岡山大学

Spring 2015
EPOK Student Forum

2015 年春期　EPOK 受入れ学生フォーラム

JULY 31, 2015　@　Presentation Room
EPOK (Exchange Program of Okayama) Course

Center for Global Partnerships & Education

Okayama University

岡山大学
OKAYAMA UNIV.

　2015 年夏、ＥＰＯＫを修了するみなさん、修了おめでとうございます。
岡山大学での留学生活の中でみなさんがしてきた経験や出会いのすべてが、こ
れからの人生の宝になることと信じます。
　岡山大学のＥＰＯＫプログラムはみなさんが参加することによって、その経
験を通じてより生き生きとした力強いものになってきました。この留学を通じ
て、岡山大学がみなさんにとっての学び舎のひとつになったことを光栄に思い
ます。
　皆さんの未来に祝福あれ。

　Congratulations on your completion of EPOK at Okayama University.
All of your experiences and encounters in your life in Japan will be
indispensable treasure in your life.

　It would be our great pleasure to share a part of your treasure. I am also
pleased that you have made a part of the EPOK history which will continue
to grow.

　Best wishes for your bright future.

July 30, 2015

山本洋子 (Yoko YAMAMOTO)

Director

Center for Global Partnerships and Education

Okayama University

祝 EPOK 修了！

　2014 年秋期および 2015 年春期 EPOK 生のうち 17 名が、2015 年 8 月、岡山大学での留学生活を修了します。それぞれが努力して、日本語の力を伸ばし、日本社会や文化について教室の内外で学びました。EPOK の修了プロジェクトは、そうした学習成果の中から各自が最も興味深かったテーマを一つ選び、共有するものです。

　ＥＰＯＫを修了するみなさんは、家族や友や慣れた日常と離れ、日本という異文化の中で暮らす経験を通して、良いことも困難なことも合わせて、個人としてより強くたくましくなった自分を発見したことと思います。

　この留学生活の中であたらしく得た自分と友達がなによりの宝になることでしょう。みなさん、修了おめでとうございます。

In August 2015, the twelve of 2014-Fall students and five of 2015-Spring students are to complete EPOK program at Okayama University.

In this EPOK Essay collection, the students share their individual research interest, findings and analysis as their final EPOK project. The compilation of the writing whose topic was chosen by each student shows a good variety of the student's interest in studying "Japan."

In the course of EPOK these students have well achieved their own goals by strengthening *Nihon-go* and intercultural communication skill as they furthered the understandings of society and cultures of Japan through own experiences. The experience of living in a foreign land and culture, which could be both joyful and hard, has helped the EPOK students expand their horizon and grow stronger, I believe.

With all the achievements, we are very proud of YOU. Wishing you all the best.

July 30, 2015

大林純子 (Junko OBAYASHI)
EPOK Advisor
Center for Global Partnerships and Education
Okayama University

~   EPOK   2014 – 2015   ~

◇◇   平成２７年７月修了生   ◇◇

平成 26 年度 10 月期受入生

◎カリフォルニア州立大学モントレイベイ校
California State University, Monterey Bay
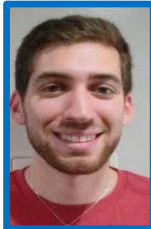
Hatty Gardner
（ハチ）

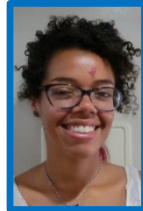Christian McGlothlin-Clason
（クリス）

Christopher Soto
（クリス）

◎カリフォルニア州立大学フラトン校
California State University, Fullerton

◎サンノゼ州立大学
San Jose State University

◎ビショップス大学
Bishop's University

Brandon Halprin
（ブランドン）

Marina Hutchins
（マリナ）

Myriam Sevigny
（ミィミー）

◎エディンバラ大学
The University of Edinburgh
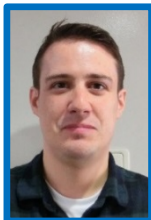
◎シェフィールド大学
The University of Sheffield

Andrew Russell
（アンディ）

Emily Abbott
（エミリー）

Sally Forshaw
（サリー）
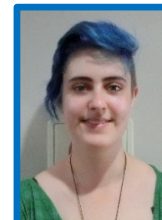
◎イーストアングリア大学
University of East Anglia

◎ヨークセントジョン大学
York St. John University

Nina Schulz
（ニーナ）

Emily Zwart
（エミリ）

Vicky Mcghie
（ヴィックス）

平成 27 年度 4 月期受入生

◎サンノゼ州立大学
San Jose State University

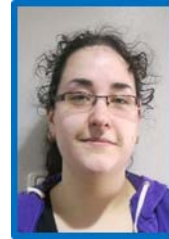**Sarah Phan**
（サラ）

◎アパラチアン州立大学
Appalachian State University

Matthew Randall
（マシュー）

◎ビショップス大学
Bishop's University

Marie-Anne Fournier
（マリーアン）

◎ハノーファー大学
Leibniz Universität Hannover

Corina Gassner
（コリーナ）

◎南オーストラリア大学
University of South Australia

Luke Logothetis
（ルーク）

継続生　Continuing Student

◎アデレード大学
The University of Adelaide

Harley Harrer
（ハーリー）

EPOK学生フォーラム ＆ EPOKコース修了式

～ EPOK Student Forum & EPOK Course Closing Ceremony ～

日時：平成２７（2015）年7月31日 15：00～

場所：プレゼンテーションルーム（一般教育棟A棟1階）

EPOK Student Forum Schedule スケジュール（Presenter in order 発表順）		
1500	2015Spring EPOK Student Forum 開会	
1505	RANDALL, Matthew Keith アパラチアン州立大学（アメリカ）	Communicative progression
1513	FOURNIER, Marie-Anne ビショップス大学（カナダ）	Short Introduction to Shrines
1520	GASSNER, Corina ハノーファー大学（ドイツ）	Japanese temples and shrines: What is the difference?
1528	LOGOTHETIS, Luke Andrew サウスオーストラリア大学（オーストラリア）	Japanese English: A Phonetic Analysis
1535	MCGLOTHLIN-CLASON, Christian Briana カリフォルニア州立大学モントレイベイ校（アメリカ）	Interactions of Japanese with foreigners with special interest in tourism
1543	SOTO, Christopher Nicholas カリフォルニア州立大学モントレイベイ校（アメリカ）	日本と「将来」という言葉
1550	HALPRIN, Brandon Robert カリフォルニア州立大学フラトン校（アメリカ）	Comparative analysis of cultural values in Advertising
1558	HUTCHINS, Marina Evet-Belle サンノゼ州立大学（アメリカ）	Foreign Music Interpretation
1605	SEVIGNY, Myriam ビショップス大学（カナダ）	Japanese Mentality and Ways of Living Through Martial Arts – Kendo（剣道）
1613	RUSSELL, Andrew Alexander エディンバラ大学（イギリス）	Nihonshu /日本酒
1620	PHAN, Sarah Thi Nhu-Y サンノゼ州立大学（アメリカ）	Japanese Culture and Customs
1628	GARDNER, Hatty Elisabeth カリフォルニア州立大学モントレイベイ校（アメリカ）	English Education in Japan
1635	ABBOTT, Emily Danielle シェフィールド大学（イギリス）	The Globalised Self
1643	FORSHAW, Sally Diane シェフィールド大学（イギリス）	An investigation into the social and cultural influences on gendered language in Japan
1650	SCHULZ, Nina Evelin イーストアングリア大学（イギリス）	Okinawa and mainland Japan: A turbulent relationship
1658	ZWART, Emily Grace イーストアングリア大学（イギリス）	*Kawaii or kowai:* Japan's cuteness craze
1705	MCGHIE, Vicky Marie ヨークセントジョン大学（イギリス）	Gender Distinctions within the Japanese Language
1715	2015Spring EPOK Student Forum 閉会	

	EPOK Closing Ceremony　EPOK修了式
1715	2015 Spring EPOK 修了式　開会
	開会のことば　山本洋子　グローバル・パートナーズセンター長 Opening remarks　Prof. Yoko Yamamoto,　Director, Center for Global Partnerships & Education
	修了証書授与　Presentation of EPOK Diploma ・PHAN, Sarah Thi Nhu-Yサンノゼ州立大学（アメリカ） ・RANDALL, Matthew Keithアパラチアン州立大学（アメリカ） ・FOURNIER, Marie-Anneビショップス大学（カナダ） ・GASSNER, Corinaハノーファー大学（ドイツ） ・LOGOTHETIS, Luke Andrewサウスオーストラリア大学（オーストラリア） ・GARDNER, Hatty Elisabethカリフォルニア州立大学モントレイベイ校（アメリカ） ・MCGLOTHLIN-CLASON, Christian Brianaカリフォルニア州立大学モントレイベイ校（アメリカ） ・SOTO, Christopher Nicholasカリフォルニア州立大学モントレイベイ校（アメリカ） ・HALPRIN, Brandon Robertカリフォルニア州立大学フラトン校（アメリカ） ・HUTCHINS, Marina Evet-Belleサンノゼ州立大学（アメリカ） ・SEVIGNY, Myriamビショップス大学（カナダ） ・RUSSELL, Andrew Alexanderエディンバラ大学（イギリス） ・ABBOTT, Emily Danielleシェフィールド大学（イギリス） ・FORSHAW, Sally Dianeシェフィールド大学（イギリス） ・SCHULZ, Nina Evelinイーストアングリア大学（イギリス） ・ZWART, Emily Graceイーストアングリア大学（イギリス） ・MCGHIE, Vicky Marieヨークセントジョン大学（イギリス）
1730	閉会のことば　大林受入アカデミックコーディネーター Closing remarks　Associ. Prof. J. Obayashi,　EPOK (Inbound) Coordinator
1730	記念撮影　Commemorative photo

2015 Spring semester
EPOK Student フォーラム
EPOK 修了式
2015年7月31日（金）15：00〜17：30
場所：プレゼンテーションルーム（一般教育棟A棟１階）

15:00〜 EPOK フォーラム
EPOK修了生によるプレゼンテーション
17:00〜 EPOK 修了式
修了書授与・記念撮影
17:30〜 懇談会

主催　グローバル・パートナーズ　086-251-7037　ryugaku@adm.okayama-u.ac.jp

English Education in Japan

Hatty Gardner ハティ・ガードナー

Summary: 私の作文は英語の教育に関しています。日本はグローバルの国になりたいそうです。英語は非常にグローバルの道具として学びます。しかし、たくさんの日本人は英語が話すことが上手ではありません。なぜかというと、日本社会に、英語の教育を行うのは大変です。

　私は英語の先生になりたいと考えます。今、英会話で英語を教えます。英語の教育が面白くて、将来、日本で英語を教えたいと思います。もちろん、いい先生になりたいですから、英語の授業を分かりやすく教えなければなりません。日本の生徒によく教えるために、現代の教育方法も、歴史的に効く教育方法も大事で、先生として学ばなくてはいけないと思います。

　自分の経験とインターネット、インタビュー、アンケートを使って、研究しました。二人の岡山大学で英語を教える先生と一人の岡山大学の日本人学生にインタビューをしました。二十人の岡山大学の日本人学生はアンケートを答えました。研究によると、日本で英語の教育は社会では大変な問題だということが分かります。一般的に、英語の教育によくなることは難しいようです。しかし、たくさんの生徒は英語の先生が好きで、その応援で英語の教育はきっとよくなれるでしょう。

English education in Japan is seen as part of becoming a more globally oriented country and improving this education is considered important by the the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, MEXT, as well as many English teachers and even students. In fact, increasing the overall English ability of Japan has been a goal of the government for decades, with unfortunately so-so results. I chose to research English education because it is such a salient issue and because I have a personal interest in teaching English as a Second Language. I've used my personal experience as an English conversation partner and teacher at Okayama University's L-Cafe as well as at an off campus English conversation school, interviews with two Okayama University English teachers and one Japanese student, a questionnaire handed out to Okayama University Japanese students, and some internet research to delve into this topic.

English education in Japan began in 1947 with the goal of "gain[ing] knowledge from native English speakers via listening and speaking." However, this communicative approach was changed in the 1960s, when the focus was shifted to grammar rules and language structure, in order to help students pass college entrance exams. The Tokyo Olympics were held in 1964 and proved to be an English disaster--Japan was woefully underprepared to handle the influx of English speaking foreigners. This event spurred forward the push for improving English education; the 1970s saw a push to return to the communicative approach. In the 1980s, the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme, JET, was established to bring native English speakers to Japan to assist in English teaching. Unfortunately, despite MEXT describing developing communicative abilities as the "central

purpose" of English education and mandates in 2009 and 2011 to conduct English classes in English and to balance grammar and experiential language techniques, Japan still ranks lowest in average English ability out of all its neighboring countries, particularly in speaking. Now, the 2020 Tokyo Olympics are approaching, so there is an even greater push to increase communicative English ability. Though it's still too early to see the complete effects, in 2014 elementary schools began including English in their curriculum and more emphasis was placed on teaching English in English.

To try and gauge English education based on students, I decided to do a questionnaire. Twenty students answered it, aged eighteen to twenty-five. Between all the students, the average time spent studying English was nine years, with the lowest time spent studying English being three years and the highest time seventeen years. I asked all the students to report their own English levels as well; three felt they were advanced, ten intermediate, and seven beginner. Years spent studying English had apparently little to do with who rated themselves as advanced or intermediate, though all beginners studied for less than ten years. If you look at pie chart a). you can see a fairly even split between students who felt mostly satisfied with their English teachers and students who felt mostly unsatisfied with their English teachers. None felt that all their English teachers had been bad and boring, but three did feel that most of their teachers had been bad and boring. The most popular responses were "So-so, most were average teachers. Often English classes were boring" and "Yes, most were interesting and good teachers." Only two of the students were completely satisfied with all English teachers they'd had. Pie chart b). shows that, according to students, the majority of time in English classes is spent on grammar. Despite this grammar focus, pie chart c). does show that the majority of those interviewed do like learning English in class, which I think is a hopeful sign for English education in Japan.

Twelve out of twenty students isn't a very large majority, but at least more people like their English teachers and classes than do not, because there are many social problems in Japan that inhibit English education, according to the teachers and student I interviewed. One of these problems is the top down cultural system in Japan. MEXT has been mandating and encouraging a communicative approach to English education for decades, but the strict sense of hierarchy present in Japanese culture discourages discussion between the teachers and MEXT officials about what works and what doesn't and why. Another problem is that Japanese students can be very shy and have a fear of making mistakes. Many students desire to master English before using it, which isn't possible. I have experienced this myself during my own time teaching English. It can be difficult to get students to answer questions if they are unsure of the answer, because they are afraid of being wrong, or even carry on a conversation. As a teacher, with these students I had to spend time to create an environment that made them feel comfortable making mistakes and just trying their best. Within larger sized, more traditional, strict, and hierarchical Japanese classrooms, I think creating such an environment is much
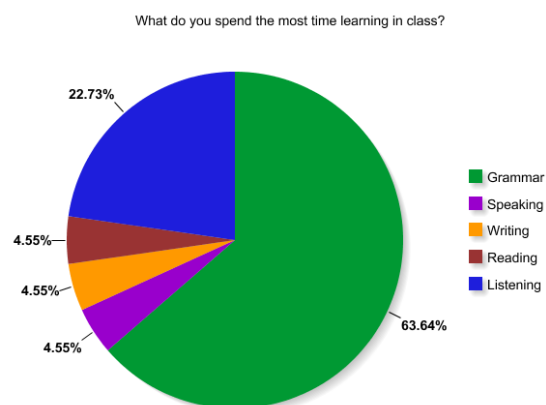
more difficult. Teachers as well, have a fear of making mistakes. Many non-native English teachers say "my English isn't good enough" to teach English in English or that they "don't know how." Non-native English teachers also complain that they are "too busy" to teach English in English. It takes a lot of extra time for a non-native speaker of a language to prepare a lesson plan almost entirely in that language, and Japanese teachers are often already overworked. In the Japanese school system before university, teachers each have a homeroom class for which they have some extra duties, including any counseling students might need, and after school, teachers are expected to oversee a club and often have to stay much later without pay. Many Japanese English teachers really are too busy to properly prepare English lesson plans. Even more, one of the biggest problems facing English education in Japan is how exam focused it is. One of the English teachers I interviewed said, "English is seen as just something to memorize for an exam, and this creates a negative attitude."

Many people advocate for more practical university entrance exams with speaking and listening portions to encourage teachers to teach these areas and students to study them. Interestingly, the tests are slowly changing to become more practical based, however, many teachers don't know this because they don't review the tests carefully. So, beyond reducing focus on exams in general, it is also important create awareness of changes happening to the exams. Another important change that could be made is to decrease extra duties for teachers, this would allow them to spend more time on their lesson plans. For those teachers unsure how to teach English in English, more Communicative Language Workshops could be held in various places. Currently, there are only three workshops held in Japan every year, and if this number were increased, more teachers would be able to attend and learn how to improve their teaching styles. Furthermore, both teachers and students should study abroad in English speaking countries for extended amounts of time. This immersion is one of the best ways to improve English skill and many English teachers have never studied abroad during their careers or college life. While studying abroad is being encouraged by the government, many students and teachers go abroad for only two or three weeks, which isn't enough time to really improve language skills. Semester to year long study abroad placements should really be what is encouraged for English learners.

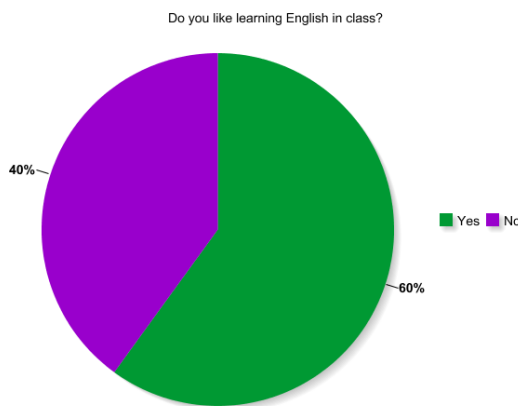Certainly, I've gained a lot from my study abroad experience; my time in Japan as an English teacher has been very interesting and enlightening for me. I feel I have improved as a teacher over time and have been very pleased to know my students, even if some of them were shy. I hope that in the future, I will continue to have opportunities to help students improve their English and create better English learning environments.

Generally, have you been satisfied with your English teachers?

10%
15%
35%
40%

- Yes, completely satisfied
- Yes, mostly satisfied
- So-so
- No, mostly unsatsified
- No, completely unsatisfied

a).

What do you spend the most time learning in class?

22.73%
4.55%
4.55%
4.55%
63.64%

- Grammar
- Speaking
- Writing
- Reading
- Listening

b.)

Do you like learning English in class?

40%
60%

- Yes ■ No

c.)

EPOK Reflections **

I've wanted to come to Japan since I began studying Japanese my first year of high school in the United States and was ecstatic to get the chance to do so during my time at University. I was also extremely nervous, coming to Okayama University was my first time traveling out of the country, and my first long trip by myself. Luckily, Okayama University's EPOK program was fairly accommodating and my experience with the program was overall good. I found the Japanese classes to be well organized and the teachers were all helpful, and the other courses offered for the EPOK students appealed to me as well due to my interest in studying Japanese culture and intercultural communication. The class load recommended by the advisors at Okayama University is ten, which comes out to twenty units total. I found this number of classes to be too

much, and each semester I took nine courses instead. However, I do wish, particularly during my second semester, that I had taken less courses, because the stress from the workload turned out to be a lot. It was also frustrating that fall semester, the first semester I enrolled in, it was difficult to find and enter clubs and circles. Probably the best part of my experience was meeting new people from around the world and making friends. I'm so happy to have met all the people I have; I never would have gotten the chance if I'd stayed in California. It's been a really mind expanding experience, and I've learned a lot at Okayama University, so despite any hardships I am glad that I came.

Interactions of Japanese with foreigners with special interest in tourism

Christian McGlothlin-Clason クリスチャン・マグロスリン‐クラソン

Summary: りょこうは日本人のおもてなしのしかたにおおきくえいきょうをあたえられている。民族性とぶんかのつながりのため、にほん人がしょうすう民族やいみんとせっするほうほうはにほんにおけるりょこうにおおきくえいきょうする。せかいてきなちょうさではにほんのかんがえかたはかわっている、いっぽう政府のせいさくはふるくてじゅうぶんではない。にほんせいふのいみんにかんするせいさくは、やまとみんぞくのみをゆうぐうするをぜんていとして、つくられている。そのせいさくがあるため、にほんじんあるいはにほん人にみえる人をゆうせんしたり、外国人をくべつするぶんかをつくった。このたいどはしょうすうみんぞくやかんこうきゃくをえいきょうする。きょうりょくなてんぼうはほかの外国人やみんぞくてきしょうすうをかこむ。きかいてきなげんどうにはいじゅうがたんじゅんではないものがある。そのたいどはかんこうきゃくにじんしゅさべつとしてみうけられる。このげんじつのげんいんは、日本人が外国人かんこうきゃくをもてなすためのちしきやけいけんをそなえていないためである。

When seeing somebody of a different physical ethnicity, hearing a different language, and a different accent, people often have a different reaction to that person, than to somebody much more similar to themselves. When it comes to Japan, the concepts of what is foreign and what is Japanese vary, making it much more difficult to determine the differences than one would presume. As various other countries have a significant percentage of their population being immigrants and descendants of immigrants, there is a much different concept of foreign from the Japanese concept. These other countries were built in part by immigrants, who have become a natural part of the country and its culture. In Japan, the percentage of foreign persons is much lower than most other countries, as foreigners and foreign residents make up only 1.5% of the populace (Foreigners make up, 2013). This makes the naturalization of a global view much more difficult, with a strong sense of homogeneity.

From the foreign resident perspective, there are various reasons for why they live in this country. Many of them were introduced to Japanese culture through some form of commodified culture, such as anime. After the introduction, many foreigners say that they like to remain in Japan for the kind, modest and quiet culture that it is. But, in coming to Japan, foreigners become residents that stand out, or must otherwise blend themselves in. Many of them were part of the majority in their own country and must thus adapt to a minority mindset in Japan.

There is not much available to assist them in attempting to come to and remain in Japan. According to Mr. Taro Kono, a member of Japan's House of Representatives, "Japan is not a country of immigration" (Yamanaka, 2008). Yamanaka found from a discussion with Mr. Taro Kono, that his opinion on Japan's "willingness to grant amnesty to undocumented transnational migrant workers." His opinion can be summed up as saying that illegal workers are criminals, Japanese see them as criminals, and Japan does not want to encourage immigration by granting amnesty to immigrants." Yamanaka has found that the common attitude of political figures regardless of their stance, is that "Japan is a country for the Japanese." There are options available for temporary stay and some homes available for long term stay, but most Japanese assume that foreigners are foreign and thus will eventually leave.

This popular view has led to a rigid model of immigration called "differential exclusion," which perceives ethnic diversity brought by immigrants as a threat to the society and its stability. It threatens the *sameness* found throughout most of the country, from its cultural values to its traditions. This view, especially existing on a political level, causes a large branch of social construct to form out of the belief of homogeneity, the belief that Japanese are all the same people, from the same ethnic background and the same culture. This perception harms Japan's long term and permanent residents, who are often Japan born residents and follow the laws just as Japanese civilians do. Japan's openness to foreigners and Japanese residents who are descendants of a different ethnicity and culture, is thus not as existent as many like to assume.

This effects permanent and long term residents as well as the tourism sector, as they become perceived as the *other*, something different to be feared and/or admired only from afar. Political views of immigrants as the *other* and social views of foreigners as the *other*, collides to create an assumption of ideas. This assumption can be positive or negative, but either way is an assumption of a sum of people, so that they do not have to get to know an individual. Somebody who does not look Japanese is assumed to be not Japanese, and therefore is probably an English speaker who does not know any, or perhaps only a little, Japanese. A person who lives permanently or long term in Japan, who appears to be Asian, is a person of the same ethnicity and culture and can be assumed to be a natural speaker of Japanese as well as having the same cultural mindset. The assumption becomes that those who look and act Japanese are assumed Japanese, while those who do not look "Japanese enough" or sound "Japanese enough" are considered foreigners who do not belong. This boils down to the unspoken stance that immigrants are welcome into Japan, but only temporarily.

The effect it has on its long term residents leaves most of them feeling excluded and separated from their identity. Especially for children of families with one Japanese parent and one foreign parent, this creates a barrier between them and their perceived identity and the society they live in. Legally, immigrants cannot become "Japanese" without some form of relation tying them into an already established Japanese family, which leads many foreigners to marry a Japanese partner. To be accepted socially, they are expected to not only have a natural understanding of culture, social graces and other unspoken rules, but also look Japanese. This is one of the problem's root causes.

When asked how they feel about how other Japanese perceive and treat them, many Japanese citizens descended of a different ethnicity will respond with explaining how they have to "prove their Japaneseness" to dissuade Japanese from treating them as the *other*. This extends to studying Japanese as their own identity, current events, cultural norms and policies that they otherwise would not be questioned on by others. But, because they are not seen as being fully Japanese, or perhaps just as a foreign person from another country, they must prove that they are in fact Japanese. They spend their lives, within their country, proving themselves to be a part of that country and its culture.

There is, however, a positive light that is the changing policies of Japan's immigrant and minority groups. Even recently, cases have been improving quality of life for minorities such as South Eastern Asians and Black Japanese (Kozuka, 2013). Such improvements include a ban on hate speech outside of a pro-Pyongyang Korean elementary school in Kyoto. The Zaitokukai, which is described as "a citizens' assembly opposed to granting special rights to foreigners residing in Japan," whose members stood outside of the school slandering the Korean children and their parents, in efforts to have the school shut down, was ordered to pay 12 million yen in damages. They attempted to appeal the ruling, but was upheld by "Osaka High Court Presiding Judge Hiroshi Mori [who] said in his ruling that the rallies outside the school

were clearly driven by racist ideals, and not at all in the interests of public" (Osaka court upholds, 2014). He said that their rally, which terrorized the school children and disturbed their classes, constituted as "racial discrimination defined under the United Nations' convention on the elimination of racial discrimination." As an ethnic minority of about 500,000 in Japan, Koreans face discrimination from the many members of this group, along with the assumptions that this group has created their claims from.

The existence of the Zaitokukai group is akin to the KKK of the United States, and perhaps should thus be considered as existing on the fringe of Japanese culture. However, with approximately 10,000 members, their reach is more than simply a glimmer of existence. Their claims are based on common assumptions about foreigners and especially Koreans. The claims they make reach new ears, and while they may not convince others fully of their claims, they put a new piece of bias into others' ears. Their existence is the existence of a negative form of racism against at least one ethnicity of Japanese civilian.

A pessimistic side to the ruling was that the ruling was applied using existing civil code, not an anti-discriminatory law. There does not exist any discrimination laws based on race. Existing rules about discrimination are vague and easy to reinterpret, meaning that a ruling can be made in favor of discrimination, as easily as against it. It is a large step in changing perceptions and moving legal principals towards equality rulings, but prevention of discrimination in businesses and other areas still legally exist. They are also considered normal within some areas, whether it ise an onsen or a restaurant, various people can and do still discriminate based on a person being different or foreign. This is usually based on an assumption of "foreigners act or behave this way, and that is not desired in this place" therefore they refuse service, to avoid foreigners. Instead of starting a discussion on acceptable behavior with possible foreign customers, clientele, etcetera, they shut out those who are different, whom they assume do not understand or know how to behave in their place. Thus is the assumption to group all people together, so that they do not have to meet the individual as a person.

Various cases involving landlords refusing housing to foreigners have occurred recently. These cases involve government officials refusing to do anything about discrimination (Osaki, 2014), and mere warnings towards such individuals and businesses, which are not followed up on, when they are ignored (The Asahi Simbun 2008). This has resulted in issues in finding housing for foreigners, and open listings refusing to hire or house foreigners being listed without regulation on an anti-discriminatory basis.

But, if this is the way that Japanese treat legal residents and Japanese who are simply different from them, how do they treat tourists? It is a difficult depiction to find, as research shows that in many prefectures, the usual reaction to foreigners is distancing themselves from the *other* or foreign people. However, personal experience and discussion with tourists also shows that many Japanese respond to visitors with a welcoming attitude, especially those of the younger generation. Adults of a younger generation both understand the need for tourism in Japan and some of the desired traits of Globalization. Many Japanese are aware of foreigners bringing in something desired, such as English teachers and popular culture, and so they reflect this by opening up with a more accepting attitude towards those who are different.

So how does this effect tourism? Well, with the way foreigners are treated, being either completely ignored or pointed out as the *other*, we find that many are discouraged from visiting Japan. Even without learning much about Japan, many Westerners, especially U.S. Americans, are aware that Japan has a homogenous pride, with a culture that is difficult to understand, even with a translator. This makes many of them hesitant to visit, taking away what could be a large amount of tourism for Japan.

Many foreigners do visit though, some for a two week visit to a unique nation with a unique culture, and others with years of studying about the language and culture. These people come back with various kinds of stories, most of them varying based on how long they stayed within Japan. Foreigners who have been in Japan for short amounts of time report that their stay held many nights of drinking parties, cultural oddities, and strange commodities that would otherwise be considered inappropriate or taboo to display in their own culture. They see Japanese people as polite or shy people, and always felt that people encouraged them when they tried to understand Japanese language and culture.

Tourists who remain for a longer amount of time, the aforementioned problems of faux homogeneity in Japan becomes more apparent. For those who are in Japan for a longer period of time, it becomes more apparent that there is a different level of judgment in some of the things that seem encouraging to the short term tourists. Being around more Japanese people and having the same stimuli for an extended period of time, tourists who stay in Japan longer notice some of the racial issues more prominently than others. This varies from repetition of encouragement, such as "you speak Japanese well, keep it up" or "you use chopsticks well, keep it up" to completely avoiding them physically. Some Japanese people go as far as to completely avoid situations where they end up sitting next to a foreign person or halt a conversation when a foreign person comes within the parameter.

It is a "soft" racism, an unintentionally systematic behavior that makes people feel excluded or otherwise given the cold shoulder. At times, it removes the reason tourists come to Japan in the first place, whether that be to study Japanese language and culture, or to simply enjoy themselves in this unique country. Removing the social aspect by distancing them or belittling their capacity for things typically seen as being uniquely Japanese, removes the reasons for which they come to Japan. But, there are plenty of foreigners who remain in Japan for a long period of time. They do not simply tolerate the discriminatory behavior, they find things that they enjoy about Japan and its culture. They enjoy socializing with Japanese people. Some even enjoy working in Japan. While much of these discriminatory behaviors seem integral to the culture, many Japanese people go out of their way to come out of their shells, or otherwise make foreigners feel welcome. One of the most popular ways they do so, however, is speaking English to them primarily, even if they do not know a lot of English.

From the foreign perspective, especially for those who are native to Japan, simply being a minority born in the country, this becomes a grating routine of letting strangers know that they speak Japanese. But, the intention behind it, according to many Japanese citizens who admit to having done so before, is that they want to make foreigners feel welcome and safe. They want tourists to feel welcome in their country, so they use what they know, in an attempt to make them feel greeted. They want to start a discussion, and especially in business settings, they want to be able to communicate with foreigners efficiently. In order to do so, they presume that it would be easier for foreigners if they spoke English with them.

This often leads to another, rarer way that Japanese people try to do the opposite of discriminate. That is to speak to foreign strangers. Most Japanese people would not speak to a stranger, as it is a little taboo to do so without any reason of doing so. However, some foreigners have had various encounters where strangers decide to greet them and start up a conversation. It is an odd thing to do in Japanese culture, because Japanese people typically mind their own, if they do not otherwise know you. However, for foreigners, this makes them feel that they are being viewed as something different, something to stare at. It gives many foreigners a feeling of being out of place, thus being viewed as the *other*, as many long term tourists are aware of Japanese cultural norms. However, the intent is to make foreigners feel more

comfortable. While it does mean that somebody foreign stands out, it means that they are attempting to make them feel more at home. Coming out of their shells to greet somebody of a different ethnicity in an attempt to talk to them, usually in English, is in the Japanese perspective an attempt to give them a positive perspective of Japan.

In conclusion, much of Japan's perspective of foreigners is very narrow, despite the wide array of foreigners that visit and live in Japan. Many ethnicities that do live in Japan have not been mentioned, but that does not disclude them from the list of tourists who are discriminated against and otherwise greeted by Japanese. The interactions of foreigners with native Japanese people is not limited in format, as there are various views amongst the Japanese, with varying degrees of experience with foreigners. Each individual in Japan has a different way of approaching tourists, both trying to be friendly and inviting and giving it a reputation. It is in the hospitable attitudes that come with the culture that make most long term residents decide to stay in the country. There is something unique and enjoyable about how Japanese people treat each other and their friends in their culture, and that attracts many people. Much of tourism has been harmed by the sour reputation of Japan's treatment of foreigners, however. Many people are afraid of going outside of their comfort zone and knowing that Japan is such a vastly different country that closes itself off with a homogeneity concept, many people are afraid to try. There is strength in the way people talk about a country and its culture, more so than companies, news articles and politicians can say about it. People have connections, something that becomes lost to tourists during some of their stay in Japan. Whether they are immigrants, long term residents or tourists, the behavior towards them affects the long term stability of incoming tourism from other countries for Japan's economy.

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EPOK Reflections ***

Studying in Japan was but a dream just a year ago. I came to Japan with a goal in mind and little idea what I would do to get there. I wanted to improve my Japanese speaking and my understanding of Japanese language and culture, and at Okayama University I did that and more. While I have yet to become a fluent, confident Japanese speaker, I have improved greatly in my Japanese speaking. I have also improved in my knowledge of the culture, an understanding daily lives of Japanese people. The things I have learned and the way I have changed has not just been a part of my degree though.

Every day I have spent learning about Japan and Japanese language, I have learned about myself, my culture and my own language. Every day I have learned a new way of Japanese culture of living, I have learned how I and others in other cultures live. And the more I think about it, the more sense it makes that while I came here to earn my degree, I have received more information about myself and my life.

I wish I could write a page about how it was my social experiences that taught me, but I did not spend as much time with friends. I spent more time on my studies, preparing for class and studying vocabulary. I spent my time learning in classes about Japan's culture and how it is not what it appears on the surface. I spent my time learning how to dissect culture and dialect, to get deeper to the root of what exists beneath what Japanese prefer to show.

The teachers were all great communicators, with varying interests that help them show their passion while teaching, whether it was related to culture or dialect. They taught me in traditional lecture, discussion, and in question. Every question I have been faced with from these teachers has not been easy, whether it was about the topic we were learning about, or if it was about something in my own country. They have helped to guide me in communication in Japan, both in English and Japanese, since both languages are spoken differently in Japan than in America. That is not to say that I have spent all of my time in classrooms and study. I have met many new people and made many great friends. Many of them are students like myself, coming from different prefectures throughout Japan and different countries throughout the world. They taught me about different perspectives, even within the same country or ethnicity. The variation in people exists by individuals, as each person, while they may behave similarly to other people like themselves, will have their own unique opinion, regardless of what others think of it.

I have learned a lot from this program. It has given me the chance to learn more deeply about Japanese culture and language, as well as learn the implications of the culture and the language.

日本と「将来」という言葉

Christopher Soto　クリストファ・ソト

Summary: 教育や日常生活に伴う「将来」の希望は今の学習のモチベーションになると思い、「将来」の不思議な定義について調べようと思った。しかし、「将来」という言葉は人によりそれぞれだ。カリフォルニア州の大学生の「将来」についての考えに精通しているけれども、日本の大学生の「将来」についての考えはアメリカ人大学生の考え方と大きく異なる。日本大学生の「将来」のコンセプトを知るために、岡山大学の大学生にアンケート調査を行った。岡山大学の生徒たちからすると，今必要な事に追われて明日の事を考えて生活していると思う。その生活の向こう見ずの生活の中にあって，現在の日本学生は将来のことをどう考えているか，将来に関してどんな期待を持っているか，今将来のためにどんなことをしているのかなどを調べている。この調査から、日本の岡山大学の大学生は将来のことを好意的に考えていて、明るい「将来」を迎えられると考えていることが分かった。相反して、現在充実した生活を送っていると述べた生徒が多いが、これまでの人生の中で変えたい過去があると分かった。

The future, a concept that remains without uniform until the time comes, is not something predictable and can be rather incongruous with the expectations that people place their values of today on. As the years go by, American college students have been showing less and less incentive of looking forward to the future as each day there is little that can be spared for the vague aspects that the future holds. Every day is a trial, people living paycheck to paycheck and the constant bureaucratic migraine that comes with increasing an individual`s living standard are but only a couple of the obligations that Americans face. Current day blogs and certain novels relate to this human condition highlighting the fact that a lot of people do not have the luxury of thinking about the future when the now is more than what their plate can handle. If Americans are heavily influenced in this way regarding their future, then what about Japanese college students?

From rudimentary understanding through conversation and inquiry, Japanese people seem to have the tendency to place more importance on the present than on the future. There are many habits that can be seen that tend to differ in comparison to American culture that, albeit does not prove the prior assertion, supports the avocation that the Japanese culture does place more emphasis on the now rather than the later. One supporting factor is that unlike Americans, Japanese tend to make plans via a calendar. That by itself is actually not unusual; however, the average Japanese student`s calendar tends to be filled to the brim as compared to the average American who tend not to have any plans laid out – behavior that allows American students to hang out with friends at spontaneous times more

often than not. There is also the fact that the Japanese concept towards club activities, job-hunting, and social interaction often takes a large commitment making people live a rather present-focused life. There are many other suppositions, but nothing else to take note of to say that Japanese people do not place an importance on the future.

When discussing about the future, there are many ways of defining what the future is and the definition is different person by person. Some would think of the future as a time when they turn older while others consider the future to be based on their post-death. There are still others who refer to the future in which robots have enslaved humanity. Of course discovering the Japanese concept of the future would be exciting, but there is no such leniency as there are currently no precedent found within viable resources. During this time, no matter the concept of the future, the goal was to find whether people seriously placed any emphasis on the future, whether or not their concept and feeling of the present and future were consistent, and how much farther ahead people view as the future. Rather than a formal research report, a general questionnaire was passed around to gather the required data to consider whether this string of thought would allow a more strict research guideline.

I used a 21 question questionnaire and passed it to various Japanese Okayama College students. I asked for their year level, their major, their age, their gender, and their GPA. Although there was the intention to see if there were any correlations between the demographic data and the resulting data, a lot of the data was not usable in the end. The students per year were not enough for each year to be representative, and this left age and major being the same. Although saying that there is a possible correlation between two factors, if the factors have not enough cases, there would be no point in calculating whether the data was significant or not.   Then there was grade. A number of the students were not able to list their own GPA and did not think of posting their high school GPA since it technically did not carry over into university life.   If this report were to include GPA into the matter, the resulting report would end up missing around a fourth of its data since the findings would be considered as not usable for especially during the calculations phase. Other than gender, there were no demographics that particularly stood out for study. These questionnaires were passed out to 80 students, but only around 46 were usable due to not filling out certain sections or the fact that the questionnaires were not returned. There were also times when the student turned out to be not a student in Okayama University.

In the survey, there are four questions regarding whether people are currently living a fulfilling life or not and whether they can live a fulfilling life in the future based on a 7 point scale where 1 is considered disagreeing with the statement and 7 is considered agreeing with the statement. Question

1, participants were asked whether they can say that they lived a fulfilling life. The males answered with a mean of 5.32, whereas the females answered with a mean of 5.72. Question 2, participants were asked whether they want to change their past if they could. The males answered with a mean of 4.36, whereas the females answered with a mean of 5.57. Question 5, participants were asked whether they think they will live a good life in the future. The males answered with a mean of 5.08, whereas the females answered with a mean of 5.95. Question 6, participants were asked if they would regret the choices they made in the future. The males answered with a mean of 4 and the females answered with a mean of 3.36. What this data implies is that males show the trend of wanting to change less in their lives but are more likely to expect regretting their actions in the future. Of course another viewpoint to is consider is that females are more likely to be positive in concerns with their life. However these means and the actually data show a particular irregularity since the answers between question set 1 and 2 and set 5 and 6 should be almost opposites.

Two multi-part questions were asked to determine what the participant found to be important to them in the present, and again asking them what they would possibly consider important in the future. The dual intent of these questions were to make sure that the participant actually considered how they would feel in the future as compared to the present, and the other was to probe into possible areas to focus the study on for the next time anyone wanted to do a further inquiry. In this data set, Japanese people tend to be very positive when answering. The only time when there would be negative trends would be when discussing about their future considerations – marriage was the only trend that should be considered significant enough while there would be some mentions of health and traveling as secondary issues to observe. There are a few cases where they were exempted from review due to everything in the same column being marked.

Finally, the last question concerning how far in the future do they think about when they hear the word "future."Since the distribution between the graduation year, 5 years from now, 10 years from now, 15 years from now, 20 years from now and 25 years from now were almost identical, there really is no difference to analyze between the male and female group. However, with the males 19 out of 25 responses and the females 15 out of 21, the 5 year and 10 year groups reported above a 70% response rate. In a sense, the word itself is used to represent the next start for the young generation at Okayama University since these years are respectively when they graduate from school, get used to their job, make a decision about marriage, and experience the wonders of being middle aged. These years are also rather even and make an easy marker to think about, although whether the date is just an empty

concept that they carry or if they actually hold more meaning than what the future already implies is beyond the scope of this survey.

Whether the future or the present, there seems to exist a pressure from society to think a certain way about the future in order to be socially acceptable. The ideals that include the distaste for marriage in the future were most likely heavily influencing the participants at a younger age. Considering that Japanese society is a collective society and that there is more pressure on public mannerisms and behaviors, the results were almost predictable. However, despite the fact that many students wrote that they would be leading and be able to lead fulfilling lives, the students still put that they wanted to change some parts of their lives and that the decisions they make now or in the future would most likely cause them regret shows a practicality in nature but also an inconsistency. This inconsistency comes from the fact that the questions were purposefully contradicting each other. After all, how can a person who lives a fulfilling life want to change many things in it? There is also the added fact that some students might be trying to be too positive since there were many parts where a row of 7s were circled. The consistency could be considered rather questionable and might not show the true opinion of the student.

Although the results might be questionable, there is no doubt that the survey also left much to be desired. One problem was that this survey was made in hopes of linking the student`s perception of the future and their educational achievements, but, since many first year students did not receive a grade from the college, the GPA demographic was immediately useless. There was also concept problems while making this survey. For example, the survey should have asked many more specific questions instead of attacking only surface level issues this way the provided data would hold a more solid meaning. This survey could also have emphasized on the present as compared to the past to allow more contrast. There could also have been a better demographic to target than just male and female such as heritage. This survey should have been an interview when viewed upon retrospect. Therefore the results are not indelibly accurate to say that this would be beyond a mere foray into what the Japanese students at Okayama University consider the future.

The one thing that was exaggerated throughout the survey process though was the idea about the future. Americans and Japanese people conception of the word future is experienced differently. Similar to people wearing their hearts on their sleeve, Americans tend to embody themselves with the future that they see. If they live day-by-day, they tend to show their disposition. The Japanese instead live in expectation of it, but do not actually become encumbered by it. Like looking at a painting, they do not let their hopes of the future shackle and weigh them down.

EPOK Reflections **

My experience in EPOK was not always exciting, but extremely fulfilling considering that I have really broadened my horizons. Meeting Japanese people on the street and talking to all of the students really gave me perspective on the Japanese way of life, but I think one of the greater shocks was when I was speaking with Chinese and Korean foreign exchange students. My greatest shock was when I met a young woman from Turkey who was extremely talented. Being an American, being trilingual and in a major was already considered exceptional in the closed communities of America. However, coming here I realized that people were expected to be trilingual and also still pursue their career path. This really made me impressed with the education systems and made me want to learn more about education in a foreign country like Japan. Seeing everyone so talented made me really push forward in my studies, but I always felt behind. This was frustrating, but at the same time really fulfilling since I could actually notice my progress when I talked with other students.

I do regret a little about not going around Japan some more though. There were some places that I really wanted to go to such as Nara. However, I most likely would have regretted not studying either so in the end I just cannot win!

One thing that I became affixed on was how social cliques formed and societal pressure worked in Japan. Looking your best all the time was something everyone worried about, no matter how rough life seemed to get. It was like a social obligation. There was not only the one social obligation either, there were many! This realization really opened my eyes to a new world, and I feel like the knowledge I gained would help me aim to be the educational researcher I aim to be.

Comparative analysis of cultural values in Advertising

Brandon Halprin ブランドン・ハルプリン

Summary 要旨*：* 文明の初めから近・現代にかけては、世界各国が長期に渡って孤立していた。その間、各国の人々は独自の文化や習慣を発達させてきた。交通技術が発達し、海外へ行く機会が増えるにつれて、人々はそれらを認め、自国の文化を他国に普及させ始めた。例えば、25〜30年前から今日まで、大変化がインターネットの導入によって引き起こされた。そしてそれに影響され、世界中の約30億の人々の生活が変わった。その結果、人々は今までにないほどお互いに関連し合うようになった。

　なかでも広告は世界中の人々との関係を理解するための方法の一つである。コミュニケーション学を専攻しているアメリカの大学生として、広告の作られ方や人々に与える印象をとても興味深いと感じていた。私は、アメリカの広告についてよく知っており、日本に着いたばかりの頃から日本の広告界に飛び込んだ。日本にいる間、時々「ここでは宣伝はどのように行われるか」や「広告はどういう風にアメリカや日本との価値観を表しているか」などの質問を自問自答していた。対象顧客層を特定の消費者にアピールすると言うことに関する効果は欠かせない役割であるとして、両国の価値観の異なる点を分析しようと思う。

Over the entire course of human history, our world and all of its inhabitants have maintained relatively isolated and shut off from the rest of the developing world around them. During this long period of isolation, the early foundations of the modern countries that we know today slowly cultivated unique cultural customs, traditions and values, all of which were deeply rooted in the history of the indigenous people living there. As technology gradually advanced and the opportunities to travel abroad became more readily available, people began to visit and immigrate to other countries. There they began to immerse themselves in the cultures of others while, whether consciously or inadvertently, began to integrate their own cultures in the societies of the countries that they resided in. Within the last 25 to 30 years alone, our world has seen exponential growth, both socially and technologically. A perfect example of this growth, the permeation of the Internet into the lives of nearly 3 billion people around the globe has allowed cultures to collide and people to become interconnected in ways that have never been seen before in history.

Advertising is one such method that people use to understand the relationships and bonds with others around the world. As an American college student majoring in Communications with an emphasis in Advertising, I have been fascinated with the creation of advertisements and the impressions they leave on people for a few years. American advertisements have always been intriguing to me, but my interest in Japanese culture has enabled me to delve into the new world of Japanese advertising. Periodically during this past year, I've pondered the answers to many questions about how advertising is conducted in

Japan and how advertising represents the cultural values of America and Japan. I will attempt to show the differences between the value systems of both countries, as these values serve a fundamental role in the effectiveness of advertisements pertaining to particular demographics of consumers.

Regardless of which country one comes from, the general population is astutely aware of the presence of advertising in their daily lives, but I don't believe it is unreasonable to state that a large majority of people don't fully understand how psychological advertising is. Advertising is, of course, a means of marketing communication used to persuade an audience to take some kind of action, but it doesn't stop there. Advertising includes not only understanding why people think certain ways about particular products or companies, but also attempting to decipher how people arrived at those conclusions and which aspect of that product/company influenced their reactions. By extension, learning how advertising affects consumers can give an integral view into what society deems as socially acceptable, in addition to the values that are perceived as most important by the people of each country. Such is the case both in America and Japan.

American Values

Throughout their history, Americans have always embraced headstrong ideologies for the purpose of attaining and remaining the world's foremost superpower. For example, one of the most important values for American society is the practice of individuality in the daily lives of its citizens. Americans are encouraged at an early age to be independent and to develop their own goals in life, not simply live in the shadows of their relatives. They are encouraged to not place an excessive amount of dependence on others including their friends, teachers or parents, so that they can learn to take care of their own business. They are rewarded when they try harder to reach their goals.

This Burger King advertisement perfectly illustrates one aspect of America's desire to be independent. By allowing the customers the option to create their own customized ideal burger, a company can portray itself as one that places importance in giving consumers the power in this transaction. Americans love to make their own decisions about what is best for themselves and this advertisement, along with a simple, but very appealing slogan that tells consumers that their business is important and that their opinions are being considered, would be extremely effective in the American market.

WE HEARD YOU LIKE BURGERS, SO WE PUT BURGERS IN YOUR BURGER.

BURGER KING

HAVE IT YOUR WAY

IF I HAD SOMETHING TO HIDE, I'D CARRY A SAFE.

Break the Cycle.
New U by Kotex. Tampons, pads and liners.
For a free sample go to ubykotex.com

Another value that Americans deeply treasure is the concept of equality. Americans uphold the ideal that everyone "is created equal" and has the same rights. This includes women as well as men of all ethnic and cultural groups living in the United States. There are even laws that protect this "right to equality" in its various forms. This wedding gift registry advertisement for the popular Target department store exemplifies an increasing acceptable social stance in a controversial human rights issue in the United States. While advocacy for the restriction of same-sex marriage in America has waned rapidly in recent years, this is a rather bold statement made by Target, which aims to persuade the consumers that their company is proudly in support of giving every man and women the right to marry whoever they love, regardless of gender. The objective of this advertisement is not only to sell their services, but also to build a positive reputation amongst its target demographics and hopefully encourage new customers to associate Target with equality. Americans are much more likely to be motivated to shop at Target after seeing this advertisement.

One final example of some of the major discernable American values is the self-motivation to display assertiveness and confidence in daily life. This concept can be observed on many levels. At its core, assertiveness is one of many keystone characteristics that constitute a capitalistic wealthy person. An individual that exudes confidence is often simultaneously a risk taker; they don't fear taking initiative and their efforts are usually greatly rewarded. While not directly related, these qualities are also regarded as being attractive when dating and looking for a significant other.

クール
バーボン、
始まる。

JIM BEAM
WORLD'S No.1 BOURBON

Confidence can also be connected to the value of individualism that I previously mentioned. Possessing self-confidence and pride about who you are as a person is rarely seen in a negative light in the United States. In this particular case, the advertisement emphasizes that while menstruation can be embarrassing to discuss publicly, it is a perfectly natural process that women must undergo, that there is nothing to be ashamed of and that it is okay to simply continue on as normal.

Japanese Values

As one can certainly imagine, Japanese society stresses similar importance on many of the same values that American society does, but due in part to their history of solitude, strict reverence for tradition,

and their unwavering dedication to hospitality (among other things), Japanese people are primarily concerned with living up to their own distinct values. An example of a popular Japanese value that is, of course, never seen in America is Westernization. Prior to Commodore Matthew Perry's pivotal role in opening Japan to Western customs and technology in the mid 1800's, Japan was a primitive nation in comparison to countries in Europe and North America. Within 15 years, Japan was well on its way to becoming an industrialized nation under the new rule of Emperor Meiji, after abolishing the shogunate and implementing the Meiji Restoration.

The trend of Westernization has persisted to this day and continues to change Japan into a country more accepting of foreign culture. This can be observed in many facets of Japanese society, from food and fashion to business practices and architecture. In Japan, it seems that Western countries are seen as the standard for what is stylish or modern. In this advertisement, Jim Beam is playing to the preconceived notions of the Japanese people that Westerners are "cool" (Cool Bourbon, as stated in the ad), so that must mean it is cool to drink Jim Beam bourbon. In addition, using the likeness of a globally recognized Hollywood movie icon like Leonardo DiCaprio certainly doesn't hurt Jim Beam's chances of gathering the attention of a wide audience in Japan.

As what would be expected from a country that possesses such rich history and culture, Japanese people clearly value preserving their ancient traditions without sacrificing them for the sake of modernization. This is often reflected in countless examples of Japanese video and print advertisements. Combined with well-placed notes of humor, this type of advertisement is incredibly effective at leaving memorable impressions on consumers. While there is nothing intrinsically comical about neither Samurai culture nor Coca Cola, a Japanese salaryman wielding a katana and wearing a bottle of Coke as a top knot is immediately noticeable and shows appreciation for traditional Japan, as well as modern Japan. In a very similar television commercial, Nissin Cup Noodle created a scene where workers at a Japanese company, all dressed in suits, samurai armor and wielding katana, were notified that they were under new English-speaking management. As most of the workers had seemingly not practiced speaking English in years, many of them were terrified at the thought of working under these circumstances. Nissin then enacts a metaphorical battle of the hilarious, but all too realistic struggle that Japanese people face when learning and speaking English. The commercial is funny because of its depiction of samurai culture mixed with modern Japanese workers, but is instantly familiar to anyone who has had trouble learning a new language.

Finally, as one of Japan's most prevalent values, societal conformity is a conflicting issue amongst Japanese people, especially young children to university students on the cusp of adulthood. Essentially, Japanese people are indoctrinated from birth to look and behave in the same way as their classmates or colleagues. Differentiating oneself from what is socially normal is generally discouraged, especially in

professional situations. When university students begin looking for jobs in their 3rd year of school, every student must dress in relatively the same manner. Men wear a white dress shirt, slacks, and a choice of either black, dark blue or gray suit jacket. Women similarly must wear either black, dark blue or gray, but they may choose between slacks or a skirt. Ties need to be a standard design and everyone's hair must be its natural color. Failure to comply with these customs will result in an unfavorable decision: either succumb to societal pressures or give up the opportunity to get a job. In this advertisement, at first glance Meiji Chocolate is sending a message that someone can become an adult/ become more mature by eating their chocolate. However, when you recall the story of Peter Pan, one can find a more subtle interpretation. Peter Pan is basically the story of a boy who didn't want to grow up or accept the responsibility of becoming an adult. By living in Neverland, he tried to delay the inevitable; eventually everyone must move past their childhood and transition into life as an adult. An alternative message of this advertisement could be that you can't remain a child forever—at some point everyone must conform and stop living in a fantasy land; you might as well do it with Meiji Chocolate.

Conclusion

Over the course of their establishment from the first traces of civilization until the modern era, each respective country has developed unique cultural values that help define the identity of its citizens, both predecessors of the historic ways, as well as the successors of future generations. Obviously, analyzing every aspect of American or Japanese society thoroughly would be an arduous task; perhaps it is even impossible.

However, through advertising we can bring each country/culture into the limelight and begin to understand not only more about those people different from us, but also understand more about ourselves, where we come from and what matters to us. While true comprehension might be a lifelong pursuit, just taking a short look at a country's advertising can offer an opportunity to peer into the lives and minds of others and see for oneself what is truly important to each culture.

EPOK Reflections感想 ***

　大学に通い始めた頃、やらないと絶対に後悔する体験は一つしかなかった。「誰も知っている人がいないので、友達ができるのか」、「どのクラブに興味があるのかさえも分からない」、「私にとって最も面白く、成功率の高い専攻は何だろう」などということについて当

時によく悩んでいた。豊かな大学生活を送れたら嬉しいと思いながら、勉強に向かって人生を過ごし続けた。しかし、何よりも一番気になったのは、いつか日本に留学することを目指している夢であった。やらないと絶対に後悔するとは言え、私が留学をしようと決めた後、様々な提供されたプログラムの中から別々に調べた。その当時、カリフォルニア州立大学フラトン校と岡山大学との提携が新しいことによって、それに関する情報が少なく、不明であった。それに加え、以前にフラトンから岡山に留学を決めた人がいない結果、岡山について尋ねられる人もいなくて、私はなぜかわからないが、先駆者とされている。

　今では岡山での経験を振り返ると、後悔するものは何もない。私は日本にいる間、様々な素晴らしい体験を得てきた。例えば、日本語力がますます上達するばかりでなく、良い友達ができたり、色々な所に旅行できたりもした。その中でも、最も大切にしたいものは新しいブランドンを発見したことである。岡山での留学を通して、自分に自信が付き、社会的にも精神的にも成長した。その結果、私は自己のコンフォート・ゾーンを脱却できたものである。つまり、以前に思われた心地の良い範囲を壊すことができた。来日する前に、保守的に生きていたが、日本に着いて以来、新たな面白いものに積極的に挑戦するようになった。これからも、どんな大変なことがあっても、辛い時でも、私はその経験を生涯忘れられないであろう。

Foreign Music Interpretation

Marina Hutchins　マリナ・ハッチンズ

Summary: 私の岡山大学生の時間の間に、コミュニケーションをよく考えている。どうやって私と他の人は情報と感情を伝えるか。特に、その国際的な状態で皆のコミュニケーションスタイルは違う。それ加えに、音と話し方にも興味がある。最近、自分で私は音響心理学をちょっと勉強している。なぜインストの曲は私たちを嬉しくさせることができるだろうか。また、時々知らない言語で音楽を聞くことは楽しいと考えられる。脳の機能が理由だ。曲を作った人と聞く人の脳は同じようにニューロンを発射している。

　何かするたび、脳でニューロンが働き、通路を生み出す。読んだり動いたり音を立てるなどというとき、脳で神経回路が作られる。脳は、音楽を聞くときと同じように、音楽を作るときもニューロンが作用している。それから、音楽を聞くときにあなたの脳はその曲を演奏するミュージシャンの脳と同じように働く。例えば、寂しいミュージシャンが曲と作るとき、ニューロンは特定の方法で働いている。そのため、他の人がその曲を聞いたとき、ミュージシャンの脳で働いているの同じようにその人のニューロンが働く。だから、歌詞の意味を理解していない場合であっても、曲中の感情を理解することができる。

　私は友達にポルトガル語の曲を聞いて曲の意味について質問と聞いた。私は友達が曲の意味を当ててみて欲しかった。本当の意味をあまり理解できないけれども、皆は曲の感情を感じることできたと思った。

Sound perception is an amazing ability. Our ability to hear helps us communicate with others, avoid danger, express our feelings, and enjoy music. In his book *The Language Instinct,* Steven Pinker puts it simply "...speech is by far the fastest way of getting information into the head through the ear" (Pinker 162). This means we can learn from the experiences of others through a simple conversation, and directly receive so much information from the outside world. Instead of reading for hours, or learning through trial and error, we can simply listen to understand situations around us, abstract theories, and the emotions of others.

What is more amazing than the fact that we can hear anything at all is *how* we perceive sound. When you hear footsteps in the dark, you immediately know what is producing the sound. If you hear glass breaking in another room as opposed to silverware clattering, it is easy to tell which sound belongs to which situation. "Different things make different sounds," and sound waves created by individual objects give us information as to the source of the sound (Schnupp, et.al 2). When we hear a sound its source instantly comes to mind, and with that an image of an object or an emotional response.

So we can gather all sorts of information from sound, as well as closely guess its source, if not immediately identify it. In *A Perspective Theory of Music and Perception,* Björn Vickhoff explores the ways in which music can instantly connect us through the theory of *mirror neurons.* When we have a conversation with someone we know well we sometimes feel like we can "finish their sentences," or guess accurately what they will say next. This is because when we listen to speech, or music, our neurons fire down almost the same pathways they would if we were to speak or produce that same music ourselves. Our ability to empathize comes from this ability to "put ourselves in another's shoes" and feel their emotions first hand. When we hear someone cry it makes us sad because the same areas of our brain are activated as if we were crying with them. The same phenomenon happens when we listen to music, we hear the music "*as if* we were playing" (Vickhoff 110).

Upon discovery of this information, I began to wonder about the limits of our sound perception abilities. Can we understand others if they speak in a different language? Can we understand the meaning of a song sung in a different language? If we can perceive emotions in songs without lyrics or in languages we do not speak, can we maybe understand what the song is actually about? Can we maybe do the same with human speech? I have been wondering for some time now if it is possible to understand foreign language speech without actually understanding the foreign language itself. Since so many people listen to music in foreign languages, or to songs without lyrics, and have emotional reactions to them, I was wondering if at some point these people could go beyond understanding the raw feelings of the song and get to the solid content. So I decided to do an experiment.

I asked 15 people if they could please interpret the meaning of a song sung in a language they did not understand. I didn't want them to just tell me how the song made them felt, I wanted to see if they could understand the context of the song and one minute of speech, both in Portuguese. I asked them to listen to a Brazilian song a few times on their own, ideally over a day or two, listen to my friend explain the meaning of that same song in Portuguese, and then listen to the song again. I gave them 9 questions to answer and asked them to reply within a week. The responses to 2 of these questions are at the end of this resport. Some of the questions included "Do you ever listen to music in languages you do not understand?" "Please guess what this song is about (theme, story, etc)" and "What emotions and images/ideas came to mind while you were listening to the song?" I specifically asked these last two questions to make clear that I was asking them to guess the meaning of the song and not just their emotional responses.

I asked my Brazilian friend to pick a song and to record her speaking about that same song. The song she chose was "Vida de Gado" by Admiravel Gado Novo, a song about wanting to break free from a system, questioning a society for which you sacrifice so much, but knowing it is sometimes more practical to continue living life as "cattle" (gado), thinking of happier times, past or future. The song has an upbeat but slightly melancholic atmosphere. The images that come to my friend's mind when she hears this song is of Brazilian country-side and hills. I also tried myself to guess the meaning after listening to the song once before my friend explained it to me. My guess was that the song was people who had been through a hard time but they were still okay. The only image that came to my mind was of a burnt orange color. My hypothesis for everyone else's responses was that they would feel similarly melancholic yet hopeful. When it came to guessing the actual meaning of the lyrics, I assumed that they would all get about as specific as I did but perhaps more accurate, because they would have more time to listen to the song. I was also hoping that listening to the Portuguese recording would add something to their interpretations of the song.

Reading the responses to the song was very interesting. In the end only 7 people ever got back to me with their answers but there were a few similarities among even so few responses. All but one participant had studied more than one language in their lives. All participants listened to music in languages they do not understand. Two people said they don't ever feel like they understand the meanings of those songs, while the rest said they do have times when they feel like they understand the meaning of a foreign language song. As for the meaning of the song there were a few different answers but several surprising similarities and even a few people who came close to perceiving different aspects of the song and its meaning.

First I'd like to mention a few outliers in the interpretations of the song. One person straight away said that the song reminded him of the James Bond theme. Because of this the image of James Bond rising from water was stuck in his head from the beginning. Two people thought the song was a love song which

is pretty far from the actual meaning of the song, but when asked about what images and feelings they had while listening to the song, their responses were similar to what my Brazilian friend had in mind when she listens to the song.

Next, I'd like to discuss the similarities, the most interesting part of the study. When asked what images come to mind while listening to the song, every person mentioned the sun/sunset or nature/countryside. The person with the James Bond theme stuck in his head later mentioned "The Circle of Life," others explicitly mentioned the sun, the sun over a wide piece of land, or the sunset. Five people mentioned the countryside or hills. One thing every participant had in common was that the voice recording in Portuguese of the explanation of the song had no influence whatsoever on their interpretation of the song.

Answers regarding the literal meaning of the song were the most interesting responses. One participant said that the song was about a man's hard struggle through life, "climbing a mountain," but in the end he would be okay. Another said that the song was about looking positively towards the future, while another said the song was about appreciation for old friends and nostalgia for one's homeland. While yet another, while he thought it was a love song, felt the song was about a person looking back at their life and questioning their current situation. Two simply spoke of a living peacefully in nature. I think that among these answers, a connection can be made as to a common interpretable theme. Almost everyone mentioned a feeling of reflections on the past in relation to their current situation or near future. Even my response was similar to this.

After listening to the song several times participants were unable to determine the meaning of the song exactly, though I felt their emotional interpretations were fairly close to the emotions conveyed in the song. I was slightly disappointed about the fact that the recorded speech didn't effect their interpretations at all. But the fact that there were so many similarities between the responses to the song made me very happy. If I were to repeat this experiment I would do a few things differently. I would ask at least twice as many people, I wasn't expecting so many to not get back to me. I would *tell* them to listen to the song at least *x* amount of times, and also ask them how many times they had listened to the song by the end. I will certainly conduct a study similar to this in the future.

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Appendix:

1. **Please guess what this song is about (theme, story, etc?).**

The intro section and part of the instrumental is straight out of the James Bond theme which makes me think of spies and stuff but as for overall theme, it sounds kind of naturey.

Its about life, about the trials a man must take on in his life, and the people that he meets that affect him greatly.

前向きな気持ちでいようのような意味と感謝しましょみたいな内容。

分かりませんが、たぶん、ラブソングかな。

自然の中の暮らし

An appreciation for an old friends.

I think the song is about something coming to an end. And the singer is asking 'Why?'

2. **What emotions and images/ideas came to mind while you were listening to the song?**

Daniel Craig emerging out of the water while a bunch of admiring onlookers attempt to not look creepy.

I have strong uplifting images about relationships, family, and personal redemption. I see a man steadily climbing a mountain with the world on his shoulders. It looks like he's struggling a bit, but in the end I know he's going to make it. It sounds very endearing.

広い大地と太陽のイメージ。それと一人で歌ってるけど次第に人が増えていくイメージ。

明るい気持ち。どこかカントリーサイドで楽しい生活をしているイメージ。

穏やかな感じがします。草原にいるイメージ

Maracas, latin, sunset

I feel like its a classic breakup song and the loved one is walking away. The singer is reflecting on the good times they shared, and is questioning the situation.

EPOK Reflections ***

My time in Japan through the EPOK Program has made me think about communication so much. Not only sound perception but differences in communication styles amongst people from different cultures, and amongst people with varying levels of language skill. When I talk to friends from the United Kingdom as opposed to friends from Vietnam my English changes. Even when

speaking in Japanese, I find myself speaking differently to different friends without thinking about it. Being in Japan has given me the opportunity to clearly see the way I carry a conversation with others. It is hard to observe my communication style while I speak English in America, surrounded by people I have known for years. Participating in the EPOK program has given me the chance to analyze my conversations, based not on the content of what I'm saying, but by the way I begin and sustain conversations, my pronunciation and inflections, and the way I react to others.

Working at Rooftop has given me the most exposure to new people on a regular basis. In this English conversation cafe, I meet so many different people with varying levels of English skill. There have been many instances at work where I don't quite understand a customer's Japanese, or a customer doesn't quite understand my English. But the conversation doesn't stop because we can implicitly understand the meaning of the other's speech. For example, one night a new customer came to the bar and was have trouble understanding anything past "Hello." We had been chatting for a few minutes and began talking about his past weekend. When I asked him if he had any plans for the upcoming weekend, he gave me a perplexed face and said "Not. Yet." He turned to his friend and asked "予定がありますか。"His friend said "そうだ。" The first guy turned back to me laughing "その感じですね！" We all laughed. This is one of countless examples of a potential miscommunication　side-stepped because of a perceived meaning. Even when I don't understand a large portion of a conversation in Japanese, I still manage to participate. Instead of waiting for words I recognize, I just listen to the voices and try to understand the flow of the conversation.

Japanese Mentality and Ways of Living Through Martial Arts – *Kendo*（剣道）

Myriam Sevigny ミリアム・セヴェニィ

Summary: この論文では剣道を通じて、日本の文化や生活の方法や日本人の考え方を探ります。そのために先ず、剣道の精神のより良い理解を得るために、剣道の歴史や特別な単語といった剣道の物理的および精神的な基礎を説明します。続いて私の人生観と、どのようにこの経験が私のビジョンと私の人生を変えたかについて記します。そして日本人の考え方についての私の理解を説明し、私自身が剣道部に入り学んだことを話します。最後に私の EPOK の経験を話します。

It is in between the 8th and 10th Century that Japan's swordsmanship and martial arts met a lot of important changes. During and after the Nara Period, Japanese swordsmen adapted their own combat style and armory to match their own view of their culture; by giving birth to the iconic curved-edged samurai sword as we all know it today. Doing so, Japanese swordsmen adapted their combat techniques and it became widespread among warriors. Using a curved-edge sword gave importance to slashing techniques instead of stabbing, making it easier for warriors to fight on foot and engage in actual combat demonstrations. Adapting their weapons and combat behaviors also lead to major changes in the mentality and view of swordsmanship; leading to developing not only physical skills, but true and pure mental strength. Physical strength was important of course, but mental strength was as valuable if not even more. As many ancient and recent documents state, for samurais, the mind（心）was what actually decided one's fate and final outcome of a fight. In more recent applications of this mentality, and for teachers to teach better, many specific terms have risen to give a better understanding of these ways of thinking and how to properly achieve the right state of mind, or of heart, in order to win a fight whether it is inside of yourself or with an opponent in front of you. Although recent teachings of kendo have adapted to our fast-paced society, the true fundamental ways still remain.

Through intense mental and physical training, the purpose of kendo is:

> To mold the mind and body,
> To cultivate a vigorous spirit,
> To strive for improvement in the art of Kendo,
> To hold in esteem human courtesy and honor,
> To associate with others with sincerity,
> And to forever pursue the cultivation of oneself.

After all, even in our adapted version of today's kendo, all of these characteristics NEED to be demonstrated in combat, otherwise no points (or 一本, *ippon*) are given to the combatant. In order to win in a competition, many severe basic principles apply.

Fist and for all, the combatant's spirit must always be present and shown. In order to properly do this, the kendoka must first release 気合 (*kiai*, *screams* - literally "spirit" and "synthesis") at specific

timing, in a specific manner and with specific terms. True spirit has to be demonstrated in every movement and every hit. To release a good *kiai,* the kendoka has to yell the place where he or she strike, has he or she is doing so. In kendo, there are 4 major points where you can strike to obtain an 一本. These are :

The men (面) – The head; mask.
The thrust or *tsuki* (突き) – A thrust aiming at the throat region.
The kote (小手) – The wrists.
The Dou (胴) – The waist.

But kendo doesn't end with a single strike. In order to obtain an 一本, the kendoka has to demonstrate his 気剣体 (*kikentai - spirit-swordskills-body strenght and synchronicity).* All of these elements needs to make ONE with themselves. This means, the kendoka needs to demonstrate a strong spirit with a strong will, good sword skills and body will and synchronicity. To achieve good *kikentai*, one must aim forward without hesitation (気持ち前, *kimochi mae – emotions forward*), with a clean and clear strike of the sword (If one's heart is doubtful or blurred by bad emotions it will show in his or her strike) and all of this, in complete body harmony and synchronicity. The technique (技 - *waza*) also has to be complete, with full force and beautifully executed; thus the importance of *zanshin* (残心).

Finally, the kendoka needs a stable heart and mind. Recent documentation state that specific terms were used to explain and represent how one's state of heart and mind needs to be in order to follow kendo's ways of teaching :

First, the term *Heijoshin* (平常心) which means *presence of the mind* (or heart). *Heijo* (平常) means *ordinary* or *normality* and *shin* (心) means *heart* (also used for *mind* in Japan). Basically, in order to have a true balanced state of mind, one needs his heart and mind to be in a normal state without any confusion or disturbance. It is only in this state, that a warrior can clearly see what is coming upon him and react to it properly. An important part of kendo is to gain control over your own heart and soul, thus being open enough to humbly become a better human and elevate the spirit to accomplish any hardships that life gives a person. *Heijoshin* (平常心) also needs to be in proper balance with *mushin* (無心). Often translated as "empty mind", *mushin* is needed for the kendoka to be alert at all time. They say, a good example of *mushin* is driving a car. When driving a car, one doesn't focus on one action at a time. You need overall focus to keep your eyes on the road, on the mirrors, on the pedals, on the shift stick and so on. You are never focusing on one thing at a time. *Mushin* is exactly like that. For a kendoka to perform properly, his or her mind needs to flow constantly in every directions in order to adapt and bend itself to every situation and everything that can happen during a fight. He or she has to be ready to all types of encounters; thus needing an "absent mind" that can control our fears and keeps us from getting surprised and imbalanced. In kendo, a state of imbalance in one's heart could be the death of the person. These imbalances are called *shikai* (四戒) and they are basically constituted of 4 important prohibitions : *kyo* (虚), *ku* (懼), *gi* (疑) and *waku* (惑).

- *kyo* (虚) is a state of surprised. If the kendoka is not ready to all eventuality, the kendoka will be surprised; thus unable to react properly and could make mistakes.

- *ku* (懼) is fear or imprudence. The fighters sees his or her opponent bigger than they actually are. This often happens when you have apprehensions before the fight even started. Seeing your opponent bigger than they actually are blurs your heart, your mindset and thus, your strikes.
- *gi* (疑) is doubt. Doubting oneself can be the person's worst enemy. In a fight, doubt in one's own abilities is deadly. When striking, one should never doubt himself has it will show in or her strikes, not carrying through kendo's purpose and at the time of samurais, would often give the enemy a very painful death which was not wished.
- *waku* (惑) is the state of confusion. Like stated above, one's mind should always be clear and steady and this, at all times. When confused, the kendoka can't focus on him or herself and cannot focus on the opponent. In this state usually, the opponent performs better than the confused kendoka.

These four states can also be summarized by the kendo term *shishin* (止心) which means *to stop one's mind* at one place. When you stop your mind's flow, you can't be ready to all eventualities that a combat brings. In order to avoid these states, remaining in 平常心 and 無心 at all time is crucial.

My Kendo Experience :

In order for me to truly understand these concepts, I decided to join the Okayama University Shikata (medical campus) kendo club back in January 2015. Before entering the kendo club, I already had martial arts experience back in Canada where I practiced karate (Shorinjiryu Shindo) for 7 years. I did not know what to expect exactly from kendo, but I was very interested in the mentality behind it and decided to start reading many books and to throw myself out there. I have to say that I was blessed to be able to experience Japanese clubs the way I did, because even though I am a foreigner, to them, I was still a member of the club and they always treated me *equally*. In this case, *equally* means that I needed to help, do all the exercises (despite being a beginner), attend outside the club activities and attend competitions. I always felt like if I gave it all I had, they would always be positive and help me accomplish myself.

To be honest, when I first decided to join, I was a little bit afraid. My level of Japanese at that time was only Japanese level 2 (In Okayama University) and most of them don't speak English pass the self-introductory level. I also heard some stories about other students joining clubs and turning out to be a nightmare for them, as the Japanese students never took them seriously to the point of insulting them. That being said, I decided to try and was more than agreeably surprised. Everyone welcomed me with arms wide open and within a very light hearted atmosphere. Some of them tried their hardest to speak English to me and surprisingly, most of them were less shy than me.

At the Shikata Kendo Club, around once a week, Ogura sensei (小倉先生) comes to the dojo and properly teaches us kendo's ways by reviewing and verifying everyone's techniques. We are able to also practice *jigeiko* (自稽古) with him and receive valuable advice. After every practice, Ogura sensei sits down with all of us and teaches us kendo's important points and mentalities. He once said something I will always remember as he gave us a speech on *ichigo ichie* (一期一会) : To always be thankful for every encounters and what they teach you. Especially in kendo, winning a fight is not actually about winning the combat, but it is about winning internally each time and learning from your mistakes in order

to become a better human being each time. To do so, you need to be thankful to every opponent with whom you fight as each and every one of them teaches you valuable lessons and thus allows you to evolve internally. In loss, thank your opponent he said, for your opponent showed you an important weak point on which you should work from now on. He said to always be graceful in defeat and be humble in victory. For these reasons, I truly believe that the people in the kendo club saw my participation as an opportunity as I never felt judged even once.

        I was also able to see another part of Japanese culture, as the importance of respect is very important in the kendo club. Not only towards senseis, but towards everyone. I was able to compare with Canada as Canadian martial arts teachers expect respect and teaches us the same kind of respect, but the application is not as often applied as in Japan. Here, demonstrating respect is really important and it made me reevaluate my own notion of it. For this reason, I also think that entering the kendo club was a major turning point in my own evolution. I was encouraged to participate in the *kangeiko* (寒稽古), *gasshuku* (合宿), pass two grades (*Ikyuu* (一級) and *shodan* (初段)) and participate in 4 different competitions where we both laughed and cried all together. I have seen so many faces of Japanese culture, met amazing people and tried to make the most out of it. Most details of what I have seen and experienced are very difficult to explain using words and within a limited amount of time, but I can say that it was without a doubt, a life changing experience and I will continue upon my return to Canada. To me, Kendo is not only a way to enhance your physical and mental abilities, but it also became a lifestyle.

EPOK Reflections **

        To begin with, I have to say that it was a life changing experience for me to be able to participate in this exchange program. During this period of time, I was able to learn a lot about myself and really tried to make the most out of it. One positive point about this program is that fact that the workload is appropriate for us to be able to expand ourselves and be able to explore Japan thoroughly, at our pace. Every person has their own desires coming here, some want to improve their Japanese skills as much as possible, some people want to travel, some people want to experience the culture and I truly believe that the EPOK program gives you the tools to accomplish yourself. We were all very lucky to be here, accompanied by very patient teachers who are willing to make things happen for us. It was a unique chance to be able to share with Japanese students, to receive, but also to give back and help each other. Although it is a wonderful program, I also believe that it is an individual's own personal choice to develop oneself. By that, I mean that the EPOK program gives you all the tools to do so, but won't do the work for you. If you want to explore, learn and challenge yourself, it has to stem from YOU. You can be the change. And for that, I know that the people in charge of the program will be there to support you and encourage new ideas. I have learned many things about the world and myself coming here, and I am truly grateful for everyone's support and for this opportunity that has been given to me.

Nihonshu /日本酒

Andrew Russell アンドリュー・ラッセル

Summary: フランスに続いて、日本料理は 2013 年に UNESCO 世界遺産に認定された、唯一の郷土料理となりました。しかし、未だに海外で日本の国民的なお酒である「日本酒」という飲み物の人気はないです。日本酒は伝統的なものであり、日本で約1000年もの間存在しています。日本酒の作る方法は、一つの材料を発酵し、お米からできているので、よくワインのような飲み物であると思われています。しかし実際には、日本酒はよりビールに近いものです。とにかく、日本酒の作り方はユニークで、世界の中でも最も強いお酒が製造されています。しかし、一般的に海外で日本酒を購入することは困難です。海外に住んでいる人は、安くて質の悪い日本酒しか飲んだことがありません。だから、海外で日本酒のイメージは悪く、多くの人が誤解をしています。しかし、日本酒には様々な種類があり、特定名称酒という日本酒もあります。この日本酒は普通の日本酒と比べると、全く違います。例えば、特定名称酒というは最も良いお米を作っているし、作るのにはとても時間がかかります。残念ながら一般的にそのような日本酒は海外ではあまり知られていませんでしたが、最近いくつかの酒蔵によるプロモーションで、より人気が高まってきています。この結果、特定名称酒の需要はだんだん増えています。

From my own experience, when I ask people who have never visited Japan what they know about the country, they will usually perceive a modern, busy, almost futuristic place with packed trains and bright neon signs. If they have even a remote interest in Japan's history, they might mention Geisha, old temples or the many tales of the Samurai. However, nearly everyone will mention Japanese cuisine, in particular Sushi. So popular has Japanese cuisine become in recent years, that in 2013 it became only the second national cuisine behind France to be designated world heritage status by UNESCO. It is for this reason alone that makes it so surprising that Japan's national beverage Nihonshu (日本酒), almost always referred to oversees as Sake(酒), is still both relatively unknown and hugely misunderstood.

Steeped in tradition, Nihonshu has existed in some shape or form for around a thousand years in Japan. In short, it is an alcoholic beverage brewed from rice. It is often considered to be a type of wine as it produced through the process of fermentation of a single ingredient, in this case rice. However, it is in fact unique in how it is made and is in some ways actually closer to beer than wine. Nevertheless, one standout fact about Nihonshu is that the method of production yields the highest naturally occurring alcohol level of any non-distilled beverage in the world, usually finishing at around 20% before it is watered down to release more subtle aromas and flavours. Another feature of Nihonshu that could be considered unique is the range of temperatures that it can be enjoyed at. Of course wine and beer are served at various different temperatures, but Nihonshu can be enjoyed anywhere from extremely hot to extremely cold and anywhere in-between. It is Nihonshu served at the former of these temperature ranges that is probably to blame for most people's misconceptions of the drink outside of Japan.

It is the case in most countries, including Japan, that beer and wine are the most widely drank alcoholic beverages. As a result, in most parts of Europe and America, with the exception of a few specialist outlets that have appeared recently, Nihonshu is not widely available. When it is available it is almost always is the form of a cheap, poor quality variety that in truth was probably intended only for cooking. Furthermore, in the same way that wine has overly generalised rules about how it should be drank, for instance that red should be at room temperature and white should be chilled, the same arbitrary rules exist in the overseas Nihonshu world. They state that cheap Nihonshu, usually referred to as futsūshu (普通酒) should be drank warm (ぬる燗) or hot (熱燗) and that more expensive, or

better quality, Nihonshu should be served cold. It would be wrong to suggest that there isn't a great deal of logic behind this rule, although there are exceptions. The reason poorer quality varieties are usually heated is because it can hide flaws or bad tastes in the Nihonshu. The opposite often applies to good quality Nihonshu whereby heating it would neutralise the more delicate flavours. As many people outside of Japan only get the opportunity to try cheap Nihonshu, this usually limits them to this one specific way of serving. Therefore, for many people their image of this hugely varied and complex drink is formed by this one experience alone.

There is however a completely different side to Nihonshu, that all too often is missed by many people outside of Japan, and indeed sometimes from within Japan. This comes in the form of six classifications collectively known as Special Designation Sake (特定名称酒) which represent the pinnacle of the brewer's work and accounts for a mere 20% of the entire industries production. What separates these six classifications from normal futsūshu is that in order for a Nihonshu to qualify for one of these top grades, it must adhere to certain rules regulating how much of the rice used during production is polished away.   In fact, the amount of rice polishing or milling, referred to as the Seimai Buai (精米歩合) is what also separates the higher categories from the lower categories within the top six classifications. The thinking behind this is that by milling away the outer layers of a grain of rice, that consists of fats and proteins, only the starch centre will remain resulting in a more elegant, often fruitier tasting beverage. However, the top six classifications are not just separated by the amount of rice milling and are in fact further split into two sub-classifications. The difference between these two groups is that one side has had a small amount of pure distilled alcohol added and the other, known as Junmai-Shu (純米酒), hasn't. The illustration below contains a full breakdown of the premium Nihonshu classifications.

No added alcohol	Some added alcohol
Junmai Daiginjo-shu 純米大吟醸酒 A subclass of junmai ginjo-shu, brewed with very highly polished rice (to at least 50%) and even more precise and labor intensive methods. The pinnacle of the brewers' art. Generally light, complex and fragrant.	**Daiginjo-shu** 大吟醸酒 A subclass of ginjo-shu below, brewed with very highly polished rice (to at least 50%) and even more precise and labor intensive methods. The pinnacle of the brewers' art. Generally light, complex and quite fragrant.
Junmai Ginjo-shu 純米吟醸酒 Brewed with labor-intensive steps, eschewing machinery for traditional tools and methods, using highly polished rice (at least 60%) and fermented at colder temperatures for longer periods of time. Light, fruity, refined.	**Ginjo-shu** 吟醸酒 Brewed with labor-intensive steps, eschewing machinery for traditional tools and methods, using highly polished rice (at least 60%) and fermented at colder temperatures for longer periods of time. Light, aromatic, fruity, and refined.
Junmai-shu 純米酒 Made with only rice, water and koji mold. The rice used must be polished to at least 70%. Often a full and solid flavor profile, clean and well structured. Note, also Tokubetsu Junmai-shu, or "Special Junmai-shu," which merely indicates more highly polished rice, or the use of very special sake rice.	**Honjozo-shu** 本醸造酒 Made with rice, water, koji and a very small amount of pure distilled alcohol ("brewers' alcohol") to help extract flavor and aroma. Light, mildly fragrant, easy to drink. Note, also Tokubetsu Honjozo-shu or "Special Honjozo-shu," which merely indicates more highly polished rice, or the use of very special sake rice.

Premium Sake -- Increases in quality, price, fragrance and complexity.

Table from John Gauntner at Sake World, recognized as the world's leading non-Japanese sake expert.

Although it is wrong to say that all futsūshu is bad and all of the top categories are good, in general, anything falling into the above six categories is going to be of a higher quality than that of regular Nihonshu. Much more than just how much milling the rice has had, these top grades are generally made with better quality ingredients, in particular the rice, and have undergone a lengthier more careful production. With the exception of Honjozu-shu (本醸逗酒) most Nihonshu within these categories would typically be served chilled in order to allow them to express their more subtle flavours. In particular the top four categories, collectively referred to as Ginjo-shu (吟醸酒), are often described as having tasting profiles similar to that of wine, in that they are often light and fruity. At the very highest level, Daiginjo-shu (大吟醸酒) is usually light, fragrant and often displays very complex or unusual tastes likes melon or peach. Furthermore, as the level of rice milling is required to be 50% or higher from the original grain, a process that is both expensive and time consuming, Daiginjo is often produced using superior rice, like that of Yamada Nishiki (山田錦) or Omachi (雄町). All of this results in a finished product that is so different from most futsūshu that it is difficult to even consider them the same type of beverage. However, this type is unfortunately not the image most people have when they imagine Nihonshu.

Consumer awareness, and the industry in general, is slowly changing though. In recent years, probably due to a drastic reduction in the number of breweries, makers of Nihonshu are becoming much more pro-active in their promotions. In particular, more and more brewers are beginning to explore new markets in places like the United Kingdom and the United States. One company in particular, Asahi Shuzo (旭酒造) from Yamaguchi prefecture, has been strongly shifting their focus to overseas markets with the hope of promoting premium sake outside of Japan. In fact 100% of their Nihonshu is produced using Yamada Nishiki rice and brewed to Junmai Daigingo standard. Furthermore, in 2014 the company opened their first overseas outlet in Paris where customers will be able to try, amongst other products, their trendy Dassai 23 (獺祭) that boasts, as the name would suggest, a Seimai Buai of just 23%. This type of overseas promotion is changing the perception of Nihonshu and how different it can taste.

From a consumer perspective, the early indications are that the demand is slowly shifting away from lower grade products towards premium Nihonshu, in particular Ginjo-shu. Whether or not this remains to be the case is something that only time will tell. However, there is no doubt that the industry is in transition. Renowned industry expert John Gauntner has noted that the level of Nihonshu being produced today is higher than it has ever been. The more people are exposed to this kind of product, the more appreciation for Nihonshu will surely grow. Alongside the recent growing popularity of Japanese cuisine, the opportunity is certainly there to revive the industry and open up new markets, something that can only be good for producers and consumers alike.

EPOK Reflections **

When I first arrived in Okayama I was surprised by the number of people who asked me "Why Okayama, why not Kyoto or Tokyo?" In truth, although I had never been to Okayama before, it was always my desired destination for my year abroad. At my home University in Edinburgh, I was fortunate enough to be able to consult with two previous Okadai students, one Japanese and the other Scottish. What they both had in common was the high regard they held for Okayama and the yearning they had to one day return. I made my decision based on these

recommendations and the fact that I never spoke to another sempai that seemed to convey the same enthusiasm for their host city as they did. After almost a year spent in Okayama, I can safely say that my decision to come here has been vindicated.

But what is it that I have found so enjoyable about life in Okayama as an Okadai student? Well to start with, in my own opinion, the city is beautiful. Whether it's been going a run along the Asahi river at sunset, a drink with friends along Nishigawa at night, or a nice stroll around Korakuen, I have constantly found nice parts of the city to enjoy. In regards to Okayama University, I was welcomed and made to feel at home right from the beginning. For example, not only did Okadai organise extremely helpful Residents Assistants to help all of the exchange students adjust to life in Japan, but also arranged for personnel tutors to help us with our studies and show us around Okayama. I was lucky enough to be assigned two fantastic tutors, both of whom I now consider close friends. Without them, I am sure my assimilation into Okayama life would not have been as easy or as much fun. And that leads me onto my final reason for enjoying my time in Okayama so much.

From what I have experienced, the people living, studying and working in Okayama are incredibly friendly. The best nights I have had here have been spent in one of Okayama's many fantastic Izakayas with people from various different nationalities and backgrounds. In my opinion, speaking with, and learning from, people from other cultures is the quickest and most fulfilling way to broaden the mind. My time in Okayama has been spent exclusively with such groups of people and I have on several occasions found myself to be the only one within a large group to have learnt English as my first language. I have in turn made many friends with people from various parts of the world and on reflection of my year abroad consider this to be the best thing about my time in Okayama. On returning to Scotland, I will of course be sure to pass on the message to my kohai, as my sempai did for me, about how great a place Okayama is.

The Globalised Self

Emily Abbott エミリー・アボット

Summary: 私たちのそれぞれの複雑なアイデンティティ。現在、グローバリゼーションにつれて、国が他の国との関係を養うことだけではなく、日常的に人が外国人と友達になることも普段になりつつある。つまり、国がグローバルになると伴い、私たちのアイデンティティもグローバルになりつつある。インターネットや留学で外国人の友達と会い、友達の国のほうが自分の気持ちに合うことや、移住し、新しい生活を始め、生まれた国の文化を他の国の文化と交ぜ合わせることなどもある。

　不快な文化の交ぜ合わせもある。無理やり自分の元の文化を捨てさせられる場合もあり、そのようなことの結果は複雑な（または矛盾の）アイデンティティだが、前の例と違い、切ないのである。

　楽しいことも、切ないことも含め、このエッセイでは、この現在の豊かなグローバルの私たちのアイデンティティを探り、説明する。結局、我々は異文化をやさしく触れ、外国人と楽しく話し合い、最も「相手は私と同じ、人間」ということを意識しながら、平和を進んで、本当にグローバルの世界とグローバルの自分を育てたら・一緒に応援し、がんばったらいいと考える。

If I were to ask you to describe yourself, to list a set of qualities that describe you, what kind of things would you think of? What is the first thing that comes to mind? Your personality (shy, energetic etc.)? Your gender? Your nationality? Your job? Perhaps your hobbies or interests? All of those things are essential when it comes to defining how we see ourselves, but in our increasingly international world, the level of certainty we feel in our own national identities is, I think, being challenged. In my time at Okayama university I have come to understand more and more what it means to engage in cultural exchange, and I can say with absolute certainty that the strong sense of belonging that I held in my heart towards England before I came to Japan is far less strong now that I have spent almost a year here. In my classes here too, we have discussed deeply the many complex issues surrounding what it means to belong to a particular country. Thus I have chosen the topic of the 'Globalised Self' for my essay and presentation. In this essay I shall define national identity, elaborate on what it means to have a national identity, and then describe how things such as the internet are helping to expand our identities such that it is possible to feel attached to the cultures of many countries. In this way, I hope to not only explain what I have learnt in class during my time here at Okayama but also to explore even more deeply the issues surrounding one's sense of national identity by adding my own thoughts and experiences as well as those of more established theorists who have explored this issue already.

The phrase 'national identity' describes a personal sense of belonging to a particular state or nation; this feeling of belonging may match your citizenship status, or you may feel you belong to a country of which you are not a citizen. National identity is defined by "an awareness of difference" and a "feeling of recognition of 'we' and 'they'" (Lee, 2000, p. 29). This feeling of community is essential to national identity. People can gain a sense of community from being in things such as sports clubs or through being an employee at a particular company, or may feel a sense of community through being in the same age group or being the same gender. National identity is, however, more complex than this. National identity does not arise from connecting with just one aspect of a country's culture; it arises through feeling an *overall* sense that you are similar to other people in the country and that you share important cultural ideas, or that you otherwise fit in with the makeup of the country in some way. This may or may not be tied to ethnicity. In Japan's case, 'being Japanese' is often used to mean

'being ethnically Japanese'; this is true to the extent that there are essentially no statistics on Japan's ethnic makeup as Japanese nationality is conflated with Japanese ethnicity by the Ministry of Justice. In the case of England, however, generally race matters little; there are black English people, there are English people with family members from China and India and there are English people with heritage from all over Europe. The defining quality of their 'English-ness' is simply that they live in England now. This is especially true if they have an English accent; in that case in most people's minds there is no doubt that the person speaking is definitely English.

When we examine the situation now, it can be seen that the older ways of defining nationality are gradually being eroded by the international connections formed between people over the internet and through things such as *ryuugaku*/international student programs. Social media connects people who years ago perhaps would never have been able to meet each other. Someone in America can have a face-to-face conversation with someone in Australia via webcam, and people can learn foreign languages by partnering up with other people on websites such as lang8 or, as previously mentioned, through going on international exchange programs or meeting students who have come to their own country on such a program. Merely meeting people from other countries would not be enough to change one's sense of national identity, but the fact that people form these international connections from such an early age (due to the profusion of social media) and that these friends can be lifelong, means that the people and places you have an emotional attachment to may be less your local surroundings and more those of your international friends. Even in cases where your sense of belonging is not *drastically* changed by knowing people from many different countries, it may still be broadened such that you do not develop the sense that only people from your own nation can understand you.

So far I have only discussed social media and international exchange study, but the truth is that these are more likely to be ways in which *younger* people develop international connections. Globalisation of identity has been true for people long before the proliferation of the internet. Immigration, for example, has played a major part in restructuring the ethnic makeup of countries around the world for centuries. People who move to an entirely different country to make a living for themselves are doubtless going to have identities that encompass more than just their birth nation's dominant culture. For instance, a Japanese wife of an American who works in Japan is going to have a different sense of her place globally than an Japanese woman who has only lived in Japan and has only had Japanese partners. A more drastic example would be if a Japanese woman moved to America to work and found an American partner there. If she had children with her partner, then her children may potentially not grow up speaking Japanese fluently. This is especially true for a lot of Japanese Americans whose parents had to avoid speaking Japanese in order to avoid persecution by the American government during WW2; on top of this, during the same period, when the Japanese living in America were forced into internment camps they were denied the right to engage in their traditional culture. In that kind of situation, the children would undeniably have Japanese heritage but would grow up knowing only American culture and/or language. What, then, would their sense of national identity be like?

Even in cases where someone born in one country is raised in another country or culture by choice, their sense of identity would likely be complex. The famous author Hideo Levy is a man born in America but raised largely in Hong Kong, and educated in Japan. He won the prize for Japanese literature and is fluent in Japanese, but has his origins in both America and Hong Kong. He has written extensively about the complexities of mixed identity. In class I studied a piece called イ・ヤンジからの電話 which detailed a phone call he had from the zainichi Korean author I Yanji. I Yanji is ethnically Korean, but was raised in Japan, and thus her first language is Japanese. In the piece, Levy discussed

how I Yanji and he talked about the difficulties of having complex and contradictory national identities. In the piece this experience was described as a 豊かな矛盾. The 'mujun' was how I Yanji identified so strongly as Korean and yet was more at home in Japan, speaking Japanese.

Some countries are defined by the diversity of their citizenship. Hawaii, for example, has had immigrants from Portugal, China, Japan, America and the United Kingdom. People in Hawaii define themselves less by what particular race they are and more by their locality - the fact that they live in Hawaii. It is more common to be 'part' something, such as 'Japanese and American' rather than just purely one race, for example simply 'Japanese'. Diversity of citizenship is becoming a reality for more and more countries, including Japan, a nation historically defined by it's racial purity. Thus, as people's realities become more culturally diverse, so too does their sense of national identity. Saying that one is 'British' now means less that one is culturally British and thus exemplifies British Culture and more that one simply resides in the United Kingdom.

In my time at Okayama university, my attachment to my British identity has waned, even though my homesickness and desire to physically be in England has at times been very strong. There are many aspects of Japanese culture that I identify with or appreciate and will miss upon my return to my home country. Through my classes and through things such as L Cafe I have seen how much cultural diversity can be experienced once the language barrier is broken down. Complexity of national and cultural identity is, as we've seen, not always a pleasant experience, but the act of learning a language and connecting with different cultures by choice is, I think, something very valuable. I am glad that it is becoming both easier and more normal to do.

In conclusion, there are many ways in which one's sense of national identity might become complicated or internationalised. Some of those ways are pleasant to experience, such as having friends from another country or going on *ryuugaku*, and others are very *un*pleasant, such as having your native culture forcibly kept away from you, or being in a position where you cannot connect with the culture of your family heritage. National identity has been diverse ever since humankind has been able to travel across the ocean, but in our modern world the speed at which idenity can diversify has increased. Our aim now as human beings should be to help foster this diversity in healthy ways that both respect each other's native cultures while creating new understandings - understandings that can only occur through opening our hearts and minds to the abundant variety of culture and experience that exists in our world.

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EPOK Reflections ***

The reason I wrote my essay about globalised identity is that because, without a doubt, my experience studying here in Okayama has completely changed my sense of who I am. It's hard to choose just one or two things I've enjoyed, because every single aspect of my time in Japan has truly been a blessing. I've had some wonderful times with the friends I've made here, both Japanese and otherwise. The classes too have always been interesting, and I'm very grateful for

the kindness of the teachers. I'm also grateful for how supportive the staff at Global Partners have been. I couldn't have asked for a better environment to learn about Japan and experience Japanese culture, and I will recommend Okayama to every friend I know who is considering studying in Japan. Even above and beyond the incredible time I've had here in terms of the studying itself, there really is so much to enjoy in Okayama-shi (not to mention Kurashiki and the beautiful countryside of Okayama-ken generally). It's been a privilege to be able to go into town and visit Kourakuen on weekends, and also to be surrounded by so much history, perhaps the most notable being the legend of Momotarou.

As you can see, it's hard to narrow down what I've loved about my experience to just one or two things, but I do want to say that the existence of L Cafe, the help from the RAs at the international dormitory, and the consistent support from staff have all been especially important to me, and have helped me have both a fun *and* educational time at Okayama. Thank you all. My experience here as a ryuugakusei is something I will doubtless treasure and remember for my entire life.

An investigation into the social and cultural influences on gendered language in Japan

Sally Forshaw サリー・フォーショー

Summary 要旨：この 論文 は、話題 が 日本語 で 性別 に 分けられる 言葉 だ。つまり、性別 役割 の 言葉 だ。特 に、社会 と 共 に 変化 していると 言う焦点 を 絞る。この 話題 を 選んだ 理由 は、言語学者 と 女権論者 として、興味 があるからだ。英語 で、そんな 性別 役割 言葉 はあまりそれと 分からないで、日本語 で 社会 の 地位 に 関係 があるかどうか 知りたいので、この 話題 を 選んだ。

　まず、性別 役割 の 言葉 の 起源 を 取り調べる。女性語 は 元々女生徒 の 言葉 で、成り下がった 話方 だったけど、政府 と 記録媒体 で、地位 がすっかり 変わった。

　そして、女性解放論 と 言語 変化 の 関係 を 論じる。男女雇用機会均等法 で、女性 の 機会 が 広がった。しかし、職場 では、まだ 女性 差別 があるので、同列 の 地位 で 扱われるように、多くの 働く女性 が「男性語」と 言う話し 方 を 使わなくてはいけないと 感じている。

　その 後、若者文化 が 多くに 性別 役割 言葉 の 変化 を 左右 しているので、若者文化 を 取り調べる。若者 の 経験 と 変わっている 意見 が 言葉 の 使い 方 に 影響 を 及ぼしていると 言う現象 を 取り調べる。その 上、草食男子 と 肉食女子 の 両方 について 論じる。

　最後 に、言語 は 社会 と 密接 な 関係 があると 結論 づける。

In this essay, I will discuss gendered language in Japan, and how it has changed over time alongside social and cultural developments.

The topic of Japanese gendered language is of particular interest because, through language, people are able to present certain images of themselves, and the Japanese language enables this to extend to perceptions of gender, too.[1]

Furthermore, speech styles in Japanese are closely related to perceived social power due to the vertical structure of relations. This structure positions "male" speech patterns as powerful and assertive[2], and "female" speech patterns as socially powerless[3].

When discussing Japanese gendered language, one cannot help but mention pronouns, as they are one of the most noticeable examples. First person pronouns such as「あたし」and「私」are considered to be more feminine and polite – though「私」is more gender neutral, especially in formal language – and first person pronouns such as「僕」and「俺」are considered more masculine and self-assertive[4]. In addition, males are assumed to use more assertive particles such as「ぞ」and「ぜ」, and females are assumed to use more hedges and tag questions such as「ね」.[5] The link between the gender and perceived assertiveness of these language features entails the expected behaviour of males and females.

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[1] Brass, 2006
[2] Schonfeld, 1999
[3] Ueno, 2004
[4] Brass, 2006
[5] Brass, 2006

However, gendered language is only truly present in casual speech[6]. Formal speech is more polite, and what would be considered feminine, but is used by all genders, so there is little division in its use.

Furthermore, gendered language is not a nationwide phenomenon. In regions such as Ibaraki, there is no division of speech styles based on gender. Since the area is mostly agricultural, and all genders work together, everyone speaks in the same way to reinforce the spirit of cooperation and equality[7]. Gendered language seems to be more prominent in more urbanised areas, so there must be reasons other than inherent gender divides.

In order to understand the gendered language of Japan, we must look at its history.

For the aristocracy, the gendered division of language use began long ago, in the Heian period. Writing practices were divided such that men used 漢字 and women used 女手, an early name for ひらがな. The thinking behind this was that women were not intelligent enough to use 漢字, and were expected to disassociate themselves from "men's affairs". The division affected males, too, as those who wanted to write 日記 and use 女手 had to pretend to be female in their writings, to avoid the discrimination of others[8]. However, since this division of language took place only within the aristocracy, the working classes of Japan still had no such gendered language use.

More class-wide gendered language began in the Meiji era, originating from the speech styles of schoolgirls. Many male intellectuals criticised schoolgirl speech, describing it as lowbrow and vulgar[9], in contrast to their high opinion of their own speech as rational and ideal[10]. However, the treatment of schoolgirl speech changed as the Westernisation of Japan began, and people began to search for traditional Japanese aspects to maintain their cultural identity independent of Western influence. It was then decided that the speech styles of those schoolgirls was, in fact, a traditional Japanese form, and so it became re-established as the ideal way for women to speak.

The media, in particular, idealised this way of speaking[11] by using it regularly so that women would hear this speech style and imitate it. The government also used it as a means to control women and make them more obedient[12], as they used the speech style to encourage submissive behaviour.

Even now, the media uses gendered language to influence the public. The language used in certain pieces of media changes based on the gender demographic. For example, women's magazines tend to use fewer proper nouns than men's magazines, implying that women know less about matters such as politics[13].

In addition to this form of control, many older men in Japan are reluctant to accept that women speak in any manner other than their idealised one, as they fear how it challenges tradition[14] – which, incidentally, is what gives those men power over women. Since many positions of power and influence in Japan are still held by old males, these men have more influence on media representation of gender and language than they should, and are able to use it to force their opinions on others.

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[6] C, Koichi
[7] Brass, 2006
[8] Sasaki, M.
[9] C, Koichi
[10] Inoue, 2003
[11] Ko, 2009
[12] Brass, 2006
[13] Brass, 2006
[14] Brass, 2006

However, in modern Japan, women, as those of other genders, have more autonomy in choosing their speech styles, and often do so based on the context. For example, they may use more formal, "feminine" language if they are speaking to someone they do not know well[15], to create distance. So it can be seen how it is not gender alone that dictates speech styles, and that the context can change how someone chooses to speak.

The language of females in Japan has changed much due to the empowerment of women in society. Since the establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, more women have been entering higher education and employment[16], making them more able to express equal social status to males. However, women still face a certain degree of harassment in workplaces, and so often choose to speak in more "masculine" ways to secure equal respect[17]. Additionally, women in authority are consciously choosing how they speak to ensure respect from male subordinates and co-workers[18].

There are still many issues in Japan affecting gender equality and gendered language. A wage gap between genders still exists, and gender stereotypes and expectations are still prevalent in society[19]. In recent years, media reports about women have been known to include irrelevant, sexist details such as the marriage status of the woman, or how well they cook[20]. Women still have to contend with these issues and prejudices against them.

However, things are changing. More women are travelling, gathering experiences, and being exposed to strong female role models; young females are currently the most influential power in pop culture, deciding what is and is not popular[21]; and adult women are making the decision to marry and have children later in life, in order to further pursue their education and careers[22]. All these trends indicate the growing autonomy of females in Japan.

In terms of the changes to language, women are using language to empower themselves[23], though there are multiple ways in which they are achieving this. Some women use 「君」, a pronoun originally used by men to degrade women, to address males, positioning themselves as equal to or above men. 敬語 can also be a tool for social power. 敬語 is mainly used for politeness[24], but still holds a power in it in the expression of social distance and its use as a persuasive tool. Whether or not 敬語 is used is dependent on the context for most women.

Age also impacts gender and language use. In recent times, young people have had more money and free time to pursue their interests and experience new things than ever before. With that, and the growing influence from overseas, young people in Japan have a wider range of experiences open to them, and are being exposed to different cultures, opinions and concepts. They have been thinking

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[15] Brass, 2006
[16] Brass, 2006
[17] Sasaki, M.
[18] Brass, 2006
[19] Brass, 2006
[20] Gottlieb, 2006
[21] Schonfeld, 1999
[22] Brass, 2006
[23] C, Koichi
[24] Brass, 2006

more critically about traditional values, and gender roles have been breaking down as these young people see new options open to them.

One of the ways these changes have manifested themselves in language is through 若い者の言葉, the speech styles of young people in Japan. 若い者の言葉 has what would be considered an assertive, "masculine" quality, though users of it do not consider it to be 男性語, language used by males [25]. More young females are using self-assertive pronouns, and much slang generally considered to be used only by males is being used by all genders[26], at least in certain dialects. For example, 「さみい」being used rather than 「寒い」has been considered a "masculine" trait, though in 岡山弁, this usage is not gender-specific, at least amongst younger speakers.

The change in gender perceptions and roles in young people in Japan is also evident in the dual phenomena of 草食男子 and 肉食女子, which sees the reversing of stereotypical gender roles. 草食男子, or "herbivore males", are less masculine and sexual than previous generations of males. They tend to be more feminist in mind-set, with some female friends and less inclination to sexually harass or pursue women[27]. 肉食女子, or "carnivore females", on the other hand, are more assertive than previous generations of females, and have more sexual agency free of shame, with many actively pursuing males of romantic interest[28]. Phenomena such as these indicate how genders are blurring and more people are expressing their personalities more than their genders.

In summary, gendered language is actually relatively new to the Japanese language, outside of the upper classes, as is the concept of gender divided roles. However, the media and government have made gendered language seem like a traditional part of the Japanese shared identity. In this way, the media and societal expectations reinforce gendered language[29].

In Japanese society over the past few decades, there has been a rise in female empowerment and the social status of women in society. Old gender stereotypes are breaking down[30] as youths of all genders are faced with a wider range of opportunities and lifestyles. Alongside this, the Japanese language is gradually becoming less gender divided, though the change is still very slow[31], as with most societal changes.

To conclude, language has a powerful influence on people's mind-sets, and people's mind-sets have a powerful influence on language. The media uses language to influence and control[32], but the Japanese society is challenging this and changing the definitions of gender and gendered language.

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EPOK Reflections **

Before coming to Okayama, I was very anxious. I had never travelled so far or been away from home for so long. I had no idea what this year would be like. I had not even chosen Okayama University, but rather had been placed here by my home university, so I really did not know what to expect.

But Okayama University has been so welcoming, and I now feel that Okayama was the perfect place to come to. I feel that I have really been able to experience Japan, and have met so many different people while here.

My confidence in Japanese language has increased greatly, and the whole experience has improved me as a person. I will miss being here, and will definitely have to return one day.

Okinawa and mainland Japan: A turbulent relationship

Nina Evelin Schulz　ニナ・エヴェリン・シュルツ

Summary: 何年も前から現在まで、沖縄と内地の関係が「微妙」なものだと聞いてました。「微妙」という関係はどのような関係でしょうか。どうして「微妙」という関係が生まれたのでしょうか。なぜなら沖縄と内地は「別の米軍基地を建てるのは悪い」という意見と「別の米軍基地を建てるのは良い」という反対の意見が左右します。内地の人々は「良い」というような意見をもっています。その一方で、大部分の沖縄の人々の意見は「悪い」だそうです。理由は二つあるそうです。次の米軍基地の建設する場所は沖縄の「大浦湾」と知られており、沖縄県は生物多様性のために大浦湾を保護しているので、基地建設に反対しています。もう一つの理由として日本全体の米軍基地の割合は沖縄に75％となっており、大部分が沖縄に集中することです。さらに沖縄の面積20％が基地に占められています。

　本土に住むほとんどの人と沖縄の一部の人は、より多くの軍事基地の存在が良いと信じています。その主張の一つは、それらの場所は失業者のレベルが高く、すでに経済的に不安定な島のために新しい仕事の機会を提供することです。沖縄は日本で最も貧しい県の一つであると言われています。そのため、それが最終的な決定にするのは難しいですし、議論は続きます。

The Ryukyu history is long, the "Ancient Ryukyus generally refers to the period from the 12th century, at the beginning of the Gusuku (Castle) Period, through to the establishment of the Ryukyu Kingdom, to the invasion of the Ryukyus by the Shimazu Clan from Kyushu in 1609."①. At first, after the ending of the hunter-gatherer lifestyle and the beginning of a lifestyle that depended on agriculture, each region had it's own rulers "regional chieftains, called Aji"①. They "built castles, called Gusuku, for fortresses and struggles for overall political power"① and thus began the Gusuku Period mentioned before.

Later, by the "14th century three great houses had developed and Okinawa was divided into three centers of power; the south, called Nanzan, the central area, called Chuzan, and the north, called Hokuzan"① by that time all parts started trading with China and therefore started to gain more economical power. By the 15th century, the ruler of the south Sho Hashi, conquered and united all the kingdom "The Ryukyu Kingdom was born."①. The Kingdom was prosperous thanks to its "built up trading relationships with China, East Asia, Korea, Japan, and other neighboring Asian and East Asian

nations. This era has been called The Great Age of Trade."①. The kingdom also paid tribute to China in order to ensure a good and steady commercial relation and in exchange of China's protection.

In the 17th century, after the unification of Japan, "The Shimazu Clan of Satsuma began to approach the Ryukyus with territorial ambitions"①. Ryukyu kingdom having close to no battle experience, had no choice but to surrender to the Satsuma Clan's power. The Ryukyu Kingdom was allowed to exist as such "Facing up to the reality of Satsuma domination, they tried to save the Ryukyu Kingdom through policies based on cooperation"①, so that the Japanese could trade with China, but tributes had to be paid to Japan as well. With that cooperation came another Era of development and prosperity to the kingdom that "actively absorbed culture from Japan and China. Harmonizing the diverse cultural influences from Japan and China developed most of the Ryukyuan culture's rich distinctiveness."①, that we still know today.

Unfortunately, by the 19th century, that harmony was broken. The contact and exchange with western people returned, "and a modern state was established. As part of that process, the Ryukyu Kingdom was incorporated into Japan and the monarchy that had ruled the islands for 500 years was dissolved."①. And thus began the turbulent relationship between mainland Japan and Okinawa. There was a "difference in systems and customs"① and "a deeply rooted resentment of the old ruling class and the Meiji government in Tokyo"①. That same government decided to implement the "Ancient Customs Preservation Policy"♭. That policy was the big cause of Okinawa "falling behind in modernization in comparison to other prefectures"① because it demanded that "landholding system, taxation system, and local government system were all to remain as they were with no great or sudden reforms.". From that point on the Okinawan people started to fell hardships, they faced starvation and a economical panic, which made many migrate to mainland to work, for example, in factories, and where they suffered prejudice and discrimination.

After a long history of disagreement between the two parts, the current source of discord between Okinawa and mainland Japan, that is still alive and controversial, started after World War II. In the final stage of the War one of the most deadly battles happened in Okinawan territory, *the Battle of Okinawa*, that "has been called the largest sea-land-air battle in history. It is also the last battle of the Pacific War"② during which "More than 100,000 Okinawan civilians perish, with over 72,000 American and 100,000 Japanese casualties."②. Those casualties represented 20% of the Islands'

population, "Three months of desperate combat leave Okinawa a "vast field of mud, lead, decay, and maggots."②. After the US troops victory Okinawa fell into US occupation, and the construction of bases started due to the strategic value of the islands. Finally, after intense negotiation between Japan's and US governments a treaty was signed and in "May15, 1972. Still 25 years since the reversion to Japan, Okinawa, occupying only 1% of the land area of Japan, is the location of 75% of the U.S. military bases in Japan. There remain many issues concerning the bases."①.

US military bases are scattered throughout Japan, as one of the agreements signed between the two governments demanded that Japan absolved their military in exchange of US military protection. Of all the bases, 75% of them are located in Okinawa and occupying 20% of their territory. That by itself is already a source of discussion as Okinawa retains most of the burden of housing the bases. But the more serious protests began when the plan of closing a central base due to the increase of houses around it, and the construction of a new one in a different location, appeared. Also when serious incidents took place, such as the crash of a military's airplane into houses, killing people, and sexual assaults by service men. The main concern about the construction in a new location is the location itself. In 1996 it was decided the area where the new base would be built, "in Henoko and Oura Bay, famous for the lich coral reefs and seagrass beds."③, and therefore disturbs the rich and unique biodiversity that we can only find in that location, so the "two-decade-old bitter row over the relocation of the site drags on."④. There's also the desire of a reduction or even the extinction of military bases, due to the wishes of keeping Okinawa away from the war to avoid the same atrocities that happened in the past and "locals have blocked the move to relocate the base, insisting the facility should go off-island instead."④

Although a big percentage of Okinawa residents are against the presence of military bases, hiding behind the typical Japanese saying "しょうがない" (shouganai , meaning : it can't be helped) a big percentage of mainland residents believed that it is a "Necessary evil", and that there's no other choice but to accept due the protection provided by the military forces in the event of a war. Also, some of Okinawa resident back up that opinion because the military bases provide new job opportunity for the islanders when the island is still economically unstable and one the poorest prefectures of Japan.

In conclusion, the existence of military bases split the Japanese population's opinions and it's benefits and negatives outcomes are still debatable even after 2 decades of discussion, making it

hard to believe that the two, once upon a time unquestionably different cultures, will ever be able to truly come to a consensus.

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EPOK Reflections ***

Coming to Japan gave me the opportunity to look more deeply into the culture I admired since childhood. I believe that to truly know a country's culture, one must immerse itself, body and soul, into the same, and there's not better way to do so than visiting and living amidst that culture for a good amount of time. One year might seem like a fair amount of time to discover most of the Japanese culture, but now that my time in Japan is coming to an end I realize that there's still a lot to learn and to discover, and that one year is not even close enough, maybe not even a life time. One of the things that fascinated me the most was the history behind Japan's most exquisite prefecture, Okinawa. Before coming to Japan I had only heard of Okinawa in anime and to me they had a direct connection, as if they were one since the beginning of what is now called Japan. Finding and experiencing Okinawa made me feel that there's much more to learn, and motivated me to search and study the past, which is also important to understanding a culture. In general, coming to Japan, and specially coming to Okayama, an amazing city, not too big, not to small, gave me the opportunity to "try" different kind of people inserted in the same culture. The experience washed away any preconceived ideas of Japan and made me feel like I know a little bit more of the world, and most of all made me feel welcome and that I can find my place anywhere I go.

Kawaii or *kowai:* Japan's cuteness craze

Emily Grace Zwart エミリー・ズワルト

Summary: 西洋の世界では「かわいい」と言うことは人気があります。例えば、ヘロキテイやサンリオなどの日本のかわいいものは良く知られています。でも、日本に来て以来こんなにたくさんかわいいものをまだ見ませんでした。どこに行ってもかわいいものを見えます。はじめにちょっとびっくりした。かわいいキャラクターやカルチャーが好きですけど、よく「この多くのかわいいものは本当に必要かしら？」と思いました。警察官のマスコットから岡山の猫たま電車まで、どういう意味がありますか？その上キャラクター意外に、アクセサリーやファッションの中には色々なトレンドがあります。「かわいい」は子供の時を思い出して、愛の気持ちを感じられているろと分かってきました。それに、日本では大人になると、厳しい社会人の生活に入ります。でも、そのような生活の反対に、かわいいものは短い救済だと思います。しかし、否定的な面もあります。例えば、かわいい子供のように振る舞ったら、よく情勢はよわいイメージがあるかもしれません。

Kawaii culture is everywhere in Japan. Both young and old, the Japanese have an appetite for products that come under the category *kawaii*, meaning cute. Kawaii covers a wide range of styles, from sweet innocence to kitschy cuteness. Public vehicles come in the shape of adorable animals, covering the country's trains and even airplanes; bento boxes are adorned in accessories, all the while girls dressed in maid outfits can be found serving bear-shaped pancakes. Even "macho" institutions such as the police are represented by rather "un-macho" mascots. These examples of kawaii culture have certainly proliferated on a global scale.

Japan's remarkably cute police mascots

Kawaii refers to the sweet features of children or baby animals, or simply characteristics which foster feelings of love. The word is also used for odd, cool, loveable and even humorous things. Despite the wide range of connotations, kawaii will always have a positive meaning. In Japan, young girls crave cute things as much as they want to be kawaii themselves. Instead of wanting to look sexy, they tend to yearn for the cute kawaii look. Kawaii is also embraced in the form of accessories, make-up and clothing, usually resulting in multi-coloured hair and layered pastel outfits.

The wide scope of kawaii culture can be attributed to packaging and product design, as seen in manga, anime, and character design, which are the main creative methods that have contributed to this aesthetic. As such, over the years designers have picked up on this obsession, which has resulted in banal things such as bus stops to be shaped like strawberries.

At the head of such creations is Hello Kitty, the queen of kawaii. The feline icon is so loved that Sanrio sent a figurine of her aboard the Hodoyoshi-3 satellite for her 40th anniversary. Hello Kitty's popularity is thought to originate from her simple, blank expression, resulting from her lack of a mouth. It is thought that the success of a top kawaii character (also such as *Rilakumma*, *Tarepanda*) is often dictated by its imperfections; things that are too perfect are deemed cold and artificial.

As recent as it may seem, the Japanese have actually often leaned towards and respected inanimate objects. For example, in traditional ceremonies and in Shinto blessings, *kokeshi* dolls are burnt at shrines. These figurines from the Edo era have simple designs, and are often credited as the original inspiration behind kawaii characters. In more recent history, the emergence of *kawaii* in the 1970s also began with the start of a unique, though often chastised movement in writing. High school teens began to write in childishly rounded characters, overly punctuated with random English words, cartoon hearts and the like for no specific reason. Remarkably, those that used *maru-ji* ("round writing"), were mostly older teenagers. This meant it was a style they chose to adopt consciously, and not because of any real inability to write correctly: the childish writing was completely on purpose.

Kobitozukan

From then on, kawaii concepts have evolved drastically. Recently, hints of horror rival the traditional cute aesthetic. A prominent example is Gloomy, a pink bear often depicted violently attacking his owner. Alternatively, other concepts such as *kimo-kawaii*, a mix of cute and *kimoi*, meaning weird, or gross. Creepy-cute encapsulates things such as Kobitozukan, strange creatures with the outside skins of mushrooms, peaches, and plants, but on the inside faces of old men. However, it is these developments that keep kawaii fresh, adding to the culture's ever-expanding and sometimes questionably fickle fan-base.

Kawaii does not only include products, mascots, and cutesy characters, but also includes a way of life. In the West, one often associates adulthood with the gift of freedom and independence. In Japan however, it is commonly viewed as a period of difficult, never-ending work, all to fit in to the *shakaijin* world and uphold the responsibilities to one's employer and family. In doing so, freedom and individuality are all too often set aside in order to follow the rules. Nonetheless, aside from children and high-schoolers, many find a sense of relief in kawaii. It represents a brief, but acceptable reprieve from the hardships of adulthood and brings back the appeal of childhood. For example, despite their sometimes serious and heavily business-like attire, one can often spot a salary man sporting a mobile phone with a "cutesy" charm dangling from it. Some may think of this as either surprising or endearing, but it is also mostly unquestioned. It seems kawaii has become such an inherent of Japanese culture that it is creeping in to places one wouldn't usually expect. Building relationships with kawaii characters fills a void from social anxiety and creates a connection that enables them to be part of something in which they know they can be accepted, or even as a form of rebellion against the expectations that come in adulthood.

On the other hand, this attachment to all things kawaii can be seen as detrimental. Japan often presumes women in particular to be, in a general way, kawaii, due to the expectations of the country's mainly patriarchal society. For instance, within the male-dominated office work-place, women are often expected to comply to their male colleagues by behaving passively – and being submissive, of course, is an integral part of being kawaii. Actual children possess kawaii qualities by nature, but the exaggerated features and self-infantilisation that kawaii girls adopt in order to appear artificially "cute" are often highly theatrical. One may argue that rather than being perceived as capable, rational, and powerful people, being kawaii only fuels a world already laden with misogyny more reason to condescend to women, simply because they do not behave or look like adults. On one hand, one may see this image of kawaii as not really about being a sweet cutesy girl, but rather doing everything to stunt growth in order to remain a girl. Furthermore, though a woman may dress or behave like a child, she will still have the physiological features of an adult (breasts, wider hips) which combined with their kawaii appearance can contribute to the sexualisation of children. Even though the kawaii look was never intended to be "sexy", it has certainly become fetishized with the "schoolgirl" pornographic motif being the most obvious scenario. This is why we may ask ourselves whether the kawaii movement can be considered as an escape, or even a form of rebellion against the expectations of adulthood, or rather another vehicle for gender inequality.

Nonetheless, the future trajectory of kawaii remains to be seen, though whether it is super-girly fashion, intricate food design or even architecture, this is an area that attracts some of Japan's most talented creators. Since its beginning, the culture continues to be a celebration of femininity, eccentricity, and sometimes oddity, but always with an outgoing positive energy.

EPOK Reflections **

As my final semester finally, and almost unbelievably, comes to an end, I have realised what an important role the EPOK program played in my year abroad. Without the option to enrol in the EPOK program, a part of me doubts that I would have ever come to Okayama to study, let alone visit. This, of course, would have been the greatest shame as I firmly believe Okayama University is a truly wonderful institution for students seeking to study abroad. The EPOK program opened up countless opportunities for my classmates and I to immerse ourselves in Japan: we took our language learning to the highest level it has ever been, we absorbed Okayama's sights and sounds, made the most of everything Japan had to offer, and we fully embraced our year abroad.

Not only were we able to deepen our knowledge of the Japanese language, but the EPOK program also allowed us to continue our study of other subjects. Though taking part in language classes was vital to our year abroad, I believe that the chance to partake in culture classes was equally important. In my case, studying classes and topics such as "Family and Gender" allowed us to delve in to aspects of Japan that our language classes would not have normally been able to offer us. The class that I particularly enjoyed the most was without a doubt "Study of Japan". This class gave us many opportunities to discover various and initially unknown parts of Okayama, and delve deeper in to Japanese culture. Thanks to the university's pre-arranged

travel facilities, it made exploring our surroundings much easier and less daunting, especially for new students. Not only that, I know that I, personally, discovered and learned about things that I had never heard of before, such as Bizen-yaki for instance. Furthermore, I had always wanted to visit Hiroshima, so taking the trip with my university friends in an educational environment was a highlight for me. Study of Japan was a wholly enjoyable class which I would recommend to any student, and for which I owe thanks to EPOK for including it in its program.

Finally, and without wanting to sound trivial, I truly believe that the EPOK bursary was a highly positive factor of the program. I believe without a doubt that it is thanks to EPOK's monetary support that we were able to make the most of our stay. Taking part in certain activities, sight-seeing and travelling are things any year abroad student wishes to do while staying in a foreign country. Unfortunately, cost can be a hindrance. In fact, many of my co-students from East Anglia who were stationed to other Japanese universities were often unable to do so, purely because of monetary issues. I still feel incredibly fortunate to have had such a fantastic chance to travel around the country (even its surrounding countries!) and enjoy Japan to the full.

Gender Distinctions within the Japanese Language

日本語 におけるジェンダー化 される 言葉

Vicky McGhie ヴィッキー・マッギー

Summary: This research project looks into the gender differences within in the Japanese language. The primary focus of my research was on the different words that each gender uses in Japanese, and if someone other than that of the default gender the word is assigned to uses said words, if it has any negative connotations attached to its usage. The research I carried out was through the form of questionnaires, and yielded some very interesting results. I looked at the history of women's language throughout the years in Japan, in terms of how it developed, how the Western world effected it, and how it is used in today's society. I go into detail about the different pronouns that Japanese speakers are expected to use, and the images associated with the use of these pronouns. I look into uses of these pronouns in real speech, music, and anime, and also briefly mention the use of sentence ending particles in reference to gender. I carried out a small amount of research in the form of questionnaires, and compiled the answers given into separate graphs which can be found at the bottom of this report.

日本語 は 現在 でもジェンダー化 される 言葉 はまだたくさんあり、場合 により 自分 の 性別 に 適当 なジェンダー化 される 言葉 を 使 わなければ 困 ることがある。しかし、日本語 で 伝 えるジェンダー化 される 言葉 はだんだん、どの 性別 でも 使 えるようになりつつある。だが、日本文化 の 変化 として 嫌 だと 思 う 人 もいるかもしれない。

     In this essay, I will explore the distinctions between genders in Japanese. This topic is of interest to me because as a second language learner of Japanese, it is hard to grasp the concept of different genders having to use separate words constantly, in fear of being ridiculed. Another point of interest is that this gendered way of speaking is almost never used in the written language, and I wanted to find out why exactly that might be. I believe through my research of this topic, I received a greater insight into Japanese society (in terms of politeness and how language changes through the generations), and also how the language works and is used in daily life by native Japanese speakers.

     In the Japanese language, there is a distinct difference in the way both males and females speak. The genders use different words, pitch intonation, and even final particles. Many years ago, the gender differences in the language were a lot more prominent than they are nowadays, and the more traditional way that females were expected to speak has become used less and less (Lingualift, 2014). This way of speaking was known as 'women's language,' and was seen as the epitome of female communication (Brass, H., 2014). This women's language was characterised by the use of female only expressions, such as using the polite forms of words, a high-pitched tone and honorific prefixes (Fujimura-Fanselow, K., Kameda, A., 1995). Compared to English, females do have a different speech pattern to that of males, however we don't really have 'polite forms' of words, so there isn't much of a difference between their speech, unlike in Japanese.

     It is said that Japanese women's language developed sometime around the 1800s, and that before then, "[…] differences in speech patterns were based on social status, not gender." ⸢Ko, K.,

2009). Originally the women's language was seen as vulgar and it was said to have originated from lower-class citizens in Japan (Ko, K., 2009), however it was later on in the Meiji Era (which was from 1868-1912) that the women's language began to be seen as something to use in everyday life by women, as it showed people that the women could be seen as a good wife and a good mother, a concept otherwise known as 'ryousai kenbo' (Ko, K., 2009). It was used in magazines around that time, as well as lots of other media outlets by women, which in turn encouraged other women to use said language (Ko, K., 2009). The speech patterns were then seen to be something used by the middle-class, instead of the previously mentioned lower-class (Ko, K., 2009). Another reason the women's way of speaking became popular was because of the influence of Western countries making their way to Japan (in terms of fashion etc), and the Japanese people wanted to protect their culture – one way of doing this was to keep the distinct way that men and women speak, as this wasn't seen in Western languages, and it was a way to keep Japan unique, as well as preserving their culture (Ko, K., 2009).

During my research, I found that Japanese women generally tend to have their names end with the kanji 「子」, meaning 'child,' and that this signifies the child-like qualities within women, which is something to be desired (Schonfeld, A., 1999). In comparison, no male names and a small percentage of family names ended with this kanji (Schonfeld, A., 1999). Female Japanese names also tend to have more delicate meanings (e.g. flower, beautiful, pure), where-as male names take the roles of being active (e.g. strong, smart, big), and in turn reflect Japanese society's way of thinking, putting women in the passive role, and men in a higher status (Schonfeld, A., 1999).

Moving onto the actual components of the Japanese language that the different genders use (as briefly mentioned earlier), in relation to how women speak – it is said that they are believed "…to speak more politely and indirectly than men, and use more standard forms and prescriptively correct grammar." (Brass, H., 2014). This is seen in the way that women tend to use the 「です」 form, instead of the short-form 「だ」, even though 「です」 isn't a short form (hence not really a way to speak to friends or people that may be close to you), and is considered the standard polite form that you would use when speaking to strangers or people in a higher-ranking position than yourself (TV Tropes, 2014). For men however, this is the opposite, and they prefer to use the 「だ」 copula rather than 「です」 (TV Tropes, 2014). In my opinion, I think that 「です」 sounds more feminine than the 「だ」 copula, as 「だ」 sounds rather harsh, and when I was learning hiragana for the first time (the dakuten and handakuten), the dakuten sound changes were described as being 'harsher' sounding, and this has stuck in my head since then, hence why I feel that 「だ」 sounds harsher and in turn more masculine than 「です」, as the 「です」 has the character 「す」 to lessen the harshness, where-as 「だ」 is by itself. Another way that women's speech is different to men's is that they tend to use honorific prefixes more often, such as "o" or "go" (e.g. お金, お弁当, ご主人), however it is said that older women tend to use these prefixes more often (Brass, H., 2014). The most prominent difference in speech between males and females, however, is that of the personal pronoun. Male Japanese speakers tend to use the personal pronouns 「僕」 or 「俺」. Female Japanese speakers tend to use the personal pronoun 「あたし」 or 「私」, with 「私」 being the default Standard Japanese that all non-native speakers learn to describe oneself – myself and a friend of mine from Canada discussed the teaching of Japanese, and that 「私」 is the only personal pronoun we learnt in our home countries when studying Japanese, and I was wondering why this might be, however I think it may just be because we learn Standard Japanese (東京弁), however in my Japanese class at

Okayama University, 「僕_{ぼく}」 was mentioned and that only males use it, so I am still unsure about the reasoning for not learning it outside of Japan. Even with these pronouns, there is a politeness factor to consider. 「俺_{おれ}」 can be seen as quite rude, so it would never be used in a formal situation or with someone you didn't know. Through speaking to various Japanese people, I noticed that the pronoun 「私_{わたし}」 would be the preferred pronoun to use in formal situations such as speeches or business meetings etc., which I find interesting, as the gender difference would seem to be non-existent in such situations if the pronouns they would use normally wouldn't be used here.
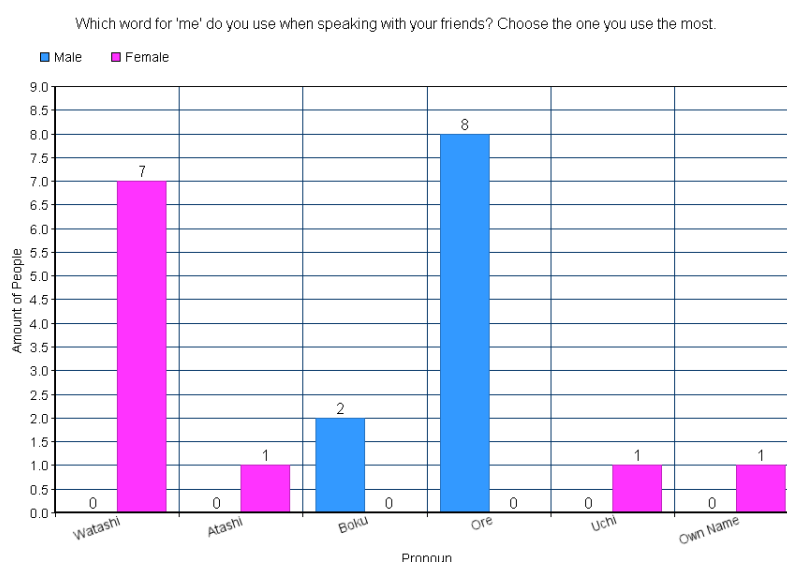
I found it very interesting that female Japanese singers tend to use the pronoun 「僕_{ぼく}」 in their songs instead of 「私_{わたし}」 or 「あたし」, and so did a small bit of research on this also. It seems as though female Japanese singers use the pronoun 「僕_{ぼく}」 because they don't want their audience to think the songs relate to their personal lives, and wish to make it so the audience can identify with the lyrics themselves (Looping Infinity, 2013). I managed to find an instance of a male singer using 「あたし」 in one of his songs, and that was "シド (SID) 「夏恋_{なつこい}」", however he is in this instance talking from a female's perspective, and so it doesn't really have the same effect as the female singers using 「僕_{ぼく}」. I also personally believe that singers use this specific pronoun because it will shock the audience and in turn catch their attention, seeing as it's not something that females usually use. Through my research, I also found a TV trope in which female anime characters use the pronoun 「僕_{ぼく}」, which is known as *bokukko,*" and is seen to be used by girls who act quite masculine (TV Tropes, n.d.). It left me wondering why this is portrayed in anime, but is not actually a common occurrence in real life. As well as these, another pronoun used is the one for 'you,' which can also be related to politeness depending on the situation – 「あなた」 is generally thought to be used more by men, as "…they typically occupy a higher position." (Brass, H., 2014).

I carried out a simple questionnaire and handed it out to 20 Japanese people (10 women, 10 men) in an attempt to see if the pronoun and honorific usage still happens in today's society. The graphs for the five questions I asked and the answers I received can be seen at the end of this paper. I managed to get a few answers from females who were in their later years instead of just teenagers or people in their 20s, which provided interesting results. The gender differences seemed prevalent in most of the questions I asked, with the female's answers supporting the theory that women's language is still very much prominent today (e.g. the males using 「僕_{ぼく}」 even with superiors), however with the answers to the question asking if they use honorific prefixes, the difference between males and females wasn't very large, and the males were split down the middle, with five saying yes and five saying no – this seems to go against the aspect of women's language that describes women using honorific prefixes more often, as the males tended to use them almost as much as the females. Something which was quite surprising was that three of the females I questioned about personal pronouns said they used 「わたくし」, which I wasn't expecting – they were all the women in their 50s-60s, however, so this shows that these women were conditioned from a young age to use the most polite form of the word 'I.' Another interesting development was for my second question, which asked the Japanese which personal pronoun they used when speaking with their friends. One respondent replied saying that she uses her own name, and she was 19 years old. This also struck me as quite odd,

as it seems like a characteristic of something called 「ぶりっこ」, which I will explain in the next paragraph. I also wished to carry out research on sentence ending particles, in order to see if males and females really use their specific gender particles as often as most articles about gender differences seem to portray, but my Japanese skill would need to be much higher in order to listen intently, so I hope to do this sometime in the future. Another interesting thing I wish to research later on is if male actors in advertisements aimed towards women use feminine sentence ending particles, and vice versa, as it has been said that "[…] one can easily determine whether a piece of writing in the media is directed toward men or women depending on the use of SFPs […]" (Brass, H., 2014).

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, there is something known as 「ぶりっこ」, which is used to negatively describe a very childish and naïve way that women speak, and it "[…] comes from the verb *buru* (to pretend) and *ko* (child)." (Brass, H., 2014). Although the women using this speech pattern are using aspects of women's language (such as the high-pitched voice, using honorific prefixes etc), they use them to such an extent that it becomes annoying and child-like, and incorporate things such as head-tilting or baby talk (Brass, H., 2014). As I said, this is used to negatively describe females, and this type of speech pattern is seen negatively by females as well as males. An example of females viewing this behaviour negatively is in an anime named 「アオハライド」, in which a character named 「槙田 悠里」 has a high-pitched, baby type of voice, and uses 'cute' sentence ending particles, and the females in her class view her negatively as a result of this.

In conclusion, I believe that the distinctions between gendered speech in Japanese are still alive and well in modern times, and can have negative repercussions depending on if you follow the social structure of the language that has been put in place for many years. Though people are starting to change the way they speak, there will always be people who will view the change negatively, as it has been a part of Japanese culture for a long time, and there are many who wish to preserve that.

Which word for 'me' do you use when speaking with your friends? Choose the one you use the most.

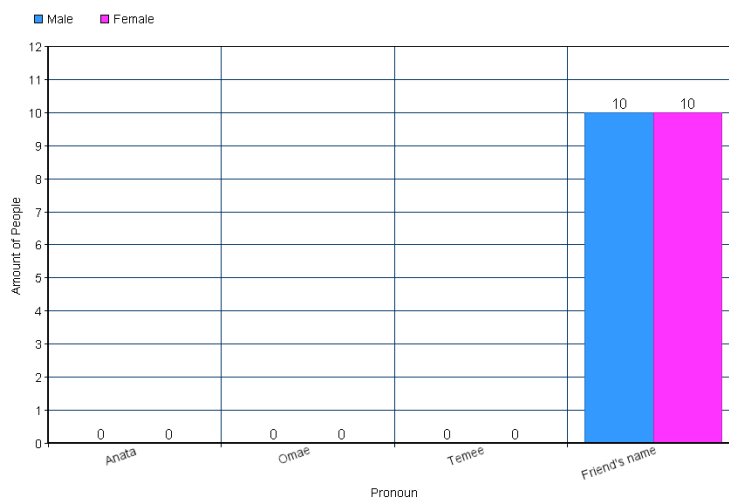|	Male	Female
Watashi	0	7
Atashi	0	1
Boku	2	0
Ore	8	0
Uchi	0	1
Own Name	0	1

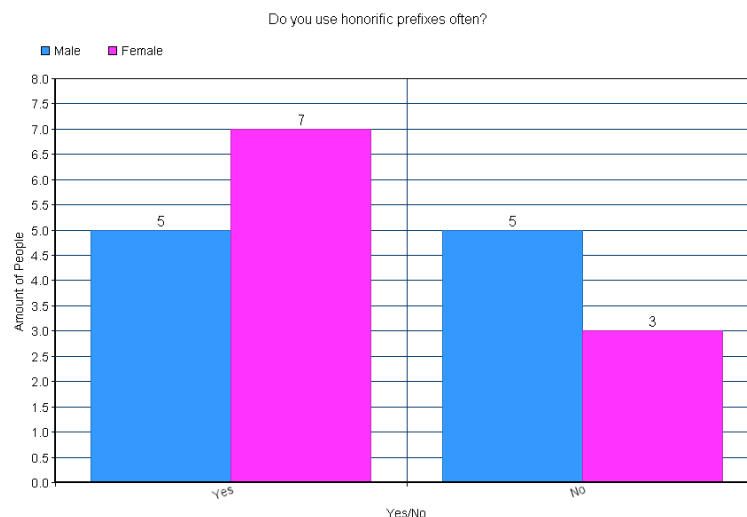Which word for 'me' do you use when speaking to your teacher or boss? Choose the one you use the most.
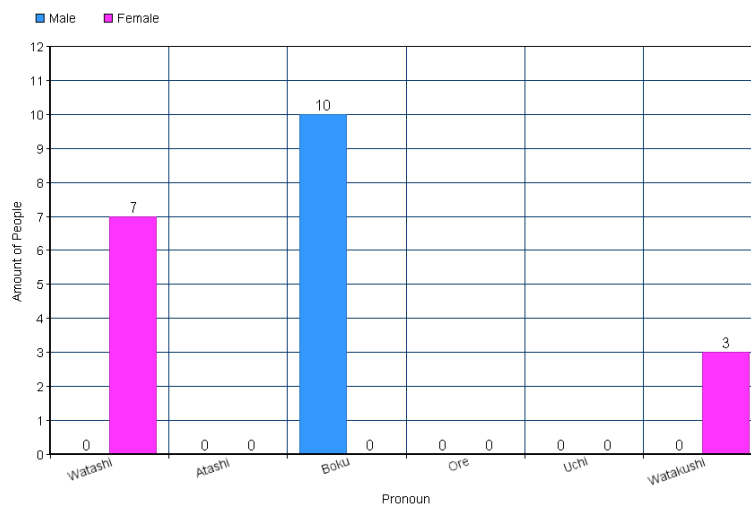
Which word for 'you' do you use when speaking with your friends? Choose the one you use the most.

Which word for 'you' do you use when speaking with your teacher or boss? Choose the one you use the most.

Do you use honorific prefixes often?

■ Male ■ Female
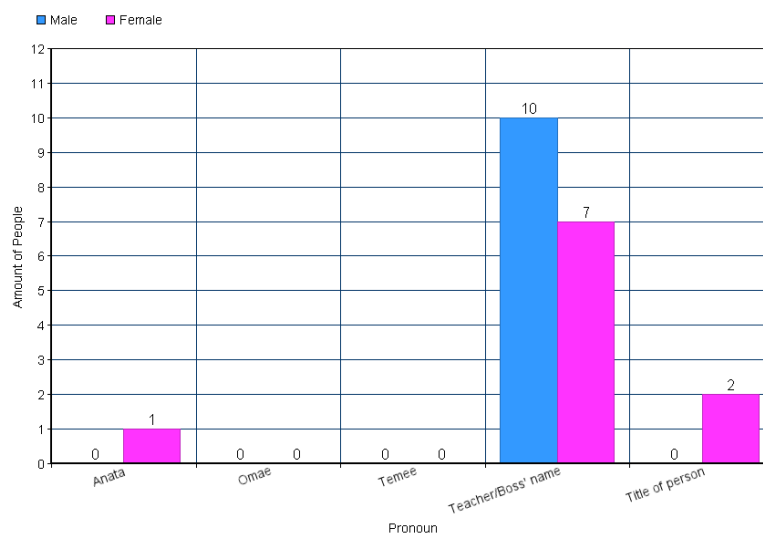
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EPOK Reflections ***

I very much enjoyed my time on the EPOK programme, even though when I first arrived in Japan I wanted to change my stay time to just a semester. I'm glad that I stayed for the whole year, even though I did get very homesick during the final few months of my time here. The Japanese courses that I took were intensive, and there were a lot of things we had to learn every week, but I know that they helped me so much, and I feel as if I know a great deal more going back to England from my study abroad programme than I would have if I had just continued my Japanese studies back in England.

The EPOK courses offered all seemed very interesting, though I was only allowed to choose a certain few that were related to my major of English Linguistics. The ones that I did take however, were very interesting and the teachers were great; some classes even offered me a chance to converse with Japanese students which helped me understand Japanese culture a lot more, and also helped me to understand how I can be more aware of the way I speak to foreign language learners in the future.

I was sort of disappointed that I had to live with a lot of international students, as it didn't give me the opportunity to speak Japanese very often, as we usually just spoke English with each other. Though I did appreciate having a familiar language around me at all times, a kind of safety net if you will, I would have enjoyed having more Japanese students living on the same floor as me. I did however very much enjoy the L-café, as it provided all of us EPOK students a place to hang out away from the dormitory, and also speak to Japanese students. It was also a very good experience in terms of working, and I would recommend it to any other prospective exchange students who wish to learn a little bit more about the business of casual English teaching.

I also really liked having the student tutors around to help me, and became good friends with all of them. I had four in total, and they all had varying degrees of English, which really helped me in the long run, as I managed to improve my Japanese through speaking to one of my tutors who didn't really speak much English. I actually ended up talking to her more than I spoke to my other tutors, which is surprising for me to think of, as when I came to Japan in the beginning, I never would have thought that was possible.

Japanese Culture and Customs

Sarah Thi Nhu- Y Phan サラ･ティニューイ･ファン

Summary: As the plane gets ready for landing, that's the moment I realized I'd be in a completely different country that's more than 5,400 miles away from home. Coming from a family of 7 kids, whenever I have a problem, I always resort to my siblings for help because they are always close by and just a phone call away. Being in Japan, it was a bit difficult to contact them whenever I wanted, due to the 16-hour time difference. I had a difficult time adapting to Japanese culture when I first came to OkaDai, primarily because I don't know the Japanese language. While attending school here, I was not enrolled in a Japanese language class. I think that the staff and other students didn't even know that it was possible to not take a language class through the EPOK program. So I guess I'm the first student here to do so. But there is more to learn in the country of Japan other than the linguistics, such as the culture and learning how to interact with other international students from around the world. I believe that although wanting to learn a new language is wonderful, that doesn't mean that that should be your only incentive to choose to study abroad. I've learned many aspects about Japan such as the culture, customs, and even a bit of the language. Although I've only been in Japan for 5 months, living here gradually became easier as the days went by. While living in Japan for a short period of time, I have built a deeper understanding for various customs and culture points in Japan. I have learned Japanese concepts and ideas such as gambaru, honne to tatemae, and lastly uchi and soto. With that being said, I would like to focus on tying these concepts together with my personal experiences while studying abroad in Japan.*

Gambaru（がんばる）：

The Japanese concept, gambaru, is used quite often in various situations. Gambaru is defined as, 'doing one's best' or 'hanging on.' For example, the term gambaru can be used to motivate students to study hard in order to pass exams and practice hard in order to win athletic competitions. Gambaru is often used to encourage someone that's taking on a challenging task to not give up and try his or her best. It is often said that Japanese can be too diligent, to the point where they become workaholics. This causes them to not take off time from work and have leisure time, while in America we believe that working too hard is not good for your physical and mental well- being. It is said that gambari is losing a lot of its traditional strength and that the concept is now changing due to modernization. The changing attitude towards gambari is partly due to children being given what ever they want, causing them to be spoiled. This changes the children's attitudes, which causes a serious problem of collapse in the classrooms. The result of children becoming impatient also causes them to be absent in school a lot. Today, Japanese people are starting to think it's important to have leisure time. So they still work hard, but also think it's good to have free time. In America, it's good to work hard, but not to the extent that it affects your mentality. So, I would like to share my first hardship while in Japan and how it helped me realize how the society here worked.

I came to this country with no prior knowledge to the linguistics of this country, such as: reading, writing, and speaking. I didn't even know the differences between hiragana, katakana, and kanji. I had no intention in learning Japanese because I knew that learning a new language was not an easy task. I know this because in high school the educational system required us to take two years of a foreign language, in which I had difficulties in passing the course. It didn't take a lot of convincing, but one of the Global Partnerships staff told me to join Japanese 1. So I decided to give the class a shot. Japanese 1 turned out to be a huge challenge because it was too fast paced and difficult for me. Many students told me to 'がんばって,' but I think it's easier said then done. Like many other

international students, I was going through many hardships when first arriving to a new country. There was a lot on my plate at the time and this was my first time truly being away from home. So I was dealing with many difficulties such as culture shock, being homesick, and having difficulties in communicating. This caused me to drop the class because it was too much for me to handle. This doesn't mean that I don't have the motivation to learn the Japanese language. I even started studying hiragana and katakana on my free time. A lot of people gave me a hard time for not sticking to Japanese 1 in the beginning of the semester. I think it's a bit humorous because although the main reason why many people study abroad is to increase their linguistics skills, not everybody goes abroad to study a different language. I do believe that it would be much easier to know the language of the country you're studying at because it would make many tasks easier to do on your own. But depending on your period of stay, you don't necessarily have to know the language in order to survive. But it is also good to know some conversational Japanese and survival words. Although the concept of gambaru is changing, I think it the meaning is still relative to it's original. So I think it's important to keep in mind how Japanese society works compared to America.

Honne to Tatemae （ほんねとたてまえ）:

  The two Japanese terms, honne and tatemae, are used to describe the difference between a persons true feelings and intentions and a persons superficial words and façade. It is said to be in relation to the spirit of wa, in which tatemae is used to maintain harmony and create a comfortable atmosphere. You can say tatemae is a custom that has been around since the beginning of rice growing in Japan. Due to the geographical landscape of the country, in order to achieve high production in a limited amount of space workers had to cooperate with one another. That meant that workers avoided stating their ideas and opinions clearly in order to work in harmony together. One example I would like to focus on is how the double code, honne to tatemae, is used quite often between Japanese and foreigners. It can cause confusion in communication and affect the way foreigners give credibility towards Japanese. In Japanese culture, it is important to examine the virtues and cultural characteristics such as the dislike of direct expression and the importance of harmony and ceremony. The country and people of Japan are often seen as polite compared to other countries such as America. So when Japanese people use tatemae, they are doing so to present the issue in a different way to not seem rude or hurt the other person's feelings. This is most likely done subconsciously since Japanese society is considered to be homogeneous. But in a foreigner's point of view, we can see this as being dishonest and futile. I would like to share one of my experiences when I realized a Japanese persons true intention versus façade.

  During the first few weeks at Okadai, I've met many Japanese students ranging from tutors to classmates. When first meeting, many of them mentioned they would like to hangout in the near future. But I realized that many of the Japanese students I've encountered don't truly intend to hangout again and that these are just their superficial words. Although they mention that they would like to practice their English learning skills with me, many of them don't make the time or effort to arrange a meeting. I feel like they suggest wanting to hangout again as small talk. At first I thought many of these people I met were dishonest and fake, but that's not the case at all. Because I now realize that their use of tatemae is actually a standard they have grown accustomed to. I believe that this virtue can cause a lot of miscommunication on an international level between acquaintances and in business. This is why it's important to become familiar with the customs of honne and tatemae in Japanese society.

Uchi- Soto（うち・そと）:

The fundamental terms, uchi-soto, is the contrast between in-groups (uchi), family and close friends, and out-groups (soto), acquaintances and others. This concept divides people into two social groups and is vital in Japanese society especially when it comes to how Japanese view foreigners in Japan. In many cases foreigners and ethnic minorities are treated as 'soto' but wish to become 'uchi.' But Japanese people may even treat you better than how they treat their in-group. The feeling of being an outsider and insider can apply to any culture around the world. Although we try to treat each other equally, we can actually do the exact opposite. So I would like to talk about one of many experiences in regards to uchi and soto.

When going out in mixed groups of Japanese and foreign students, we often get confused about which language we should speak to each other in. For example, Japanese students may speak to other Japanese students in Japanese, but when speaking to foreigners, they might speak in English. The same example applies to foreign students as well. Foreign students speak to other foreign students in English, but when speaking to Japanese students, we might speak in Japanese. This can create a feeling of soto by accident for both foreign and Japanese students on a case-to-case basis. There can be a lot of miscommunication and misunderstanding when it comes to speaking with people of different cultural backgrounds. But we can avoid more of these problems if we became more conscious about how others feel around us and try to help each other out in as many ways possible. It is not an easy task to do, but I think if we try and become more open- minded and see things from others perspectives, we can make speaking in intercultural groups more easy and comfortable. One day while waiting for our professor in an English based class, we were all talking about what we did over the weekend. I was in a group of 3 Japanese students in which I was the only foreigner. Two out of three of them were very confident in speaking English, while the other one was quite shy. As we began to discuss what we had done over the weekend, I realized that the shy student didn't mention what he had done over the weekend, so I asked him directly. I asked him directly because I felt that maybe he was feeling left out because the other two Japanese students and I were having a full on conversation. He then hesitated to answer my question and replied with, "Sorry, my English is not very good." I told him that it was okay and to just try to explain in his best way possible. He then continued to explain what he had done over the weekend. Through many experiences like these, I realized that many people could be extremely shy about speaking aloud in a second language. If I hadn't asked him directly what he had done over the weekend, maybe he would have never said anything and felt hesitant about speaking in class for the rest of the day. For example, if we foreigners are speaking in a group with students of different cultural backgrounds and notice that one doesn't seem to be a part of the conversation or has a look of confusion on their face, we can try to make them a part of the conversation by asking them questions in relation to the topic we're discussing about. If we do this, I believe we can make the unpleasant feeling of feeling like an outcast go down. I learned that even though some people may not show or admit it, that they too feel left out in some situations. But we can avoid this by; asking others directly whether or not they understand, where they get lost in the conversation, and explain any words they are not familiar with. So I think the way we communicate with one another can make a huge difference in the feeling of acceptance when in a group of different cultures and language.

EPOK Reflections **

Overall, I've had a great experience while studying abroad in Japan. Studying abroad through the EPOK program has helped me grow not just academically, but personally too. This

program opened up many doors of opportunity for me. Being a business major, I now have an advantage over co- equals, that is, in regards to international business. It also made me realize my growing curiosity for other cultures all around the world that I hope to discover in the near future. I've become less biased due to international exposure to people of different cultural backgrounds, which helped me eliminate many of the judgments and stereotypes I have heard and made about this country. I've also noticed a great change in my personality since arriving to Okayama compared to when I departed America. I believe I have become more open- minded, friendly, and more independent. I've also created life- long friendships that I hope to maintain and extend. I would also like to show a deep appreciation for my tutors here at OkaDai. Without one of my tutors, I think I would have been pretty anti- social since I had a pretty hard time adapting to Japanese culture. My tutor was the person I came to when I needed help for anything, and she was always there when I needed her, no matter how big or small the problem was. We also went on many memorable trips together with other Japanese and EPOK students. We went to places such as Universal Studios, Electrox Beach, and even South Korea. All of these people made my EPOK experience worthwhile and eventful. If it weren't for the friends I've made here I'd probably lock myself up in my room watching Netflix everyday. Of all the things I would miss the most, it would most definitely be the people and the food. College is said to be the best years of your life, and with this study abroad experience being a part of it, I most definitely agree. Studying here was definitely a life changing experience and by far, was filled with the best experiences I have had in my life thus far.

Communicative progression

Matthew Randall マシュー・ランドル

Summary: これは私のフィナル エッセイ。フィナル エッセで話すの研究があります。授業の名前はインタカルツラルカミユニケシン。インタカルツラルカミユニケシンで学生と英語で話しました。そのときにいろいろなトピックがありましたら。毎日英語ではっぴょしました。その目的は英語で話すとき上手になります。最初はちょと大変と思います。授業で学生が日本語を使えないで話しなければいけません。授業でアメリカンの映画を見ました。その映画はグラントリノです。毎週少しを見ました。あとで小さいはっぴょを使いました。その英語は面白い、でも、時々もくてきはちょとむずかしいとおもいます。毎週先生はしつもんをききました。テストがある時学生がグループで五分ぐらい話しました。話す時学生がぺらぺらそうと思います。テスト前に　グループでトピックをしらべておきました　。そのときに英語をれん油したり、いろいろなトッピックを話したりします。ファイナルテストで学生がとても上手になりました。うれしくなります。ごちょしゅありがとうございました。

The purpose of this paper and research accompanying is to answer one question- how does consistent and prolonged communication in a non-native language change how one speaks? Through out the paper we will be looking at things such as individual observations taken throughout the semester, group observations throughout the semester, and a few one on one interviews to see from the students perspective what they think the effects are.

During the semester I had the opportunity of studying with a group of Japanese students. Together, we were tasked with putting together small groups, and in these groups we were to have discussion in a "round table" fashion. The first question I asked myself when the semester began is: How are the perspectives different from both my point of view as a native English speaker, and the point of view of a native Japanese speaker? I set out to get a better understanding of this throughout the semester. To start, I looked at my own interactions and attitude toward the class. From a first glance, the class seemed to simple to be true, but after a few weeks of working with students; I found there was a somewhat hidden challenge to the course. This challenge came in the form of presenting myself and performing in such a way that would help to forward not only my fellow student's understanding of conversational English, but my own as well. As a native speaker I find it innately difficult at times to effectively communicate with someone who may not know all of the colloquialisms and nuances I've been using myself for many years. This in mind, I was eager to practice, and find my own way of being both constructive, and understandable in my communication.

In the beginning it was relatively difficult to eke out a lot of words with the students, as they were understandably shy. Despite how originally shy they were, I observed that there was an apparent eagerness to learn, and a yearning for confidence in their speaking. I specifically jotted down a few notes during the class's first days during our course introductions. The majority of the course seemed to have more confidence in this sort of activity, as it is laid out as more of a speech.

One part of the introduction, however, piqued my interest. The last part of the introduction was to state one interesting fact about yourself (something standard in just about any native English course). What I noticed in the beginning is that many students fact was related to the major they had just stated, or in some way school related. Very few would branch out and talk about their hobbies, or circles they were in. I was curious as to why this was, but upon questioning a student or two, I was met with only either a shy nod, or an uncomfortable laugh. What this conveyed to me was that there likely wasn't the appropriate level of comfort between students yet. Overall, I'd say the main inhibiting factors in the beginning were associated with confidence, and sociability, as there was a definite sense of potential.

As the semester moved on, we began regularly having our "round table" discussions. Throughout the semester, I found this particular aspect of the course to be a perfect crux to base the progression of both the students and myself. My interaction with the first set of students I was paired with was rather interesting. None of us were incredibly social, and there was a mild sense of discomfort in our practicing, and discussion at first. One thing I found that helped to alleviate the sense of being stifled was asking each other: What's new? (Which was assigned fairly often during the course.). This gave students a chance not only to practice a form of English that they would commonly use for conversation, but a chance to also branch out, and maybe use some vocabulary they hadn't necessarily used before. Needless to say it was entertaining to hear and convey what was happening in our everyday life. One core thing I noticed during the first few discussion exercises was the tendencies to revert to a structured, speech style presentation. Even in a few of the free discussion topics the students would wait until specifically asked to speak, despite having explained that it was a free environment. I think this was the most difficult hurdle to overcome in talking with the students, as structure seemed to be something they were familiar and comfortable with. In the beginning it was seemingly easy to point out individual skill levels of students, but I learned quickly that some students were just shy, and wound up surprising me on numerous occasions.

As the semester continued to progress, we switched to different groups, and I grouped with the 2nd set of students. This time around I was concerned with pushing students out of their comfort zones with what they regularly did during discussion, and progress them further in heir conversation skills. I found the most effective way was to lead by example. One of these examples was preparedness. While I conveyed that it was important to take notes to remember key facts, and keep the ideas for discussion in our heads for a whole week, I tried my best to never use many notes during the actual discussion. I wanted them to understand the importance of eye contact, and expression during conversation. Another aspect of conversation I wanted them to understand (as instructed in our guidelines for discussion) was a sense of fluidity in what we were talking about. Simply restating our topic (generally based around a film watched during the previous class) in an orderly fashion wasn't going to cut it. Occasionally during discussion I would pitch an idea we may not have preparedly discussed, just to keep the students on their toes. The first and middle parts were different in that there was less need for me to "carry" the conversation. After teaching my group members what I like to think of as "relief phrases" (Example: "what did you guys think about~~~?" "Any ideas on~~~?" etc.) They showed a much better ability to transition between one another. This was the first group I met with outside of class to study with. I have to say, I was impressed with our meeting, and how well it was conducted. As opposed to directly addressing the

mid term topic, I started out with general conversation topics: How are you? Any trouble getting here? Etc. This was met with both friendly, and excited answers, and the conversation *flowed*. I was overjoyed at this, and asked a few group members why they didn't speak up more in class. The overall response was that it was easier to naturally converse outside of the classroom setting. I wouldn't consider this negative at all, if the student can take what they learned in class, and perform even better in a practical setting; it's a victory to say the least. After completing our presentation at the midterm, my group seemed proud of themselves, and their improvement would shine later in the semester when they moved on to a group that presented without the help of a native speaker.

After changing groups once again, I was paired with my final group of the semester. In the beginning I asked myself; what can I do differently to progress this group even further? For this group I decided that taking a more passive role, and focusing more on encouraging them to take point would be an effective method. While shaky at first, students given a more active role in the conversation responded positively. For instance, when given the role of moderator, a teammate showed active effort in helping to keep the flow of conversation more natural. Despite having a more passive role during presentations, I always maintained a level of encouragement amongst the group. I found that the more comfortable they were with me, and the other teammates, the less they would worry about making mistakes. Non-verbal communication is another aspect I tried to push with this group. I tried to teach them certain cues that would let another teammate know when they were ready to "pass the torch" or having trouble thinking of something. While originally unsure if the teachings had gotten through, our study session outside of class proved to be quite serendipitous. For various reasons, I was late to our out of class meeting, and was concerned that I wouldn't have enough time to help and practice with them. What I was to find, was that my group had taken lead, and, like a well oiled machine, had already organized, discussed role, and was actively conversing about the topic at hand when I arrived. I was impressed, and when the final test arrived, they were just as on point and prepared.

Overall I'd say the progression from the beginning of this course, to the end is clear. Students have come a long way in confidence and how they present themselves in class. Our group discussions went from being choppy organized speeches, to well thought out and meaningful conversation. It's wonderful to have taken part, and I fell the students truly will be able to use the skills learned here on a practical and scholarly level in their life.

What I've learned in writing this paper, compiling the notes taken during class, and speaking with classmates out of class isn't necessarily easy to explain, as most description I feel wouldn't do it justice. I learned the difficulties of speaking on an intercultural level from both sides of the spectrum. I learned just how much easier it is to have an idea in your head, than to effectively convey it. Patience is something I took away from this, and conveying the right amount is key to being respectful, while still pushing for performance. I think probably the most difficult thing I took away from my semester long observation and participation was how difficult it is to be objective in my communication without the sense of belittling someone. Overall, Id say it was a wonderful experience, and I'm glad to have participated.

EPOK Reflections **

       I like to think that my experience here at Okayama University in the Epok program has been not only a great opportunity to learn, but an enjoyable one too. I have been able to speak with many people about various things ranging from Japanese course practice, to more effectively teaching students how to communicate in Japanese. I have been taught this semester by some very talented, and passionate instructors, and my only hope is that they know how much of an impact they've had on my experience here. On top of meeting wonderful teachers, I've had the opportunity to make friends from Japan, Canada, Germany, Russia, China, Malaysia, Vietnam, India, and many more. Everyone has been more than welcoming, and I have to say the experience has been phenomenal thanks to everyone. I hope that when I return to my home country I can encourage more of my colleagues to travel abroad and hopefully be able to experience some of the great things I have. A big thank you to everyone involved in EPOK and Okayama University, it's been a great semester!

Short Introduction to Shrines

Marie-Anne Fournier マリーアン・フルニエ

Summary: 日本で、二つ主要宗教があります。それは仏教と神道です。神道は日本の一番古い宗教です。日本の中に、たくさん旅行をして、いろいろな神社を見ました。日本で、神道はとても重要なことと思うので、私が EPOK の作文は神道の神社を紹介するを決めました。次の作文は四つぶぶんがあります。最初には神社に入れてから何がするを紹介します。このぶぶんでは神社の鳥居と手水舎を説明します。このぶぶんの後では鳥居と手水舎の写真があります。そして、二番のぶぶんは、神社の中で何が見えるを紹介します。このぶぶんで、たくさんものを説明します。たとえば、本殿と狛犬を紹介します。二番のぶぶんの後では京都の北野天満宮神社の摂社とお神酒の写真があります。三番のぶぶんでは神社の中で何ができるを説明します。たくさんのことができるが、このぶぶんは三分にわかれられます。最初は神社で拝むの時、何をするを話します。次の分は社務所でいろいろなものが買えるを紹介します。このぶぶんの最後分は朱印と朱印帖を少し紹介します。朱印と朱印帖と北野天満宮神社の社務所と地主神社の絵馬の写真があります。

In Japan people usually have two main areas of religious belief, Buddhism and Shinto. Buddhism, which originated in India, derives from the teaching of Siddhartha Gautama. Shinto, on the other hand, is the oldest religion in Japan. It follows the belief that life is sacred and every piece of it can be materialized into a divinity (神, "kami" in Japanese).

Having travelled a lot around Japan and even here in Okayama prefecture, I had the opportunity to see many different shrines (in Japanese, "jinja" 神社). Shrines are holy sites in the Shinto faith where a specific *kami* is believed to reside. During my travels I have come to see the importance of shrines in Japanese people's everyday life and this is a part of the reasons which led me to introduce them briefly as the topic of my EPOK essay.

1. Entering a Shrine

To the non-aware visitors, entering a shrine could be seen as just passing through a door. However the truth is much more. First of all, the gate through which a visitor enters a shrine is called a "torii" (鳥居). Every entrance to a shrine will be gated by at least one *torii*. Before going pass this point, people are expected to bow. The type of bow can vary from person to person. I have personally seen to particular type. One consist of a person stopping right before the gate and bowing deeply. The other kind seems more natural; a person walking up the way to the shrine, right before entering, will bow their head in respect without ever breaking their stride.

The second thing most people will do after entering a shrine is washing their hands and rinsing their mouth. Close to the gate, one can usually find a water basin called "temizuya" (手水舎) filled with water and upon which ladles are resting. The person who intends to pray to the *kami* will pick a ladle with their right hand, fill it with water then wash their left hand. The person will then take the ladle into their left hand and wash their right one. Next, the person will bring back the ladle into their right hand, cup the left one and pour water into it which will then be used to rinse their mouth. This part is really just for rinsing the mouth, a person would not actually drink the water. Finally, the left hand will be washed again, the remaining water will be removed from the ladle and it will be set back onto the *temizuya*.

Torii

Temizuya at the *Kitano-Tenmagu* shrine, Kyoto

2. Around a Shrine

Once a visitor has entered the shrine area, washed their hands and rinsed their mouth, a few things can be noticed surrounding the *haiden* (拝殿, the worship hall) and the *honden* (本殿, main structure housing the object of worship). Right before the haiden, a pair of "komainu" (狛犬, which literally means Korean dog) will be seen, guarding the entrances. They are believed to ward again evils spirits.

Often times, there will be a huge tree near the *haiden* and the *honden*; it is the "shinboku" (神木), a sacred tree where the enshrined *kami* resides. Next, any visitor paying the slightest bit of attention to their surrounding will notice the shrine attendants. They are the Shrine Maidens, the "miko" (巫女) which are females and the Shinto Priests, the "shinshoku" (神職) or "kannushi" (神主) which are males.

A bit farther away from the main shrine area, a few more interesting little tidbits of the Shinto faith can be seen. "Sessha" (摂社) which are small scale shrines and "massha" (末社) which are even smaller shrines can be found in the surrounding of the main one and will serve as auxiliary shrines. In the more active shrines, sake barrels piled one on top of the other can also be seen. "Omiki" (お神酒), the sake, is part of the food offerings to the *kami*. It will usually be shared by the celebrants during events with the goal of deepening the communion with the divinity. Because shrines tend to be around for long period of times and the barrels are usually kept together, those piles of sake barrels can be quite an interesting sight to see.

Omiki at the *Kitano-Tenmagu* shrine, Kyoto

Secondary shrines at the *Kitano-Tenmagu* shrine, Kyoto

3. Things to Do

The first and foremost reason to go to a shrine is for praying to the *kami*. This is done in a very specific way, but for reason that are personal to each supplicants. Anyone coming to ask for the *kami'*s help will usually start their praying ritual bit throwing a bit of money into the "saisenbako" (賽銭箱), a box into which monetary gifts are collected. Sometimes, people will also ring the bell which has its rope hanging down in front of them. It is called a "suzu" (鈴). Following this, the praying person will bow twice before the haiden, clap their hands twice, pray to the kami then bow one last time. This particular way of praying is called the "sanpai sahô" (参拝作法).

After praying, one can obviously take a walk around the shrine area, the grounds of these sacred sites being usually visually enjoyable. When wandering around a bit, a visitor to a shrine will usually pass in front of the "shamusho" (社務所), a building with its main function being to serve as a shrine's administrative office. At the *shamusho*, visitors can usually buy a few different goods such as "daruma" (達磨), which are little dolls that are believed to bring good-luck. In the same way, people visiting a shrine can also buy various amulets and talismans called "omamori" (お守り). *Omamori* can range from special ones intended towards high school students to help them succeed in their exams and all the way to amulets for good health or safety on the road. Two other things are commonly bought at the *shamusho*: "hamaya" (破魔矢) and "omikuji" (おみくじ). *Hamaya* are decorative arrows believed to attract good luck and hold back misfortune. If one were to translate the name *hamaya* literally, it would mean something like "demon-breaking arrow" or "evil-breaking arrow". As for *omikuji*, they are the Shinto equivalent to fortune-telling. One can buy an *omikuji* for a small fee and it will tell them if they are lucky or will be successful in their undertaking, be it about romance of business related. If the *omikuji* is an unlucky one, people are expected to tie it somewhere in the shrine area, as a way to counter the bad luck. One more thing to buy in a shrine is an "ema" (絵馬). An *ema* is a wooden plaque with a picture on its front that is usually representative of the shrine from which it was bought. The price of an *ema* can vary from place to place, however their function remains the same. They are seen as prayers to the *kami* of a shrine and people will write a wish on the back of a plaque so that the *kami* can receive their prayer and fulfil their wish. Once a wish is written, the person who wrote the wish will then hang it in a dedicated area of the shrine.

Lastly, in shrines (also in Buddhist temples), stamp books (*shuin-chô*, 朱印帖) and stamps (*shuin*, 朱印) can be bought. While the price of the *shuin-chô* will vary, a *shuin* will normally cost 300¥. Stamps and stamp books are associated with pilgrimages. At the start of a pilgrimage, a pilgrim will buy a *shuin-chô*. If this person is doing a multi-site circuit type of pilgrimage, they will visit many sacred sites, all dedicated to a specific divinity (or a group of related ones) they are addressing their prayers to. If this person is doing a single-site pilgrimage, then they will be headed to one particular site. For tourists who don't necessarily associate with the Shinto faith, *shuin-chô* and *shuin* can have a more secular function. Since there are so many shrines (and also Buddhist temples) in Japan and most of them offers the drawing of a *shuin*, they can be used a diary of travel, referencing the various shrines that have been encountered along the way.

Ema at the *Jishu* shrine, Kyoto

Top:*Shamusho*, *Kitano-Tenmagu* shrine in Kyoto
Bottom: two different *shuin* and a *shuin-chô*

EPOK Reflections ***

       Before coming to Okayama, I had many expectations about my stay in Japan. I was eager to come, stressed as all hell about what was going to happen, but still willing to jump into the exchange program head first. Almost four months ago now, I finally arrived in Okayama on April 1st after an eventful plane trip, the first in my life. Since then, that has become a way for me to describe my everyday life, totally eventful. It's been great; by the end of April, I knew I didn't want to go back home even if I didn't really have a choice about it. A few weeks ago, around the beginning of July, I spent an evening scaring my friends, just being depressed because it dawned on me that my great adventure in Japan was coming to an end. As for my original expectations, I guess they've been fulfilled and even surpassed. I wanted to see the beautiful cherry blossoms and I did; they were so pretty! I wanted to hear about the samurais and I did; I went to the Osafune Sword Museum one day; seeing a real katana: check! I also wanted to try real Japanese ramen. It turns out that I did a homestay weekend during which I was brought to a ramen shop; delicious!

       The EPOK program is a great opportunity. It gives us a chance to experience life in a different way. Sure it brings us to Japan which is already a big change, but it also allows us to live as native Japanese. I've never felt closer to really being one of Okayama's people than when I go around on a bicycle in the city. I've also never despised rice so much as I've come to hate it recently. Rice seems to be everywhere; you have to leave as a Japanese to really understand this. The EPOK program gave me that and so much more. Despite the strange, funny, awkward situations I've lived because of it, EPOK is great. Sure, maybe it has some little problems when it comes to details like paperwork but then again, it's paperwork. Everyone hates that and I'm sure that the EPOK people aren't an exception to this. Overall, I'm happy EPOK exists, it might need so fine-tuning in some area but that's what make life interesting: when the unexpected happens and your life just becomes better because of it.

Japanese temples and shrines: What is the difference?

Corina Gassner コリナ・ガスナー

Summary: これから、私の EPOK research essay をしょうかいします。トピックは、日本の神社とお寺のちがいについてです。このトピックをえらんだりゆうは、まずだいいちに、日本のしゅうきょうにきょうみがあるからです。また、しゅうきょうは、日本の文化のじゅうようないちぶであるとかんがえたからです。

日本には、むかしから、ふたつのしゅうきょうがあるので、お寺と神社という、ふたつのしゅうきょうてきなたてものがあります。このエッセイのなかでは、私のけいけんと、それぞれのてんけいてきなとくちょうをしょうかいします。

まず、神社についてです。神社は、しんとうというしゅうきょうのたてものです。神社のとくちょうは、たとえば、つぎのようなものがあります。神社にはかならず門をとおって入ります。また、手と口をあらうためのあらいばがあります。

つぎに、お寺についてです。お寺は、ぶっきょうのたてものです。お寺では、ぶっだのぞうやえをよくみかけます。また、ぶっとう(pagoda)とよばれるたてものがあります。

神社やお寺であう人たちは、心のひろい、いい人たちがおおいです。どちらのしゅうきょうでも、人びとは、心ゆたかなせいかつをおくっているといえます。

I would not say that I am a religious person but I am very interested in Japanese culture and like to visit temples and shrines. Maybe one reason for my interest is the difference between Japanese and German religion. In Germany, a religious building generally takes the form of a church. Another key difference is popularity. It is not common for the youth in Germany to pray, as such, religion is not so much a part of daily life. This is quite different in Japan. After visiting around 100 various temples and shrines, I saw that many folks visit them, both young and old.

There seems to be many temples and shrines in Japan. Even when you are just riding by bicycle to the next supermarket or to a park you will probably pass one. Most tourists may not know the difference between them, but I think if you want to understand Japanese culture it is an important thing to know. This in mind, I decided to figure out the differences between the temples and shrines. Japanese shrines are called Jinja (じんじゃ, 神社) and are usually based on Shinto. On the opposite site Buddhism will be practiced at temples (じ, おてら, 寺). Both religions date back thousands of years.

The Shinto religion is a spiritual ideology that is based on the belief that powerful gods called *kami* inhabit both heaven and earth. Each clan identified with its own *kami* and utilized a shaman or diviner to help them pray and often built shrines dedicated to their chosen *kami* .The Shinto religion was unified in the 700′s when the mythology was documented for the first time to include the various *kami* formerly worshipped by the individual clans. The Japanese refer to Shinto as *kami no michi* (the way of the gods) but the pronunciation of the Chinese ideographs is *shin tao* or Shinto. One shrine I visited was Sanzo Inari in Fukuyama:

This was one of my best visits. You do not need to go to big shrines or temples to experience the idea of belief and kindness. I just visited the city Fukuyama to see the castle and find this beautiful place without searching. The person who takes care of the shrine was so kind. Even though that he only spoke Japanese, and my Japanese is limited, we were able to come to a general understanding of his religion and things about the temple. Furthermore, he gave me a Japanese book about Shintoism, so that I can learn Japanese and about this religion at the same time. In small facilities people are more likely to be surprised to see a foreign person but they seem to be very happy about the interest. This is always a surprise, and through conversation you learn a lot. I am very happy and grateful to be able to experience this kindness.

Buddhism was introduced to Japan from China and Korea in the sixth century and gained wide acceptance in the following century when it was endorsed by the nobility. The Japanese word for Buddhism is ぶっきょう (仏教) which is a combination of two words: ぶつ (仏) meaning Buddha and きょう (教) meaning doctrine. One of my favorite temples is Houka-in in Okayama:

I visited this temple after my class on a weekday and was surprised about the beautiful inside of the temple. The priest was also very surprised to see a non-Japanese person, and asked me to come back to see the matsuri in this temple. We also had a long conversation about Japanese culture and he gave me a flag with a written kanji on it which symbolizes luck.

Some people may not be aware of the aesthetic differences between temples and shrines, but you can easily distinguish between them by looking for some key characteristics:

Shinto Shrine:

- You always enter a Shinto shrine through a gate.
- A pair of guardian lion dogs (こまいぬ) often sits on each side of the entrance to a Shinto Shrine.
- There is a purification fountain near the entrance to a Shinto Shrine where you clean your hands and mouth before praying.

Buddhist Temple:

- A Buddhist temple always houses an image of the Buddha.
- A large incense burner is usually in front of a temple. The smoke created by the burning of incense is said to have healing properties.
- There is often a pagoda on the premises of a Buddhist temple.

For me, Japanese temples and shrines represents one traditional way of the modern Japan. For Japanese people, temples may be different from shrines, but I do not really distinguish between these two types of religion. People you meet at such places are so open-minded, kind and at ease. I really think you can find peace and reach true happiness through both ways. In addition both facilities provide peaceful places where you can take a rest while you enjoy the beautiful surroundings. Some have really beautiful gardens or ponds where you can keep sitting for hours and free your mind. One of the most beautiful places can be found at the famous Kibitsu Shrine:
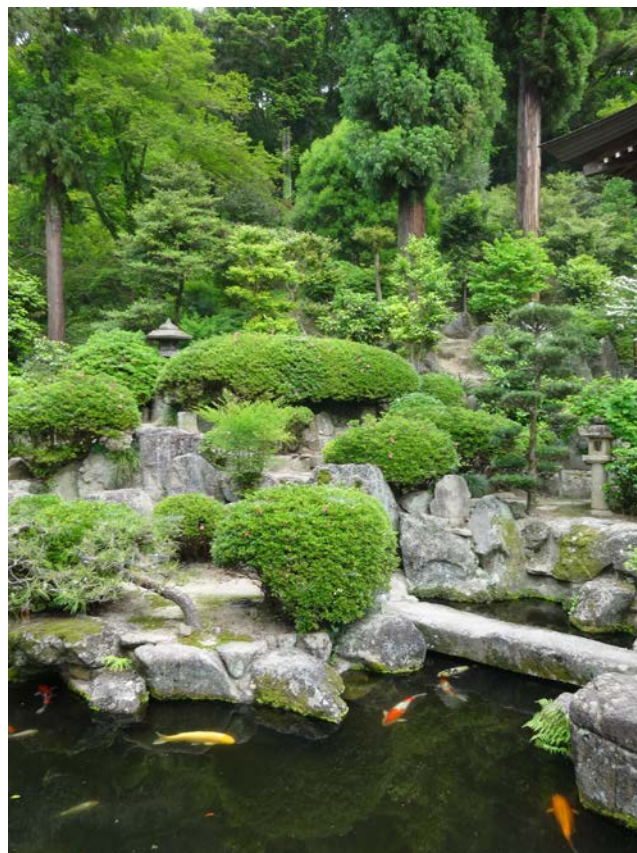
EPOK Reflection ***

The EPOK program is a wonderful opportunity to experience Japan. On weekends or after class I often travelled a lot. It is also a great opportunity to get in contact with a lot of Japanese people and experience their culture. Also in our Study of Japan class you learn a lot about Japan itself. We experienced a real Japanese tea ceremony, made our own Bizen pottery and heard presentations about Japanese history.

Furthermore, when I came to Japan I was not able to communicate in Japanese. I just entered the Japanese 1 class and also took Reading and Writing 1. It really surprised me how much you learn about the language when you study hard. Travelling and talking to people is another great way to improve your Japanese quickly and effectively.

I think this was a wonderful experience, and I am grateful to have participated. I hope I am able to come back to Japan as soon as possible.

Japanese English: A Phonetic Analysis

Luke Logothetis ルーク・ロゴスティス

Summary: 日本語は英語に本当に異なっています。英語のさまざまな種類がたくさんあって、「ジャッパニーズイングリッシュ」は独自です。英語について日本人の読み方法と書き方法はとてもいいですけど、英語の話し方法は面白です。このレポートの目的は、私はジャッパニーズイングリッシュが異なる音色が理由を説明したいです。また、英語と日本語の違いを説明したいです。日本語の音でより英語の音がありますので、日本人が英語を話すことは難しいです。この言語はジャッパニーズイングリッシュになります。

IPA を使用して、私はジャッパニーズイングリッシュを分析します。日本語は簡単な母音と子音を作って、日本語は5つの母音と20子音があります。しかし、英語はもっと難しい母音と子音を作って、英語は12母音と26子音があります。日本人はこの他の音を知りませんので、英語の話し方法は難しいです。私は日本人がこの他の音を言うことが困難である理由について話します。一般的に日本語は英語からカタカナで単語を取ります。私は、これは日本人が英語を話すように影響を与える理由について話します。最後に、日本人の英語の話し方法が上手になるために、私は解決策について話します。

There are many different varieties and dialects of English, and with todays modern globalising age, English continues to become more and more diverse and widely used internationally. Japanese English is interesting when it comes to the way Japanese people pronounce english words and sentences. Commonly the reading and writing attribute of English will stay the same; as 'Standard English'. However, when people begin to communicate verbally using this easily changeable language, different attributes begin to change and come into play.

Native speakers of English will somewhat agree that Japanese English is its own dialect from what is considered Standard English. However when you look at the phonetic capabilities of the Japanese Language and compare to to a native speaker of English, or a language with more complex sounds, we can begin to see the difficulties for Japanese speakers learning English and how Japanese English is formed.
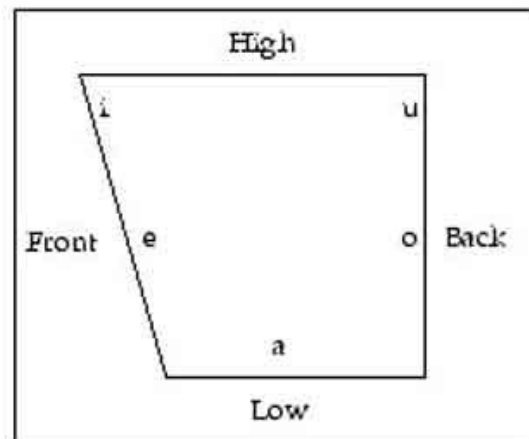
For the purpose of this essay, the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) will be implemented for further understanding. Along with discussing the difficulties Japanese speakers of English face when speaking the language, with concluding solutions that may help and benefit all learner's fluency and fluidity when using this diverse and complex language. Also showing in-depth analysis and comparison between the Japanese and English languages.

In all languages the use of vowels are extremely important especially in Japanese and English. A vowel is easily categorised by the way it is produced (manner of articulation) and where it is produced in the mouth (place of articulation). However, the main characteristic of a vowel is that there is no restriction of air flow. A vowel can be produced all around the mouth and is identified by how High-Mid-Low (up and down) and Front-Centre-Back the tongue is placed. Finally depending of your lips being Rounded or unrounded. For example a Front High Rounded sound is the /i/ sound.

Looking at the vowel articulation chart below we begin to see how few sounds Japanese has compared to English.
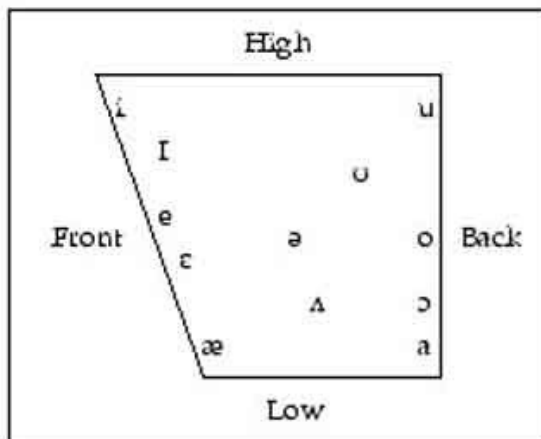
English Vowel Chart   Japanese Vowel Chart

From the above charts it is clearly shown the initial differences between English and Japanese sounds. Not only is there twelve English vowel sounds compared to the five Japanese, the places of articulation in English are far more complicated.

Japanese vowels are produced only around the mouth in five separate locations. However, English vowels are created all over the mouth, which leaves little room for error when creating them, due to their closer spacing and english differentiating between these different sounds.

For a speaker of Japanese, mastering these sounds can become quite complicated due to your native languages lack of sounds. If becomes difficult for a non-native speaker of English because you must also learn the way of articulating these sounds along with putting them into effective use. However, for a speaker of English learning Japanese, it is very easy to master Japanese sounds because the English speaker already uses them.

Not only is there a lack of vowel sounds between English and Japanese, but consonant sounds are also widely used in English. However, fewer are used in Japanese. A constant is the opposite of a vowel; where air for is restricted in some way to produce different sounds. Constants are identified from their place and manner or articulation, along with whether they are voiced or voiceless sounds. For example; a Voiceless Alveolar Stop is the /t/ sound. Bellow is a chart of 26 English consonant sounds and 20 Japanese Consonant sounds.

MANNER		VOICING	PLACE						
			Bilabial	Labiodental	Interdental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
OBSTRUENTS	Stop	Voiceless	p			t		k	ʔ
		Voiced	b			d		g	
	Fricative	Voiceless		f	θ	s	ʃ		h
		Voiced		v	ð	z	ʒ		
	Affricate	Voiceless					tʃ		
		Voiced					dʒ		
SONORANTS	Nasal	Voiced	m			n		ŋ	
	LIQUID Lateral	Voiced				l			
	Rhotic	Voiced					r		
	Glide	Voiced	w				j	w	

English Consonant Chart

Manner of Articulation:	Place of Articulation:						
	Bilabial	Labiodental	Interdental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop voiceless voiced	p b			t d		k g	
Nasal	m		n			ŋ	
Fricative voiceless voiced	ɸ			s z	ç		h
Affricate voiceless voiced					c ɟ		
Glide voiceless voiced	w				j	w	
Liquid				ɾ			

Japanese Consonant Chart

Not only are there more sounds in English that are import for creating different words, some English consonant sounds are nonexistent in Japanese. These extra sounds are usually the reason Japanese English lacks its fluidity. Usually what will happen in these circumstances is the Japanese speaker will change the sound to one that is similar to the replaced sound or surrounding sounds.

For example the Voiced Alveolar Lateral sound /l/ doesn't exist in the Japanese sound system however, a similar sound which is close to same articulation as /l/ exists which is a Voiced Palatal Rhotic /r/ sound. We see the switch between /l/ and /r/ occur a lot in the Japanese Katakana system. In the case of translating my name (Luke) into Japanese, because there is no /l/ sound to translate into, my name takes a similar sound that is existent in katakana. These then changes into /ru'ku/ (ルーク) using the katakana alphabet which also indicates a foreign word that has been 'Japanese-ised'.

The Japanese-isation of English words also plays a considerable part into Japanese English. Katakana allows Japanese to take foreign words and change them into Japanese sounds. These Katakana words occur frequently in the Japanese language and it is possible to take words from any language. However, because of these translated words certain irregularities occur. Mainly the addition of extra vowel sounds in-between, and at the end of English words that should end with a consonant sound (/ænd/ (and) becomes /ando/ (ando), /naɪt/ (night) becomes /naɪto/ (nighto).

In order to over come these set backs that Japanese speakers face when learning English, there are a few solutions that can be implemented to lessons that will allow them to produce more of the English sounds that don't exist in Japanese. Along with teaching the compulsory reading, writing aspects of English, attention to the way of speaking the language is needed to help with articulation. Simply listening and conversing with native speakers of the language will increase a learners understanding of new sounds. Another option could be to engage in more phonetic based language lessons.

The exceeding amount of English to Japanese sounds plays a crucial roll in creating what is known as 'Japanese English'. Replacing sounds that aren't used in Japanese with similar sounds that are, is one of the main methods used when speaking Japanese English. Moreover, Katakana words while being Japanese, aren't English, and amplify the Japanese-isation of this dialect of English. More exposure to native speakers and learning the articulation of unknown sounds can provide a smother and more fluid pronunciation of English.

EPOK Reflections ***

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time during the EPOK Program. Not only have I been able to learn so much about Japanese culture and the language, but I have been able to make so many friends from Japan and countries all over the world. My time spent in Japan has allowed me to gain further understandings of the Japanese way of life and has improved my Japanese language skills remarkably. During EPOK courses I have experienced new styles and methods of teaching, which were not only interesting but very useful for my learning experiences and outcomes. The amount of friends that I have made during my time here has made me want to come back to Japan sooner, and has also encouraged more inspiration for traveling and meeting new people. The EPOK Program has also changed my way of thinking for my future career options. After being able to see what life in Japan is like, I would very much like to work in Japan in the near future and begin a career using my Japanese knowledge and skills. I encourage everyone to take these opportunities and make the best out of them. Not only to study and learn new things, but also to travel, meet new people and participate in new and different experiences.

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岡　特任教授（Oka）　　　　　　　　小川先生（Ogawa）

グローバル・パートナーズ事務室のスタッフ(Staff)

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