

# Japanese Returnees' Reentry Cultural Struggles: Differences and Commonalities in the Research Findings Over Time

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## Abstract

The rapid business globalization in the 1980s markedly increased the number of Japanese returnees. It is reported that approximately 50,000 returnees are currently enrolled in educational institutions in Japan, many of whom experience severe reverse culture shock. This paper reviews the most acknowledged educational research from among all ethnographic studies on Japanese returnees in English and Japanese from the 1980s onwards. The paper also explores returnees' reentry processes and factors that influenced their reentry, and analyzes differences and commonalities in returnees' reentry over time. The paper further suggests a framework for future research inquiries, and identifies further avenues for investigation. (100 words)

**Keywords:** *diversity, intercultural experiences, Japanese returnees, K-12*

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## Introduction

Rapid globalization has produced a range of changes in our everyday lives, including increased human mobility. For example, nowadays, it is not surprising to hear people on a train talking in a language that we do not understand. In Kyoto, this "foreign language" may actually be spoken by a native-born Japanese who has grown up bilingual. However, these Japanese repatriates with near-native bilingual English fluency are now regarded as "others" or "outsiders". According to Kobayashi (1991), there were as many as 20,000 of these so-called "returnees" in Japan in 1986. The Japanese economy grew rapidly in the late 1980s, and accordingly, the number of expatriated Japanese businessmen also increased; these businessmen took their children overseas and then moved back with them. At present, Japanese officials expect the return of 50,000 school-aged children who currently live all over the world (Kano Podolsky, 2004; Kobayashi, 1991).

The emergence of returnees has posed an important question for Japanese educators: Is Japanese education culturally inclusive enough to accommodate cultural diversity among students? Kobayashi (1991) suggests that it is not, owing to its ethnocentric educational practices that may promote the cultural exclusion of returnees:

The Japanese educational system is designed for people who were expected to spend their entire lives in this country. Conformity to the norm is the implicit premise. [Returnees] are treated as problem children because they don't fit in" (p.206).

In other words, the Japanese educational system is not diversity-sensitive, and is inclined to treat culturally diverse students as a problem. Similarly, several other scholars have pointed out that the Japanese public educational system is not ready to accommodate culturally diverse students such as returnees (Kanno, 2003; Kidder, 1992; Kobayashi, 1991; Osawa, 1986; White, 1988; Yates, 1990). As a result, many returnees tend to face discrimination and harassment upon their return for their "differences" acquired or developed as a result of expatriation. As the literature shows, the Japanese educational system is highly culturally exclusive, and the expectation of high conformity may generate cultural clashes or exclusion in classrooms upon returnees' reentry to Japan (Kanno, 2003; Kidder, 1992; Osawa, 1986; White, 1988; Yates, 1990).

As the number of returnees has increased, this intolerance of diversity has generated many issues in educational settings. This paper reviews the most acknowledged educational research findings reported in either English or Japanese from the 1980s onwards on the reentry process of returnees, represented by the works of Osawa (1986),

White (1988), Kidder (1992), Kanno (2003) and Yoshida et al. (2009). The paper also explores the variation in the reentry process and reverse culture shock experienced by returnees, as well as the factors that have influenced their experiences of reverse culture shock and what they have learned as a result of their reentry experiences; it also analyzes the differences and commonalities observed in the research findings over time. Finally, the paper explores a helpful framework for future research inquiries and identifies some further avenues for investigation.

## Who are the returnees?

Owing to the globalization of the business world and also the boom of the Japanese economy in the 1970s and 1980s, many Japanese corporations started to open branches overseas (Kanno, 2003; Osawa, 1986; White, 1988; Yate, 1990). After a while, many Japanese businessmen started being relocated to these branches. In many cases, they took their families with them overseas, and their children went to local schools during their expatriation (Osawa, 1986; White, 1988; Kobayashi, 1991; Kidder, 1992; Kanno 2003; Yoshida, 2009). When these students returned to Japan, they were categorized as “returnees”, repatriating students from overseas with multicultural/multilingual identity (Kanno, 2003).

There are various factors that differentiate returnees from other Japanese students without overseas experience. However, some scholars identify one of the major differentiating factors as the returnees’ unique bicultural bilingual identity, developed as a result of expatriation (Goodman, 1990; Pollock, 2001; Kanno, 2003). For instance, Pollock (2001) identifies that returnees may possess a unique form of multicultural identity as they have “spent a significant part of their developmental years outside the parents’ cultures; therefore, have built relationships to multiple cultures” (p.19). This quote indicates that returnees’ identity tends to be a hybrid form of multicultural identity, bridging multiple cultures, countries and languages.

Some scholars also point out that, because of this hybrid form of multicultural/multilingual identity, these students are less likely to enjoy full membership of mainstream Japanese culture and tend to be regarded as ‘hidden immigrants’ or as part of a ‘new class’ in the Japanese social structure (Goodman, 1990; Kanno, 2003; Pollock, 2001). Pollock (2001) and Kanno (2003) also point out that returnees have their own cultures, which are composites of multiple national cultures that affect their reasoning, lifestyle, behavior, values and perspectives. In other words, returnees’ multicultural identity may lead them to behaving, acting and reasoning in a completely different manner from their Japanese peers. This difference in identity may work against returnees given the high expectations for cultural homogeneity that is pervasive in Japanese sociocultural practices (Osawa, 1986; White, 1988; Kobayashi, 1991; Kidder, 1992; Kanno 2003; Yoshida, 2009). The next section explores factors that make returnees’ reentry to Japan challenging, and how returnees tend to be treated in schools in the country.

## Collectivism, the pervasive myth of homogeneity and returnees’ reentry

It is well known that the Asian cultures including the Japanese culture lean toward collectivism, which is “associated with emphasis on harmony (at least within the ingroup, which is the most frequent setting for social interaction), which reduces stress level for everyday life” (Triandis et al., 1988, p.328). On the basis of this premise, the actors in collectivist cultural practices are more likely to perceive that “if the event is perceived acceptable, normal, temporary or expected it will have less stressful consequences than if it is perceived as unacceptable, unusual, chronic or unexpected” (Triandis et al., 1988, p.328). Given this collectivist inclination to perceive unexpected or unusual events as stressful, it is not surprising if those actors within the collectivist cultural practice who deviate from the norms and behave in unexpected or unusual ways are perceived as stressful or unacceptable.

In addition to this collectivist inclination, some scholars also identify that, despite the huge presence of minority groups in Japan, there is a prevailing myth of homogeneity that Japan is a monoracial and monocultural society solely composed of Japanese nationals born and raised in Japan (Murphy-Shigematsu, 1993; Burgess, 2007 & 2010). Burgess (2010) describes the homogeneity myth “that the Japanese are a homogeneous people (*tan'itsu minzoku*) who constitute a racially unified nation (*tan'itsu minzoku kokka*)” (p.2). As a result, Japanese sociocultural practices are more likely to be associated with expectations that individual actors will behave in the expected similar manner, and those from other cultures who do not conform to the norms will be placed on the outside as “other” (Dale, 1986; Pelto, 1968; Triandis, 1995; White, 1988; Kidder, 1992). In other words,

Japanese sociocultural practices involve high expectations for conformity and cultural assimilation. Accordingly, those who behave differently from the norms or expectations are excluded as “other”.

Despite all the societal changes toward liberalism, democracy and modernization in Japan since the 1980s, represented by events such as the enactment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law for Men and Women in 1986 and the IT advancement in the late 1990s, this societal intolerance for diversity has not changed at all. Some scholars point out that this societal inclination to exclude “others” is frequently observed in educational settings as well. It is frequently reported that returnees are excluded in school settings as “others” who do not “fit in” to the norms (Osawa, 1986; Kidder, 1992; Kanno, 2003; Yoshida et al., 2009). For instance, Osawa (1986) illustrated how returnees who moved back to Japan in the 1980s were excluded from their classroom communities by describing anecdotes from her own returnee children. According to Osawa (1986), her son Tatsuya experienced severe bullying after his repatriation to Japan. His peers started making fun of or sometimes harassing him because the following factors bothered them:

1. His spoken Japanese was not grammatically correct.
2. His gesture for “I don’t know” was too American, which gave the impression he was trying to act or look cool.
3. His mannerisms, such as holding doors for girls, seemed too “westernized” and “lady first”.
4. Too many English words were mixed in with his spoken Japanese.

Owing to these differences in verbal and nonverbal cues of differences from his peers, Tatsuya’s peers would poke him in the back with umbrellas, put pencil shavings in his lunch and send him black mails. The constant bullying resulted in him receiving a medical diagnosis of a duodenal ulcer. Tatsuya’s case sheds light on how perceptible markers of differences in verbal and nonverbal communication styles may trigger bullying, exclusion or harassment against returnees. This description also illuminates 1) the level of expectation of homogeneity in Japan, and also 2) how different “others” who do not conform to the norms are excluded. The mails Tatsuya received telling him to die and other acts that excluded him demonstrate that, in some cases, exclusion can be so extreme that it appears the goal is to erase the presence of the “other”.

Similarly, Kidder (1992) suggests that the difficult reentry experiences of returnees reveal what are considered to be the markers of being “pure” Japanese. Through her interviews, she identifies three major markers of difference that could function as a measure of “Japaneseness”: physical marks, behavioral signs and interpersonal communication styles. Physical marks include hairstyles and the way returnees dress, behavioral signs include returnees’ expressive body language and their inclination to make direct eye contact, which is not common among Japanese, and interpersonal communication styles include qualities such as being straightforward in speech (Kidder, 1992). These returnees’ perceptible deviations from “Japaneseness” result in them being labeled as “others”, which could result in their exclusion or bullying.

Kanno (2003) also identifies the rejection of returnees provoked by differences in communication styles; some returnees may speak with a mixture of Japanese and English simply because they do not know how to say certain words in Japanese. However, this mixture of language could irritate Japanese peers as it would seem as if the returnees are trying to “show off” their English ability. For instance, one of Kanno’s interviewees, Sawako, who spent eight years in total in North America and moved back to Japan for college, experienced rejection because of her inclination to mix languages when she spoke to her peers. This rejection accelerated, and Sawako was “accused of being too self-centered, too direct, too childish and of being ignorant of Japanese common sense” (Kanno, 2003, p.40). Her misuse of honorific expressions in Japanese (*keigo*) made her stand out even more from her peers, and exacerbated the situation. She was indirectly told to leave the rock band to which she belonged at college because of this series of peer rejections generated by the fact that she was different (Kanno, 2003). Sawako’s case highlights how verbal markers of difference may accelerate or perpetuate the exclusion of returnees.

Reviewing the literature on returnees’ reentry clarifies that the expectations of cultural homogeneity or assimilation in Japan have been extremely strong, which has been working against returnees since the 1980s. Furthermore, the strong presence of this expectation of homogeneity in school settings may make it difficult for returnees to make friends in classrooms. It was particularly striking that Osawa (1986), Kidder (1992) and Kanno (2003) all noted that their interviewees’ verbal communication patterns tended to be misunderstood by their peers as too straightforward and sometimes even too “hurtful”, resulting in them being rejected by their peers. In addition to Sawako’s case in the work by Kanno (2003), Osawa (1986) also concludes that one reason Tatsuya became a target of bullying was because the way he spoke was perceived as too straightforward.

Kidder (1992) also discusses how the verbal communication patterns of one of her interviewees changed in order to conform to the Japanese norms. She stated:

*Maybe now I'm becoming more Japanese... maybe the way I said things is not that nice... too straight... They always say things around... Here you have to hold down a bit what you want to say" (Kidder, 1992, 387).*

These findings highlight the power of verbal markers of differences in interpersonal communications in the Japanese cultural context. Given the risk of rejection of returnees using straightforward communication patterns in Japanese cultural contexts, the findings of Kidder (1992) highlight that adjusting speech patterns is one of the key features of returnees' attempts to fit in.

## **Factors that influence returnees' reentry and their attempts to fit in**

Kidder (1992), Kanno (2003) and Yoshida et al. (2009) note that the presence of friends or communities that accept returnees for who they are may positively influence their reentry process. For instance, Kidder (1992) found that "some returnees manage their reentry by finding the spaces where their difference goes unmarked" (p.384). In other words, if returnees have access to spaces or communities in which they are treated like everybody else, their reentry to Japan would be less "bumpy".

Similarly, Yoshida et al. (2009) compared differences among those who experienced relatively smooth cultural reentry with those who struggled with adjusting to their lives in Japan. Their findings highlight that those with a smooth reentry process tended to have found "someone who accepted them for who they were when they first returned to Japan." Those with a hard time adjusting tended to "struggle more with their acceptance and their identity" than those with a smooth reentry (p.272). In addition, those who experienced a relatively smooth reentry tended to feel that *most people accepted them for who they were* when they first returned to Japan, in part because *most of these students tended to attend a school with a large number of returnees* (Yoshida et al., 2009; emphasis added). This finding also sheds light on the benefit of returnee-accepting schools; these schools tend to provide communities in which returnees feel accepted upon their reentry, which significantly helps their cultural reentry. In other words, going to a returnee-accepting school is an option that provides students with a community of peers with similar cultural backgrounds and life experiences. Given the importance of the feeling of acceptance upon returnees' reentry, a returnee-accepting school's peer community could be a powerful and supportive tool.

Kanno (2003) suggests an alternative option in terms of a community that accepts returnees for who they are. Her findings indicate that a church could be a lifesaver for a returnee boy who spent more than 10 years in North America and was having a hard time adjusting to university life in Japan. Signs of his maladjustment were observed both physically and mentally. Since he felt like an outsider, he struggled to find someone with whom he could connect; he needed friends with whom he could speak English, and was searching for a place that would give him a feeling of belonging. After his mother, the only member of his family who strongly identified as a Christian, informed him of the location of the closest church, he visited it and found a place that met his needs. People at the church accepted him for who he was; it was also good that he could speak English there to a couple of foreigners attending the church, as he was very concerned about how to maintain his English. Once he found a place that provided him with a feeling of belonging, his mental state stabilized and he started enjoying his college life in Japan, both personally and academically (Kanno, 2003). The findings of Kanno (2003) also reveal the power of community in helping returnees to feel belonging and acceptance, and its strong influence upon returnees' mental health and their cultural reentry.

Given these research findings by Kidder (1992), Kanno (2003) and Yoshida et al. (2009), it can be claimed that the presence of friends or communities that accept returnees for who they are has been a powerful factor supporting returnees' reentry. These research findings also explain why schools with a large number of returnees are helpful for returnees' reentry. If returnees have to attend schools with relatively few other returnees, as Kanno (2003) found, it would be helpful if they had access to information about where they could meet or make friends with like-minded people with overseas experiences or English speakers, such as international churches. In the next section, the differences and similarities of these authors' research on returnees are explored further, and the kinds of changes over time that can be observed in such research on returnees are highlighted.

## Differences and commonalities among returnee literature

It is possible to see a shift in research focus in the literature on Japanese returnees over time. For instance, during the 1980s, the focus was more on the fact that returnees tend to experience discrimination and harassment upon their return to Japan because of their different mannerisms acquired as a result of expatriation. Osawa (1986) and White (1988) described in detail the experiences of Japanese returnees at middle and high schools in Japan. Their papers provide detailed accounts of the kinds of discrimination and harassment that returnees tended to experience at school owing to their different mannerisms.

This tendency of returnee research to focus on discrimination and harassment can still be observed in literature from the 1990s. However, in the 1990s, some researchers started focusing on what kind of learning or acquisition of skills occurred as a result of the reentry process. Kidder (1992), for example, identifies a returnee girl who acquired chameleon-like skills to switch her speech styles appropriately to each linguistic context. She changed the way she spoke depending on which language she was speaking; when she spoke English, she was more expressive and straightforward, while she was more reserved and avoided being straightforward when speaking Japanese, so that she would be quiet enough. As Bennett (2004) defines intercultural competence as a set of cognitive, affective and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interactions in a variety of cultural contexts, it can be claimed that the acquisition of intercultural competence among returnees started being referred to in the literature in the 1990s.

In the early 2000s, the paper by Kanno (2003) was published. Her findings shed light on the fact that the reentry process may provide returnees with opportunities to learn and grow. For instance, she describes two interviewees who confessed to using the “returnee” label to avoid taking responsibility for interpersonal conflicts that they had faced. For instance, the interviewee Sawako mentioned, “I’ve always used it [returnee identity] as a good excuse for evading responsibility. I told myself ‘it’s not because of my personality I’m having problems; it’s because I’m a [returnee]’ ” (p.44). On the basis of this interviewee’s response and her personal experience as a returnee, Kanno (2003) points out that instances like these are the exact moments when the experience of reentry provided returnees with opportunities for personal growth. Compared with the earlier literature of the 1980s, and given that the notion of intercultural competence started appearing in the literature in the 1990s, it can be stated that the literature published relatively recently has tended to focus more on aspects of intercultural learning after reentry.

In the late 2000s, Yoshida et al. (2009) conducted a large-scale quantitative study on returnees of various ages, documenting their reentry experiences. Given that most research on Japanese returnees has tended to involve qualitative studies, this large-scale quantitative study provided quantitative verification of what had already been found in qualitative studies, such as the factors necessary for a smooth reentry. For instance, White (1988), Kidder (1992) and Kanno (2003) all found in their qualitative interview-based research studies that the presence of communities or friends that accept returnees for who they are results in a smooth reentry. The quantitative research of Yoshida et al. (2009) also reaffirms this point, namely, the importance of friends and communities available upon a returnee’s reentry, by providing analysis on the differences in characteristics among those who experienced a smooth reentry and those with relatively challenging reentry experiences.

Another commonality observed over time is the issue of teacher quality. Both Osawa (1986) and Yoshida et al. (2009) found that there are some teachers in Japanese secondary educational institutions who discriminate against or harass returnees. These educators sometimes do this by themselves or alternatively make the returnee’s peers resentful of them by making them stand out. Given that similar findings regarding teacher quality were reported in the late 1980s and in the 2000s, it is implied that the same issues regarding teacher quality, particularly the lack of teachers’ capacity to instruct students from diverse backgrounds, have been present in classrooms in Japan throughout this period.

To improve this issue regarding teacher quality, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology published a teacher’s handbook called “Yori-yoi-deai-no-tame-ni” [For better encounters with returnees], which provides curriculum details that have worked well with returnees in a school district with a large number of returnees. The book also refers to what kinds of skill sets or mindsets are necessary for teachers to teach returnee students. However, given that the same issues regarding teacher quality have been continually reported from the 1980s up to the present, as shown by Osawa (1986) and Yoshida et al. (2009), there seems to be room for further investigation regarding how to help teachers gain access to the skill sets and frameworks necessary to teach students from backgrounds different from their own. These differences and commonalities are also described in a chart (cf. Appendix 1).

## **Suggested framework: Sociocultural perspective with Bennett's model**

Some qualitative research literature on Japanese returnees suggests symbolic interactionism as a framework, particularly to inquire about the identity formation of returnees (Kidder, 1992; Kanno, 2003). Symbolic interactionism offers a postmodern perspective of identity that its formation is a product of negotiation with individuals or societies around them (Kidder, 1992; Kanno, 2003). Given this symbolic interactionist conceptualization of identity, it makes sense that both Kidder (1992) and Kanno (2003) identify one of their research findings that friends or communities that accept returnees for who they are tend to be powerful tools to support returnees' reentry. With this perception of identity, returnees need to be in places or with individuals that accept returnees' backgrounds in order to ensure their healthy development of an identity.

Kanno (2003) further explores this concept of identity in relation to social practices with reference to a sociocultural perspective of learning and communities of practice. Her work, accordingly, explores returnees' bicultural bilingual identity development in relation to Japan as a community of practice.

This sociocultural perspective on learning and identity seems helpful to explore the relationships between individual agents (returnees) and (sociocultural) practices. The sociocultural view conceptualizes learning as identity formation within particular sociocultural practices. New individual agents, who have just joined a community of practice, remain in a state of legitimate peripheral participation (LPP) at the beginning, engaging in simple low-risk tasks that are peripheral to the practices. As these new agents become old-timers and learn how to participate in the practices, they move toward central participation, engaging in activities that are more meaningful to the practices. The membership of these new individual agents is mediated by the forms of participation to which the new individual agents have access (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

This framework facilitates understanding of the ways in which returnees learn how to participate as outsiders at the beginning, and then start to find ways to move toward central participation upon their repatriation. However, the framework fails to refer sufficiently to how other factors, such as shifts in worldview as a result of returnees' learning from cross-cultural experiences, influence their participation and mediation of membership in Japanese sociocultural practices.

Therefore, in this paper, it is suggested that Bennett's model of Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI) could be used as an additional framework to obtain a deeper understanding of the reentry processes among returnees. IDI has been developed to understand the transformation of worldviews that influence attitudes toward cultural differences, and behavioral and interpersonal communication patterns. IDI provides six different worldviews on cultural differences: denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation and integration (cf. Appendix 2). These six stages are on a continuum, and those at the first three stages are considered ethnocentric, considering their frames of reference or cultural standards as universally accepted standards across cultures, and those at the latter half are considered ethnorelative, able to accept and respect cultural differences (Bennett, 1993, 1998 & 2004; Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003; Bennett & Hammer, 2006). As learning progresses, learners are expected to move along the continuum toward ethnorelative stages.

Given that the work of Kanno (2003) sheds light on returnees such as Sawako and Rui who distinguish between "us" (returnees) and "them" (those without overseas experiences), and who defend their worldviews as superior to those of individuals without overseas experiences, it can be stated that some returnees may start their reentry from the defense stage (2:nd stage of IDI; see Appendix 2). Both of them later acknowledged that they used to use their returnee identity based on this bipolarized distinction of "us" (returnee) and "them" (those without overseas experiences) as an excuse to avoid taking responsibility for the interpersonal conflicts that they had experienced. Eventually, they both stopped using their returnee identity as an excuse and learned that the life experiences of those around them were equally valuable, regardless of whether or not they had spent time abroad, as a result of their cross-cultural experiences. Given these changes after their cross-cultural reentry experiences, it can be asserted that Rui and Sawako moved away from their defense stage mindsets as a result of the learning obtained via their reentry experiences. It would also be helpful to inquire how the ways in which they participated in communities of practices, both Japanese and international communities in Japan, such as the church for Rui, changed as a result of their learning from their reentry experiences as well.

Similarly, Kidder (1992) describes a returnee girl who acquired a chameleon-like skill to switch the way she talked depending on the language she was speaking as a result of her learning from reentry experiences. She spoke quietly and used euphemisms when speaking Japanese, while she was more expressive and straightforward

when speaking English, as a result of her learning from her peers that they thought the way she spoke in Japanese was too straightforward and even sometimes hurtful. Given that those at the adaptation stage could operate effectively in multiple cultural contexts while maintaining their own primary cultural and linguistic identity (Bennett, 1993, 1998 & 2004; Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003; Bennett & Hammer, 2006), this girl could be described as having acquired the skill sets needed to move to the adaptation stage. Accordingly, she knew how to participate in Japanese sociocultural practices, as well as those of the foreign country in which she had lived. In other words, moving to the adaptation stage means that individual agents have learnt how to participate properly in the new community of practice that they have recently joined, while maintaining their primary identity.

Given that many learning theorists have identified that cross-cultural experience could trigger learning followed by a change in worldview (Mezirow, 1991 & 1994; Bennett, 1993, 1998 & 2004; Wenger, 1998; Engestrom et al., 1999; Mezirow & Associates, 2000; Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003; Kanno, 2003; Bennett & Hammer, 2006; Mezirow, Taylor & Associates, 2009), IDI should be a helpful framework to explore how returnees' cross-cultural reentry experiences result in a change of their worldviews, and how the shift in worldviews affects the ways in which they participate in Japanese sociocultural practices. Using IDI along with a sociocultural perspective should be helpful to shed light on the factors influencing returnees' participation in Japanese sociocultural practices that cannot be covered by the theory of community of practice.

## Discussion: Issues unresolved since the 1980s

Some literature indicates that teachers have been engaged in harassment or discrimination against returnees (Osawa, 1986; Yoshida et al., 2009). This can be verbal or nonverbal harassment; in other cases, teachers make other students resentful of returnees by making them stand out (Yoshida et al., 2009). Given that both Osawa (1986) and Yoshida et al. (2009) identify the engagement of teachers in the exclusion of returnees, the issue of teacher quality, particularly about how to educate teachers to teach and develop relationships with students from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds, is one that has remained unresolved over time. In the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's teacher's handbook entitled "Yori-yoi-deai-no-tame-ni" [For better encounters with returnees], there is a series of curriculum examples that have worked well with returnees in elementary and secondary schools. It makes some note of what teachers need to do to make the classroom inclusive of diversity: teachers need to be able to respect differences and so on; however, it does not refer to how teachers themselves can develop the mindsets and skill sets that are needed to deal with diversity in classrooms.

Given the greater awareness of diversity in Japan represented by returnees (Osawa, 1986; Kobayashi, 1991; Kidder, 1992; Kanno, 2003; Yoshida et al., 2009), indigenous people such as the Ainu and Okinawans (Weiner, 2009), forced immigrants including Japanese-Koreans (Weiner, 2009) and the increasing number of Japanese-Brazilian immigrants (Burgess, 2007 & 2010), it is obvious that the country cannot be considered "culturally homogeneous". It is now time to call for multicultural education courses and fieldwork for teachers in Japan so that they can develop the necessary skill sets and ways of thinking to teach and develop relationships with students, among which a trend of increasing diversity is shown.

In the US, community-based teacher education programs that provide white teachers with intercultural experiences and learning by spending time in neighborhoods with people of color have attracted attention as an alternative multicultural teacher education approach. In theory, this type of teacher preparation should be helpful to prepare teachers with the skill sets and mindsets needed to understand and teach diverse students (Boyle-Baise & McIntyre, 2008; Sleeter 2001 & 2008; Villegas, 2008). Although the learning outcome of this kind of teacher education program is still under debate, it might be an option to educate teachers about multiculturalism and help them to develop the skills necessary to teach diverse students in Japan.

## Appendix 1

	Osawa (1986)	White (1988)	Kidder (1992)	Kanno (2003)	Yoshida et al. (2009)
Type of research	n/a (Description of reentry experiences based)	Qualitative (Interview-based)	Qualitative	Qualitative	Quantitative (Survey-based)

	on the narratives of her own returnee children)		(Interview-based)	(Narrative Analysis: Interview-based)	
Number of samples	Not available	50	Not available	4	512
Research topic	Returnees' experiences of harassment and discrimination at middle and high schools	Returnees' identity and their reentry at middle and high schools, and also what returnee parents tend to experience after moving back to Japan	Returnees' reentry at the higher education level	Returnees' bicultural identity development, and their reentry at the higher education level	Returnees' reentry experiences at various levels; some in middle schools, some in high school and the others in university.
Major findings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teachers and schools tend not to be helpful in stopping bullying against returnees</li> <li>2. Visible markers of difference (such as different interpersonal communication styles as well as incorrect Japanese grammar in speech) may accelerate the bullying against returnees</li> <li>3. Teachers may engage in harassment or discrimination against returnees</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presence of friends is helpful for returnees' smooth reentry to school life in Japan</li> <li>2. Many returnees tend to find that they are off track for academic success because of their cultural minority status in Japan,</li> <li>3. Identified different reentry trajectory among participant families during and after the expatriation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Physical, behavioral or interpersonal markers of differences may generate bullying or harassment against returnees at all levels: school life, job hunting, etc.</li> <li>2. Some students may acquire intercultural competence; some returnees learn to change the ways they speak: they are more expressive and talkative when speaking in English</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cross-cultural experience provides returnees with opportunities for personal growth</li> <li>2. Communities like churches that accept returnees for who they are can strongly support returnee reentry</li> <li>3. Markers of difference in communication styles may generate bullying or harassment against returnees</li> <li>4. How bicultural identity develops and influences returnees' lives during and after their expatriation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Those who experience smoother reentry tend to have more friends or communities that accept who they are</li> <li>2. Students at returnee-accepting schools are more likely to adjust more smoothly because of the above findings</li> <li>3. Teachers may engage in discrimination or harassment against returnees</li> </ol>
Framework	n/a	n/a	Symbolic interactionism	Sociocultural theory (Communities of Practice)	Culture shock reentry model (Ward et al., 2001)

## Appendix 2

Denial → Defense → Minimization → Acceptance → Adaptation → Integration



ETHNOCENTRISM

ETHNORELATIVISM

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