	Temporary	Weakened due to time limitation and no shared L1/C1	Robust during the short duration of activity due to shared language proficiency and migration experience. Then dropped.

Structure of JSN1

This study showed that JSN1 was a highly ranked and extremely valued exchange network prior to departure to the United States and this corroborates the social network framework that has been provided in the literature. The Japanese returnees interacted routinely with their family and friends and turned to them for direct aid, advice, criticism, and support. JSN1 meets the criteria of the exchange network typology where all members of the social network share the same language and culture and the bond of the network is highly valued (Milroy, 1980) with strong ties (Milroy & Li, 1995). Socio-cultural networks are established as a result of a socialization process where first language (L1) and first culture (C1) play a pivotal function to teach and validate social roles and language use according to the norms established by society (Stoessel, 1998). Once the returnees arrived in the United States; however, differences in the classification and functions of JSN1 were evident.

Redefining passive networks

According to social network studies (Milardo, 1988; Milroy, 1992; Milroy & Li, 1995), JSN1 should have become a passive network when the Japanese return migrants were in the United States. Passive networks are described as former exchange networks with strong emotional ties that have become weakened or suspended due to an increase in geographical distances resulting in a decrease in the frequency of contacts and communication. For the Japanese return migrants, however, their JSN1 networks were different. Their JSN1 networks remained active in terms of contact frequency throughout their stay abroad and operated as an active linguistic and cultural connection for the Japanese returnees. The influence of JSN1 diminished while they were in the United States due to distances between the two countries; however, JSN1 was never completely excluded from the returnees' lives and was never viewed as a passive network. JSN1 was consistently highly valued while they were abroad, and upon

their return to Japan, JSN1 became a prominent network in their lives again, thus making JSN1 the only permanent network that was maintained throughout their entire return migration experience.

The findings from this study suggests that the pattern of reclassifying an exchange network into a passive network as found in social network studies of immigrants needs to be re-examined. The Japanese return migrants did not follow this pattern of categorization of the exchange network to passive network that has been established in the literature. Technology has strengthened the weak ties of the passive networks by removing the distance factor that separated the home culture from the receiving culture in the past. Technology has opened the possibility for future social network analysis to expand or redefine the typology of social networks to include the potential that exchange networks can still remain an active network for migrants when they are in the host country.

Social networks and technology

This study shows that technology was the primary means through which the Japanese returnees sustained contact and communication with JSN1. Advancement in communication technology enhanced the manner in which the Japanese returnees were able to keep close ties with their L1 social networks in the home country. Due to expense and available means of communication in the past, contacting or corresponding with the social network back home was either systematically slow or not economically feasible, resulting in an acute drop in the frequency of contacts or a complete suspension of contacts. When Milardo (1988) and Milroy (1980) categorized the exchange network of close friends and family back in the home country as a passive network, the label was logical and understandable because of the long distance communication methods available at that time. When this study was conducted; however, the

Japanese returnees had technology that was not commonly available when the previous studies were published.

Social networks and advancement in communication technology

The previous studies were conducted prior to the advent of affordable digital means of communication, e.g. high speed internet and email which now gives us a platform of instant communication and instantaneous information. Although a global networking system of interconnected computers accessing data from multiple sites had been used by military, government, and research organizations since the early 1970s, the term ‘internet’ was not officially used until the Federal Networking Council passed a resolution on October 24, 1995, defining the Internet as a worldwide broadcasting mechanism to disseminate information (Internet Society, 2011). The mid-1990s was also a period of time when the early internet browsers were released: Netscape Navigator™ in 1994 and Microsoft Internet Explorer™ in 1995, making instantaneous interactions and communication between individuals possible without regard for the geographic locations of the users’ computers. Email also became widely available and easier to use with the development of email software called Microsoft Outlook™ in 1996 and with the free offer of Microsoft Hotmail™, an internet email website during the same year (The Guardian Newspaper, 2002). In 1994, with the introduction of the webcam, a video camera that can be attached to a computer, internet telecommunication companies started to offer consumers the ability to call and receive video and audio communications through their internet provider or subscribe to Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services, which allows consumers to make inbound and outbound calls for free or for a monthly flat rate. As a result, the increased competition from Internet based telecommunication companies have made landline telephone companies more competitive by reducing the cost of making long distance calls in order to attract customers, making it more affordable than it was in the past. Through the

innovation of technology, keeping contacts with social networks in the home country is not as cost prohibitive as it was in the past, and using the internet with audio/visual transmission technology has reduced the effect of geographical distances.

Due to affordable and efficient communication technology, access to JSN1 for the returnees was quickly attainable and utilized; therefore, JSN1 was not a passive network, but to a certain extent an active one. The importance of JSN1 in the lives of the returnees slightly diminished due to their location overseas with the emergence of JSN2, however, JSN1 was routinely accessed and activated when needed during their time in the United States and regained full operational mode upon their return to Japan.

Structure of SNSP

The study observed that a social network for specific purpose (SNSP) was established and maintained only as a resource to gain specific knowledge that the Japanese return migrants were seeking. Access to SNSP was brief because SNSP was utilized to fill a temporary need in order to gather information about their forthcoming trip overseas. When the participants learned that they would be leaving for the United States and needed to search for specific information about life overseas, it was practical and efficient for the returnees to turn to more experienced Japanese acquaintances who had lived overseas than to their exchange networks of families and friends. Unlike the close bond that was established over an extended period of time with their close family and friends, SNSP was intense and short-lived. This temporary network emerged quickly into their lives because it was formed immediately after the returnees found out that they were going to the United States. During the short period of time before they actually departed from Japan, the members of SNSP were highly valued for their knowledge about living overseas, and the social network rapidly expanded until it was no longer useful for them. Upon their departure from Japan, the SNSP was no longer an active network because their quest for information about

living overseas was no longer applicable, and SNSP was dropped because the relationships ceased to serve any other purpose for the returnees.

Interactive networks

Social network analysis literature suggests that acquaintances are an interactive network of individuals who interact frequently over a prolonged period of time (Milardo, 1988; Milroy, 1992; Milroy & Li, 1995). Interactive networks have weak ties because members do not rely on the network for personal favors, materials, or other resources (Milroy & Li, 1995). According to the literature, this type of network is a loose-knit network with no deep bonds; therefore, there is no incentive or need to expand the network. On the other hand, an advantage of interactive networks is that they can be temporarily utilized as a resource for certain types of information. The interpersonal relationship of the network is beneficial for information extraction because the weak ties of an interactive network can provide broader information that a person is seeking rather than the strong ties of an exchange network, e.g., a job vacancy at a company (Granovetter, 1983; Scott, 1991).

Redefining interactive networks

This study shows that the interactive networks as defined by immigrant studies are restricted by the longevity, purpose, and growth of their membership. Due to their short duration as active networks, the interactive networks of the returnees did not meet the requirement of high frequency contact over an extended duration of time requirement that has been suggested by the social network framework, nor did they conform to the nonessential need for network expansion or the minimal influence or importance to an individual (Milardo, 1988; Milroy & Li, 1995; Stokowski, 1994). The foundation for the temporary duration of existence, the strength, and the structure of SNSP is built around a quest for a specific body of knowledge. This network was important to the returnees because going over to the United States was an important decision for

them. In a very short period of time, SNSP rapidly filled a void that the other networks could not fulfill by functioning as a pertinent source of information for them before they embarked on their overseas journey. It must be noted that using interactive networks for information extraction supports Granovetter (1983) and Scott (1991); however, they describe the interactive network as relations in a public domain with weak ties that are not particularly highly regarded. This was not the case for the Japanese return migrants. The SNSP temporary interactive networks in contrast were established for a specific objective and the members of the interactive network were highly valued at the time of engagement, however, once the objective was accomplished, the relationship also ceased to serve any other purpose for the returnees, and the network was consequently dropped.

Temporary interactive networks

The findings from this study suggest that a different type of interactive network, a temporary interactive network for specific purposes, needs to be included in the typology of social networks described in the literature. The interactive network that has been described and defined in social network studies for immigrants was not completely applicable for the Japanese return migrants. This study found that the Japanese return migrants quickly established a temporary interactive network prior to their departure for the important purpose of providing information about living abroad. The growth and establishment of the network was intense and short-lived, not acquired over a prolonged period of time. The importance of a short-term social network cannot be overlooked. SNSP was a highly valued temporary social network for the sole purpose of providing opportunities to access desired resources and information to achieve certain goals.

Structure of JSN2

The findings show that JSN2 was a highly regarded temporary L1 interactive network with strong ties. Frequent interactions with a Japanese community composed of other short-term sojourners in the United States made JSN2 the prominent L1 social network for the participants and the main resource for gathering information about living in the United States. JSN2 was highly regarded and respected by the returnees while they were in the United States due to their shared return migration experiences and the returnees would often turn to JSN2 for support and advice on challenges or issues they faced in the United States. Due to the high frequency of interactions throughout the week, the structure of JSN2 was strong. The network sustainability in the United States continued even after the returnees left the country, with the network expanding and contracting as new members arrived and the established members left for Japan. The engagement and access of JSN2 correlated with the duration of the returnees' time in the United States. Once the returnees departed for Japan, JSN2 was dropped because it no longer served any interest for the returnees.

Sustainability of ethnic social networks

Research shows that ethnic social networks have strong linguistic and cultural influences on immigrants in receiving cultures (Hamer & Mazzucato, 2009; Portes, 1998, Wierzbicki, 2004). Studies have also suggested that the strength of ties within an ethnic social network correlates with the influential strength the social network has over its members. Ethnic social networks become stronger or denser as they gather more solidarity from its members (Hamer & Mazzucato, 2009; Lanza & Svendsen, 2007; Matsumoto, 2010; Tsai, 2006; Wierzbicki, 2004). As more immigrants join the ethnic community, the bond between its members becomes stronger as the network grows in membership. The endurance and sustainability for an active network is

determined by the length of stay of its members, and in immigrant studies, the stability of an ethnic social network is based on the long-term residency of its members.

Sustainability of JSN2

The findings indicate that the L1 social networks for Japanese returnees were able to continue to have influence on the Japanese community even though there was no solid foundation to hold the network together. This study found that the returnees mainly associated with other Japanese in the area, primarily Japanese women, thus creating a high density (multiple members) and multiplexity (overlapping members) for their network (Li, 1994; Marshall, 2004; Milroy, 1992; Stokowski, 1994). JSN2 was composed of other temporary Japanese sojourners like themselves, and not long-term residents; therefore, the members constantly rotate in and out of the network making the network contract and expand. The network was important to them and a strong bond was maintained and forged while they were in the United States. This was different from previous studies of immigrants who often have a central figure, usually a long-term resident, who provides stability to the network (Hamer & Mazzucato, 2009; Marshall, 2004; Stokowski, 1994; Tsai, 1994; Wierzbicki, 2004). Based on the literature, because long-term residents were not involved with the JSN2, theoretically, the structure and strength of the social network should have weakened as members kept leaving to return to Japan. With a constant fluctuation of its membership, the stability of JSN2 should not have been able to survive. However, for the Japanese returnees, JSN2 did manage to maintain its structural integrity and continued to be a strong and viable network for the returnees with a prominent role in their lives during their stay in the United States. The study shows that the stability of JSN2 was strengthened because members of the network were highly regarded and valued at the time of engagement, and the strength of ties with members were strong enough to be able to structurally

sustain the network's integrity and remain robust even with the expansion and contraction of membership.

Redefining sustainability for temporary social networks

The findings of this study suggest that social network analysis needs to recognize and include a wider set of structural relation factors that represents the temporariness of a social network of return migrants. The study found that a temporary L1 social network in a host culture for return migrants can maintain structural integrity with a constantly fluctuating membership base and no long-term central figure as an anchor of the network. Due to the transient nature of return migration, the foundation of their social network was not based on the strength of long-term residents. In contrast, there was a heightened involvement of other relational factors that strengthened the sustainability of the network. The structure of the Japanese returnees' social network was well-supported by the strength of ties due to the frequent contacts, the high value the network received, and the shared linguistic and cultural experiences and issues related to living in the United States as well as the density and the multiplexity of the members of the network. These factors made the sustainability of the Japanese returnees' temporary social network strong and sound. The findings show additional factors that extended the criteria identified in immigrant studies that define the structures of a social network, and suggest that additional perspectives need to be included in the social network framework.

Structure of IBSN

The findings demonstrate that in lieu of establishing any American social networks (ASN), the returnees interacted with other temporary sojourners who were in the United States from different countries and formed an international bilingual social network (IBSN). IBSN was a temporary interactive network that was established in the United States. IBSN generated a non-Japanese social network for the returnees and their children and created a broader sense of an

international community that was composed of multilingual and multicultural temporary sojourners. Since English was not a first language for the members of IBSN, the network gave them an undemanding linguistic platform where the Japanese returnees could contribute and learn from their fellow sojourners. Members of IBSN were also able to provide information about living and integrating in the United States to the Japanese returnees and the network was highly valued for this information. The strength of ties between the members was strong and remained strong until the Japanese returnee departed to Japan. Since IBSN was a temporary interactive network, it was only accessed during the returnees' stay in the United States and was dropped once the returnees left the United States when the network was no longer useful.

Redefining the ties of a social network

The findings from this study suggest that the strength of the social network tie does not have to rely on shared linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This differed from the findings in immigration studies (Hamer & Mazzucato, 2009; Massey, 1990; Wierzbicki, 2004), where the strong ties of immigrants' social networks are more likely to be homogenous racially and ethnically. IBSN was diverse linguistically and culturally; therefore, it did not fit the mold of the social network models in immigrant research. The common denominator that strengthens IBSN was not a cultural, racial, or ethnic factor. The traits that they shared in common were English as a second language and their international migration experience. This was a multilingual and multicultural network with members of varying levels of English proficiency. The strength of the network was strong due to the frequent interactions they had through their children's schools or at the English language classes they attended. Just as in the case of JSN2, the returnees placed a high value on the relationships with members of IBSN because the network was also able to give the returnees information about living in the United States as well as provide support and advice on linguistic and cultural issues that they faced. IBSN strongly reiterates that a temporary

social network can have strong ties through a specific purpose and the solidarity of the network can be strengthened through the language proficiency of its members, hence suggesting that language proficiency plays a role in the establishment and maintenance of an L2 network in the host culture.

Functions of the Social Networks

With regard to Japanese return migration, there were three major functions for the social networks of the Japanese returnees. The first role was to help support and facilitate linguistic and cultural maintenance of the children through JSN1 and JSN2. L1 maintenance was a priority for the children of the Japanese returnees; therefore, in addition to their family members who were in the United States, JSN1 and JSN2 were also viewed as a linguistic anchor for the return migrants' children. In addition, JSN1 and JSN2 also functioned to facilitate cultural maintenance for the children. The associations with JSN1 and JSN2 networks provided a strong link for the returnees to the homeland for their children and helped support active C1 maintenance activities. The second role of the social networks was found to be for information purposes. JSN2 as well as the SNSP and the IBSN networks provided information about settling, living, and integrating into the host culture. Access to these temporary interactive social networks was vital for the returnees and provided needed information during certain segments of their overall return migration journey. Finally, the third role was to assist in the self-identification of the return migrants through JSN1 and JSN2. These networks helped enforce their cultural identity and guided (reinforced) them towards self-identification. Table 6-3 shows the roles of the social networks during each segment of the returnees' return migration experiences.

Table 6-3. Functions of the Japanese return migrants' social networks

Functions	Networks	Explanation
L1 & C1 Maintenance Supporter for their Children	JSN1 & JSN2	JSN1 supported with supplemental items sent from Japan. JSN2 supported through socialization of the children.
Information and Resource Provider	SNSP, JSN2, & IBSN	SNSP provided pre-departure information about living in the US. JSN2 & IBSN provided information about living and integrating in the US.
Self-Identity Facilitator	JSN1 & JSN2	JSN1 & JSN2 enforced the linguistic and social norms of Japanese society.

Linguistic and Cultural Roles

The findings from the study indicate that the Japanese returnees used JSN1 and JSN2 for the purpose of language and culture maintenance for their children. The returnees were highly concerned with the L1/C1 maintenance of their children, especially for their young children who were just learning how to talk or for the older children who would have to return to Japan and re-enter the Japanese school system. They were familiar with the linguistic and cultural issues of the *kikokushijo* (returnee children in Japan) and wanted to help circumvent any problems that could delay their children's language and academic development. The first findings show that the Japanese returnees accessed their JSN1 to function as a major link to the home culture and language for their children while they were in the United States. The second findings show that when the returnees were in the United States, they also accessed JSN2 to help support L1 maintenance for their children. The Japanese returnees tried to help alleviate possible issues their children would have in their reintegration into the Japanese school system by creating a Japanese childhood for their children by singing childhood songs and interacting with other children from JSN2.

L1 social networks and L1 maintenance for children

The findings from the study indicate that for the Japanese returnees, the motivating factor to establish L1 social networks in the host culture was to help support L1 maintenance for the children. Several of the adult returnees stated that since they were in the United States for a short time, they were not concerned with their own Japanese language ability because they could already speak Japanese. Their concern was more for their young children's L2 ability and their ability to use L1 in an academic setting. While the Japanese returnees were in the United States, they turned to JSN1 and JSN2 to help them facilitate L1 maintenance for their children. Since JSN1 remained an active network while they were in the United States and was not relegated to a passive network status, the returnees were able to use JSN1 as a linguistic resource for Japanese materials, e.g., requesting videotapes of Japanese television shows for their children or Japanese items that they cannot buy in the United States. Because JSN2 was in the United States while they were there, the Japanese returnees utilized JSN2 for the socialization of their children.

JSN2 and L1 maintenance

The study shows that JSN2 helped the Japanese returnees' children maintain L1 maintenance through socialization. One goal of the returnees while they were in the United States was for their children to be able to speak Japanese so that when they entered Japanese schools, they would not be faced with language difficulties when they communicated socially with their Japanese peers or performed academically in school. Accessing and interacting with JSN2 frequently throughout the week helped them in their effort toward L1 maintenance for their children.

The returnees were involved with different JSN2 subgroups, e.g., hula dancing, tea ceremony, beadwork, etc., throughout the week and would spend most of the day at these gatherings until it was time to pick up their older children from school, then they would return to

the group and stay until it was time to go home to prepare dinner. Children who were not old enough to be enrolled in American schools or preschools accompanied their mothers to the JSN2 gatherings during the day with their older siblings joining them after school. Association with JSN2 allowed the returnees an arena for their children to interact and socialize with other Japanese children and allowed them to share the same traditional cultural background and traditional childhood rites of passage with children in Japan. This extended exposure of L1 allowed the children to play with other Japanese children and increased their L1 interpersonal communication skills outside their immediate family. The study showed that active involvement with JSN1 and JSN2 was believed to be beneficial for the L1 acquisition and maintenance of the return migrants' children and helped the returnees accomplish their L1 goals for their children.

L1 social networks and cultural maintenance for children

The study also found that for the Japanese returnees, JSN1 and JSN2 were utilized to help in their efforts toward C1 maintenance for their children. It was imperative for the returnees that their children knew not only how to speak Japanese but also to experience a Japanese childhood. The findings suggest that the Japanese returnees tried to create a Japanese childhood for their children while they were in the United States by targeting cultural practices that chiefly evolved around children through their networks of JSN1 and JSN2. Many stated that it was important for their children to know about Japanese culture, so that they could share the same children's traditions with the children in Japan. The returnees felt that this was best accomplished through celebrating festivals and holidays that are enjoyed by the children of Japan. JSN1 was also drawn upon to help them with the Japanese cultural celebrations while they were in the United States by requesting members of JSN1 to send them decoration items or special foods that were not readily available in the United States so that they could observe the Japanese holidays and festivals in the same manner as children in Japan. Holidays and festivals that were associated

more with children, e.g., Boy's Day, Girl's Day, or Star Festival, were observed and/or celebrated within their family or with other Japanese children from JSN2.

JSN1 and JSN2 indirect L1/C1 support for adults

The findings indicate that establishing L1 social networks in the host culture was not a motivating factor for language maintenance. For the Japanese return migrants, JSN1 and JSN2 were not perceived to have a role in maintaining L1 for the adults. This is ascribed to the Japanese return migrants' perspective that as adults, they did not need to actively pursue the maintenance of their language proficiency because they already knew how to speak Japanese. They viewed JSN1 and JSN2 primarily as a source of friendship, and emotional support for themselves and did not see any linguistic benefits for themselves as far as speaking Japanese within both networks.

Although the returnees were adamant that L1 maintenance was not the main motivational factor to establish and maintain a link with JSN1 and JSN2, the data from this study suggests that the act of speaking Japanese to members of JSN1 and JSN2 did have an indirect influence on language choice of the returnees by reinforcing the cultural norms of Japanese society through their interactions and associations with these networks. From a linguistic viewpoint, this simple act of communicating and socializing with JSN1 and JSN2 contributed in an indirect manner to the adult returnees' L1 maintenance. It is because the returnees' focus in establishing and maintaining JSN1 and JSN2 was for the benefit of their children; the returnees were not cognizant of an influence the networks may have had on the adults as well. For the returnees, the ability to forge relationships with JSN2 and the high value placed on the relations with members of JSN1 outweighed any linguistic or cultural benefits the returnees were seeking.

Social networks and language maintenance

The findings from this study show that for Japanese returnees, a permanent exchange network and a temporary interactive network help facilitate language and cultural maintenance. Motivation for L1 maintenance for their children was instrumental in actively accessing JSN1 and JSN2 while they were in the United States. In order to accomplish this task, JSN1 in the home culture was often utilized as a linguistic and cultural resource. Unlike the functions of the passive networks of providing moral support and becoming a link to the home culture from afar (Milroy, 1987; Milroy & Li Wei, 1995, Stoessel, 1998), this study shows that JSN1 was an active exchange network when they were in the United States and helped support their L1 maintenance efforts for their children.

The study also found that for the Japanese returnees, the aim of L1 maintenance was directed towards the reintegration and adaptation of their children into Japanese schools after they returned to Japan; therefore, the L1 temporary interactive networks in the host culture were utilized as a social mechanism for language maintenance and socialization of their children. Immigrant studies have shown that social networks have a role in the degree of language maintenance and shift (Li, 1995; Milroy, 1990; Stoessel, 1998) in the receiving culture, and those studies broadly suggest that close-knit social networks help support language maintenance, whereas a weak tie social network will predict language shift. In the social network approach, interactive networks should have loose ties with no deep linguistic or cultural bonds (Marshall, 2004, Milardo, 1988; Milroy and Li, 1995; Stokowski, 1994). In the case of the Japanese return migrants, however, the temporary interactive network of JSN2 was a dense, close-knit network that was highly influential for the returnees. Therefore, JSN2 played more of an integral role in assisting them to attain their linguistic and cultural goals.

These findings reiterate the distinction between the exchange network and interactive networks between immigrants and return migrants. Because the short duration in the host culture is an important consideration for return migrants, their underlying motivation and expectation of L1 and C1 maintenance from their social networks are different. The study shows that the criterion of a network varies according to the needs of the members and suggests that more interpretive approaches in the study of social networks should be investigated.

Information and Resource Roles

The findings revealed that the temporary interactive networks of the Japanese returnees functioned as a retrieval resource for vital information about living abroad. The three social networks of SNSP, JSN2, and IBSN played an important role in providing information and resources to the returnees during certain segments of their overall return migration journey. SNSP provided information about preparing to live in the United States prior to their departure and JSN2 and IBSN were able to provide information about settling, living, and integrating into their new lives once they had arrived in the United States. All of these networks were temporary and established for the specific purpose of information retrieval. The longevity of the networks was based on the need of the returnees, and once the usefulness of the network ceased, these networks failed to be accessed after the Japanese returnees departed from Japan. The findings from this study suggest that for temporary networks, in addition to linguistic and cultural functions, other functions of a network can be determined to fulfill a specific purpose.

Temporary L1 interactive networks as an information resource

The findings from this study show that the Japanese returnees added another dimension to the definition of an interactive network that was not previously taken into consideration by demonstrating that interactive networks can be temporary and still have an important and influential function for an individual. The findings showed that SNSP, JSN2, and IBSN function

as information retrieval sources for the Japanese returnees. SNSP played this role for the Japanese returnees as they prepared to live abroad by providing valuable information about living overseas, whereas JSN2 and IBSN played the role of providing information about living and integrating in the host culture while they were in the United States. What was unconventional about these interactive networks was that they were not weak tie networks formed in a public domain over an extended period of time with no major influence on an individual (Milardo, 1988; Milroy & Li, 1995; Stokowski, 1994). Members of these temporary interactive networks were targeted for a specific body of knowledge, and the Japanese returnees' quest to glean as much information as possible in a short amount of time generated the growth of the network's membership. The formations of these networks were quick, with strong ties and a short longevity, yet they were deemed important to the Japanese returnees to fulfill a specific purpose. The prevailing social network analysis focuses on the linguistic and cultural functions of a social network once a network has been formed and does not necessarily look at the function of a network as a reason for the establishment and maintenance of that network. The data from this study suggest that there is a need to expand the parameters of social network functions to include the concept that the purpose of a network is a distinct factor in the application of social network analysis.

The need for social networks for specific purposes

The study suggests that the foundation for the construction, establishment, and growth of a temporary interactive network can be based on a specific purpose. The social networks of SNSP, JSN2, and IBSN for the Japanese returnees were established for a specific need and for a limited period of time. Several scholars have stressed that social networks of acquaintances (interactive networks) are weak tie networks that are established over a period of time. For the Japanese return migrants, the nature and scope of their interactive networks was different. Although this

study identified SNSP, JSN2, and IBSN as separate entities, all of them were engaged and accessed for a limited time for a specific purpose. Their networks of acquaintances fulfilled a certain function and were accessed specifically for the information that they could provide. These networks were highly valued for this purpose and played a significant role in providing information to the return migrants that helped facilitate their experience of living in the United States. What this study has shown is that SNSP is a vital social network when applied to return migrant communities. This is a departure from the social network framework in immigrant studies that has been suggested in the literature where the function of the network is mainly based on linguistic and cultural factors. Social network for specific purpose is an indispensable network for return migrants and should be considered to be an integral part of social network analysis.

Relationship between Identity, Role, and Social Networks

This study revealed that the returnees strongly self-identified themselves as Japanese and this was reflected in their social network preferences where Japanese networks of JSN1 and JSN2 were their primary social networks of choice for each segment of their return migration journey. Their self-identification responses also indicated that they identified themselves as Japanese throughout their entire return migration experience, with a brief self-identification as a returnee upon their initial return to Japan. Their Japanese identity was in conjunction with the collective identity of the Japanese society and the returnees negotiated their personal identity for social obligations and acceptance.

One explanation for the consistency of self-identification as Japanese is that their maternal identity did not change. Whether the returnees were in Japan or in the United States, their role as a wife and mother remained the same, thus for them, their self-identity as Japanese was sustained. Another explanation of their consistent self-identification as Japanese is due to the

limited time spent in the United States. Although the returnees established a temporary L2 social network of international speakers of English in the United States, the findings show that the returnees did not see themselves as having a bilingual and/or bicultural identity, suggesting that time and the language proficiency of the L2 social networks are influential factors in the development of a bilingual and/or bicultural identity.

Cultural identity and social networks

The findings of this study show that the L1 social networks of the Japanese return migrants in the home culture and in the host culture functioned as an enforcer of their cultural identity as Japanese. For the participants in the study, the findings show that all of them identified themselves first and utmost as Japanese for each segment of their overseas journey. Retaining a Japanese identity was important for the participants because of the underlying cultural belief that if a person leaves Japan, he or she will lose the cultural and linguistic markers that make them Japanese (Ueno, 1998). The strong linguistic and cultural influences of the permanent exchange network of JSN1 and the L1 temporary interactive networks in the United States helped them to retain and strengthen their self-identity as Japanese. Membership in these L1 networks was crucial and necessary for the Japanese return migrants because it allowed them to achieve compliance with the social protocol of Japan where being a member of a group defines your collective identity.

The findings also show that after their initial return to Japan, an identity of “returnee” was briefly included in their self-identification responses. The selection of the term “returnee” could be a result of the existence of the word, *kikokusha* (literally returnee), a term commonly used in the Japanese vernacular in the Japanese language. The Japanese word, *kikokusha*, is a generalized term used to describe a migration pattern of physically leaving the country and returning and does not include the connotation of a cross-cultural migration experience of living

abroad. Once the returnees were resettled into the linguistic and cultural parameters of JSN1, the Japanese return migrants then identified themselves as Japanese who at one time had been a long-term *kikokusha* (returnee).

Collective identity

The findings revealed that although the Japanese returnees negotiated their personal identity to strengthen their Japanese identity, when asked to describe if they had changed in any way, all them were quick to say that they had not. For the Japanese return migrants, their definition of identity change was based on tangible changes that were easily observable by others rather than changes in their cultural identity. They did not think that they had been “Americanized” in their mannerisms, demeanor, appearances, or lifestyle. These traits are easily detected by others and could be telling signs that they have been abroad for an extended period of time.

For the Japanese returnees, their self-perception of identity is in tangent with the collectivism of the Japanese culture (Ueno, 1998). According to Ueno, adjusting to a social network is one of the most significant factors in the Japanese tradition, and the Japanese underscore the importance of maintaining harmony within the group. Therefore, changes in their identity cannot be overtly displayed. This is also supported by their unwillingness to share their overseas experience with others when they first arrived back in Japan. They had been gone for a while, and they were trying to quickly resume their place within the Japanese social networks. This also occurred in *kikokushijo* research, where families would use a coping mechanism of purposely avoiding to the fact that they had been overseas in order to regain their social standing in their social networks (Goodman, 1990; White, 1988). Although it has been more than 20 years since the *kikokushijo* studies, the returnees in this study still made conscious efforts to

make sure they did not dress differently and that they did not talk too much about their overseas experience with others as they reintegrated back into Japanese society.

It was not until they were questioned in the interview if they had changed or not, that the returnees took stock of themselves verbally. It did not dawn on them to question themselves about their identity, because after all they left as an adult Japanese émigré and came back as an adult Japanese returnee. Evidence of a change, however, can be observed in their stories.

Though some were brave enough to confess that they did feel a slight change inside, many of them could not exactly pinpoint the change, although they thought that maybe they were just older or wiser. Based on their interviews, the study showed that a subtle self-identity shift may have occurred as their perspective on life widened beyond their Japanese viewpoints. They became more aware of who they were as an individual by recognizing their strengths (e.g., ability to live overseas) and their weaknesses (i.e., English). They were able to realize themselves as independent individuals rather than as members of a collective group.

Maternal identity

The study suggests that because their role definition as a mother did not change when they were in the United States, the return migrants did not perceive any changes in their self-identity as Japanese. All of the returnees were mothers and full-time housewives while they were in the United States. Ayame and Mokuren were working mothers when they left Japan, but during their time in the United States, they too became full-time housewives and mothers and settled into their Japanese maternal role of taking care of their family.

Universally, language is and has always been central to the formation of ethnic identity, and for the Japanese returnees language also helps define their roles in Japanese society. Role definition in Japan is defined by language-use and social expectations (Brass, 2005; Eto, 2005; Gottlieb, 2005; Morley, 1999). In terms of language use, gender related differences could be

seen in the speech styles and patterns in the manner which Japanese women express themselves. In terms of social expectation, Japanese society dictates gender cultural styles and roles of women and this is especially reflected in the division of labor within families, where the duties of the mothers are clearly assigned (Carroll, 2001; Eto, 2005; Okamoto & Shibamoto Smith, 2004). The traditional gender roles in Japan are more static than the dynamic gender role perspectives drawn from the West (Apparala, Reifman & Munsch, 2003; Bryceson, Okely & Webber, 2007; Espiritu, Y., 2003; Thompson, L. & Walker, A., 1989), making the cohesion between language and social roles in Japan inseparable. Thus, for the Japanese return migrants, the role of wife and mother is centered on their self-identity as Japanese.

Family responsibilities and social networks

Motherhood receives high respect in Japanese society and the mother's priority is to care for her family. Due to the long hours that the husband spends on his job, the responsibility of a traditional housewife in Japan are to manage household affairs, e.g., financial bookkeeping and housekeeping, prepare meals for the family, and be the primary parent involved with the children and the children's education (Carroll, 2001; Eto, 2005; Okamoto & Shibamoto Smith, 2004; Sakamoto, 2006). This attitude towards gender stratification in the family system is changing with more mothers still active in the workforce after marriage and motherhood; however, the returnees with husbands working or studying outside the home, epitomize the traditional housewife whose main occupation is to care for her family.

This could be the reason why the cultural conflicts reported by the returnees evolved around issues that prevented the women from fulfilling their duties as a wives and mothers. The difficulties that were often expressed were the struggles with preparing food, helping their children with schoolwork, and taking care of their families. The returnees' narratives are filled with cultural differences of shopping for food items, difficulties in finding ingredients to prepare

Japanese meals, or the expense of buying short grain rice. Family responsibilities are foremost in their lives and the children's needs are placed above their own needs. What helped them to overcome these household cultural obstacles was JSN2. The mothers in JSN2 were going through similar adjustment difficulties and were able to support, advise, and educate the other returnee mothers so that they were able to find ways to work around the obstacles that hindered their maternal duties. When the returnees were back in Japan, JSN1 took over the role of JSN2 and further strengthened and enforced their roles as Japanese wives and mothers.

Bilingual/bicultural identity

The findings indicated that the Japanese returnees did not self-identify with a bilingual/bicultural identity. Only one participant, Ajisai, identified herself as bilingual on the questionnaire during her time in the United States because she had to use two languages when she was there. When she returned, she had no opportunity to speak English; therefore, she rejected the bilingual identity response on the questionnaire and reverted back to a monolingual Japanese identity when asked if it would be possible to have a bilingual identity now that she has returned to Japan. For this particular returnee, perhaps being bilingual had a different definition. For Ajisai, being bilingual meant that you lived in an environment that required you to switch from English to Japanese depending on the situation. Since she needed to speak English from time to time in the United States, she identified herself as bilingual, whereas she now speaks only in Japanese; hence the bilingual identity was no longer applicable for her. For the others, they explained that since they were in the United States for a limited time, since they could not proficiently speak English, and since they did not actively seek to acquire English-speaking skills, they were not able to self-identify or conceptualize themselves as bilingual/bicultural identities.

Bilingual/bicultural identity and alternative L2 social networks

The study indicates that for certain circumstances, there are some types of social networks that are more influential and stable in providing strong effective systems to facilitate developing bilingual/bicultural identities. Studies have shown that strong social networks in both L1 and L2 cultures and languages can help support and encourage the individual towards the development of a bicultural identity (Kanno, 2003; LaFromboise, et al, 1993; Lanza & Svendsen, 2007; Matsumoto, 2010); however, limited English proficiency made social interactions with mainstream L2 social networks difficult for the Japanese returnees. They had nurtured strong ties with IBSN and the communication with IBSN was in English, yet the Japanese returnees could not self-identify themselves as developed bilingual and/or bicultural identities. The findings from this study show that establishing an L2 social network of international English speakers in a host culture during a limited time is not influential enough to facilitate the development of bilingual/bicultural identity, suggesting that time of exposure in the host culture and interactions with mainstream L2 social networks in the host culture affects the development of bilingual/bicultural identities.

Other Social Network Developments

In addition to the investigation of the establishment of social networks and the examination of the structures and functions of the social networks of the Japanese return migrants, this study found other developments that had significant implications in the construction and establishment of their social networks in the host culture. The study revealed a) limited access to an L1 social network launched a formation of a parallel L1 social network and b) self-perception of L2 proficiency may influence access to L2 social networks.

Limited Access to L1 Social Network in the Host Culture

The findings from this study reveal that acceptance in an established L1 social network in the host culture is not always inevitable. For many migrants, being accepted by their ethnic social network in the host culture is critical because it can be a source to provide employment, housing, education, financial support, or moral assistance to help facilitate the immigrant's journey (Hamer & Mazzucato, 2009; Tannenbaum, 2007; Sussman, 2002; Wierzbicki, 2004). For two of the Japanese returnees, Ajisai and Sakura, even though they met the membership requirement of being Japanese from Japan and were in the United States temporarily, this did not give them easy access to the established Japanese community. The barrier for both of them to join a Japanese social network was not created by the host culture, as suggested by Berry's model (1990), but was enforced by the social norms of the home culture within the host culture. The Japanese social network in the United States observed social norms from Japanese society and created an internal code of segregation to marginalize other Japanese. The study shows that membership requirements are more than just shared linguistic and cultural values. Prospective members also need to meet the approval of the network in order to attain membership.

Launching a Parallel L1 Social Network in the Host Culture

To compensate for the lack of access to an L1 social network, the study found that Ajisai established a separate, parallel L1 social network for any Japanese women who wanted to join. Creating groups and adjusting to the group to maintain harmonious relations is a Japanese tradition (Ueno, 1998). Membership to this parallel JSN2 created by Ajisai was robust and the network became just as popular as the existing JSN2 in her area as a central clearinghouse for information about living in the United States. The formation of the parallel JSN2 initially caused separate L1 groups to form within the same geographical area for a while, with limited interaction between the two groups. It was not until a member of the newly formed group was

invited to become a teacher of the established group that the two groups acknowledged each other and formed a truce and created an even stronger presence within the Japanese community.

Construction of a Parallel L1 Social Network in the Host Culture

The findings show that the development of a parallel social network further enhanced the density (number of members) and enlarged the multiplexity, or the multiple connections a person is linked to in a social network, of the JSN2 (Marshall 2004; Stokowski, 1994) by affording more opportunities to engage with each other. Studies have rarely been able to document the emergence of a new social network in a host culture. Research on the development of ethnic social networks can only speculate how networks are formed, since many ethnic social networks have been active in a host culture for a very long time. Development of L1/C1 networks in a host culture is not unusual. Ethnic social networks are rapidly developed because “every act of migration creates a set of friends and relatives with a social tie to someone with valuable migrant experience” (Massey, 1990; p. 17). In a paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Goza (2004) stated that most likely the original pioneer migrants into the new area would “pass the torch” to a second wave of immigrants with whom they share reciprocal obligations based on either kinship or friendship. This was true for Ajisai when she co-founded a parallel JSN2 in her community. She wanted to meet other returnees who shared her experiences and who understood the linguistic and cultural issues that are involved with living in the United States. Newcomers to the area were informed about this social network through word of mouth and it soon became the main source for all Japanese returnees for information about living in the United States. The parallel JSN2 created by Ajisai was important to her fellow returnees and continued to thrive with new members even after Ajisai returned to Japan.

Functions of a Parallel L1 Social Network in the Host Culture

The findings from this study suggest that Japanese returnees need to have access to an L1 social network in the host culture to maintain their identity. What was revealing about the development of this L1 network was that the formation of this new parallel JSN2 was also fueled by a need to maintain a Japanese cultural identity. Cultural identity is a dominating factor in Japanese society, where membership in a particular group determines one's identity. The Japanese society is group-oriented and has a strong emphasis on creating harmonious interpersonal relationships through the acts of reciprocity within the group. Identity is created from these social networks and membership and acceptance to an in-group is essential. Members are socially compelled to keep in good standing with their in-groups by keeping their Japanese cultural identity intact. This means that members of the in-group should not be influenced or swayed by outside factors, such as exposure to other languages and cultures. Social conformity is expected and those who stray from the socio-cultural norm of this in-group network may jeopardize their cultural identity.

When Ajisai and Sakura were not initially considered to be potential members of the prevailing JSN2 in the community, this placed the returnees in a precarious situation. First, they did not have a support group in the host culture that they could turn to for assistance to help them integrate into their new life in the United States. Second, since it is inconceivable in Japanese culture to be without a group, not belonging to any network meant that they did not have a group that they could identify with while they were in the United States. Their Japanese cultural identity became vulnerable because they had risked their Japanese identity by leaving the home culture network, and then their fellow returnees in the United States did not recognize their identity as a Japanese returnee.

Being identified as a Japanese returnee in the United States was important for them because it denoted to other Japanese that their time away from Japan was temporary and that they had every intention of returning to Japan. This reflected the strong bond that is felt within the Japanese society where obligation to the group is the main concern for its members. With this new L1 network formation; Ajisai and Sakura were able to have access to a social network that shared their language, cultural, and migration experiences. They were able to utilize this network as a resource for information about their American life, and more importantly, they were able to identify themselves with other Japanese returnees.

Self-perceived low L2 proficiency

The findings from this study found that the Japanese had a low self-perception of English proficiency that affected their confidence in their ability to establish mainstream L2 social networks. Difficulties of Japanese communicating with non-Japanese have been documented by various studies to be embarrassing, unpleasant, and frightening experiences, or to be linguistically challenging for them because of the semantic and structural differences between Japanese and other Indo-European languages (Eto, 1977; Kowner, 2002). For the Japanese returnees, their low self-perception of their own L2 ability was a factor in their establishment of IBSN and the strong identification with JSN2. They were not confident in their English ability to seek out ASN nor did they strive to improve their English ability so that they could associate or form friendships with mainstream L2 social networks.

Lack of investment with mainstream L2 social networks

This study shows that the returnees' lack of investment with the target language was not based on linguistic and cultural capital, but on a misguided expectation that communication with mainstream L2 social networks required near native fluency. In second language acquisition studies, (Norton, 2000; Norton & Gao 2008; Norton Peirce, 1995), Norton suggests that

investment, rather than motivation, is a factor to explain the social interactions between language learners and target language speakers. She argues that language learners who fail to learn the target language are not sufficiently committed to the learning process and would only ‘invest’ in the target language if the language learner believed that he or she will receive symbolic and material resources in return (Norton & Gao, 2008, p. 108).

For the Japanese returnees, this study found that ‘investment’ is an appropriate term to describe relations the returnees had towards their communicative competence; however, unlike Norton’s suggestion; their lack of investment was not due to the lack of perceived social/cultural gains. The Japanese returnees did not feel the need to invest any time or effort in establishing any ASN because of their self-perceived low English proficiency. The Japanese returnees felt that due to their lack of English skills, establishing an English-only ASN was unattainable for them and did not see themselves as linguistically worthy of forging friendships and relationships with mainstream L2 social networks. Since the returnees were expecting a negative encounter when trying to communicate with mainstream L2 social networks, any interaction with ASN became a self-fulfilling prophecy that communication in English would be an impossible task for them.

The Japanese returnees also did not strive to improve their English ability so that they could associate or form friendships in mainstream L2 social networks. Due to the short time they would be in the United States, they did not feel that they had enough time for them to reach a certain level of English proficiency in order to communicate with members of the mainstream L2 network. Instead, the returnees took drastic measures to separate themselves from ASN and even refused to interact with ASN even when an opportunity to do so was presented to them. For example, Ume refused to include Americans in her hula dancing class, Mokuren allowed

only her children to have American friends, and Sakura purposefully limited her associations with Americans to her children's teachers. The Japanese decided that they could not associate with mainstream L2 social networks until they felt that they had achieved a certain level of English proficiency, and took the initiative to separate themselves from the members of the host culture.

Language Proficiency and Self-Selected Separation from the Host Culture

The findings indicated that the Japanese returnees initiated a separationist approach to the host culture. One can argue that if separation is the approach the Japanese returnees seek, then at first glance, the Japanese return migrants' choice may look similar to Berry's (1990) model of acculturation attitudes where the approach an individual adopts for his/her acculturation process is based on the attitudes the individual has toward cultural maintenance and the inter-group relations with the home and host cultures. In Berry's model, the separation approach is for individuals who attach importance to C1 maintenance but do not value inter-group relations, and the marginalization approach is for those who do not support or value C1 maintenance or inter-group relations. Separatist individuals identify with the ethnic culture, whereas the marginalized individual identifies with neither culture. Although the Japanese returnees strongly identify with their ethnic culture, Japanese society also highly values inter-group relations, making Berry's model limiting for the Japanese return migrants. What is missing from Berry's model is that language ability was not taken into consideration. For the Japanese returnees, their self-selected separation was not entirely based on their devotion to C1 maintenance as suggested in Berry's model, but rooted in their self-perceived low L2 proficiency.

Home culture explanation

Another possible explanation for the returnees to not invest in practicing and using their English with ASN could stem from the Asian culture of saving one's face in public. The 'face'

in Asia refers to the integrity of the person. To lose one's face is equivalent to losing the trust of a social network. If the returnees avoided any interaction with ASN, then they would not have to embarrass themselves by their lack of English ability. Their Japanese integrity would be intact (Gottlieb, 2005). This could account for the returnees' resisting opportunities to speak English to establish ASN. Instead of the host culture marginalizing the newcomers as it is often reported in immigration studies, it was the Japanese returnees' deliberate choice not to associate with Americans. Their choice was to interact with an alternative L2 social network, an L2 social network that was less intimidating and less likely to cause a loss of one's 'face'.

New approach to establishing social networks

The findings of this study revealed that the Japanese return migrants developed an alternative L2 social network as their L2 social network of choice. The emergence of an alternative L2 social network comprised of international speakers of English depicts a non-traditional movement for establishing social networks in a second language within a host culture environment. In immigration research, social networks are used as predictors of the cultural adaptation an immigrant may experience (Berry, 1990; Clayton, 1996; Hamer & Mazzucato, 2009, Wierzbicki, 2004) or to help an immigrant's language choice, language maintenance, or language shift (Li, 1994; Marshall, 2004; Milroy, 1980; Stoessel, 1998). In all of these studies, the options that the immigrants have in order to establish and/or maintain social networks are either L1 networks or L2 networks. The conclusions from these immigrant studies are very straightforward in implying that the immigrant is presented with only two possibilities in a polarized linear fashion. The findings of this study are novel because the Japanese return migrants have deviated from the sociolinguistic social network models used in previous research. They intentionally separated themselves by purposely avoiding ASN, even though they were in the United States. Their avoidance of ASN was not due to ethnic or racial differences, but

mainly to a self-described low proficiency of L2. Instead of sequestering and clustering into a JSN2 enclave, they established an alternative L2 social network, namely the IBSN. What had until now been an “either/or” approach to social networks for immigrants, the Japanese return migrants now demonstrated that there could be an alternative choice social network. The alternative L2 choice of network transcends cultural and linguistic boundaries that have been substantiated in other immigration studies. This unconventional alternative choice of social network development introduces the possibility that there is a wider range of social network choices for migrants who move to a host culture.

New Models of Social Networks

The concept of social network was developed to describe and systematize the patterns of relationships that individuals develop as they function in a group or in society. Social Network Theory, therefore, must address and provide a means of accounting for the numerous factors that are relevant to a wide variety of situations and individual differences. The findings from the social networks of return migrants raised questions and issues that challenge the conventional application of social network theory to return migrants. For return migrants, time is an important factor to take into consideration. The short duration of time in the host culture drives the pattern of establishing and maintaining social networks as well as the role the social network plays for the return migration experience. This study proposes a theoretical model for the social networks of return migrants. The model suggested is not intended to compete or duplicate existing social network models, but to complement the existing social network framework so that it may provoke more work on the development of a social network theory that accommodates return migrants.

Social Network Typology for Return Migrants

The study suggests that because the return migrants are temporarily in the host culture, the return migrants primarily established and maintained permanent exchange networks and temporary interactive social networks. The structure and function of the networks are different because their pattern of migration is different. The findings encourage social network analysis to take into consideration the temporariness of the migration experience because it affects and reflects the longevity, structure, and function of a social network for return migrants. The findings from this study enforce the notion that the typology of social networks needs to be broadened to include an interactive social network for specific purpose, a short-term, highly valued network of acquaintances that is established and maintained for specific purposes. A detailed outline of the structures of these networks is provided in Table 6-4.

Table 6-4. Social network typology for return migrants

Network Type	Structure	Strength	Longevity	Function
Permanent Exchange Social Network	Family and close friends in the home culture.	Strong, active through each stage of the return migration journey.	Long Term. Only network with permanency for the return migrants.	Act as the home culture link. Teaches and validates social roles and language. Help support L1/C1 maintenance for their children.
Temporary Interactive Network	Acquaintances in the host culture. Shared language and culture not necessary.	Strong ties. Solid stability and sustainability with no long-term members. Robust due to shared social factors.	Short. Only for the duration in the host culture.	Provides information about living abroad. L1 network can support L1/C1 maintenance for their children.
Social Network for Specific Purpose	Acquaintances. Members target for their knowledge.	Strong ties for the duration of engagement. Bond is strengthened by the purpose of the network.	Short and intense only for its intended purpose.	Provides needed information that an individual seeks

Alternative L2 Social Networks

The study also suggests that due to the short duration of time in the host culture, a return migrant's L2 social network of choice can be an alternative L2 social network. Until now, immigrant studies have limited the choices of social networks in the host culture to L1 and/or L2 social networks (Figure 6.1). Return migrants deviate from this pattern and establish an alternative L2 international social network where English is the second language for its members (Figure 6.2). One explanation for the establishment of the alternative L2 social network of choice is based on the language proficiency of an individual. Because the duration of time in the host culture is short for the return migrants, there is no perceived need to invest in any time or effort to improve L2 proficiency. The findings from this study offer an additional model for the establishment of social networks for return migrants for consideration in the social network framework.

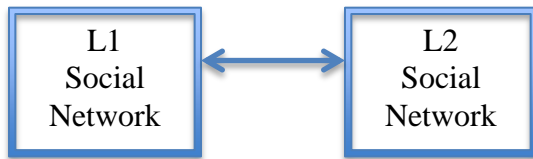


Figure 6-1. Social networks pattern for immigrants in a host culture

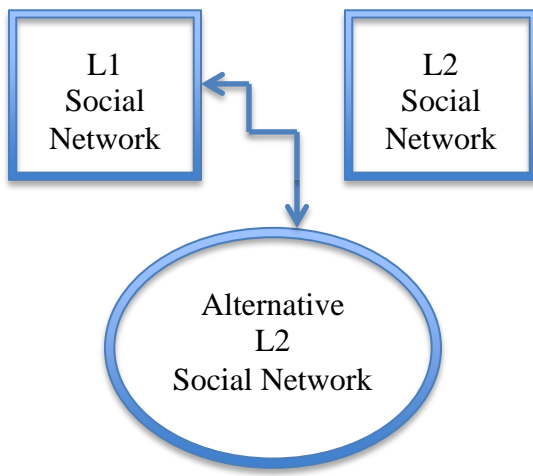


Figure 6-2. Social network pattern for return migrants in a host culture

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

The impetus for this research was to further increase our knowledge and understanding of the social networks of Japanese return migrants and the linguistic and cultural roles that the social networks play in their return migration experience. The aim of this study was to investigate the experience of return migration. Current international migration patterns are diverse, and the uniqueness in their cross-cultural migration experience of integrating and reintegrating into the home and host cultures made this population ideal for inquiry. This study investigated if the social network models for immigrants were applicable for the social networks of return migrants. The study examined the stories of six return migrants from Japan through personal interviews and data collected from a questionnaire and asked what role their social networks played in their integration and reintegration into their home and host cultures. Due to the unique cyclical nature of their migration experience, the findings from this study diverged from the traditional views on how social networks are structured and how they function during a short-term migration experience. This chapter will highlight the important findings from the study, suggest future areas of inquiry, state the limitations of the study, and close with final remarks.

Summation of the Findings

The findings from this study revealed that the structures and functions of the social networks of Japanese return migrants were different from those found in immigrant studies. This demonstrated that the conventional concepts of social network models are not completely appropriate or applicable for return migrants. Major differences in the structures of the social networks of the Japanese returnees were found in the passive network typology that defines

strong and weak ties, the construction of an interactive network for specific purposes, and the sustainability of a network despite a lack of stability in the networks due to rotating members.

Finding 1. The findings showed that the Japanese return migrants established permanent and temporary social networks during various phases of their migration process, and the establishment of the social network was dependent on the support that the networks could provide to the returnees during a particular stage of their return migration journey. Technology was the primary means that allowed the exchange network not to become a passive network. The findings also indicate that the Japanese returnees established robust temporary interactive social networks with strong ties for the purpose of retrieving information about living abroad. The strength of the social network tie did not rely on shared linguistic and cultural backgrounds. These temporary interactive networks were able to continue influencing the Japanese community even though there was no solid foundation to hold the network together. This suggests that social network analysis needs to recognize and include a wider set of structural relation factors that reflects the temporariness of a social network of return migrants

Finding 2. The study proved that the foundation for the construction, establishment, and growth of a temporary interactive network could be based on a specific purpose. The interactive networks as defined by immigrant studies are restricted by the longevity, purpose, and growth of their members. This finding added another dimension to the definition of an interactive network that was not previously taken into consideration by demonstrating that interactive networks can be temporary and still have an important and influential function for an individual.

Finding 3. The findings from this study revealed that Japanese returnees developed a parallel L1 social network when acceptance to an established L1 social network in the host culture was not automatic. This development of a parallel social network further enhanced the

density (number of members) and enlarged the multiplexity (multiple connections) a person was linked to in a social network. Access to this L1 parallel network was a necessity in order for the returnees to maintain their self-identity as Japanese.

Finding 4. The study demonstrated that the Japanese had a low self-perception of their English proficiency that affected their confidence in their ability to establish mainstream L2 social networks. Due to their low self-perceived L2 proficiency, the Japanese returnees did not attempt to establish any mainstream L2 social network. Because of the short duration of their stay in the host culture, the Japanese returnees did not invest any efforts into English language learning and instead initiated a separationist approach to the host culture.

Finding 5. The data showed that under certain circumstances, there are some types of social networks that are more influential and stable for integrating strong effective systems to facilitate the development of bilingual/bicultural identities. This suggests that a short duration in the host culture and the establishment of an alternative L2 social network of international migrants resulted in insufficient exposure to promote the development of a bilingual/bicultural identity.

Finding 6. The findings revealed that the Japanese return migrants developed an alternative L2 social network of international speakers of English as their L2 network of choice in the host culture. Due to their lack of English ability, the Japanese returnees felt that a mainstream L2 social network was unapproachable for them, and they felt more comfortable approaching an alternative L2 social network where English was spoken as a second language. This finding indicates that language proficiency is an important factor to consider in the establishment of L2 social networks. The study demonstrates that there are a number of complex social and contextual factors that may affect a return migrant's social network of choice.

Implications for Future Research

The findings from this study confirm the importance of distinguishing different social networks and their functions. The research methods selected for this study demonstrated the potential contribution of narrative inquiry as a vital research tool for the understanding of return migrants' social networks in a multilingual and multicultural setting. The emerging system of sociolinguistic factors associated with the social networks of the return migrant is more complex than had been predicted, suggesting the need for more research.

Language Learning

One of the areas of study that needs attention is an investigation into the correlation of how a migrant's perception of their own L2 proficiency fosters or impedes their language learning. In second language acquisition (SLA) research, being immersed in the target language and culture as well as interacting with L2 speakers are considered to be important factors in facilitating second language acquisition. In the case of the Japanese return migrants, being surrounded in an L2 environment did not contribute to their development of second language proficiency. Their low self-perceived L2 ability prevented them from interacting with mainstream L2 social networks, thus influencing their social network of choice, which in turn did not promote their improvement of L2.

In terms of language learning, a self-perceived low L2 proficiency may mediate the quantity and quality of opportunities to use the target language. When the period of time in the target language and culture is limited and the language learner senses that there are too many linguistic and cultural obstacles to attain higher levels of L2 proficiency, the language learner may choose not to invest any time or effort in their acquisition or improvement of L2. This follows Peirce's (1995) study where she states that if language learners do not have an investment in the target language, then they will not have any motivation to continue to seek

second language acquisition. The possibility that the social context in which language learners seek to establish interpersonal relationships that could facilitate the learner's development of everyday communicative skills and abilities may be rejected due to that individual's self-perceived low L2 proficiency is worthy of further investigation.

Different Type of Social Networks

Future studies also need to focus on adding new types of social networks to the social network typology, which currently include the exchange network, the interactive network, and the passive network. Social networks should reflect the technology that is currently available, and studies need to investigate ways that technology use can affect the social network typology found in the research literature. In addition, a new form of interactive social networks that was identified in the findings of this study invites further research by social network scholars. The temporary interactive social network that was created and established for a specific purpose was an important and influential network for the participants of this study. Other studies need to be conducted in order to examine what other roles and functions this new type of interactive social network may have in the migration experience of both immigrants and return migrants.

Emergence of Different L2 Social Networks

More specific directions for future research in social network analysis come from the emergence of an alternative L2 social network. Developing L2 social networks with acquaintances was not an easy task for Japanese return migrants due to their limited English proficiency; however, this did not cause them to abandon any attempt to forge relations with L2 speakers. The development of an alternative ESL social network for return migrants was a novel finding and underscores the conclusion that there are more options for establishing and/or maintaining social networks than previously identified in traditional immigrant studies. Further

research is needed to expand our understanding of migrants from just L1 and L2 networks to also include linguistic and cultural variation found within each network.

Limitations of the Study

The findings in this study have important linguistic and cultural implications that we must consider for future social network research. At the same time, it must be noted that any research design will have its strength and weakness that needs to be acknowledge. There are several limitations of study that may affect the validity of the results that needs to be discussed.

Researcher Bias

As the researcher, I share a similar experience from early childhood of multiple migrations between Japan and the United States due to my father's military affiliation. I was born in Japan to an American father and a Japanese mother, and I had the advantage of growing up with access to Japanese and American social networks in both countries. I am married to a Japanese national, therefore, this international pattern of having both Japanese and American social networks has continued into my adulthood.

In qualitative research such as this, researcher bias and subjectivity are inevitable, especially in the analysis and interpretation of the data; therefore, measures to counter for the sources of researcher bias have been taken into account in the research design. According to Golafshani (2003), engaging in multiple methods such as observation, interviews, and recordings will lead to a more valid, reliable, and diverse representation of a social phenomenon. Therefore, for this study, these qualitative research criteria were implemented to minimize the effect of researcher bias. In order to ensure dependability (reliability), data were obtained using different collection methods (personal interviews and questionnaires). For credibility (internal validity) of the data collection, the interview data were mechanically recorded and transcribed, then

translated into English. The English translations were then crosschecked with a bilingual Japanese /English speaker for accuracy.

Number of Participants

This study reflects the return migration experience of a small group of Japanese women, and their stories alone are insufficient to uncover all the intricate factors involved in their return migration experiences. A social network analysis of such a small sample cannot provide strong and ample evidence to create a new analytical framework for the social networks of all return migrants. Nevertheless, it is imperative to recognize that the structure and function of social networks for return migrants are different and that the social network framework found in immigrant studies needs to be expanded in order to accommodate these differences.

Selection of Participants

Another limitation of the study is the selection of the participants. The participants of this study were married Japanese women with children who came to the United States to accompany their husbands. The occupations of the husbands included medical doctors who were visiting researchers at large university hospitals and engineers who were sponsored by their companies to pursue a graduate degree in the United States. Financial support for the Japanese return migrants' stay in the United States came from Japan and no other supplemental income was earned while they were in the United States. The social economic status of the Japanese return migrants in this study afforded the participants more opportunities and freedom to pursue personal and family interests than other return migrants who come to the United States under different economic situations. Thus the Japanese return migrants in this study were narrowly defined, distinguishing them as a unique distribution among global migration patterns. The generalizability (external validity) of the findings may not extend to all other cultures or to other return migrants. The goal of the qualitative researcher, however, is not to generalize these

findings to a larger population, but is concerned rather with the transferability of the findings to similar phenomena. The goal of this study is to provide sufficient information that can be used with another target population to determine whether the findings are applicable to other return migrants from Japan, as well as other return migrants from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Final Remarks

Scholarly contributions to new social network models that take into account the complex linguistic and cultural characteristics of return migrants would greatly enhance our understanding of the roles social networks play in return migration. Further replication-based studies for different ethnic groups of return migrants are needed in order to confirm the roles that social networking can play for return migrants. The richness of the data from this study speaks to the value of the continual investigation of the return migration phenomena from a social network perspective. Implications for future research studies conducted on the social networks of return migrants will have the potential to contribute valuable insights to new areas of inquiry for social network analysis as well as for issues related to second language learning and L2 learners' self-identity development.

APPENDIX A
INFORMED CONSENT FORMS

English

Dear Participants:

My name is Jo Kozuma and I am a doctoral candidate with the School of Teaching and Learning at the University of Florida. I am conducting a research project to learn about the social networks of Japanese families who have lived in the United States with their children for a period of time and then returned back to Japan. Social networks are your friends, family and acquaintances, and the purpose of my research is to learn how the relationships you have with your social networks influenced your language and cultural experiences when you lived in the United States and when you returned to Japan. I have been told that you have lived in the United States for a while and I would like to have an opportunity to ask you about your overseas experience.

If you participate, your involvement in this study consists of two personal interviews and filling out a questionnaire. Both the questionnaire and the interviews are available in Japanese or English. The first interview should take about 30-45 minutes and will be held at a time and place that is most convenient to you. Before we meet for the first interview, I will ask you to fill out a questionnaire. The questionnaire will contain questions about your circle of friends at home and in the United States, as well as your cultural and language experiences in the United States and when you returned to Japan. The questionnaire should take about 1 hour to complete. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer, nor share any information you do not wish to share.

With your permission, I would like to audiotape our interview. I will be the only person to have access to the tape and I will do all the transcription of the interview. I will use pseudonyms and delete any information that clearly identifies you for the final report. Please be assured that I will respect your privacy and any personal information about your family, your friends or any other information mentioned during the interview or questionnaire that may identify you, your family, or members of your social networks will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Personal information will not be used for the final manuscript, publication release, or identity disclosure. At the end of the study, I will delete and destroy any information on paper or tape that will identify you or link you to the pseudonym assigned to you.

Please realize that the participation in this study is completely voluntary. In addition, there are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. If at any time you feel you want to withdrawal from the study, please let me know and I will delete all your data from my report and return the questionnaire to you. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence.

If you have any questions about this study you can contact Dr. Ester de Jong at the University of Florida, College of Education, School of Teaching and Learning, 2413 Norman Hall, Gainesville, Florida 32611. She can also be reached at (352) 392-9191 ext. 280 or edejong@coe.ufl.edu or you can contact me, Jo Kozuma at daigaku@ufl.edu. If you have any

questions about your rights as a research participant in this study, you can contact UFIRB Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611-2250 or at (352) 392-0433.

If you agree to participate in this study please sign the agreement below. A second copy is provided for your records. By signing this letter, you give me permission to report your responses anonymously in the final manuscript. I am looking forward to meeting and talking with you. Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jo Kozuma
University of Florida
College of Education
School of Teaching and Learning
2413 Norman Hall
Gainesville, FL 32611

I have read the procedure described above for the social network questionnaire and interview. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have received a copy of this description for my records.

Participant: _____ Date: _____

Principal Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Jo A. Kozuma

Japanese Translation of Consent Form

インフォームドコンセント確認書

参加者の皆様、

私は州立フロリダ大学教育学部 Teaching and Learning 学科の教官で Jo Kozuma と申します。

私は現在、「アメリカ合衆国でお子様と一定期間過ごされたあと、日本に帰国された日本人家庭のソーシャルネットワーク」について調査する研究を行っております。ソーシャルネットワークとは、あなたのお友達、ご家族およびお知り合いのことを意味し、私の研究の目的は、「あなたがアメリカ合衆国にお住まいの時と、日本にお帰りになった時において、ソーシャルネットワークがあなたの言語や文化体験にどのような影響を与えたかを調べること」です。私はあなたがアメリカ合衆国に一定期間滞在されたとうかがっており、あなたの海外でのご経験をお聞かせいただきたく存じます。

この研究にご参加いただきますと、個人的なインタビューに2度お答え頂き、一つの書面によるアンケートに記入していただくこととなります。どちらのインタビューも日本語、英語のどちらでも受けていただけます。一回目のインタビューの所要時間は約45分から一時間で、あなたの御都合の良い時間と場所をお選びいただけます。一回目のインタビューの前にはアンケートのご記入をお願いいたします。アンケートは日本とアメリカ合衆国とでのあなたのまわりのお友達について、およびアメリカ合衆国にいらっしゃった時と日本にお帰りになってからの文化的、言語的体験についての質問が含まれます。アンケートの完成には約1時間かかります。あなたがお答えになりたくない質問にはお答えにならなくて結構ですし、他人に知られたくないことについてはご記入いただかなくても結構です。

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この研究への参加はあなたの自発的な意思であることをご理解ください。しかもこの研究に参加することによってもたらされる、予想される危険、代償または直接的な利益はありません。いつの時点においても、あなたがこの研究への参加を取りやめたいと思われた時はお申し出ください。あなたのデータはすべて私の報告書から削除され、

アンケートはあなたにお返しいたします。あなたはいつでもなんのともなく自由にこの研究への参加をとりやめることができます。

もしこの研究についてなにかわからないことがおありでしたら、下記にあります **Dr. Ester de Jong**、または私、**Jo Kozuma** まで郵送、電話または電子メールのいずれかの方法でご連絡ください。

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この研究への参加者としてのあなたの権利についてのご質問は以下のところでうけたまわります。

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(352) 392-0433.

もしあなたがこの研究への参加にご同意いただける場合には以下にご署名をお願いいたします。2枚目のコピーをあなたの記録としてお渡しいたします。以下にご署名いただくことによってあなたは私があなたのお答えを匿名で私の最終原稿に盛り込む許可をお与えいただいたこととなります。

この研究にご参加いただきありがとうございます。お目にかかれることを楽しみにしております。

Jo Kozuma

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私は上記のソーシャルネットワークアンケートとインタビューの手順を読み理解しました。私は自発的にこの研究に参加することに同意します。私はこの書面のコピーを私自身の記録として受け取りました。

参加者氏名: _____ 日付: _____

研究代表者: _____ 日付: _____

Jo A. Kozuma

APPENDIX B INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Personal Background Information

Tell me about your life before you left for the USA?

What were your impressions/thought about people who have lived overseas?

How did you feel when you found out that you were moving to the USA?

Before Leaving Japan

What did you do to prepare yourself to move to the USA?

Tell me about any concerns you had about your family moving to the USA?

What did you family and friends say about you moving to the USA?

Your Stay in the USA

What was it like to arrive in the USA?

Tell me about your life in the USA? How was it different from your life in Japan?

What did you miss about Japan?

Tell me about the difficulties you encountered while you were living in the USA?

What did you like about your life in the USA?

Returning to Japan

How did it feel to be back in Japan?

What kind of difficulties did you encounter when you were re-adjusting to Japan?

What do you miss about the USA?

How has your life changed because of your experience of living in the USA?

APPENDIX C
ENGLISH QUESTIONNAIRE

Background Information 1

<p>Directions: Please answer the following questions that are relevant to your family. Your answers to any or all questions will be held in the strictest confidence. Although I ask for names throughout this questionnaire, the names will not be revealed in any manner for the final report. The contents of this form and any information identifying you are absolutely confidential.</p>				
Family Name:	Person who is filling out this questionnaire:			
Children's Names:	Current Age	Where were your children born?		
Child 1		Japan	USA	Other:
Child 2		Japan	USA	Other:
Child 3		Japan	USA	Other:
Other family Members:		Japan	USA	Other:
What was your reason for being in the USA?				
Where were you in the USA?				
How long did you stay in the USA?				
Have you lived in the USA before your last visit? If yes, when and where were you?		Yes No	Date and Location:	
When you were in the USA, did you go back to Japan for a visit? If yes, how many times did you stay in Japan and how long was each stay?		Yes No		
When did you permanently return to Japan?				

Background Information 2

Did you do anything to prepare yourself and your family for your live overseas?

Took English language classes.	Yes	No
Took preparation seminars/workshops for living overseas.	Yes	No
Talked to people who have lived overseas.	Yes	No
Sought advice from Americans living in Japan.	Yes	No
Read books and articles about living overseas.	Yes	No
Talked or corresponded with Japanese who lived in the USA.	Yes	No
Talked or corresponded with Americans in the USA.	Yes	No
Used the internet for information.	Yes	No
Talked or corresponded with Japanese who have lived in the USA before.	Yes	No
Other: Please specify		

Short Answers:

What positive or negative comments do other Japanese people make about your experience of living overseas?

Language Information 1

What languages do you generally speak in your family now			
Approximately what percentage of your daily language use is	Japanese %	English %	Other %

How would you rate your family's English speaking ability?

You	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Spouse	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Child 1	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Child 2	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Child 3	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Others	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor

How would you rate your family's Japanese speaking ability?

You	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Spouse	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Child 1	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Child 2	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Child 3	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Others	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor

Language Information 2

What did your family do to help maintain their Japanese while in the USA? Please circle your response using the 4 point scale.

	Not at all	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
Watch Japanese videos/DVDs	1	2	3	4
Watch Japanese TV through cable/satellite	1	2	3	4
Read Japanese books, magazines, manga, etc...	1	2	3	4
Listen to Japanese radio on the internet	1	2	3	4
Read Japanese newspapers on the internet	1	2	3	4
Socialize with other Japanese	1	2	3	4
Child/Children attended special Japanese schools	1	2	3	4
Engage a private tutor	1	2	3	4
Maintain a blog on the internet	1	2	3	4
Maintain a website	1	2	3	4
Chat/instant message in Japanese on the internet	1	2	3	4
Child/Children were home schooled in Japanese	1	2	3	4
Other: Please specify	1	2	3	4
What language did you generally speak to your children when you were in the USA?		Japanese	English	Other
What language did your children generally speak to the family members when you were in the USA?		Japanese	English	Other
Did any of your children attend school in the USA?				
Child 1	Yes	No	Grades:	
Child 2	Yes	No	Grades:	
Child 3	Yes	No	Grades:	
Other	Yes	No	Grades:	

Language Information 3

Were any of your children enrolled in a special English language program at their school?	Did not enroll	Initially enrolled and exited	Enrolled and remained
Child 1			
Child 2			
Child 3			
Other			

What does your family do to help maintain their English now that you are in Japan? Please circle your response using the 4 point scale.

	Not at all	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
Watch English videos/DVDs.	1	2	3	4
Watch English TV through cable or satellite.	1	2	3	4
Read English books or magazines.	1	2	3	4
Listen to English radio on the internet.	1	2	3	4
Socialize with English speakers.	1	2	3	4
Read English newspapers on the internet.	1	2	3	4
Enroll your children in kikokushijo school.	1	2	3	4
Socialize with other Japanese returnees.	1	2	3	4
Engage a private tutor.	1	2	3	4
Chat/instant message in English on the internet.	1	2	3	4
Maintain an English blog.	1	2	3	4
Enroll in English conversation classes.	1	2	3	4
Child/Children attend international schools.	1	2	3	4
Other: Please specify				

Language Information 4

Please circle your response to the following statements below using the 4 point scale. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for *no answer*.

▲While I was in the USA:	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
I spoke Japanese to my spouse.	0	1	2	3	4
I spoke English to my spouse.	0	1	2	3	4
I spoke Japanese to my children.	0	1	2	3	4
I spoke English to my children.	0	1	2	3	4
Our children spoke Japanese to us.	0	1	2	3	4
Our children spoke English to us.	0	1	2	3	4
I sent my children to the local American schools.	0	1	2	3	4
I sent my children to the local American daycare centers.	0	1	2	3	4
I sent my children to supplementary Japanese schools on the weekends.	0	1	2	3	4
My family tried to maintain their Japanese language skills.	0	1	2	3	4
I took English lessons.	0	1	2	3	4
Other: Please specify					
▲After returning to Japan,	0	1	2	3	4
I speak Japanese to my spouse.	0	1	2	3	4
I speak English to my spouse.	0	1	2	3	4
I speak Japanese to my children.	0	1	2	3	4
I speak English to my children.	0	1	2	3	4
Our children speak Japanese to us.	0	1	2	3	4
Our children speak English to us.	0	1	2	3	4
I continue to study English.	0	1	2	3	4
Our children attend international schools.	0	1	2	3	4
Our children attend provisional Japanese schools for returnees.	0	1	2	3	4

Social Network Information 1

Please list 5 families or friends with whom you associate the most and tell me some information about them.

Names	Relationship	Duration	Nationality	Distance	Rank of Importance
	1 = Good friend 2 = Acquaintance 3 = Minor Acquaintance 4 = Family	1 = How long have you known this person or family?	JPN? USA? UK? AUS? Other?	Lives in the same town? Lives out of town? Lives overseas?	1 = Important 2 = Average 3 = Minor
A.	1 2 3 4				1 2 3
B.	1 2 3 4				1 2 3
C.	1 2 3 4				1 2 3
D.	1 2 3 4				1 2 3
E.	1 2 3 4				1 2 3

When you needed information about living in the USA, to whom did you turn to the most? Please circle your response on the 4-point scale. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for *no answer*.

Before leaving Japan		No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
	Japanese	0	1	2	3	4
	Americans	0	1	2	3	4
	Others	0	1	2	3	4
In the USA						
	Japanese	0	1	2	3	4
	Americans	0	1	2	3	4
	Others	0	1	2	3	4

Social Network Information 2

Approximately how much of your time did you spend with the following people? If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for *no answer*.

	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
Before Leaving Japan					
Japanese	0	1	2	3	4
Americans	0	1	2	3	4
Others	0	1	2	3	4
	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
In the USA					
Japanese	0	1	2	3	4
Americans	0	1	2	3	4
Others	0	1	2	3	4
	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
After returning to Japan					
Japanese	0	1	2	3	4
Americans	0	1	2	3	4
Others	0	1	2	3	4

Short Answers:

1. Was it important for you and your family to keep a close connection with the Japanese language and culture while you were in the USA? Please explain.

Social Network Information 3

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for *no answer*.

▲While you were in the USA:	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasion-ally	Often
I relied on my Japanese contacts in the USA to help me adjust.	0	1	2	3	4
When there was a problem, I consulted with other Japanese living in Japan.	0	1	2	3	4
When there was a problem, I consulted with other Japanese living in USA.	0	1	2	3	4
When there was a problem, I consulted with Americans.	0	1	2	3	4
I kept a close connection with Japan through my family and friends.	0	1	2	3	4
I made American friends.	0	1	2	3	4
I socialized mainly with other Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4
I joined a Japanese social association.	0	1	2	3	4
Sometimes it was difficult to meet Americans.	0	1	2	3	4
I turned to my family and friends in Japan for emotional support.	0	1	2	3	4
I turned to my family and friends in the USA for emotional support.	0	1	2	3	4
▲Upon Returning to Japan:					
I consulted with my Japanese friends/family I met in the USA to help me re-adjust.	0	1	2	3	4
When there was a problem, I consulted with other Japanese living in Japan.	0	1	2	3	4
When there was a problem, I consulted with other Japanese returnees in Japan.	0	1	2	3	4
When there was a problem, I consulted with Americans living in Japan.	0	1	2	3	4

Social Network Information 4

▲Upon Returning to Japan	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasion-ally	Often
When there was a problem, I consulted with the Japanese living in USA.	0	1	2	3	4
When there was a problem, I consulted with Americans living in the USA.	0	1	2	3	4
I turned to my family and friends in Japan for emotional support.	0	1	2	3	4
I turned to my family and friends in the USA for emotional support.	0	1	2	3	4
I kept a close connection with the USA through my family and friends.	0	1	2	3	4
I meet with a social association for returnees.	0	1	2	3	4
▲About your Time in Japan Now	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasionall y	Often
When there is a problem, I sill consult with Japanese friends/family I met in the USA.	0	1	2	3	4
When there is a problem, I sill consult with other Japanese returnees in Japan.	0	1	2	3	4
When there is a problem, I sill consult with American friends/family living in the USA.	0	1	2	3	4
When there is a problem, I sill consult with American friends/family living in Japan.	0	1	2	3	4
I keep in touch with my family and friends in the USA.	0	1	2	3	4
I am active in a social association for returnees.	0	1	2	3	4
I maintain my American connection through my Japanese friends who I met in the USA.	0	1	2	3	4
I maintain my American connection through my American friends who I met in the USA.	0	1	2	3	4

Identity Information 1

Did you consider yourself a bilingual person?	Yes	No	Other
Before leaving Japan?			
While in the USA?			
Returning to Japan?			
Did you consider yourself a bicultural person?	Yes	No	Other
Before leaving Japan?			
While in the USA?			
Returning to Japan?			

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for *no answer*.

	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
▲While in the USA:					
I felt I had a lot in common with other Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4
I identified with the Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4
I was proud to be Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4
I had negative feelings about other Japanese people.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt I was treated differently because I was Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt I had a different way of thinking than the Americans.	0	1	2	3	4
I was glad to be born Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4
I tried to conform to my American peers.	0	1	2	3	4
▲Upon Returning to Japan:					
I felt I had a lot in common with other Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4
I was proud to be Japanese who had lived overseas.	0	1	2	3	4
I had negative feelings about other Japanese people.	0	1	2	3	4
I tried to hide my overseas experience from my Japanese peers.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt I was being treated differently because I was a returnee.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt I had a different way of thinking than other Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4

Identity Information 2

▲About Your Time in Japan Now:	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasion-ally	Often
I feel I have a lot in common with other Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4
I identify myself with the Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4
I identify myself as a Japanese returnee.	0	1	2	3	4
I have negative feelings about other Japanese people.	0	1	2	3	4
I feel that I am treated differently because I am a returnee.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt that I have a differently way of thinking than other Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4
I tried to hide my overseas experience from my Japanese peers.	0	1	2	3	4
I am glad to be considered as an international person.	0	1	2	3	4

How would you label yourself? Please check all answers that apply.

	Before leaving Japan	While in the USA	Returning to Japan
Japanese			
International Person			
Foreigner			
Returnee			
Japanese American			
Other: Please specify			

Culture Information 1

Short Answers:

Did you experience any culture shock when you first arrived in the USA?
If yes, what was your culture shock?

Yes	No
-----	----

Did you experience any culture shock when you first returned to Japan?
If yes, what was your culture shock?

Yes	No
-----	----

Which was more difficult for you to do: going to the USA or coming back to Japan? Why?

USA	Japan
-----	-------

If you had a chance to go overseas again, would you like to go again? Where would you like to go the next time?

Yes	No
-----	----

If you had a chance to go overseas again, is there anything you would do differently to prepare yourself and your family?

Yes	No
-----	----

Culture Information 2

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

▲While in the USA:	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasion-ally	Often
I observed the traditions and holidays of Japan.	0	1	2	3	4
I observed the traditions and holidays of the USA.	0	1	2	3	4
I wanted to learn about American culture.	0	1	2	3	4
I had difficulties adjusting to American culture.	0	1	2	3	4
I wanted my children to know about Japanese culture.	0	1	2	3	4
I wanted my children to know about American culture.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt that I could live anywhere in the world.	0	1	2	3	4
I enjoyed sharing my culture with the Americans.	0	1	2	3	4
▲Upon Returning to Japan	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasion-ally	Often
I have incorporated some customs I learned in the USA into my family life.	0	1	2	3	4
I observed the traditions and holidays of the USA.	0	1	2	3	4
I tried to do everything American style.	0	1	2	3	4
I had difficulties adjusting to Japanese culture.	0	1	2	3	4
I wanted my children to remember the American culture they learned.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt that I had forgotten certain aspects of the Japanese culture.	0	1	2	3	4
I felt that I could live anywhere in the world.	0	1	2	3	4
I enjoyed sharing my overseas experience with other Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4

Culture Information 3

▲About Your Time in Japan Now	No Answer	Not at all	Seldom	Occasion-ally	Often
I still incorporate some customs I learned in the USA into my family life.	0	1	2	3	4
I still observed the traditions and holidays of the USA.	0	1	2	3	4
I live by a mixture of Japanese and American customs.	0	1	2	3	4
I feel that it is important to be bicultural.	0	1	2	3	4
I feel that it is important for my children to remember that they have a bicultural lifestyle.	0	1	2	3	4
I feel that I could live anywhere in the world.	0	1	2	3	4
I still enjoy sharing my overseas experience with other Japanese.	0	1	2	3	4

What are the advantages and disadvantages of living abroad and returning to Japan?

Advantages:

Disadvantages:

Thank you for your participation. I look forward to seeing you at our interview. If you should have any questions about the questionnaire, please feel free to ask me at our interview or you may contact me at daigaku@ufl.edu.

END

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APPENDIX D
JAPANESE QUESTIONNAIRE

Background Information 1

Directions: あなたの家族に対する質問について回答してください。あなたの回答についての名前や内容など個人情報、外部へ漏れることはありませんので、ご安心ください。今回は、あなたの知人を紹介していただくこともありますが、その知人の名前やその他の情報が外部に漏れることもありません。				
名前:	英語またはローマ字での名前:			
子どもの名前:	今の年齢	あなたのお子さんはどこで生まれましたか?		
子ども 1		Japan	USA	その他:
子ども 2		Japan	USA	その他:
子ども 3		Japan	USA	その他:
その他:		Japan	USA	その他:
家族が米国へ行った理由は何ですか?				
米国のどこに住みましたか?				
どれくらいの期間、米国に滞在しましたか?				
最後に米国に住んでいた以前に米国に住んだ経験はありますか? それは、いつでどこに住みましたか?		Yes No 住んだ期間 (年月～年月) ・場所:		
米国にいたとき、日本へ一時帰国したことはありますか? もし、あるなら何回帰国しましたか? またどれくらいの期間、日本に滞在しましたか?		Yes (回 : 日) No		
いつ、日本へ完全に帰国しましたか?				

Background Information 2

米国へ家族ですむための準備を何かしましたか？

英語（英会話）のレッスンを受けた。	Yes	No
外国へすむためのセミナーやワークショップに参加しましたか？	Yes	No
外国へ住んだ人にアドバイスもらった。	Yes	No
日本に住んでいるアメリカ人に話を聞いた。	Yes	No
外国へ住むための本や記事を読んだ。	Yes	No
当時、米国に住んでいる日本人に話・情報を聞いた。	Yes	No
当時、米国に住んでいるアメリカ人に話・情報を聞いた。	Yes	No
インターネットで情報を得た。	Yes	No
前に、米国に住んだことのある日本人に話・情報を聞いた。	Yes	No
その他（どんな方法？）：		

Short Answers:

自分が外国に住んでいたことに対して、他の人はどんな意見でしたか？

ポジティブな意見：

ネガティブな意見：

Language Information 1

あなたの家族は、家で何語を使っていますか？			
現在、何パーセント日本語または英語を使っていますか？	Japanese %	English %	その他 %

あなたの家族の英語能力は、どんなものですか？

あなた	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない
妻または夫	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない
子ども 1	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない
子ども 2	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない
子ども 3	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない
その他	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない

あなたの家族の日本語能力は、どんなものですか？

あなた	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない
妻または夫	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない
子ども 1	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない
子ども 2	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない
子ども 3	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない
その他	非常にある	ある	普通	あまりない

Language Information 2

米国にいるとき、日本語を維持するために、あなたの家族はどんな努力をしましたか？下記の4段階の回答に丸をつけてください。

	Not at all	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
日本語のビデオ・DVDを見た。	1	2	3	4
日本語のTVをケーブル・衛星放送で見た。	1	2	3	4
日本の本・雑誌・マンガなどを見た。	1	2	3	4
インターネットで日本のラジオを聞いた。	1	2	3	4
インターネットで日本語の新聞を読んだ。	1	2	3	4
他の日本人と交流を持った。	1	2	3	4
子供・子供たちは、日本の学校にかよった。	1	2	3	4
日本語の家庭教師を雇った。	1	2	3	4
インターネットで日本語のブログを持っていた。	1	2	3	4
日本語で自分のホームページを持っていた。	1	2	3	4
インターネットで日本語のチャットをしていた。	1	2	3	4
親が子供に日本語の勉強を教えていた。	1	2	3	4
その他（具体的に）：	1	2	3	4
米国にいたとき、あなたの子供に対して、何語を話して いましたか？		Japanese	English	その他
米国にいたとき、あなたの子供は家族に対して、何語を 話していましたか？		Japanese	English	その他
米国にいたとき、あなたの子供は学校に行きましたか？				
子供 1	Yes	No	学年:	
子供 2	Yes	No	学年:	
子供 3	Yes	No	学年:	
その他	Yes	No	学年:	

Language Information 3

あなたの子供は、行った学校で特別な英語研修を受けましたか？	受けなかった	最初だけ受けた	ずっと受けた
子供 1			
子供 2			
子供 3			
その他			

今現在、英語を維持するために、あなたの家族はどんな努力をしましたか？下記の4段階の回答に丸をつけてください。

	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
英語のビデオ・DVDを見ている。	1	2	3	4
英語のTVをケーブル・衛星放送で見ている。	1	2	3	4
英語の本・雑誌・マンガなどを見ている。	1	2	3	4
インターネットで英語のラジオを聞いている。	1	2	3	4
他の外国人で英語のできる人と交流を持っている。	1	2	3	4
インターネットで英語の新聞を読んでいる。	1	2	3	4
英会話のクラスを取っている。	1	2	3	4
他の帰国子女と交流を持っている。	1	2	3	4
英語の家庭教師を雇っている。	1	2	3	4
インターネットで英語のチャットをしている。	1	2	3	4
インターネットで英語のブログを持っている。	1	2	3	4
帰国子女のための学校に行っている。	1	2	3	4
インターナショナルスクールに行っている。	1	2	3	4
その他（具体的に）：				

Language Information 4

下記の4段階の回答で当てはまるものに丸をつけてください。もし、当てはまらないものがあれば、0に丸をつけてください。

▲米国にいる間	なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
夫婦では、日本語を使った。	0	1	2	3	4
夫婦では、英語を使った。	0	1	2	3	4
子供には、日本語を使った。	0	1	2	3	4
子供には、英語を使った。	0	1	2	3	4
子供は、親に日本語を使った。	0	1	2	3	4
子供は、親に英語を使った。	0	1	2	3	4
子供をアメリカの学校に行かせた。	0	1	2	3	4
子供をアメリカの保育園（デイケア）に行かせた。	0	1	2	3	4
子供を週末の日本学校に行かせた。	0	1	2	3	4
日本語を忘れさせないように努力した。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、英語のレッスンを受けた。	0	1	2	3	4
その他（具体的に）：					
▲日本に帰ってから	なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
夫婦では、日本語を使っている。	0	1	2	3	4
夫婦では、英語を使っている。	0	1	2	3	4
子供には、日本語を使っている。	0	1	2	3	4
子供には、英語を使っている。	0	1	2	3	4
子供は、親に日本語を使っている。	0	1	2	3	4
子供は、親に英語を使っている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、まだ英語の勉強をしている。	0	1	2	3	4
子供は、インターナショナルスクールに行っている。	0	1	2	3	4
子供は、帰国子女の学校に行っている。	0	1	2	3	4
その他（具体的に）：	0	1	2	3	4

Social Network Information 1

あなたの良く知っている、5つの家族・友達を教えてください。

名前	関係 1 = 仲のいい友達 2 = 友達 (面識がある) 3 = 面識がない 4 = 親戚	知り合っ てから、ど のくらいで すか??	国籍 JPN? USA? UK? AUS? その他?	住居の距離 同じ町に住 んでいる。 他の町に住 んでいる。 外国に住ん でいる。 。	影響力のランキング 1 = 重要 2 = 普通 3 = あまり重要
A.	1 2 3 4				1 2 3
B.	1 2 3 4				1 2 3
C.	1 2 3 4				1 2 3
D.	1 2 3 4				1 2 3
E.	1 2 3 4				1 2 3

米国住むための情報が必要なときは？誰から、情報をもらいますか？下記の4段階の回答で、当てはまるものに丸をつけてください。もし、当てはまらないものがあれば、0に丸をつけてください。

日本を出る前		なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
	日本人	0	1	2	3	4
	米国人	0	1	2	3	4
	その他	0	1	2	3	4
米国で						
	日本人	0	1	2	3	4
	米国人	0	1	2	3	4
	その他	0	1	2	3	4

Social Network Information 2

どれくらいの時間を彼らと過ごしましたか？ もし、当てはまらないものがあれば、0に丸をつけてください。

		なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
日本を出る前						
	日本人	0	1	2	3	4
	米国人	0	1	2	3	4
	その他	0	1	2	3	4
		なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
米国で						
	日本人	0	1	2	3	4
	米国人	0	1	2	3	4
	その他	0	1	2	3	4
		なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
帰国してから						
	日本人	0	1	2	3	4
	米国人	0	1	2	3	4
	その他	0	1	2	3	4

Short Answers:

1. 米国に住んでいたときの日本語や日本の文化を保つことは重要でしたか？これについて説明してください。

Social Network Information 3

下記の経験で一番近いものを選んで、丸をしてください。もし、当てはまらないものがあれば、0に丸をつけてください。

▲米国に住んでいたとき:	なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
アメリカの生活に慣れるのに、日本人の手を借りた。	0	1	2	3	4
何か問題が起きたとき、日本に住んでいる日本人に相談した。	0	1	2	3	4
何か問題が起きたとき、米国に住んでいる日本人に相談した。	0	1	2	3	4
何か問題が起きたとき、アメリカ人に相談した。	0	1	2	3	4
自分の家族や友達を通して、日本との関係を大切にした。	0	1	2	3	4
アメリカ人の友達を作った。	0	1	2	3	4
ほとんどの時間、日本人との付き合いだった。	0	1	2	3	4
日本人会に入り、交流を持った。	0	1	2	3	4
アメリカ人と会う機会が少なかった。	0	1	2	3	4
心のケア（サポート）のために、日本にいる家族や友達との付き合いを利用した。	0	1	2	3	4
心のケア（サポート）のために、米国にいる家族や友達との付き合いを利用した。	0	1	2	3	4
▲帰国してすぐ:					
私は、米国にいる日本人に、日本へ帰国してからの相談をした。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、何か悩みがあるとき、日本に住んでいる他の日本人に相談をした。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、何か悩みがあるとき、外国に住んでいた他の日本人に相談をした。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、何か悩みがあるとき、日本に住んでいる外国人に相談した。	0	1	2	3	4

Social Network Information 4

▲帰国してすぐ	なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
私は、何か悩みがあるとき、米国に住んでいる日本人に相談した。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、何か悩みがあるとき、米国に住んでいるアメリカ人に相談した。	0	1	2	3	4
心のケア（サポート）のために、家族や友達との付き合いを利用した。	0	1	2	3	4
心のケア（サポート）のために、米国に住んでいる家族や友達との付き合いを利用した。	0	1	2	3	4
自分の家族や友達を通して、米国との関係を大切にした。	0	1	2	3	4
帰国者たちの会合に参加している。	0	1	2	3	4
▲帰国して、しばらくした今は？					
	なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
私は、何か悩みがあるとき、米国で知り合った日本人や家族にまだ相談する。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、何か悩みがあるとき、日本に帰国している日本人や家族にまだ相談する。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、何か悩みがあるとき、米国に住んでいるアメリカ人や家族にまだ相談する。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、何か悩みがあるとき、日本に住んでいるアメリカ人の友達や家族にまだ相談する。	0	1	2	3	4
まだ米国に住んでいる家族と友達に連絡を取っている。	0	1	2	3	4
まだ帰国者たちの会合に参加している。	0	1	2	3	4
米国であった日本人の友達とアメリカンのコネクションとして、まだ連絡を取っている。	0	1	2	3	4
米国であったアメリカ人の友達とアメリカンのコネクションとして、まだ連絡を取っている。	0	1	2	3	4

Identity Information 1

あなたは、自分をバイリンガルだと思えますか？		Yes	No	その他
	日本を離れる前から？			
	米国にいる間に？			
	帰国してから？			
あなたは、自分をバイカルチャルだと思えますか？		Yes	No	その他
	日本を離れる前から？			
	米国にいる間に？			
	帰国してから？			

下記の経験で一番近いものを選んで、丸をしてください。もし、当てはまらないものがあれば、0に丸をつけてください。

▲米国に住んでいたとき：

	なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
私は、他の日本人と同じだと感じた。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、やはり日本人なんだと感じた。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、日本人だということを誇りに思った。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、他の日本人に対して、ネガティブな感情を持った。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、日本人として違和感を感じた。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、アメリカ人と違う考え方だと感じた。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、日本人として生まれたことをよかったと思った。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、アメリカ人の仲間にあわせようとした。	0	1	2	3	4

▲帰国してすぐ：

私は、他の日本人と同じだと感じた。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、米国に住んで日本人だということを誇りに思った。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、他の日本人に対して、ネガティブな感情を持った。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、日本人の仲間に、海外での経験を隠している。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、海外からの帰国者として違和感を感じた。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、他の日本人と違う考え方だと感じた。	0	1	2	3	4

Identity Information 2

△帰国して、しばらくした今は？	なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
私は、他の日本人と同じだとまだ感じている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、やはり日本人なんだとまだ感じている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、海外からの帰国者だとまだ感じている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、他の日本人に対して、ネガティブな感情をまだ持っている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、海外からの帰国者としてまだ違和感を感じている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、他の日本人と違う考え方だとまだ感じている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、日本人の仲間に、海外での経験をまだ隠している。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、国際人ということがよかったと思っている。	0	1	2	3	4

自分を評価してください。答えが多くあれば全てに回答してください。

	日本を離れるとき	米国にいるあいだ	帰国してから
日本人			
国際人			
外国人			
帰国者			
ジャパニーズアメリカン			
その他（具体的に）			

Culture Information 1

Short Answers:

あなたが初めて米国に着いた時、カルチャーショックを感じましたか？ もし、
Yes ならどんなカルチャーショックを感じましたか？

Yes	No
-----	----

あなたが帰国した時、逆にカルチャーショックを感じましたか？ もし、Yes なら
どんなカルチャーショックを感じましたか？

Yes	No
-----	----

米国に行くとき、または帰国したとき、どちらの方が困難がありましたか？ ど
うしてだと思いますか？

USA	Japan
-----	-------

また海外へ行く機会があれば、また行きたいと思いますか？ 次は、どこへ行
きたいですか？ その理由は、何ですか？

Yes	No
-----	----

また海外へ行く機会があれば、次はどんな違った準備をすると思いますか？ そ
れは、どんな準備ですか？

Yes	No
-----	----

Culture Information 2

下記の経験で一番近いものを選んで、丸をしてください。もし、当てはまらないものがあれば、0に丸をつけてください。

△米国に住んでいたとき:	なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
私は、日本の伝統と習慣を守っていた。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、アメリカの伝統と習慣にしたがった。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、アメリカの文化を学びたかった。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、アメリカの文化になれるのに苦労した。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、子供に日本の文化を知ってほしかった。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、子供にアメリカの文化を知ってほしかった。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、世界のどこにでも住めると思う。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、アメリカ人と日本について話すのが好きです。	0	1	2	3	4
△帰国してすぐ:	なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
私は、自分の家族の生活にアメリカの習慣を取り入れている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、アメリカの伝統と習慣にしたがっている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、なるべくすべてのことをアメリカンスタイルにしている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、日本の文化になれるのに苦労した。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、自分の子供に、アメリカの文化を覚えていてほしい。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、日本の習慣を時々、忘れていたことがあったと感じた。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、世界のどこにでも住めると思う。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、アメリカ人と日本について話すのが好きです。	0	1	2	3	4

Culture Information 3

△帰国して、しばらくした今は？

	なし	ぜんぜん	たまに	時々	よく
私は、まだ自分の家族の生活にアメリカの習慣を取り入れている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、まだアメリカの伝統と習慣にしたがっている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、アメリカと日本の生活を混ぜている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、バイカルチャルは、重要だと感じている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、自分の子供がバイカルチュアルのライフスタイルをおぼえておくことが重要だと思っている。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、世界のどこにでも住めると思う。	0	1	2	3	4
私は、他の日本人と海外での経験について話すのが好きです。	0	1	2	3	4

海外に住んで、また日本に帰国して、良かった点と悪かった点は、何だと思えますか？

良かった点:

悪かった点:

END

このアンケートに対しての御協力に感謝します。今度は、インタビューであなたとお会いできることを楽しみにしています。もし、あなたがこのアンケートに対して、何か質問がありましたら、いつでも次のメールアドレスまで、または次にお会いするときに聞いてください。
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APPENDIX E
RESULTS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Table E-1. Background information 2A, pg. 2

		Did you do anything to prepare yourself and your family for your life overseas?	
<i>Took English language classes?</i>		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
With Interviews	6 Total	1 16.6%	5 83.3%
No Interviews	2 Total	2 100%	0 0%
Collectively	8 Total	3 37.5%	5 62.5%
<i>Took preparation seminars/workshops for living overseas?</i>			
With Interviews	6 Total	2 33.3%	4 67.6%
No Interviews	2 Total	1 150%	1 50%
Collectively	8 Total	4 37.5%	5 62.5%
<i>Talked to people who have lived overseas?</i>			
With Interviews	6 Total	6 100%	0 0%
No Interviews	2 Total	1 50%	1 50%
Collectively	8 Total	7 87.5%	1 12.5%
<i>Sought advice from Americans living in Japan?</i>			
With Interviews	6 Total	1 16.6%	5 83.3%
No Interviews	2 Total	0 0%	2 100%
Collectively	8 Total	1 12.5%	7 87.5%
<i>Read books and articles about living overseas?</i>			
With Interviews	6 Total	6 100%	0 0%
No Interviews	2 Total	2 100%	0 0%
Collectively	8 Total	8 100%	0 0%

Table E-1. Continued

Did you do anything to prepare yourself and your family for your life overseas?			
<i>Talked or corresponded with Japanese who were living in the USA at that time?</i>		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
With Interviews	6 Total	4 66.6%	2 33.3%
No Interviews	2 Total	1 50%	1 50%
Collectively	8 Total	5 62.5%	3 37.5%
<i>Talked or corresponded with Americans who were living in the USA at that time?</i>			
With Interviews	6 Total	0%	6 100%
No Interviews	2 Total	0%	2 100%
Collectively	8 Total	0%	8 100%
<i>Used the Internet for information?</i>			
With Interviews	6 Total	4 66.6%	2 33.3%
No Interviews	2 Total	0%	2 100%
Collectively	8 Total	4 50%	4 50%
<i>Talked or corresponded with Japanese who have lived in the USA before?</i>			
With Interviews	6 Total	3 50%	3 50%
No Interviews	2 Total	1 50%	1 50%
Collectively	8 Total	4 50%	4 50%

Table E-2. Background cultural information 2B, pg. 2

Short Answers: What positive or negative comments do other Japanese people make about your experience of living overseas?

Positive: It must have been a good experience.
You will be able to speak English.
You will be able to know about the American culture.
You are able to give your children a lot of experiences.
I was told that I would be able to have an experience that I would not be able to have in Japan
Your English will improve.
We had a lot of opportunities to have family conversation. Our family became closer.
I think they were jealous.

Negative: You children's Japanese language will suffer.
I was often told how my parents would worry about me since I am only child. My parents are currently 78 years old.
Education will be a problem for your children.
The danger of AIDS, guns and living environment.
America is dangerous. Aren't you worried?
It was hard to find Japanese ingredients. It would have been easier to take them with us.
The repairperson did not come at the promised time.

Table E-3. Language information 1A, Pg. 3

What language do you generally speak in your family? Approximately what percentage of your daily language use is Japanese, English, or Other?

Ajisai-WI	Japanese	100%
Ayame-WI	Japanese	100%
Kiku-WI	Japanese	98%
	English	2 %
Mokuren-WI	Japanese	100%
Sakura-WI	Japanese	100%
Ume-WI	Japanese	100%
Momiji-NI	Japanese	100%
Tsubaki-NI	Japanese	95%
	English	5%

Table E-4. Language information 1B, Pg. 3

How would you rate your family's English ability? Poor, Fair, Good, or Very Good?

Ajisai-WI		Poor
	Spouse	Good
	Child 1	Poor
	Child 2	Poor
Ayame-WI		Poor
	Spouse	Fair
	Child 1	Poor
	Child 2	Poor
	Child 3	Poor
Kiku-WI		Poor
	Spouse	Good
	Child 1	Poor
	Child 2	Poor
	Child 3	Poor
Mokuren-WI		Poor
	Spouse	Good
	Child 1	Good
	Child 2	Good
	Child 3	Good
Sakura-WI		Poor
	Spouse	Fair
	Child 1	Poor
	Child 2	Poor
	Child 3	Poor
Ume-WI		Poor
	Spouse	Good
	Child 1	Good
	Child 2	Good
Momiji-NI		Poor
	Spouse	Fair
	Child 1	Good
	Child 2	Good
Tsubaki-NI		Poor
	Spouse	Fair
	Child 1	Good
	Child 2	Good

Table E-5. Language information 1C, Pg. 3

How would you rate your family's Japanese ability? Poor, Fair, Good, or Very Good?		
Ajisai-WI		Very Good
	Spouse	Very Good
	Child 1	Very Good
	Child 2	Very Good
Ayame-WI		Very Good
	Spouse	Very Good
	Child 1	Very Good
	Child 2	Very Good
Kiku-WI		Very Good
	Spouse	Very Good
	Child 1	Very Good
	Child 2	Very Good
Mokuren-WI		Very Good
	Spouse	Very Good
	Child 1	Very Good
	Child 2	Very Good
Sakura-WI		Very Good
	Spouse	Very Good
	Child 1	Very Good
	Child 2	Very Good
Ume-WI		Very Good
	Spouse	Very Good
	Child 1	Very Good
	Child 2	Good
Momiji-NI		Fair
	Spouse	Very Good
	Child 1	Good
	Child 2	Good
Tsubaki-NI		Good
	Spouse	Good
	Child 1	Fair
	Child 2	Fair

Table E-6. Language information 2A, pg. 4

What did your family do to help maintain their *Japanese* while in the USA?

Please circle your response using the 4-point scale.

	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Watched JPN videos/DVDs.		3	1	2
With Interviews (6 Total)		50%	16.6%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)				2 100%
Collectively (8 Total)		3 37.5%	1 12.5%	4 50%
Watched JPN TV through cable or satellite TV.	5		1	
With Interviews (6 Total)	83.3%		16.6%	
No Interviews (2 Total)		1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	5 62.5%	1 12.5%	2 25%	
Read JPN books or magazines.	1	2	1	2
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	16.6%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)		1 50%		1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	3 37.5%	1 12.5%	3 37.5%
Listened to JPN radio on the Internet.	5		1	
With Interviews (6 Total)	83.3%		16.6%	
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	7 87.5%		1 12.5%	
Read JPN newspapers on the Internet.	2	2		2
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	33.3%		33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	4 50%	2 25%		2 25%

Table E-6. Continued

What did your family do to help maintain their *Japanese* while in the USA? Please circle your response using the 4-point scale.

	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
	1	2	3	4
Socialized with JPN speakers.		1	1	4
With Interviews (6 Total)		16.6%	16.6%	66.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1	1
Collectively (8 Total)			50%	50%
Enrolled children in JPN schools	1	2		
With Interviews (6 Total)	66.6%	33.3%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	1			1
Collectively (8 Total)	50%			50%
Engaged a private tutor.	5	2		1
With Interviews (6 Total)	62.5%	25%		12.5%
No Interviews (2 Total)	6			
Collectively (8 Total)	100%			
Maintained a blog on the Internet.	2			
With Interviews (6 Total)	100%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	2			
Collectively (8 Total)	100%			
Maintained a website.	8			
With Interviews (6 Total)	100%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	2			
Collectively (8 Total)	100%			

Table E-6. Continued

What did your family do to help maintain their <i>Japanese</i> while in the USA? Please circle your response using the 4-point scale.				
	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
	1	2	3	4
Did Chat/IM in JPN on the Internet.	5	1		
With Interviews (6 Total)	83.3%	16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	1	1		
Collectively (8 Total)	50%	50%		
Child/children were home schooled in JPN.	6	2		
With Interviews (6 Total)	75%	25%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	5		1	
Collectively (8 Total)	83.3%		16.6%	
No Interviews (2 Total)	1			1
Collectively (8 Total)	50%			50%
Others:	6		1	1
With Interviews (6 Total)	75%		12.5%	12.5%
No Interviews (2 Total)	Japanese children music or songs.			1
Collectively (8 Total)	I made my children keep a diary in Japanese.			16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)				1
Collectively (8 Total)				50%
No Interviews (2 Total)				2
Collectively (8 Total)				25%

Table E-7. Language information 2B, pg. 4

	Japanese	English	Other
What language did you generally speak to your children when you were in the USA?			JPN & ENG
With Interviews (6 Total)	6 100%		1 16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)	8 100%		JPN & ENG 1 12.5%
What language did your children generally speak to the family members when you were in the USA?			JPN & ENG
With Interviews (6 Total)	6 100%		1 16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)	8 100%		JPN & ENG 1 12.5%

Table E-8. Language information 2C, pg. 4

Grade	No Sch	Pre-Sch	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
With Interviews (15 Kids)	3 20%	3 20%	2 13%	2 13%	2 13%		1 7%	1 7%		1 7%
No Interviews (4 Kids)			2 50%			1 25%	1 25%			
Total (19 Kids)	3 16%	3 16%	4 21%	2 10%	2 10%	1 0.5%	2 10%	1 0.5%		1 0.5%

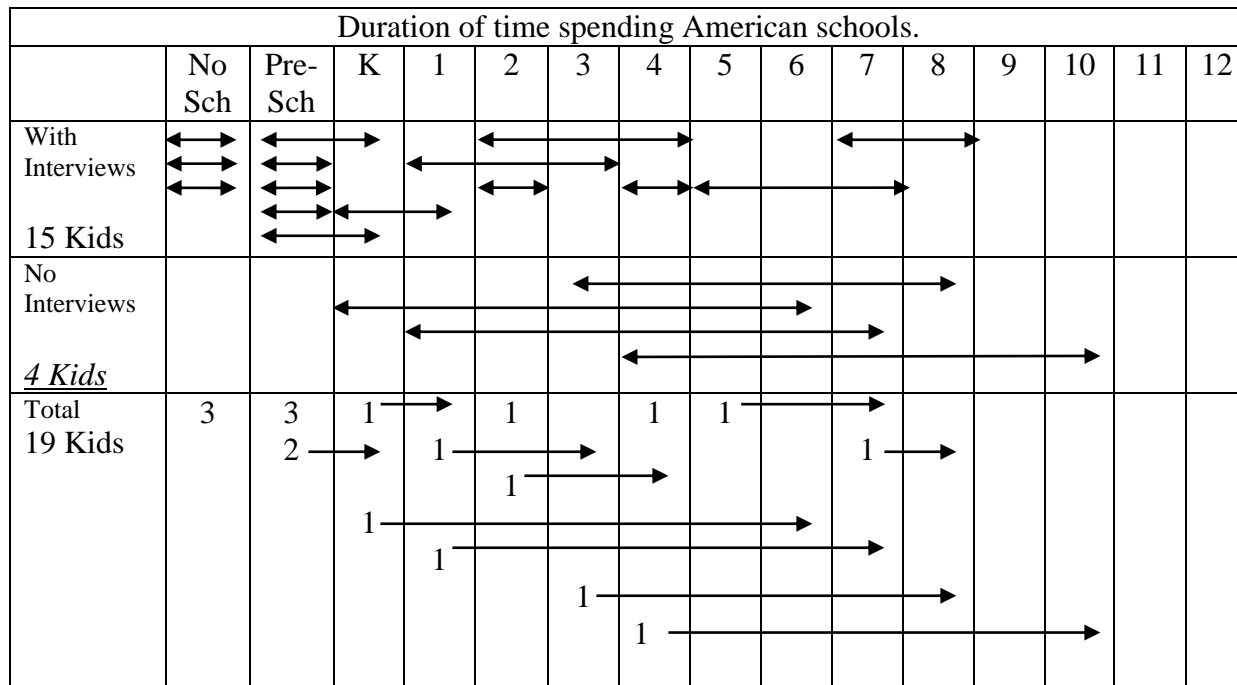


Figure E-1. Language information 3, pg. 4

Table E-9. Language information 3A, pg. 5

Were any of your children enrolled in a special English language program?

	Did Not Enroll	Initially Enrolled and Exited	Enrolled and remained
With Interviews (6 Total)	8 Children		7 Children
15 Children	53.3%		46.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)	1 Child	3 Children	
4 Children	25%	75%	
Collectively (8 Total)	9 Children	3 Children	7 Children
19 Children	47.3%	15.7%	36.8%

Table E-10. Language information 3B, pg. 5

What does your family do to help maintain their *English* now that you are in Japan? Please circle your response using the 4-point scale.

	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Watched ENG videos/DVDs.	3	2		1
With Interviews (6 Total)	50%	33.3%		16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)		2		
Collectively (8 Total)	3	4		1
	37.5%	50%		12.5%
Watched ENG TV through cable or satellite TV.	6			
With Interviews (6 Total)	100%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	1	1		
Collectively (8 Total)	7	1		
	87.5%	12.5%		
Read ENG books or magazines.	4	1		1
With Interviews (6 Total)	66.6%	16.6%		16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)	1	1		
Collectively (8 Total)	5	2		1
	62.5%	25%		12.5%
Listened to ENG radio on the Internet.	6			
With Interviews (6 Total)	100%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	2			
Collectively (8 Total)	8			
	100%			
Socialized with ENG speakers.	5	1		
With Interviews (6 Total)	62.5%	16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	1	1		
Collectively (8 Total)	7	2		
	50%	50%		
	75%	25%		

Table E-10. Continued

What does your family do to help maintain their <i>English</i> now that you are in Japan? Please circle your response using the 4-point scale.				
	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Read ENG newspapers on the Internet.	2	1	1	2
With Interviews (6 Total)	33%	16.6%	16.6%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	4 50%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%	2 25%
Enroll children in kikokushijo schools.	5			1
With Interviews (6 Total)	83.5%			16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)			2 100%	
Collectively (8 Total)	5 62.5%		2 25%	1 12.5%
Socialize with other JPN returnees.	6			
With Interviews (6 Total)	100%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	8 100%			
Engage a private tutor.	5		1	
With Interviews (6 Total)	83.3%		16.6%	
No Interviews (2 Total)		2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)	5 62.5%	2 25%	1 12.5%	
Chat/IM in ENG on the Internet.	6			
With Interviews (6 Total)	100%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	8 100%			

Table E-10. Continued

What does your family do to help maintain their *English* now that you are in Japan? Please circle your response using the 4-point scale

	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Maintain and ENG blog.	5			1
With Interviews (6 Total)	83.3%			16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)		1 50%		1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)	5 83.3%	1 12.5%		2 25%
Enroll in ENG conversation classes.	5			1
With Interviews (6 Total)	83.3%			16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)		1 50%		1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)	5 62.5	1 12.5%		2 25%
Child/children attend international schools.	6			
With Interviews (6 Total)	100%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	8 100%			

Table E-11. Language information 4A, pg. 6

Please circle your response to the following statements below using the 4-point scale. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

While I was in the USA	No Answer 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I spoke JPN with my spouse.					6
With Interviews (6 Total)					100%
No Interviews (2 Total)					2
Collectively (8 Total)					100%
I spoke ENG with my spouse.	1	3	1	1	
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	50%	16.6%	16.6%	
No Interviews (2 Total)	2				100%
Collectively (8 Total)	3	3	1	1	
	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%	12.5%	
I spoke JPN with my children.					6
With Interviews (6 Total)					100%
No Interviews (2 Total)					2
Collectively (8 Total)					100%
I spoke ENG with my children.	1	2	3		
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	50%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	2				100%
Collectively (8 Total)	3	2	3		
	37.5%	25%	37.5%		
Our children spoke JPN with us.					6
With Interviews (6 Total)					100%
No Interviews (2 Total)					2
Collectively (8 Total)					100%

Table E-11. Continued

Please circle your response to the following statements below using the 4-point scale. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

While I was in the USA	No Answer 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Our children spoke ENG with us.	2	3	1		
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	50%	16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)			2		
Collectively (8 Total)	25%	37.5%	37.5%		
I sent my children to the local American schools.	1				5
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%				83.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)					2
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%				7
I sent my children to the local American daycare.	2				4
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%				66.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)					2
Collectively (8 Total)	50%				4
I sent my children to the supplementary JPN school.	3	1			2
With Interviews (6 Total)	50%	16.6%			33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)					2
Collectively (8 Total)	37.5%	12.5%			4
My family tried to maintain their JPN language skills.	2	2	1		1
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	33.3%	16.6%		16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1		1
Collectively (8 Total)	25%	25%	25%		25%

Table E-11. Continued

Please circle your response to the following statements below using the 4-point scale. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

While I was in the USA	No Answer	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
	0	1	2	3	4
I took ENG lessons.			3	3	
With Interviews (6 Total)			50%	50%	
No Interviews (2 Total)				2	100%
Collectively (8 Total)			3	5	
			37.5%	62.5%	

Table E-12. Language information 4B, pg. 6

Please circle your response to the following statements below using the 4-point scale. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

After Returning to Japan	No Answer	Not at All	Seldom	Occasionally	Often
	0	1	2	3	4
I speak JPN with my spouse.					6
With Interviews (6 Total)					100%
No Interviews (2 Total)					2
Collectively (8 Total)					100%
I speak ENG with my spouse.	2	3	1		
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	50%	16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	2				100%
Collectively (8 Total)	4	3	1		
	50%	37.5%	12.5%		

Table E-12. Continued

Please circle your response to the following statements below using the 4-point scale. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

After Returning to Japan	No Answer 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I speak JPN with my children.					6
With Interviews (6 Total)					100%
No Interviews (2 Total)					2
Collectively (8 Total)					100%
I speak ENG with my children.	1	3	2		
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	50%	33.3%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	2				100%
Collectively (8 Total)	3	3	2		37.5%
Collectively (8 Total)	37.5%	37.5%	25%		
Our children speak JPN with us.					6
With Interviews (6 Total)					100%
No Interviews (2 Total)					2
Collectively (8 Total)					100%
Our children speak ENG with us.	3	3			
With Interviews (6 Total)	50%	50%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	2				100%
Collectively (8 Total)	5	3			62.5%
I continue my study of ENG.	1	3	1		1
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	50%	16.6%		16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)	2				100%
Collectively (8 Total)	3	3	1		1
	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%		12.5%

Table E-11. Continued

Please circle your response to the following statements below using the 4-point scale. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

After Returning to Japan	No Answer 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Our children attend international schools.	5	1			
With Interviews (6 Total)	83.3%	16.6%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	1 50%				1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)	6 75%	1 12.5%			1 12.5%
Our children attend provisional JPN schools.	4	1			1
With Interviews (6 Total)	66.6%	16.6%			16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)	1 50%				1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)	5 62.5%	1 12.5%			2 25%

Table E-13. Social network information 1A, pg. 7

Please list 5 families or friends with whom you associate the most and tell me some information about them.

Social Network	Relationship	Duration	Nationality	Distance	Rank of Importance
Ajisai-WI					
1	Good friend	5 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
2	Family	33 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
3	Good friend	8 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
4	Good friend	8 yrs	South Korean	Lives out of town	Average
5	Good friend	5 yrs	Japanese	Lives overseas	Important
Ayame-WI					
1	Good friend	10 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
2	Good friend	4 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
3	Family	40 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
4	Family	15 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
5	Good friend	15 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
Kiku-WI					
1	Good friend	7 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
2	Good friend	22 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
3	Good friend	27 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
4	Good friend	22 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
5	Good friend	6 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
Mokuren-WI					
1	Good friend	6 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
2	Good friend	7 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average
3	Acquaintance	3 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average
4	Acquaintance	25 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
5	Good friend	30 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
Sakura-WI					
1	Good friend	9 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
2	Good friend	6 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
3	Good friend	6 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
4	Good friend	4 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Important
5	Family	12 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
Ume-WI					
1	Good friend	13 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average
2	Good friend	10 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
3	Good friend	2 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
4	Good friend	30 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
5	Good friend	2 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Minor

Table E-13. Continued

Please list 5 families or friends with whom you associate the most and tell me some information about them.

Social Network	Relationship	Duration	Nationality	Distance	Rank of Importance
Momij-NI					
1	Acquaintance	40 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
2	Good friend	4 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average
3	Good friend	2 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
4	Good friend	15 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
5	Good friend	32 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
Tsubaki-NI					
1	Acquaintance	10 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Important
2	Good friend	6 yrs	Japanese	Lives in same town	Average
3	Good friend	20 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
4	Good friend	12 yrs	Japanese	Lives out of town	Average
5	Minor Acquaintance	1 yr	USA	Lives out of town	Important

Table E-14. Social network information 1B, pg. 7

When you needed information about living in the USA, to whom did you turn to the most? Please circle your response on the 4-point scale (Not at All, Seldom, Occasionally, Often). If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.					
Social Network Before Leaving Japan:	N/A or Blank 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Japanese					
With Interviews (6 Total)		1 16.6%			5 83.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)	1 50%		1 50%		
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%		5 62.5%
American					
With Interviews (6 Total)	4 66.6%	1 16.6%			1 16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	6 75%	1 12.5%			1 12.5%
Others					
With Interviews (6 Total)	5 83.3%		1 16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 50%				(e.g.books) 50%
Collectively (8 Total)	7 75%		1 12.5%		1 12.5%

Table E-14. Continued

When you needed information about living in the USA, to whom did you turn to the most? Please circle your response on the 4-point scale (Not at All, Seldom, Occasionally, Often). If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.

In the USA	N/A or Blank 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Japanese					
With Interviews (6 Total)			1 16.6%	1 16.6%	4 66.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%		1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)			2 25%	1 12.5%	5 62.5%
American					
With Interviews (6 Total)	5 83.3%	1 16.6%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	7 87.5%	1 12.5%			
Others					
With Interviews (6 Total)	6 100%				
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	8 100%				

Table E-15. Social network information 2A, pg. 8

While in the USA, how much of your time did you spend with the following people? If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.

Social Network Before Leaving Japan:	N/A or Blank 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Japanese					
With Interviews (6 Total)		1 16.6%			5 83.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)		1 12.5%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%	5 62.5%
American					
With Interviews (6 Total)	1 16.6%		3 50%	2 33.3%	
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%		4 50%	3 37.5%	
Others					
With Interviews (6 Total)	6 100%				
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	8 100%				

Table E-15. Continued

While in the USA, how much of your time did you spend with the following people? If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.

While you were in the USA	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Japanese					
With Interviews (6 Total)		1 16.6%			5 83%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total))		1 12.5%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%	5 62.5%
American					
With Interviews (6 Total)	1 16.6%		3 50%	2 33.3%	
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%		4 50%	3 37.5%	
Others					
With Interviews (6 Total)	6 100%				
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	8 100%				

Table E-15. Continued

While in the USA, how much of your time did you spend with the following people? If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.					
Returning to Japan	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Japanese					
With Interviews (6 Total)			1 16.6%		5 83%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%		1 50%
Collectively (8 Total))			2 25%		6 75%
American					
With Interviews (6 Total)	3 50%	1 16.6%	1 16.6%		1 16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	5 62.5%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%		1 12.5%
Others					
With Interviews (6 Total)	5 83%		1 16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	8 100%				

Table E-16. Social network information 2B, pg. 8

Short Answers: Was it important for you and your family to keep a close connection with the Japanese language and culture while you were in the USA? Please explain.

Ajisai-WI	Maintaining Japanese was not necessary. In order to introduce Japanese culture to Americans, I often had to study my own culture. It was amazing to realize the difficulty of trying to explain a simple idea to someone else.
Kiku-WI	Culture was not important to me, but I felt it was important for my children. I wanted my children to know about the new Year's festival foods and the customs of New Year's.
Mokuren-WI	It was not really that important.
Sakura-WI	I read Japanese books to the children and sang Japanese songs to them.
Ume-WI	Our live in the US was short—2 ½ years. Our children were in the 5 th and 8 th grade so they were at an age where they could speak Japanese without any problems. Our children had to study subjects from their Japanese curriculum as well so instead of studying Japanese conversation; they had to study academic Japanese. I was able to introduce Japanese culture at an ESOL class and to our children. It was not to maintain culture, but to realize our own Japanese culture.
Momiji-NI	Japanese language and culture were taught within the family. Knowing that we will return to Japan, I felt it was important to be at the same level of knowledge of the language and culture as the children in Japan.
Tsubaki-NI	Unlike an adult's capability of Japanese, the children's Japanese was in the learning stages and using two languages appeared to be difficult for them. At the time my children were ages five and seven.

Table E-17. Social network information 3A, pg. 9

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.

While you were in the USA	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I relied on my JPN contacts in the USA to help me adjust.					
With Interviews 6 total			1 16.6%	2 33.3%	3 50%
No Interviews 2 Total				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively 8 Total			1 12.5%	3 37.5%	4 50%
When there was a problem, I consulted with other JPN living in Japan.					
With Interviews 6 total	1 16.6%	3 50%	1 16.6%		1 16.6%
No Interviews 2 Total		2 100%			
Collectively 8 Total	1 12.5%	5 62.5%	1 12.5%		1 12.5%
When there was a problem, I consulted with other JPN living in the USA.					
With Interviews 6 total	1 16.6%		1 16.6%		4 66.6%
No Interviews 2 Total				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively 8 Total	1 12.5%		1 12.5%	1 12.5%	5 62.5%
When there was a problem, I consulted with Americans.					
With Interviews 6 total		3 50%	2 33.3%	1 16.6%	
No Interviews 2 Total			1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively 8 Total		3 37.5%	3 37.5%	2 25%	

Table E-17. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.

While you were in the USA	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
<hr/>					
I kept a close connection with JPN through my family & friends.		1	1	2	2
With Interviews (6 Total)		16.6%	16.6%	33.3%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%		1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)		1 12.5%	2 25%	2 25%	3 37.5%
I made American friends.		1	3	1	1
With Interviews (6 Total)		16.6%	50%	16.6%	16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)			2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)		1 12.5%	5 62.5%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%
I socialized mainly with other JPN.				1	5
With Interviews (6 Total)				16.6%	83.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)				2 25%	6 75%
I joined a JPN social association.	2		1	1	1
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%		16.6%	16.6%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	4 50%		1 12.5%	1 12.5%	2 25%

Table E-17. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.					
While you were in the USA	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
Sometimes it was difficult to meet Americans.					
With Interviews (6 Total)	1 16.6%	1 16.6%	1 16.6%	3 50%	
No Interviews (2 Total)			2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	1 12.5%	3 37.5%	3 37.5%	
I turned to my family and friends in Japan for emotional support.					
With Interviews (6 Total)			2 33.3%	2 33.3%	2 33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)		1 50%			1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)		1 12.5%	2 25%	2 25%	3 37.5%
I turned to my family and friends in the USA for emotional support.					
With Interviews (6 Total)				3 50%	3 50%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%		1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)			1 12.5%	3 37.5%	4 50%

Table E-18. Social network information 3B, pg. 9

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.

Upon Returning to Japan	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I consulted with my JPN friends/family I met in the USA to help me re-adjust.	1 16.6%	3 50%	2 33.3%		
With Interviews (6 Total)	1 50%	1 50%			
No Interviews (2 Total)					
Collectively (8 Total)	2 25%	4 50%	2 25%		
Where there was a problem, I consulted with other JPN living abroad.			3 50%	1 16.6%	2 33.3%
With Interviews (6 Total)			1 50%	1 50%	
No Interviews (2 Total)			4	2	2
Collectively (8 Total)			50%	25%	25%
When there was a problem I consulted with other JPN returnees in Japan.		1 16.6%	1 16.6%	3 50%	1 16.6%
With Interviews (6 Total)		2			
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)		3 37.5%	1 12.5%	3 37.5%	1 12.5%
When there was a problem, I consulted with Americans living in Japan.	3 50%	3 50%			
With Interviews (6 Total)	2				
No Interviews (2 Total)	50%				
Collectively (8 Total)	5 62.5%	3 37.5%			

Table E-18. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.

Upon Returning to Japan	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
<hr/>					
When there was a problem, I consulted with the JPN living in the USA.	1	2	3		
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	50%		
No Interviews (2 Total)		100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	50%	37.5%		
When there was a problem, I consulted with Americans living in the USA.	3	3			
With Interviews (6 Total)	50%	50%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	50%	50%			
Collectively (8 Total)	50%	50%			
I turned to my family and friends in Japan for emotional support.			1	1	4
With Interviews (6 Total)			12.5%	12.5%	75%
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%		50%
Collectively (8 Total)			25%	12.5%	62.5%
I turned to my family and friends living in the USA for emotional support.	1		2	3	
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%		33.3%	50%	
No Interviews (2 Total)	50%	50%			
Collectively (8 Total)	25%	12.5%	25%	37.5%	

Table E-18. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.

Upon Returning to Japan	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I kept a close connection with the USA through my family and friends.	1		2	1	2
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%		33.3%	16.6%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)			50%		50%
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%		37.5%	12.5%	25%
I meet with a social association for returnees.	1	1	2	1	1
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	16.6%	33.3%	16.6%	16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)	100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	37.5%	12.5%	25%	12.5%	12.5%

Table E-19. Social network information 4, pg. 10

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.

About your Time in Japan Now	No Answer 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
When there was a problem, I consulted with my JPN friends/family I met in the USA.	1	2	3		
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	50%		
No Interviews (2 Total)		2	100%		
Collectively (8 Total)	1	4	3		
	12.5%	50%	37.5%		
When there was a problem, I consulted with other JPN returnees in Japan.		2	3		1
With Interviews (6 Total)		33.3%	50%		16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)		1	1		
		50%	50%		
Collectively (8 Total)		3	4		1
		37.5%	50%		12.5%
When there was a problem, I consulted with my American friends/family living in the USA.	3	3			
With Interviews (6 Total)	50%	50%			
No Interviews (2 Total)	1	1			
	50%	50%			
Collectively (8 Total)	4	4			
	50%	50%			
When there was a problem, I consulted with my American friends/family living in Japan.	2	3	1		
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	50%	16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)	2				
	100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	4	3	1		
	50%	37.5%	12.5%		

Table E-19. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for No Answer.

About your Time in Japan Now	No Answer 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I keep in touch with my family and friends in the USA.		1	1	2	2
With Interviews (6 Total)		16.6%	16.6%	33.3%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)			2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)		1 12.5%	3 37.5%	2 25%	2 25%
I am active in a social association for returnees.	1 16.6%	1 16.65	2 33.3%	1 16.6%	1 16.6%
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)	2 100%				
Collectively (8 Total)	3 37.5%	1 12.5%	2 25%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%
I maintain my American connection through my JPN friends who I met in the USA.	1 16.6%	1 16.6%	1 16.6%	1 16.6%	2 33.3%
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)		1 50%	1 50%		
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	2 25%	2 25%	1 12.5%	2 25%
I maintain my American connection through my American friends who I met in the USA.	3 50%	2 33.3%	1 16.6%		
With Interviews (6 Total)					
No Interviews (2 Total)	1 50%	1 50%			
Collectively (8 Total)	4 50%	3 37.5%	1 12.5%		

Table E-20. Identity information 1A, pg. 11

	Yes	No	Other
Did you consider yourself a bilingual person before leaving Japan?		100%	
Did you consider yourself a bilingual person while in the USA?		100%	
Did you consider yourself a bilingual person when you returned to?		100%	

Table E-21. Identity information 1B, pg. 11.

	Yes	No	Other
Did you consider yourself a bicultural person before leaving Japan?		100%	
Did you consider yourself a bicultural person while in the USA?	37.5%	62.5%	
Did you consider yourself a bicultural person when you returned to?	12.5%	87.5%	

Table E-22. Identity information 1C, pg. 11

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

While you were in the USA	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I felt I had a lot in common with other Japanese.	1		1	1	3
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%		16.6%	16.6%	50%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1		1
Collectively (8 Total)			50%		50%
I identified with the Japanese.	1		2	1	4
With Interviews (6 Total)	12.5%		25%	12.5%	50%
No Interviews (2 Total)				1	1
Collectively (8 Total)				50%	50%
I was proud to be a Japanese.			1	1	6
With Interviews (6 Total)			12.5%	12.5%	75%
No Interviews (2 Total)			2	2	2
Collectively (8 Total)			33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
I had negative feelings about other Japanese people.				1	1
With Interviews (6 Total)	3	3		50%	50%
No Interviews (2 Total)	50%	50%			
Collectively (8 Total)			1	1	
I felt I was treated differently because I was Japanese.			1	1	
With Interviews (6 Total)			50%	50%	
No Interviews (2 Total)	3	3	1	1	
Collectively (8 Total)	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%	12.5%	
I felt I was treated differently because I was Japanese.	1	4	1		
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	66.6%	16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)		1		1	
Collectively (8 Total)		50%		50%	
	1	5	1	1	
	12.5%	62.5%	12.5%	12.5%	

Table E-22. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

While you were in the USA	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I felt I had a different way of thinking than the American.	1	1	4		
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	16.6%	66.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	1 12.5%	4 50%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%
I was glad to be born Japanese.			3	1	2
With Interviews (6 Total)			50%	16.6%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)			3 37.5%	2 25%	3 37.5%
I tried to conform to my American peers.		1	4		1
With Interviews (6 Total)		16.6%	50%		16.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)		1 12.5%	5 62.5%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%

Table E-23. Identity information 1D, pg. 11

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

Upon Returning to Japan	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I felt I had a lot in common with other Japanese.	1	1	2		2
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	16.6%	33.3%		33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)		1	1		
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	25%	37.5%		25%
I was proud to be a Japanese who had lived overseas.	1	1	1	1	2
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	16.6%	16.6%	16.6%	33.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)				1	1
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	12.5%	12.5%	25%	25%
I had negative feelings about other Japanese people.	2	1	3		
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	16.6%	50%		
No Interviews (2 Total)			1	1	
Collectively (8 Total)	25%	12.5%	50%	12.5%	
I tried to hide my overseas experience from my JPN peers.	2	3	1		
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	50%	16.6%		
No Interviews (2 Total)		1	1		
Collectively (8 Total)	25%	50%	12.5%		
I felt I was treated differently because I was returnee.	2	3		1	
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	50%		16.6%	
No Interviews (2 Total)		1	1		
Collectively (8 Total)	25%	50%	12.5%	12.5%	

Table E-23. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

Upon Returning to Japan	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I felt I had a different way of thinking than other Japanese.	2	2	1	1	
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	33.3%	16.6%	16.6%	
No Interviews (2 Total)		1 50%	1 50%		
Collectively (8 Total)	2 25%	3 37.5%	2 25%	1 12.5%	

Table E-24. Identity information 2A, pg. 12

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

About Your Time in Japan Now	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I feel I had a lot in common with other Japanese.			2		4
With Interviews (6 Total)			33.3%		66.6%
No Interviews (2 Total)				2 100%	
Collectively (8 Total)			2 25%	2 25%	4 50%
I identify myself with the JPN.			1		5
With Interviews (6 Total)			16.6%		83.3%
No Interviews (2 Total)				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)			1 12.5%	1 12.5%	6 75%
I identify myself as a JPN returnee.	1	2	1	2	
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	16.6%	33.3%	
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%		1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	2 25%	2 25%	2 25%	1 12.5%
I have negative feelings about other JPN people.	2	4			
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	66.6%			
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	2 25%	4 50%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%	
I feel that I am treated differently because I am a returnee.	1	2	3		
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	50%		
No Interviews (2 Total)		1 50%	1 50%		
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	3 50%	4 37.5%		
	1 12.5%	3 75%	4 12.5%		

Table E-24. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.					
About Your Time in Japan Now	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
<hr/>					
I feel that I have a different way of thinking than other JPN.	1	2	3		
With Interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	50%		
No Interviews (2 Total)		1 50%	1 50%		
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	3 75%	4 12.5%		
I tried to hide my overseas experience from my JPN peers.	2	4			
With Interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	66.3%			
No Interviews (2 Total)		2 100%			
Collectively (8 Total)	2 25%	6 75%			
I'm glad to be considered as an international person.			2	1	3
With Interviews (6 Total)			33.3%	16.6%	50%
No Interviews (2 Total)			1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)			3 37.5%	2 25%	3 37.5%

Table E-25. Identity information 2B, pg. 12

How would you label yourself? Please check all answers that apply.

Identity Information 1	Before Leaving Japan	While in the USA	Returning to Japan
Japanese			
With Interviews (6)	6	6	6
No Interviews (2)	1	2	2
Collectively (8 Total)	7	8	8
International Person			
With Interviews (6)			
No Interviews (2)			
Collectively (8 Total)			
Foreigner			
With Interviews (6)		2	
No Interviews (2)		2	
Collectively (8 Total)		4	
Returnee			
With Interviews (6)			4
No Interviews (2)	1	2	2
Collectively (8 Total)	1	2	6
Japanese American			
With Interviews (6)			
No Interviews (2)			
Collectively (8 Total)			
Other: Please Specify			
With Interviews (6)			
No Interviews (2)			
Collectively (8 Total)			

Table E-26. Culture information 1, pg. 13

	Yes	No
Did you experience any culture shock when you first arrived in the USA?	5 62.5%	2 25%
Ajisai-WI: <i>Five days after arriving, it was Halloween, so it was a very entertaining culture shock for us. I was looking forward to living in the USA.</i>		1 N/A
Mokuren-WI: <i>Getting immunizations for the children.</i>		
Sakura-WI: <i>At a party you don't have to be on time. Parties start late.</i>		
Momiji-NI: <i>The trains do not run on schedule as they do in Japan. Loose with time. When Americans line up, they are well mannered. They have a nice smiley face. They smile nicely.</i>		
Tsubaki-NI: <i>Seeing different races and different cultures.</i>		
Did you experience any culture shock when you first returned to Japan?	6 75%	2 25%
Ajisai WI: <i>The way people line up at the cash register. How Americans are logical in their way of thinking.</i>		
Sakura-WI: <i>My child had to enter kindergarten right away and there were too many subjects in the curriculum. The house felt small.</i>		
Momiji-NI: <i>Japanese don't know how to line up in public. They are ill mannered about the rules. They feel that as long as they are OK or get what they want, they don't care about other people. Even when they are asked if they want any more to drink, they really want more but they decline. They are so Japanese.</i>		
Tsubaki-NI: <i>People had no manners.</i>		
Which was more difficult for you to do: going to the USA or coming back to Japan? Why?	USA 8 100%	Japan 0 0%
Ajisai-WI: <i>There were a lot of things I didn't know or understand, so at first I was confused.</i>		
Kiku-WI: <i>Language, food.</i>		
Momiji-NI: <i>It was the first time I have experienced a foreign culture, so it was more difficult for me to go to the USA. I was already familiar with Japan.</i>		
Tsubaki-NI: <i>It was my first experience of living overseas. I couldn't foresee what it would be like to live in the USA.</i>		

Table E-26. Continued

	Yes	No
If you had a chance to go overseas again, is there anything you would do differently to prepare yourself and your family?	7 87.5%	1 12.5%
<p>Ajisa-WI: <i>I want to go to North America and have more adventures and experiences.</i></p> <p>Kiku-WI: <i>USA.</i></p> <p>Momiki-NI: <i>Europe, America</i></p> <p>Sakura-WI: <i>American, Australia</i></p> <p>Tsubaki-NI: <i>San Diego</i></p>		
If you had a change to go overseas again is there anything you would do differently?	5 62.5%	3 37.5%
<p>Ajisai-WI: <i>I want to study the language of the country more and learn more about their culture.</i></p> <p>Kiku:WI: <i>Language.</i></p> <p>Momiji-NI: <i>I would study the language more before I would go.</i></p>		

Table E-27. Culture information 2A, pg. 14

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

While you were in the USA	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I observed the traditions and holidays of Japan.	1	2	2		1
With interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	33.3%		16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	2 25%	2 25%	1 12.5%	2 25%
I observed the traditions and holidays of the USA.			3	2	1
With interviews (6 Total)			50%	33.3%	16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)			1 50%		1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)			4 50%	2 25%	2 25%
I wanted to learn about American culture.	1			2	3
With interviews (6 Total)	16.6%			33.3%	50%
No interviews (2 Total)			1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%		1 12.5%	3 37.5%	3 37.5%
I had difficulties adjusting to American culture.	2	2	2		
With interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%		
No interviews (2 Total)				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)	2 25%	2 25%	2 25%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%
I wanted my children to know about JPN culture.			2		4
With interviews (6 Total)			33.3%		66.6%
No interviews (2 Total)				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)			2 25%	1 12.5%	5 62.5%

Table E-27. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

While you were in the USA	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I wanted my children to know about American culture.			2	1	3
With interviews (6 Total)			33.3%	16.6%	50%
No interviews (2 Total)				1	1
Collectively (8 Total)			2	50%	50%
Collectively (8 Total)			25%	2	4
Collectively (8 Total)			25%	25%	50%
I felt that I could live anywhere in the world.	1	2	2		1
With interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	33.3%		16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)		1		1	
Collectively (8 Total)		50%		50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	1	3	2	1	1
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	37.5%	25%	12.5%	12.5%
I enjoyed sharing my culture with the Americans.	1	1		3	1
With interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	16.6%		33.3%	16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)		1		1	
Collectively (8 Total)		50%		50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	1	2		4	1
Collectively (8 Total)	12.5%	25%		50%	12.5%

Table E-28. Culture information 2B, pg. 14

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

Upon Returning to Japan	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I have incorporated some customs I learned in the USA.	1	1	3		1
With interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	16.6%	50%		16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)			1 50%	1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	1 12.5%	4 50%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%
I observed the traditions and holidays of the USA.	1	2	3		
With interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	50%		
No interviews (2 Total)			2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	2 25%	5 62.5%		
I tried to do things American style.	1	2	3		
With interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	50%		
No interviews (2 Total)		1 50%	1 50%		
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	3 37.5%	4 50%		
I had difficulties adjusting to Japanese culture.	2	3		1	
With interviews (6 Total)	33.3%	50%		16.6%	
No interviews (2 Total)			2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)	2 25%	3 37.5%	2 25%	1 12.5%	

Table E-28. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.					
Upon Returning to Japan	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I wanted my children to remember the American culture they learned.			2		4
With interviews (6 Total)			33.3%		50%
No interviews (2 Total)				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)			2 25%	1 12.5%	5 62.5%
I wanted my children to know about American culture.	1	1	3	1	
With interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	16.6%	50%	16.6%	
No interviews (2 Total)			2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	1 12.5%	5 62.5%	1 12.5%	
I felt that I could live anywhere in the world.	1	2	1	1	1
With interviews (6 Total)	16.6%	33.3%	16.6%	16.6%	16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)		1 50%		1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	3 37.5%	1 12.5%	2 25%	1 12.5%
I enjoyed sharing my overseas experience with other JPN.		2	2	1	1
With interviews (6 Total)		33.3%	33.3%	16.6%	16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)	1 50%			1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)	1 12.5%	2 25%	2 25%	2 25%	1 12.5%

Table E-29. Culture information 3A, pg. 15

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

About your time in Japan Now	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I still incorporated some customs I learned in the USA into my family life.		3	2		1
With interviews (6 Total)		50%	33.3%		16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)			2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)		3 37.5%	4 50%		1 12.5%
I still observe the traditions and holidays of the USA.		4	2		
With interviews (6 Total)		66.6%	33.3%		
No interviews (2 Total)		2 100%			
Collectively (8 Total)		6 75%	2 25%		
I live by a mixture of Japanese and American customs.		4		1	1
With interviews (6 Total)		66.6%		16.6%	16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)			2 100%		
Collectively (8 Total)		4 50%	2 25%	1 12.5%	1 12.5%
I feel that it is important to be bicultural.			1	4	1
With interviews (6 Total)			16.6%	66.6%	16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)			1 12.5%	5 62.5%	2 25%

Table E-29. Continued

Please circle the number that best describes your experience. If the statement does not apply to your situation, please circle 0 for no answer.

About your time in Japan Now	N/A 0	Not at All 1	Seldom 2	Occasionally 3	Often 4
I feel that it is important for my children to remember that they have a bicultural lifestyle.			2	2	2
With interviews (6 Total)			33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
No interviews (2 Total)				1 50%	1 50%
Collectively (8 Total)			2 25%	3 37.5%	3 37.5%
I feel that I could live anywhere in the world.		5			1
With interviews (6 Total)		83.3%			16.6%
No interviews (2 Total)		1 50%		1 50%	
Collectively (8 Total)		6 75%		1 12.5%	1 12.5%
I still enjoy sharing my overseas experience with other JPN.			3	1	2
With interviews (6 Total)			50%	16.6%	33.3%
No interviews (2 Total)				2 100%	
Collectively (8 Total)			3 37.5%	3 37.5%	2 25%

Table E-30. Culture information 3B, pg. 15

What are the advantages and disadvantages of living abroad and returning to Japan?

Advantages: With Interviews

I was able to meet a lot of people from different countries through English.
There were a lot of good people in the US and they were kind to me.

I want to learn more about other foreign countries.

It made me mentally tougher.

I became open minded.

I was able to have an experience of living overseas.
We were able to spend time as a family.

I was able to experience living in a different culture.
I was able to learn the type of English that is not taught at school.
Everything was a great experience.

My children learned how to speak English.
I learned the importance of volunteering your time.
My husband's overseas experience allowed him to have a lot of time to do his research.
I was able to meet a lot of people from different countries through English.
Since leaving Japan, I was completely removed from the social hierarchy and social responsibilities. I was able to feel free.

I realized the importance of the English and Japanese languages.
We were able to spend more time as a family.

Advantages: No Interviews

I was able to learn about American culture.
I was able to throw away the idea that the Japanese way of thinking and the Japanese culture is always correct.
My children were able to speak English.

I was able to see Japan from the outside and was able to view Japan in multiple perspectives.
I was able to meet a lot of people from different countries.
My children learned how to speak in English.

Table E-30. Continued

What are the advantages and disadvantages of living abroad and returning to Japan?

Disadvantages With Interviews

It cost a lot of money.

The time we were away from Japan, our children's Japanese was delayed. They lag academically in their Japanese development.

I made my older parents worry about us.

Used a lot of money-higher cost of living because the overseas tuition, food, and housing (for their older son who returned to attend high school in Japan)

Disadvantages: No Interviews

My children are not proficient in either Japanese or English. Went to US when oldest child was in the first grade. 2 children

My children do not know Japanese children songs or games.

I became confused about spending money.

My children's lack of Japanese.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jo A. Kozuma was born at the United States Air Force Itazuke Air Base located in Fukuoka, Japan. She grew up in Japan and bounced around the Pacific region until her father retired to Florida when she was in junior high. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in multinational business operations and Asian studies from Florida State University (FSU). During her time at FSU, she also studied abroad at Sophia University in Tokyo, Japan. As an undergraduate, she was a member of the FSU Marching Chiefs and was inducted into the Tau Beta Sigma National Music Honor Sorority.

After receiving her Master of Arts in Multilingual Multicultural Education from Florida State University, she accepted an assistant professor position to teach English as a foreign language (EFL) at Kinki University in Osaka, Japan. She specializes in teaching English to adults and was the head teacher of the non-Japanese instructors and assistant director for the Foreign Language Center at Kinki University. She also had a dual appointment of teaching American culture in Japanese to the students at Ashiya University in Kobe, Japan. While she was in Japan she was active in various international and domestic professional organizations and collaborated with in-service seminars for Japanese English teachers at national and private universities.

She returned stateside with her husband and daughter when he was awarded a sabbatical to the University of Florida (UF). During her time at UF, she initially taught English as a second language (ESL) at the English Language Institute. Later on she taught undergraduate and graduate ESOL and foreign language education courses for the College of Education, as well as Japanese language and culture for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. She also serves as a chapter advisor for the Alpha Kappa Delta Phi, an International Asian-interest sorority on campus.