Global Education's Outcomes and Improvement: The Role of Social Markers of Acceptance in Constructing Japanese Identity and Ingroup Boundaries

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"Global Education" is commonly conceived in Japan as aiming to produce students who are "global human resources" (*gurōbaru jinzai*), or those with strong foreign language and communication skills enabling them to work effectively with diverse individuals while maintaining a strong Japanese identity (see Kawano, Ota, & Poole in this volume). While such goals are valuable, often forgotten in this discourse is the importance of fostering acceptance of people born outside of Japan as members of Japanese society (for example, immigrants).[i] When considered as a set of educational processes and outcomes, Global Education is strongly influenced by Japanese constructions of the "cultural other," who is seen as linguistically and culturally different from Japanese people. Such notions fail to recognize that immigrants often adapt to Japan, mastering requisite language skills and social norms to become cultural insiders.

In this chapter, I will assess the extent to which a class of undergraduates at a private university in Tokyo (also one of Japan's leading universities in implementing Global Education[ii]) demonstrates inclusive (or exclusive) attitudes toward immigrants, with the hope that this analysis will generate insight into how the educational outcome of nurturing the sociopsychological acceptance of immigrants can be more readily achieved. Therefore, the goals of this study are 1. to clarify what kinds of sociopsychological ingroup borders are being produced through Global Education in this university setting—specifically by trying to determine the extent that these students view immigrants as potential members of Japanese society and clarifying the criteria that they utilize in making this decision, and 2. to make consequent recommendations to improve Global Education's efficacy in creating inclusive attitudes toward immigrants by refining its aims and processes.

These inquiries will be pursued through the lens of Social Markers of Acceptance, which are socially constructed indicators that recipient nationals, or the people in the society where immigrants settle, use in deciding whether a migrant[iii] is a part of the host community (e.g., adherence to cherished social norms or proficiency in the local language). Namely, I will identify the markers considered important by a sample of

Japanese undergraduates for immigrants to be accepted in society to the same degree as native Japanese. Doing so will illuminate how these students construct their national identity and to whom they are willing to extend ingroup status, as well as whether Japan's present incarnation of Global Education is achieving the goal of promoting a more inclusive society in Japan. This chapter and Komisarof, Leong, & Teng's (in press) paper are the first studies to examine Social Markers of Acceptance in Japan—thus constituting seminal work in deepening understanding of how Japanese people employ these membership criteria as well as what this reveals about their national identity and degree of inclusiveness toward immigrants.

The Demographic and Social Context of Immigration in Japan

Japan has one of the smallest shares of migrants among countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (Debnar, 2016, p. 30). Just under 500,000 immigrants, primarily Chinese or Korean in origin, have naturalized there in the past 50 years (Japanese Ministry of Justice, 2019a). Though this chapter focuses upon naturalized immigrants, there are also 2.64 million non-Japanese residents (Japanese Ministry of Justice, 2019b), or about 2.1% of the population. An expanding retiree population and a declining birth rate in Japan have led demographers predict that by 2025 almost 30% of the population will be over 65 (Roberts, 2012, p. 51), which makes admitting more naturalized immigrants and foreign workers an essential means of achieving demographic sustainability and averting economic crisis.

Literature addressing prospects for a more multicultural society in Japan were broadly categorized by Komisarof and Leong (2016, pp. 250-251) into what can be termed optimistic and pessimistic schools of thought: the former posits that demographic imperatives will force Japan to admit foreign guest workers and immigrants while becoming multicultural ideologically and demographically, and that many migrants already in Japan are valued community members. The pessimistic school contends that the migrant population is far smaller than in traditional immigrant societies, the government promotes only temporary instead of permanent settlement of non-Japanese workers, and the Japanese erect a largely impenetrable ingroup boundary that makes "becoming" Japanese unlikely if not impossible. Such literature describes *Nihonjinron* as prevalent among Japanese—i.e., a widespread ideology conceiving Japanese culture and people as unique, homogenous, and incomprehensible to outsiders (Befu, 2001, pp. 67-68; Goodman, 2008, pp. 327-328).

Japan's Immigration Policy

Japan's plans for immigration are commonly framed as extensions of the aforementioned optimistic and pessimistic discourses. Optimists insist the government will allow large numbers of migrants to naturalize and share the same rights as native-born Japanese (Komisarof & Leong, 2016, p. 251). The pessimistic view is that government policy is primarily shaped by concerns that a large migrant influx will threaten public safety and security (Chiavacci, 2012, p. 40), the Japanese way of life, and social harmony; thus, demographic shortfalls will be remedied with transient foreign workers (not permanent immigrants), more Japanese women in the workforce, and raising the retirement age (Roberts, 2012, p. 51)—thus minimizing the number of migrants admitted and ensuring that they do not overstay their welcome.

For many years, Japan's immigration policy has officially targeted highly skilled labor and students, with unskilled workers from developing countries being admitted on temporary work-enabling visas for jobs largely shunned by the Japanese (Chiavacci, 2012, p. 44). However, Japan's government has recently taken what appear to be historic steps toward transforming its immigration policy: in November 2018, a regulation was approved to allow hundreds of thousands of foreign workers in 14 sectors suffering from labor shortages to spend 5 or 10 years in Japan with the possibility of permanent residency (with the largest sectors including 60,000 people in the care-giving industry, 53,000 in food service, and 40,000 in construction) (Schwarcz, 2018, November 30; Yamawaki, 2019, June 26). Though the precise number of people to be admitted long-term and how many would be allowed to apply for permanent residency were unspecified when it was passed, this legislation signaled a monumental change in the government's efforts to attract migrants and in its vision for the number of foreign workers and immigrants in Japan.

Social Markers of Acceptance

Social Markers of Acceptance provide a means for clarifying the membership criteria in a given society (Leong, 2014, p. 121); specifically, they are socially-constructed indicators, or the perceptual signposts that recipient nationals use in deciding whether a migrant is a part of the host community (e.g., adherence to social norms, competencies such as language skills, and the demonstration of mainstream attitudes or beliefs). Recipient nationals' marker choices reveal the attributes they consider essential for immigrants to possess in order to be accepted in the receiving society to the same degree as a native. Social markers are used all over the world as a means of constructing and managing ingroup boundaries. Taken to the extreme, if one expected no markers, then s/he would accept as ingroup members people who know nothing about the recipient

culture, do not speak the local language, and may practice customs which are uncomfortable or even taboo to their host community.

Markers can also be used to assess societal inclusiveness: the more markers endorsed by host country nationals, and the stronger such beliefs are held, the less accepting those people are. Markers can be instruments of exclusion particularly when they are unrealizable (e.g., changing one's birthplace or genealogy) or expected in such copious quantities that they become almost impossible to fulfill. However, when few markers are required by host nationals and such preferences are flexible, then a more open attitude exists toward immigrants (Leong, 2014, p. 122). By examining the markers used by Japanese students to manage their ingroup boundaries and national identity, one can assess the inclusiveness of such beliefs—a first step in creating an improved sense of belonging among immigrants.

Methods and Participants

At one university in Tokyo—where the author was not (and never was) employed—a professor agreed to cooperate with this research using one 90 minute lesson; specifically, 149 first- through fourth-year Japanese undergraduate English majors enrolled in the class (plus seven foreign students) took an online survey to identify the markers they considered important to accept immigrants to the same degree as native-born Japanese, as well as how difficult they thought it is for immigrants to acquire each marker. In order to use only data from Japanese students, the author excluded from the analysis the essays in which the student writer indicated s/he was not Japanese.

This online survey, written in Japanese, was used to stimulate student ideas and opinions about immigrants and immigration, but the survey data were not analyzed as part of this study (see Komisarof, Leong, & Teng, in press, for the quantitative analysis of survey results at twelve universities including this one). After completing the survey in class using their smartphones or personal computers, students were asked, "How does this survey relate to your views of immigrants and immigration in Japan?"—in response to which they then individually wrote open-ended, reflective essays in Japanese which were analyzed for the purposes of this chapter. The data were collected in June 2016, when immigration-related news—mostly negative and often describing Europe-based events—was appearing regularly in the Japanese mass media. Immigrants were frequently portrayed as burdens on social welfare systems, as refugees flooding EU borders, and even as terrorists—particularly in response to the November 2015 Paris attacks conducted by Muslim extremists who were primarily French and Belgian citizens. Such images likely gave students pause in any potential opening of Japan's borders,

though some positive articles in the media provided a counterbalance to the stream of negative news emanating from Europe.

The students' essays revealed the subjective meanings that they attributed to the markers, how they used the markers to construct and manage the boundaries between Japanese and non-Japanese, and their attitudes toward immigrants and immigration—all of which helped to gauge Global Education's progress, and lack thereof, in creating a more inclusive society for non-native-born people. The author employed theoretical thematic analysis and open coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 77-101), the goal of which is to identify patterns or themes within qualitative data and interpret that data in light of a study's research aims. Such themes relate to both the semantic content of data, or what was actually written by participants, and to the latent content, which encompasses underlying ideas, assumptions, and ideologies which share or inform the semantic content. Taking inspiration from Varjonen and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2013, p. 114), the author analyzed each participant's ethnic identity constructions—both of themselves as Japanese and of immigrants—by noting which ethnic category labels they used, how they described and evaluated them, and how they positioned themselves in relation to them. Also noted were students' beliefs about immigrants and immigration, as well as the types of interpretive repertoires they used to make these social constructions appear as factual. Epistemologically, definitions and versions of reality were seen as constructed and produced, so these methods were utilized to unpack and analyze such meanings. To illustrate the findings, select quotations were translated from Japanese by the author.

The university where this research was conducted is widely considered a leading institution in Japan's Global Education; not only has it received generous funding from the government to promote Global Education, but it also aims to edify students with a broad world outlook, top-quality foreign language instruction, and knowledge requisite for success in the global marketplace. Thus, this university plays a critical role in Japan positioning and redefining itself as a leading member of the international community not only in terms of its economic prowess but also its cosmopolitan mindset. Students tend to be not only well-educated but also socioeconomically privileged; therefore, the participants in this study are not representative of the general Japanese population. Specifically, considering their young age and socioeconomic capital, they are likely to have more liberal, open, and inclusive views about national identity as Japanese, being less committed to ethnic conceptions of nationality than their compatriots in the general population (Jones & Smith, 2001, p. 57). Consequently, the results of this study reflect the mentalities of a portion of Japan's young, elite, and affluent cosmopolitan class.

Data Analysis: Assumptions About Immigrants and Immigration

As outlined in the introduction, this chapter aims to identify Japanese undergraduates' understanding of their national identity, whether they appear willing to extend this ingroup identity to immigrants, and what are their criteria in making this decision—in other words, which social markers are deemed indispensable in this decision-making process. From such findings, I hope to identify both successes and shortcomings in Global Education in Japan and make recommendations in terms of goals and methods to improve its efficacy—particularly in making society more inclusive of immigrants. To do so, it is first critical to clarify students' fundamental assumptions about immigrants. For instance, many participants viewed immigrants as having difficult lives in Japan, likely reflecting awareness of well-documented exploitation in the government's Technical Intern Trainee Program. The program, established in 1993, employs foreign nationals in blue-collar jobs for technical training on visas with a five-year maximum (Schwarcz, 2018, November 30), and it has been criticized in the mass media as a means of supplying cheap labor which is taken advantage of, for example, through excessive overtime work and payment below the minimum wage. As one student explained, "Immigrants experience cruel work conditions and do not have their rights protected like Japanese people."

Repeatedly, students began their essays with the disclaimer that they did not know any actual immigrants. While this may be accurate, in the survey taken just before students wrote their essays, immigrants were defined as coming from any country—as long as they had changed their nationality to Japanese. Therefore, immigrants could have included some of the numerous foreign-born professors at this university found walking around campus every day (i.e., those who had adopted Japanese nationality), but students tended to narrowly conceive immigrants as poor laborers from developing economies (even conflating them at times with refugees)—thus excluding highly-skilled labor from wealthy nations. As one student wrote, "My image of immigrants is that they are mostly from Asia and do not have much money." Another added, "My sense is . . . that one cannot call someone an immigrant if they come from a Western country and move to Japan." Thus, these students associated the Japanese word for immigrant, *imin*, with poverty—contrary to the definition supplied in the survey, and they felt distance from these indigent laborers whom they had never actually met.

Other students conceived immigrants more diversely while noting highly differentiated treatment in Japan based on their presumed race and country of origin:

> Asians, Europeans, Americans, and Africans are all immigrants, but I think Japanese think differently about each. When I hear "immigrant," what comes to

> mind is Asians, which is probably the same as other Japanese, since Asians are the largest of these groups who come to Japan. There is a strong prejudice that Asians and Africans are inferior to Japanese . . . and immigrants from these countries are not wanted. . . . In contrast, toward Caucasians from Europe or America, there is almost no prejudice or discrimination. But really, many Japanese people feel oppressed by them.

Similarly, in a review of acculturation research, Komisarof and Leong (2016, pp. 254-255) concluded that migrants in Japan are organized according to a national and racial hierarchy by which Japanese rank groups in terms of their attractiveness and desirability, with Western Caucasians being broadly esteemed as guests but non-white people often marginalized and devalued—particularly those from countries with developing economies.[iv]

> Being Asian, however, also has advantages in gaining acceptance:
>
> I think the most important factor in immigrants being accepted like Japanese is appearance. Japan is a country of a single ethnicity, so people have a sense of camaraderie toward people who look Japanese. When comparing an Asian migrant who looks Japanese and a Caucasian or Black person who clearly does not, if both have Japanese language ability that is similar to a Japanese native, then most Japanese will consider the Asian immigrant to be Japanese. But the person with a different appearance will hear things like "Where are you from?" or "Your Japanese is good," and it will be difficult for them to be considered part of the same category as Japanese.

Therefore, while being of Asian origin can result in marginalization, the similarity which Japanese may assume between the two groups can also facilitate Asian immigrant inclusion.

Immigrants: Sources of Threat or Contribution?

Students expressed a wide variety of opinions about immigrants and their influences on Japanese society. While some participants were unequivocally positive or negative, most described ambivalence (either their own or, like this student, observed it in Japanese society):

> In Japan, there are negative opinions of immigrants, for example, "If there are many immigrants, then the quality of public services will go down" or "The Japanese lifestyle, jobs, and safety will be threatened by immigrants." There are also positive opinions like "Immigrants are contributing to Japan's development." Those who viewed immigrants negatively tended to associate them with various

types of threats: to safety, employment, and Japanese culture, thus portending both economic and social disintegration. Such fears can be better understood through *integrated threat theory* (Stephan & Stephan, 2000, pp. 25-26), which posits outgroup prejudice as predicated by two categories of threat: realistic threat (concerns about competition over economic resources such as jobs, education, and healthcare) and symbolic threat (apprehension about the erosion of culture, norms, and/or identity). When host nationals see immigrants as sources of realistic threat, they tend to reject them because of their perceived burden on (or competition for) economic resources, or in the case of symbolic threat, their "incompatible" social identities.

This student voiced two threat-related discourses of dwindling employment and public safety: "If Japan accepts many immigrants, . . . Japanese will lose jobs, and crime and other negative acts committed by foreigners might increase." Another student feared cultural loss:

> Because of Japanese people's modesty and politeness, our towns are safe and clean. I do not want these good qualities to be destroyed by immigrants. As immigrants have no intention to adapt to the country they are in, . . . they will not learn Japanese manners, so if many come to Japan, Japan will change for the worse.

Such comments are representative of various assumptions which could be found in other essays construing immigrants as sources of threat. First, these students presumed positive similarities shared exclusively among Japanese—in this case, modesty and politeness. They portrayed immigrants as lacking such traits and unable to acquire them. Thus, despite the existence of the entire field of acculturation psychology (reviewed broadly in Berry and Sam, 2016) which demonstrates that cultural adaptation occurs across the globe, including Japan, these participants seemed to believe impossible that immigrants could acculturate to Japan and acquire supposedly unique local traits such as modesty. Finally, students like this one assumed that immigrants are indifferent to adjusting to Japanese culture or becoming more involved in society—instead content to live on its margins—despite ample evidence to the contrary (Komisarof, 2012, pp. 6-7).

A third participant elaborated on fears of cultural loss and social disintegration: "If Japan accepts large numbers of immigrants, . . . trouble would happen because of cultural differences. You cannot communicate [to immigrants] manners and customs that are considered natural in Japan." Such discourses associate immigrants with chaos, disorder, and/or danger (in line with integrated threat theory) with a more extreme reaction to perceived threat being the discursive construction of immigrants as terrorists: "Recently in Japan, there has been a spreading sense of danger from terrorism. . . .

Immigrants threaten our current levels of public order and peace."

Rather than threat, other students focused upon immigrant contributions to society, such as being positive change agents and sources of exposure to new ideas and practices—providing cultural and professional enrichment: "By people with many types of values coming from foreign countries, we can learn new technologies and deepen mutual understanding with other nations." Others emphasized Japan becoming a more open society: "Immigrants make Japan diverse. The friendship and mutual understanding we build by interacting with them will make Japan kinder and a more comfortable place to live [for everyone]." Another common discourse (similarly noted by Debnar and Kawano, Ota, & Poole in this volume) was immigrants stimulating the domestic economy and mitigating the labor shortage caused by a greying society:

> Corporations need globalized human resources who not only can speak their mother tongue, but also various foreign languages. . . . Immigrants who can speak different languages will strengthen our human resources and make it possible for us to interact more with many countries. . . . Immigrants are important . . . because the aging population is causing the workforce to shrink, which in turn puts pressure on the national economy, and tax revenue also gets too small to run the country.

Other students emphasized the contributions that Japan could *make* to immigrants rather than those it would receive—stressing Japan's moral obligation to provide a lifeline to those struggling: "I agree with accepting immigrants. If there are people in trouble, we should help them." Such thinking may be rooted in both international and domestic criticism that Japan, as part of the international community and a major economic power, needs to do its fair share for immigrants from poor nations: "Compared to other countries, Japan accepts few immigrants, which makes me skeptical."

Markers Used to Construct Japanese National Identity and Ingroup Boundaries

This section and its subsections explain the markers students considered important in order to accept immigrants to the same extent as they do native-born Japanese (or the markers they used to exclude this possibility). The types of markers deemed important—and whether those markers are perceived as acquirable—have critical ramifications for how people conceive national identity, which can be *ascribed* or *achieved*. The former depends on largely immutable criteria such as shared genealogy, birthplace, or religion (Esses, Dovidio, Semenya, & Jackson, 2005, p. 320; Ha & Jang, 2015, p. 55; Weinreich, 2009, pp.129-130), the latter by fulfilling selected social contracts such as endorsing popular values or principles (e.g., democracy or capitalism) (Ditlmann,

Purdie-Vaughns, & Eibach, 2011, p. 396), respect for the host country's cultural traditions (Ha & Jang, 2015, p. 55), or voluntary commitment to laws and institutions (Esses et al., 2005, pp. 319-320). Here, national identity also can be a matter of individual choice (Weinreich, 2009, p. 129-130). Ascribed and achieved concepts elucidate how people construct national identity, and in conjunction with markers, clarify the criteria by which host culture members decide whether or not to accept immigrants in their ingroup.

The importance of "Japanese DNA"

The first set of markers used to construct Japanese nationality and manage their ingroup boundary centered around lineage (i.e., having "Japanese DNA" or "blood") and its proxy of appearance. For example, this student reasoned:

> Except for the Ainu and Ryukyu people, almost all Japanese are members of a single race and look like each other. Therefore, Japanese people unconsciously feel an immediate, strong sense of solidarity with each other. . . . People of races who look unlike Japanese really stick out.

Another student observed: "In Japan, nationality is conferred by *jus sanguinis* [i.e., citizenship determined by the nationality of one's parents]. Being Japanese is tied to having Japanese parents, looking Japanese, and speaking Japanese." Thus, national identity was constructed in a coterminous manner along ethnic lines, where having exclusively Japanese ancestors, undergoing primary socialization in Japan (hence speaking the language at presumably a native level), and legal citizenship are all inextricable aspects of being Japanese. If just one of these critical components is missing, then the person is not Japanese and cannot "become" so.

Many participants affirmed that appearance is essential to being considered Japanese, with one extension of this discourse being that of having a Japanese name:

> When I consider what is most important for immigrants to acquire or what acts as a barrier for them, I think it is their appearance and name. The other social markers in the survey can be acquired with an individual's effort, but physical appearance and names are clear because they are apparent to the eyes and do not fall in the category of things that can be acquired through individual effort. Being recognized as an immigrant is an obstacle in life, but in contemporary Japanese society, this is the very sad reality.

While Japanese names actually can be acquired if immigrants legally adopt them, this student's point is that s/he is critical of commonplace constructions of Japanese nationality around immutable, unachievable features.

Others, however, embraced such exclusive identity constructions as they

expressed distrust of people seen as different: “This safe, secure country consists of people with the same values and types of faces. If we live with people whose cultures are too different, it is likely that this safety and security will collapse.” As in the previous section on threat, we once again see the theme of a presumed similarity among Japanese in terms markers such as appearance and values. However, Jenkins (1996) argued that such presumed similarity is largely illusory:

> Community membership means sharing with other community members a similar “sense of things,” participation in a common symbolic domain. But this does not entail either a local consensus of values or conformity in behavior. “Community,” for example, covers a range of meanings and means different things to different community members. . . . What is significant is not that people see or understand things in the same ways, or that they see and understand things in ways which differ from other communities, but that their shared symbols allow them to *believe* that they do. (p. 107)

Students emphasizing appearance as an ascribed marker are in fact constructing similarity between Japanese from arbitrary symbols, such as a certain shape of eyes and color of hair, and in the case of the last student quoted, also in terms of supposedly similar Japanese values. However, these students are ignoring evidence to the contrary—i.e., Japanese do not all have the same facial features or values if examined in minute detail, but they are presumed the same in order to construct a firm ingroup boundary in the manner described by Jenkins. Ironically, this student and others expressing similar fears of social disintegration overlooked the fact that over 2 million non-Japanese and immigrants already live in Japan, which continues to be a largely safe, secure country.

Language markers

Another set of markers upon which many students constructed Japanese national identity and managed their ingroup boundary was Japanese language ability. While some expressed doubt about immigrants becoming proficient enough to belong, language was portrayed by others as an achievable marker:

> At my mother’s . . . workplace, there are immigrants. . . . No one feels any strangeness or awkwardness with these immigrants, and there is no discrimination against them. They speak Japanese—the same as a regular person—and people feel at home with them. So . . . even if they are immigrants, just because they don’t look Japanese, their insides and their language are Japanese.
>
> In other words, if immigrants can use Japanese to fit smoothly into their social

environment, then they should be accepted. While this marker does require immigrants to learn the language, it is potentially achievable, unlike the previous marker of physical appearance and Japanese ancestry. Particularly if students expect a *functional* degree of Japanese competence, i.e., being able to achieve one's communication goals in a variety of contexts as opposed to utilizing the language exactly as a native, then this marker becomes far more accessible.

Other students constructed nationality around Japanese language based upon the positive outcomes that such linguistic proficiency makes possible, such as avoiding social conflict:

> For harmonious communication, a certain linguistic ability is indispensable. . . . When [immigrants] do not have enough linguistic ability to communicate adequately, if there is trouble, there is a possibility that the matter cannot be solved easily and instead becomes a big problem.

Another student opined, "When communication in Japanese does not go well, it is likely that immigrants will become isolated." Language ability also impacts employment prospects: "In order to broaden immigrants' choices of where they can work, understanding Japanese very important." Finally, people have perished because they could not understand the public announcements over loudspeakers or read documents beforehand that explained how to evacuate in case of a fire:

> In . . . fires where houses were very close together, the flames spread quickly, and because foreigners did not understand what to do in the emergency, they died. If the government accepts immigrants, then they must support people from the aspect of public safety.

From these responses, it is clear that social markers can be employed with different types of intentions—i.e., to exclusively limit national group membership or, in the case of these last four quotes, compassionately conceive benchmarks designed to ensure immigrants' social and physical welfare.

Common sense and manners

Many students emphasized the markers of mastering socially appropriate behaviors that come with knowing "Japanese common sense" (*joushiki*) and following polite manners. Being a "tight" society (Gelfand et al., 2011, p. 1103), or one that places a premium on conformity to conventional social norms and expectations, strict obedience to such norms constitutes a critical form of currency in building relationships and achieving belonging in Japanese society. Being deemed as lacking common sense—whether Japanese or an immigrant—means that one lacks the basic knowledge of how

society and relationships work, and it implies that person cannot be trusted. As one student wrote: "I think that foreigners are insensitive to tacit Japanese cultural rules and common-sense manners and do not understand their importance. If immigrants did not make efforts to fit in, I personally would have trouble accepting their culture or lifestyle." Another added: "To collectively judge immigrants . . . is not good, but Japanese common sense does not get through to people who are so unlike Japanese. As long as I do not know whether an immigrant understands common sense well, I feel I cannot trust them."

Some students clarified the norms they expected of immigrants to demonstrate common sense and good manners:

> By being similar to the Japanese majority (for example, behaving in a quiet way, bowing, being law-abiding, and wearing clothes that are sold widely in Japan instead of one's traditional dress), I think that more people will be recognized as Japanese. On the contrary, if people talk noisily, do not know how to behave politely, and engage in behaviors that Japanese people dislike, they will be stuck with a label as immigrants who cannot belong here.

Such comments help us to deconstruct the notion of Japanese common sense and identify some of the social norms considered important to migrants gaining acceptance in Japanese society.

Economic contributions

Participants also stressed the marker of immigrants contributing to Japan's economy. This is unsurprising considering that when the data were collected, it was official government policy to encourage immigration almost exclusively of those who could strengthen the economy by working in fields with depleted workforces (e.g., nursing service providers) or those that could benefit from foreign expertise (e.g., language teachers)—especially highly-skilled workers. However, some participants were critical of this marker as hypocritical:

> One way of thinking is that only top-level human resources are wanted as immigrants. We do not desire people who will increase social security expenses, but we do want immigrants who get us positive recognition for being international and who improve our competitiveness. . . . We welcome immigrants who want to do jobs that Japanese do not want, but if they take away work from Japanese, then we do not like it.

Another added, "In Japan, immigrants are not seen as people, but just as labor." Both students were quick to grasp the potential of this marker to dehumanize immigrants while creating only a narrow space within Japanese society—i.e., the economic sphere—where

they are tolerated.

Japanese citizenship

Other participants focused upon the marker of citizenship: "If someone . . . takes Japanese nationality, then at that moment, the person is Japanese. I do not understand why immigrants need to make more effort than that [to be accepted as Japanese]." S/he also explained how citizenship facilitates belonging through access to welfare and social institutions:

> Citizenship is important to be considered Japanese. If someone is not a citizen, then difficulties arise related to pensions, insurance, finding housing, and . . . getting married. Ultimately, people will remain on the outside of Japanese society [if they do not acquire Japanese citizenship].

While this student conceived the marker of citizenship inclusively, acquiring Japanese nationality also presents challenges—particularly since one must relinquish other forms of citizenship to become Japanese (an exception being binational children born to one Japanese and one non-Japanese parent, who must choose between their two passports at age twenty). This policy, and by extension, this marker, forces people to specify one identity when they may feel affinity for both—a potentially anguishing dilemma for immigrants if they want to acquire Japanese citizenship.

Subjective identity as Japanese

The final marker specified repeatedly was the subjective claiming of Japanese identity; in other words, if someone thinks they are Japanese, then they are:

> I think it is unnecessary for immigrants to have so much demanded of them to be considered Japanese. . . . If someone thinks they are Japanese, then we should follow that preference. Certainly, other problems such as needing to speak Japanese and understanding Japanese common sense are important, but I think these can come after identity. . . . Even if someone is born Japanese, as a baby, they do not know anything, so it is no problem for immigrants in the same way to say they are Japanese and then create a Japanese identity.

This marker is arguably the most accessible, as it is open to anyone at any moment. It also permits more nuanced forms of belonging than citizenship, as one can identify as Japanese in certain contexts and otherwise elsewhere. Though this marker could be deployed by students exclusively (for example, insistence that immigrants identify solely as Japanese), when conceived flexibly and allowing for multiple and even changing affinities, it is sensitive to the complexities of people whose fluid identities defy

categorical allegiances to just one nationality.

Flexibility of Japanese Ingroup Boundary

Thus, Japanese nationality was constructed and the ingroup boundary managed around the markers of lineage and appearance, language proficiency, common sense, economic contribution, citizenship, and subjective identity. Among these, lineage is the only categorically ascriptive marker, while the others have the prospect of being acquired—depending upon how they are viewed. For example, if one believes that immigrants cannot possibly master Japanese or that immigrants must speak, read, and write Japanese exactly like a native-born Japanese citizen, then language-associated markers become largely if not completely ascriptive. However, if Japanese proficiency is deemed attainable and expected to be just functional, then this marker is achievable, and immigrants can potentially be accepted to the same extent as native-born Japanese.

Given these markers were used to construct Japanese national identity, how flexible were such ingroup boundaries? In other words, were students actually willing to accept immigrants as they do native-born Japanese? Some participants were decidedly negative, expressing a strong pro-Japanese, exclusive bias: "Japanese people do not have a good image of immigrants because they love Japan, feel pride in being Japanese, and are conscious of being part of the same familiar group with other Japanese." Another student opined: "It is ideal if [social markers] considered highly important are easy to acquire, but those with high importance [in Japan] are usually difficult to acquire. . . . Because of this, I think it is very tough for immigrants to be recognized as Japanese." In other words, s/he believes that Japan is not only a "tight" society (Gelfand et al., 2011, p. 1103) with unyielding expectations for conformity to markers, but also demands adherence to markers hard to attain. If true, this poses steep challenges for Japan to incorporate the cultural diversity embodied by immigrants and other groups who do not fit narrow ideas of Japanese group membership.

Though agreeing that Japan is a tight society, this student saw signs of hope for growing inclusiveness:

> Japanese have a very narrow definition of who is Japanese. There is a strong tendency to divide people into Japanese and those who are not, and if someone contradicts even one part of this definition, it is difficult to be recognized as Japanese. . . . However, recently, . . . especially at my university, . . . I have the feeling that Japanese diversity is becoming more visible and accepted. I think that the consciousness of everyday Japanese will also change so that many kinds of people will be valued, and we will live together peacefully.

Some students were critical of Japan's tightness and how markers can be wielded to exclude immigrants: "There are many conditions which immigrants must fulfill to be accepted as Japanese, and to clear all of these requirements is almost impossible. For them to be accepted is more difficult than it is for Japanese." In other words, immigrants are judged by a more rigid standard of acceptance than Japanese themselves.

Students also expressed a variety of expectations for immigrants' acculturation to Japan. For example, some participants preferred assimilation—i.e., immigrants adopt Japanese culture wholeheartedly while abandoning their heritage cultures in order to belong (Berry, 2013, p. 666). Others advocated integration, or the preference that immigrants be accepted as members of the receiving society while retaining their heritage culture: "Rather than encouraging assimilation, I think we should recognize people who have cultures other than our own."

Such acculturation expectations impacted how students conceived Japanese ingroup boundaries. Those preferring integration often seemed motivated by the premise that immigrants *cannot* broadly assimilate to Japanese culture and become Japanese, so integration becomes the default option: "There is certainly no perception [among Japanese or immigrants] that immigrants can become like 'a Japanese who is born in Japan,' so I do not think there is discrimination or even a problem [if they cannot]." This assumption that immigrants cannot become Japanese contrasts with how integration is commonly conceived, for example, among American advocates of multiculturalism. Namely, the US multicultural discourse (as opposed to the nativist, populist ideology becoming increasingly visible today) generally rejects the aforementioned belief that there is an impenetrable cultural divide between immigrants and the native-born; rather, American liberal conceptions of immigration and acculturation typically presume that anyone can understand and adapt to American culture,[v] which has historic roots in the Melting Pot narrative in which immigrants jettison their heritage cultures, assimilate, and "become American." The multicultural liberal discourse of integration in America, commonly described as advocating a multicultural salad bowl, provides a further option for intercultural adaptation (beyond assimilation) that expresses respect for immigrants' heritage cultures by encouraging them to retain them. This school of thought does not question the notion that people could, if they so desired, willingly and competently assimilate; instead, it rejects assimilation as ethnocentric. While some Japanese students repudiated assimilation for the same reason, they commonly conceived integration not just as a more enlightened option for cultural adaptation, but as the *only* option due to the presumed inability of immigrants to assimilate in Japan.

Not all Japanese students, however, positioned immigrants as cultural outsiders.

This participant wanted to accept immigrants fully—both their heritage cultures and the ways they had assimilated to Japan, thus combining both acculturation expectations to fully recognize immigrants' cultural richness: "I want to respect [an immigrant's] proud roots, what makes them different from others, and the part of Japanese people which they have accepted." Other students advocated a world without national boundaries—psychological or physical—preferring to treat immigrants as individuals and not as members from any national category: "In this globalizing world, we should be critical of the concept itself of 'immigrant.' We should desire a world in which no one feels national boundaries."

Preferences for Immigration Policy

Student conceptions of immigrants and Japanese ingroup identity ultimately influenced their preferred immigration policies. Even at this liberal university, opinions about immigration ranged from strong opposition to unequivocal support, with numerous participants falling somewhere ambivalently in between. Those clearly against immigration adopted defensive postures toward cultural differences and employed the markers as benchmarks used largely for excluding outsiders rather than as means for enabling belonging of potential members. Immigrants and foreigners were often seen as dangerous and/or economic burdens, with cultural diversity having few benefits. Consequently, assimilation to Japanese culture was the preferred outcome of intercultural contact in order to expunge difference and minimize the threats posed by diversity. Moreover, problems in intergroup relations were commonly described as the responsibility of immigrants, while any role in such conflicts played by the host society went unacknowledged. Each of these elements can be seen in this student's essay:

> I am against immigration. In a word, immigrants are scary. They cannot assimilate into the receiving society, so they harbor negative feelings toward that country, which leads them to commit crimes. . . . Immigrants cannot assimilate because they do not try, and they lack the proper attitude of "When in Rome do as the Romans do." Therefore, they antagonize the people receiving them. Of course, there are many reasons why people decide to immigrate, but they should not forget that the host country, based on their good will, is providing means [for immigrants] to earn a living and acquire housing. . . . If immigrants follow "When in Rome, do as the Romans do," have a sense of gratitude to the receiving country, and are able to get along well with others, then I am not against [immigration]. . . . But I feel that Japanese lineage as it has been historically up until now could become extinct, so of course, I am against Japan having [an

open] immigration policy.

Many other participants supported accepting carefully proscribed numbers of immigrants. They worried about large populations of immigrants suddenly entering the country, as they considered Japan unprepared for the resulting demographic and cultural changes:

> Currently, immigration policy is probably too strict, but if we suddenly admit in large numbers of people who are unfamiliar to Japan in problematic ways—both racially and in terms of religion—then unfortunately, I do not think it will lead to a good result.

Some students' hesitation to accept more immigrants was rooted not in xenophobia but rather concern over insufficient resources and programs to ensure that immigrants thrive in Japan—for example, in schools:

> In my junior high school, there were many Filipino students. When these students were uncomfortable in Japanese and English, it seemed tough for the lessons to move forward. There was no system in the school for receiving these students, so the Filipinos were taught Japanese only a little bit after school. Naturally, many could not study effectively, and the number who could go on to university was small. In Japan, people cast a severe eye on immigrants, but I think this is because we do not have a well-equipped system . . . and the handling of immigrants at schools is not well-managed. At present, there are many teachers who can speak English, but those who can speak languages like Spanish or Portuguese are rare. Actually, there are many immigrant students from China, the Philippines, and South American countries like Brazil—most of whom do not have English as a mother tongue. It goes without saying that lessons cannot progress smoothly for either Japanese or immigrant students. . . . It is my mission to continue to think about this problem.

Accounts like this which emphasize the need for social infrastructure tended to express both empathy toward immigrants and also find cause for their struggles in the broader societal system rather than blaming the immigrants themselves.

Finally, some students were unequivocally keen about immigration:

> I personally think that we should accept more immigrants, and by doing so, Japan will receive many benefits. . . . There are many unresolved issues that need to be addressed, and unexpected problems may occur, but Japan today is too rejecting of immigrants. It is important that we become more generous and tolerant toward other cultures and accept more immigrants.

Overall, student preferences for immigration policies were intimately related to

whether they saw immigrants predominantly in terms of threats or contributions. Greater threat emphasis resulted in less support for immigration, but students focused upon contributions tended to approve of immigration as a means of enriching Japan socially, economically, and/or culturally.

Recommendations for Global Education in Japan

The results of this study suggest various recommendations for reconceiving educational processes and goals which can be used to improve the effectiveness of Global Education. First, in terms of contributing to an atmosphere of inclusiveness toward immigrants, what are the successful outcomes of Global Education reflected in this group of students? They demonstrated awareness of immigration's importance as a sociopolitical issue despite frequent claims of having little to no experience with actual immigrants. Moreover, numerous students expressed compassion for immigrants by empathizing with their struggles and thus revealing a sense of global citizenship in the form of feeling human interconnectedness regardless of place of birth or upbringing. This consciousness emphasizing shared personhood is a critical bulwark against immigrants' dehumanization—for example, the previously described tendency of some Japanese participants to view immigrants primarily as vehicles for Japan's economic growth while losing sight of their broader individual and collective needs. Many students also recognized potential benefits of immigration, and some framed problems associated with immigration as co-created difficulties necessitating cooperative solutions (i.e., not caused solely by immigrants). These are the types of positive outcomes which Global Education should continue to facilitate.

Also clear were Global Education's limitations in making participants more inclusive of immigrants. Even at this liberal university, numerous students portrayed immigrants more prominently as threats than as contributors to Japan (though they may have referred to both in their essays). Moreover, the persistence of a racial and national hierarchy dominated by Caucasian Westerners was concerning, as Global Education should play a more active role in minimizing such prejudices. Another limitation was that participants willing to accept immigrants *as Japanese* were uncommon, mostly describing the ingroup boundary delineating who is Japanese as impermeable. For them, at best, immigrants could be accepted *similarly* to Japanese, but not necessarily *become* Japanese. Why is this distinction important? Ultimately such attitudes can lead to a form of delimited belonging in which immigrants are not seen as full members of Japanese society or as stakeholders in the country's wellbeing. Unless Japanese people move beyond viewing immigrants as "the other" and instead truly as one of their own, then

immigrants (as well as foreign migrants who are long-term or permanent residents) may never be accepted to the same extent as Japanese. By Japanese opening such boundaries, Nagy (2012, pp. 9-10) argued, a shared national identity becomes possible which lies outside racial and ethnic distinctions—i.e., one emerging from a common experience forged as fellow long-term residents of Japan. Universities are one institution where this sense of solidarity can be strengthened, and policies spawned to promote it. Such vision and its actualization are sorely needed for Global Education to be more effective.

Though some students deployed markers as normative hurdles for immigrants to overcome to prove their commitment to Japan, others framed them as important benchmarks which, once achieved, would result in greater culture-specific knowledge and skills—thus empowering immigrants to build more fulfilling lives and enjoy the social and financial benefits of acceptance. For example, Japanese linguistic proficiency was described as a communication facilitator, enabling immigrants to establish social connections and find rewarding jobs. Another participant highlighted the need for better language support in schools so that immigrant children could learn more effectively and improve their prospects of gaining university acceptance—an idea which could help to avoid preventable problems (e.g., truancy or socioeconomic inequality) through prudent planning and policy making. If Global Education is to advance, it is critical to distinguish markers which are utilized defensively to protect xenophobic ingroup boundaries and markers like these used to promote immigrant well-being. Markers are also more likely to facilitate belonging when conceived as achievable rather than ascriptive. For instance, language markers may comprise a preference for functional Japanese ability (i.e., achievable) or rigid expectations for native competence that is only deemed possible if one is born and raised in Japan with two Japanese parents (ascriptive).

Classes promulgating Global Education are recommended to provide platforms for earnest conversations between Japanese, immigrants, and foreign students to clarify which markers are important, what essential functions they serve in Japanese society, and how they can be construed compassionately and achievably. Moreover, these classes can serve to help cultural newcomers reach such benchmarks. For instance, if being able to infer nonverbal messages of one's communicative partner (known as "reading the air," or in Japanese, *kūki wo yomu koto*) is a highly valued marker, then lessons can help students to gain intercultural communicative competence and adapt to such social norms. Finally, identifying the markers considered important by Japanese can also be a stimulus for change, as those which are fundamentally exclusive can be challenged in a Global Education curriculum. For example, requiring immigrants to be ethnically Japanese to be accepted relegates the vast majority to society's margins, thus excluding people who

could have positively contributed to Japan.

Thus, the mission of Global Education does not necessarily need to be the expunging of all expectations for social markers, but rather to challenge host culture members to make their expectations as inclusive as possible—not too onerous in terms of their number or rigidity, and framed in a way that promotes immigrants thriving in society. We need to establish places where people can have frank yet empathetic conversations—i.e., share their concerns about immigration and other ideologically divisive issues without fear of being attacked, while dissuading them from their prejudices and moving toward a vision of greater acceptance of immigrants and harmony in diversity. By taking such a balanced approach, we can create an improved form of Global Education in Japan which is responsive to the exigent issue of immigration while promoting a more inclusive society.

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[i] Though there are many groups of people born in Japan who have historically struggled to be accepted in mainstream Japanese society (e.g., ethnic minorities such as Ainu or native-born Japanese having one Japanese and one non-Japanese parent), this chapter's focus is upon immigrants, or people originating from other countries who settle in Japan and change their nationality to Japanese.

[ii] This university has been selected to receive ample financial support under the Japanese government's Global Education programs started in 2009.

[iii] "Migrant" is used in this paper as a term inclusive of both naturalized immigrants as well as non-naturalized foreign residents of a country.

[iv] The feelings of oppression described by the aforementioned student are likely a reference to the continuing historical legacy of the American military occupation of Japan after World War 2 as detailed by Komisarof (2011, pp. 106-107).

[v] This is not to dismiss the possibility that white Americans, even those who ascribe to such liberal discourses, may discriminate and reject even the most highly adapted minority group members (Birman & Simon, 2014, pp. 220-221).