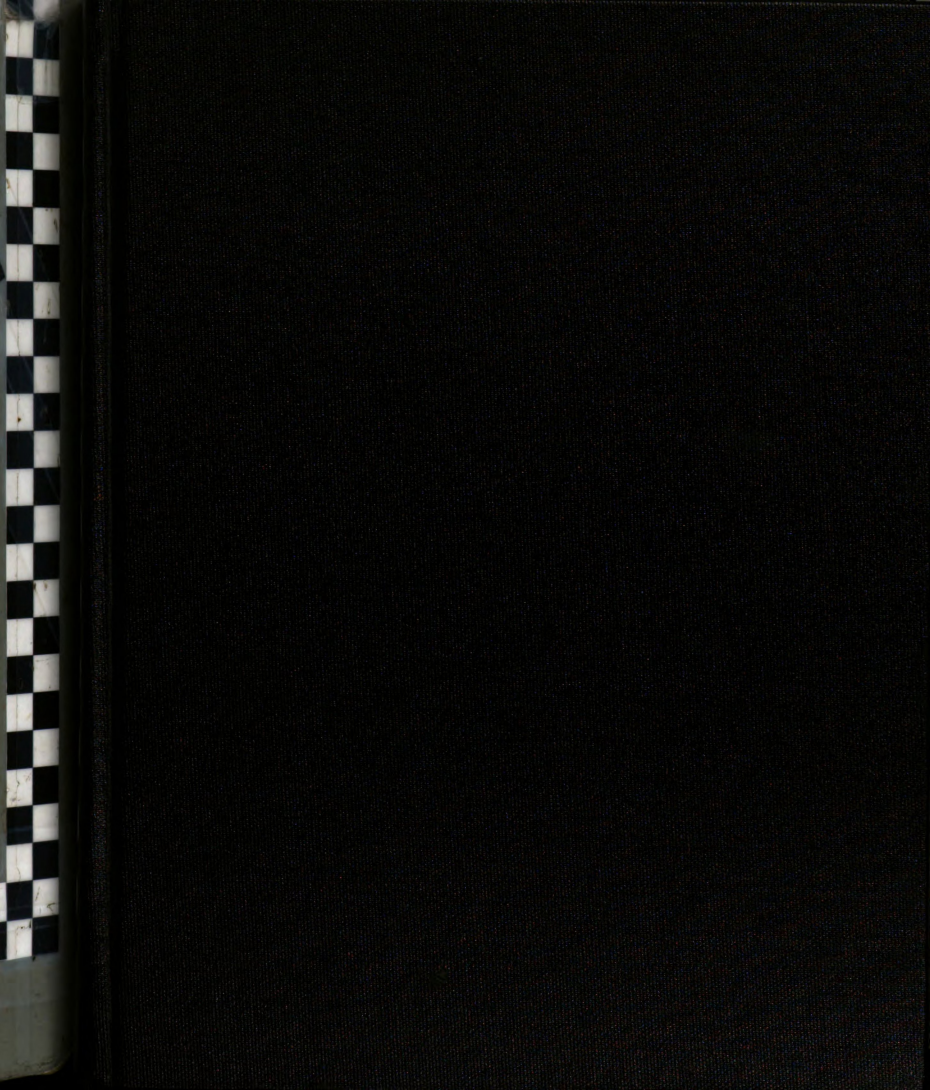




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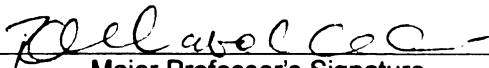
**JAPANESE UNDERGRADUATES AT AN AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY: ACCULTURATION IDENTITY, CULTURAL
IDENTITY, AND VALUES**

presented by

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**JAPANESE UNDERGRADUATES AT AN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY:
ACCULTURATION IDENTITY, CULTURAL IDENTITY, AND VALUES**

By

John Richard Brender

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Educational Administration

2006

Professor Reitumetse O. Mabokela

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ABSTRACT

JAPANESE UNDERGRADUATES AT AN AMERICAN UNIVERSITY: ACCULTURATION IDENTITY, CULTURAL IDENTITY, AND VALUES

By

John Richard Brender

Using a multidisciplinary approach that incorporated studies from anthropology, social psychology, cross-cultural communication, and linguistics, I examined the experiences of Japanese undergraduates of varying acculturation identities at a university in the Midwestern United States. I provided biographical sketches for twelve students: three identified as integrated, three as assimilated, three as separated, and three as marginalized. I then examined the students' perceptions of Japanese and American cultural identities in light of Hofstede's (1984) work-related values: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity. Subtopics such as family, education, language, and the workplace emerged under each of the work related values. Participants supported Hofstede's (1984) assertions that Japanese identity was consistent with high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, and low individualism while American cultural identity was associated with low power distance, low uncertainty avoidance, and high individualism. Since both countries ranked high in masculinity, I pointed to several subtopics in which Japanese were perceived as more masculine, and others in which Americans were perceived as more masculine. The study concluded with key findings that suggest future research on links between acculturation identity and assorted variables. I concluded with recommendations for faculty and administrators to retain and better serve Japanese and other East Asian students.

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To Claire

The memory of my parents
Richard and Jacqueline Brender

and

Fujio Takahashi
Principal, mentor, friend

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

September 1984 marked my introduction to Japan. As a young high-school teacher fresh out of college, I struggled for almost three years to learn the Japanese language and the many intricacies of the Japanese culture. At first, it seemed that almost everything I did was wrong: I struggled with chopsticks, momentarily forgot to take my shoes off when entering someone's house, bowed too much or too little, and used phrases that were, if not inadvertently impolite, at least poorly or strangely articulated. Fortunately as a *gaijin* (foreigner), I was granted a degree of immunity--at least for a while.

Japan was so different; even the simplest exchanges were sometimes difficult because of my limited language ability and what seemed like an intricately prescribed way of doing everything. I was frequently enamored with my host country but just as often infuriated. Despite a normally happy and unassuming disposition, my emotions and perceptions were heightened to new levels. Serendipity was liberally interspersed with confusion, embarrassment, and a host of other emotions that were intensified in every direction. Through it all, it was the quotidian revelations and an acquired spirit of Japanese perseverance that kept me going despite the difficulties of being a lone foreigner tucked away in a city that seemed much farther away from Tokyo than it really was.

I eventually learned to get along fairly well in Japan. I enjoyed the daily learning experiences and though my Japanese was never outstanding, I was at least unashamed enough to converse at length, teach classes, make phone calls, and write childish-

sounding letters to Japanese friends. To this day I carry with me a number of values, behaviors, and insights that could only have been developed in Japan.

In college I was a Spanish-major, and my extended trips to Spain over the years have left me with a number of Spanish values as well. In many respects I can relate to having separate Spanish, Japanese, and American identities, each of which may come to the forefront depending on a given environment, language, or situation. In each instance, however, I wonder if the cultural identity at the forefront can detach itself completely from the two in the background. It is with this unresolved quest to define my own identity that I look with fascination to find how others make sense of theirs.

The Study

Having experienced cultural immersion as a young adult, I have always empathized with international students in the U.S., their challenges and issues of identity. Nevertheless, as of this writing, postsecondary student development in the United States has focused largely on domestic students. The lack of attention given to internationals may be surprising given their academic, financial, and potential geopolitical contributions. East Asian students, hailing from the only major region of the world that has never succumbed to Western colonialism, may likely be the least understood of all foreign-born students in the U.S.

As a way to introduce the cultural background and experiences of East Asian college students to academics and university administrators in the West, this qualitative study focuses on the acculturation identity, cultural identity, and values of Japanese undergraduates at a large Midwestern university in the United States. More specifically, it explores: (1) acculturation identities based on perceptions of Japanese and American

cultural identities; and (2) perceptions of Japanese and American cultural identities based on contrasting values and behaviors. This study is divided into chapters on *acculturation identity* and *cultural identity*. To the extent possible, these and other concepts are defined and clarified below. The research questions in this study are as follows:

Acculturation Identity Research Questions

1. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *integrated*?
2. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *assimilated*?
3. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *separated*?
4. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *marginalized*?

Cultural Identity Research Questions

1. What values and behaviors do Japanese undergraduates associate with American cultural identity?
2. What values and behaviors do Japanese undergraduates associate with Japanese cultural identity?

Explanation of Terms

A number of terms must be clarified in order to ground the framework proposed in this study. To begin, *acculturation* denotes an individual's process of change in a foreign environment, but *acculturation identity* refers to how an individual identifies--at a given point in time--on a bi-dimensional measure proposed by Berry, Trimble, and Olmedo (1986). The bi-dimensional measure explores how each individual identifies with perceived Japanese and/or American identities. As will be discussed in greater detail, Japanese students who identified strongly with Japanese and American identities were considered *integrated*; those who identified more strongly or more positively with

an American identity were considered *assimilated*; those who identified more strongly or positively with a Japanese identity were considered *separated*; and those who identified negatively with both groups or identified with another group were considered *marginalized*. Figure 1 depicts the acculturation quadrant as set forth by Berry et al. (1986).

Figure 1: Berry's acculturation quadrant

		Advantages of identifying with native culture	
		Strong	Weak
Advantages of identifying with host culture	Strong	Bicultural Integrated	Assimilated
	Weak	Separated	Marginalized

(Adapted from Berry et al., 1986)

Cultural identity refers to a perceived Japanese and/or American identity based primarily on Hofstede's (1984) work-related values: *power distance*, *uncertainty avoidance*, *individualism*, and *masculinity*. In accordance with Hofstede's (1984) findings, a perceived Japanese cultural identity coincides with two or more of the following: (1) high power distance; (2) high uncertainty avoidance; and (3) low

individualism. Conversely, a perceived American identity coincides with two or more of the following: (1) low power distance; (2) low uncertainty avoidance; and (3) high individualism. Masculinity is a somewhat more complex value and is given proper attention later in this study.

Values refer to Hofstede's (1984) work-related values, defined more specifically as follows: (1) *power distance*, the degree that differences in wealth and other endowments are accepted; (2) *uncertainty avoidance*, the degree to which individuals are uncomfortable with the unknown; (3) *individualism*, the degree of interconnectedness that characterizes members of a culture; and (4) *masculinity*, the degree to which achievement and assertiveness are valued. Subtopics such as family, religion, education, and language are used to support or refute each of Hofstede's (1984) original findings.

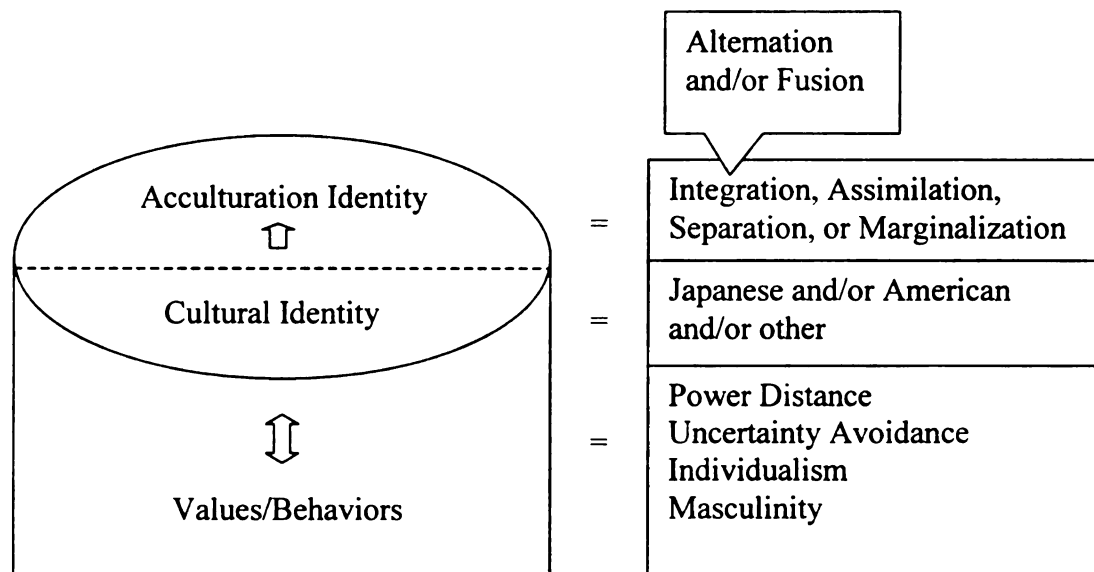
Behavior refers to how individuals act or react in response to external or internal stimuli. Although influenced by biological and emotional factors, behavior can frequently be seen as a reflection of values. A deep bow, for example, might express one's value for high power distance, deference, or humility, while a handshake, smile, and sustained eye contact may suggest a desire for friendliness and low power distance. An observer may not always interpret behavior accurately, but individuals are likely to convey values--in spite of their frequent complexity--through verbal or non-verbal behavior. Behavior and values may thus be virtually inseparable, and are sometimes brought to light in this study.

The Framework

Given the present explanation of terms, the connection between *behavior*, *values*, *cultural identity*, and *acculturation identity* may be viewed as follows: *behavior* (verbal and non-verbal) is often a reflection of *values*; *values* (power distance, uncertainty

avoidance, individualism, and masculinity) both reflect and reinforce *cultural identity* (Japanese and/or American and/or other); and *cultural identity* (Japanese and/or American and/or other) suggests *acculturation identity* (integration, assimilation, separation, or marginalization). For those who claim both Japanese and American cultural identities, the question of whether these identities are *alternated* according to situation and/or *fused* into a cultural hybrid must be taken into consideration. Figure 2 depicts the interaction of these terms. The elliptical figure represents total personal identity, which is made up of (but not limited to) acculturation identity and cultural identity.

Figure 2: Identity based on values



Purpose of the Study

The present study fulfills five purposes. The first is to present the experiences and subsequent acculturation identities of Japanese undergraduates to university administrators, professors, students, and interested business professionals in the West. Understanding why Japanese undergraduates integrate, assimilate, separate, or feel

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marginalized may shed light on potential variables that can help university professionals identify and encourage social integration for those who want or need it the most. The ability to improve social and educational experiences for future Japanese students could lead to greater retention and recruitment of not only Japanese, but other international students as well.

The second purpose of this study is to acquaint the aforementioned Western audience with perceived identity differences between mainstream Japanese and U.S. Americans. In the second part of Chapter 3, I use Hofstede's (1984) work-related values as a framework and look to the literature to provide contrasts between perceived Japanese and American values; in chapters six through nine I relate Japanese undergraduate perceptions of each of these work-related values. It is hoped that the reader will gain insight as to the difficulties Japanese may face in choosing between sometimes opposing values and behaviors to successfully navigate their various environments. Japanese and American values and their accompanying behaviors may often run contrary to one another for a multitude of reasons; applying certain Japanese values or behaviors to an American environment may thus be perceived as strange, ineffective, inappropriate, or potentially offensive. Conversely, applying commonly perceived American values or behaviors to Japanese environments could yield similarly undesirable reactions.

The third purpose of this study builds upon the value and behavioral choices that Japanese undergraduates make in order to navigate their way through an American university and its various environments. Whether American cultural values are adopted for the sole purpose of navigating American environments (alternation) or whether host values are combined with native values (fusion) is a topic that will be explored in some

detail. Ultimately, findings may suggest that some or perhaps many Japanese undergraduates take on a unique set of values influenced by both their host and native cultures; such a sub-cultural hybrid may be of great interest not only to Westerners who have a vested interest in Japanese and other international students, but to Japanese and other East Asians who seek to incorporate internationalized Japanese into their work environments.

The fourth purpose of this study is to introduce a framework that will provide a parsimonious and applicable link between Hofstede's (1984) work-related values and the Berry et al. (1986) bi-dimensional acculturation measure. Although Berry et al. (1986) suggested that specified (emic) measures might be necessary for studying acculturation between any two given cultures, I propose that Hofstede's (1984) work-related values might be applicable for examining acculturation between a number of host and native cultures. This proposal does not imply that Hofstede's (1984) work-related values are likely to serve as a universal (etic) reference for all or even most studies of acculturation; it merely suggests that for certain combinations of host and native cultures, especially those with one or more contrasting values, Hofstede's (1984) work-related values may be a relevant consideration.

The fifth and final purpose of this study is to provide a snapshot of Japanese behavior, values, and acculturation identities at an American university at the present time. A future comparative study could thus benefit by revealing changes--possibly attributable to globalization--that could be useful for analyzing and predicting cultural trends. As Nishizawa (2004) made clear: "Distinctions between [East and West] have become less and less clear, due to the homogenizing effects of multicultural

demographics and globalization” (p. 2). That Japanese values and behaviors have changed during the last two decades has been widely noted and attributed to globalization, increased affluence, a significant decrease in the Japanese birthrate, and what the Japanese have subsequently termed *the only-child problem* (Nishizawa, 2004, White, 2002). Although it may be difficult to compare the present with a past documented largely through faded and selective memories, a written account of the present may inform future studies in a way that an undocumented past cannot currently inform the present.

Rationale

While contributing to American higher education through research and classroom discussions, international students, through tuition and living expenses, added nearly \$13 billion to the U.S. economy in 2003-2004. Despite a declining birthrate and recent difficulties obtaining U.S. visas, Japan has remained fourth in the world (behind India, China, and South Korea) among countries whose citizens are enrolled at U.S. postsecondary institutions. In terms of students enrolled in English intensive programs, Japan ranked first in 2003-2004 (Koh Chin, 2004).

In spite of these statistics, U.S. institutions of higher education experienced an 11.2% decrease in the number of Japanese students on their campuses between 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 (Koh Chin, 2004). This decreased enrollment undoubtedly had much to do with increased visa restrictions and security measures in the wake of 9-11 and the subsequent British and Australian attempts to recruit a larger number of international students for their respective universities. An understanding of Japan and Japanese students has thus become critically important if recruiters and other postsecondary

administrators in the U.S. are to successfully recruit and retain Japanese students in the future. To heighten this concern, the birthrate in Japan has declined at such an alarming rate in recent years that many universities in Japan have been forced to merge (Brender, 2003) while some have filed for bankruptcy (Brender, 2005). The Japanese Ministry of Education and Science (*Mombukagakusho*) predicts that the number of places in Japanese universities will match the number of high school graduates in Japan in 2007 (Brender, 2005).

The present study focuses on Japanese undergraduate students. Although Japanese graduate students may provide as much to U.S. postsecondary education as Japanese undergraduates, the present study focuses on undergraduates given: (1) the applicability to two and four-year colleges as well as universities; and (2) recent findings that suggest the critical importance of personality development for East Asian students during their undergraduate years (Shih & Brown, 2000; Sugimura, 2001). Regarding Japanese undergraduates, Sugimura (2001) concluded: "The period between the first semester as juniors and as seniors is especially important to the changes from the lower to the higher levels in relatedness" (p. 6). In a study on Taiwanese international students in the U.S., Shih and Brown (2000) concluded that older students were more likely to identify themselves as Asian. These studies were consistent with Al-Sharideh and Goe's (1998) assertion that older international students were generally more stable and maintained a more fixed identity than younger international students.

The Pilot Study

I conducted a pilot study (Brender, 2004) with seven Japanese undergraduates who attended the same university as those who were interviewed for the current

investigation. Using self-identification on Berry et al.'s (1986) acculturation quadrant and Barry's (2001) East Asian Acculturation Measure for cross-validation, I found that in spite of the small sample, different Japanese undergraduates varied significantly in their identification with different acculturation groups. In addition, there was a strong correlation between self-selected acculturation identity and the acculturation identity determined by the East Asian Acculturation Measure. Utilizing grounded theory, I also found contrasting cultural values between Japan and the U.S. that coincided with Hofstede's (1984) work-related values. In essence, the pilot study led to the framework proposed in this chapter, and detailed in Chapter 3.

Ensuing Chapters

In the second chapter, studies related to the current investigation are presented. In Chapter 3, I expound on the two theoretical frameworks used in the study, provide justification for each, and then, based on the literature, expound upon perceived differences between Japanese and American cultural identity. In Chapter 4, I explain the methods used in this study.

Acculturation identity is addressed in the fifth chapter. Selecting from 19 interviews, I present biographical sketches of 12 participants: 3 identified as integrated, 3 as assimilated, 3 as separated, and 3 as marginalized. Commonalities and differences are noted between students within and across acculturation groups. Observations and inferences may lead to future quantitative studies that investigate correlations between selected variables and acculturation identity.

In chapters six through nine, I look toward Japanese undergraduate perceptions of Japanese and American cultural values. Using Hofstede's (1984) findings as a backdrop,

I discuss whether perceptions unearthed in this study support or refute that Japanese value greater power distance, greater uncertainty avoidance, and less individualism than Americans. Various perceptions of masculinity are explored, suggesting that in some respects Japanese are more masculine or competitive than U.S. Americans, and in other respects U.S. Americans are more masculine. In the tenth and final chapter, I present key findings, suggest future research, and provide recommendations for faculty and university administrators.

A Word on Word Choice

American is a word commonly associated with people, places, things, and concepts from the United States, but it can just as easily be used to describe anyone or anything associated with North, South, or Central America. Unfortunately there is not a commonly accepted noun or adjective in English that depicts someone or something as being from the United States. For this reason, the word *American* is used throughout this study to refer to people, things, and concepts associated with the United States. Japanese participants may use the word *America* when referring to the United States since the word *Amerika* in Japanese refers to the United States as a nation.

CHAPTER 2

RELATED STUDIES

Although some research exists regarding Japanese and other East Asian students at Western colleges and universities, much of it has been done with limited purpose or scope. A few studies have reported attitudes, sought to determine acculturation identities, focused on specific values, or offered suggestions for lessening culture shock. Others have focused on specific areas such as utilization of mental health facilities. Below are examples of studies that have featured Japanese and other East Asians at Western institutions of higher education. To date, no single study has provided an ethnographic study of Japanese undergraduates at an American university with an eye on acculturation identity, cultural identity, and values.

Wapner, Fujimoto, Imamichi, Inoue, and Toews (1997) presented three separate studies of Japanese students at American universities. The first, a pilot study, was conducted with 15 Japanese students at a northeastern university. It examined positive and negative opinions about the U.S. while determining acculturation identities based on discrepancies between expectations and actual experiences. Participants were characterized as: dedifferentiation or melting pot notion (similar to integration/fusion), differentiation and isolation, differentiation and conflict (both similar to separation), and differentiation and hierarchic integration (similar to integration/alternation). Wapner et al. (1997) concluded that there was a shift toward differentiation and hierarchic integration over time. Additionally, Wapner et al. (1997) were able to code a number of common opinions about the U.S. to be used in their subsequent quantitative study.

The second Wapner et al. (1997) investigation built on findings from the pilot study, examining physical, interpersonal, and socio-cultural aspects of the person and the environment. Qualitative and quantitative data revealed a number of common responses among participants: that American culture served as a catalyst for the participants to better understand Japanese culture; that the U.S. was a freer society than Japan; that Americans were ignorant of Japanese culture; that the U.S. was more spacious; that Americans talked more about difficult issues; that American professors were friendlier; and that American food was tasteless and caused them to gain weight. Of note were that Japanese women reported feeling less healthy, but happier and more comfortable than Japanese men.

The third Wapner et al. (1997) study investigated the development of interpersonal relationships of Japanese students at an American university. Their findings suggested that Japanese students tended to include more American and international students within their personal networks as time went on. Although the sample consisted of only 16 students, of note was that some students felt their associations with Americans were more superficial than their relationships with other Japanese and international students. Seventy-five percent of Japanese students said that they did not avoid being with other Japanese students, although some said that for at least some period of time, this was the case.

In a related study on personal networks, Fujiwara (2004) concluded that roadblocks to cross-cultural friendship between Japanese and Americans were shown to be differences in expectations of friendship. Differences included the intensity of close feelings toward friends, breadth and depth of self-disclosure, and endorsement of

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friendship rules. In a study that combined personal networks with cultural adjustment, Al-Sharideh and Goe (1998) found that self-esteem was positively correlated with participation in co-cultural ethnic communities. Of interest was that this relationship was found to be curvilinear; that is, for international students, association with more than 32 people identified as co-cultural resulted in a negative correlation with self-esteem.

Maeda and Ritchie (2004) found that for Japanese, friendship was frequently based on comfort and an ability to share problems; for Americans friendship was found to be based more strongly on stimulation. Among the American participants studied, peers who discussed their personal problems with any degree of regularity were often viewed negatively or as *whiners*. Their findings were consistent with Hofstede's (1984) work on uncertainty avoidance, which suggested that Japanese valued certainty while Americans tended to prefer situations marked by uncertainty.

Abe, Talbot, and Geelhoed (1998) studied the effects of a peer program on international student adjustment at a Midwestern university. They concluded that international participants achieved significantly higher social adjustment scores than their counterparts who did not participate in the program. In addition, they suggested that Asian students generally had a more difficult time adjusting to campus life than other international students.

Dee and Henkin (1999) concurred that adjustment to college life in the U.S. was more difficult for Asian students than for other internationals, and set about examining adjustment challenges of Korean students. Alluding to difficulties with verbal and non-verbal communication, loss of social status, and adjustment to less formal interpersonal relationships, Dee and Henkin (1999) found that gender, age, academic major, and

previous exposure to foreign cultures were important variables among their Korean subjects. Their advice to American counselors was to focus on collectivistic norms, respect for authority, and reluctance to reveal personal problems. Notably, these three propositions correspond with Hofstede's (1984) values of collectivism, power distance, and masculinity respectively.

Gilbert (2000) suggested that the Japanese conceptualization of what it means to be a student within a Japanese institution was met with cognitive dissonance when placed within an American institution with different student expectations. In essence, Japanese students viewed university life in Japan as academically passive and lacking in rigor while university life in the U.S. was seen as more intellectually demanding and a time to explore subjects and theories. Gilbert (2000) concluded that the Japanese students in her study were not typical of Japanese university students in Japan; that most had made substantial sacrifices to come to the U.S.; and that a small degree of culture shock would not deter them from their goals. Gilbert (2000) conducted her research on community college students, many of whom were beyond the 18-24 traditional age and who had already completed two or four-year degrees in Japan.

Nishizawa (2004) explored the self-concept of 18 Japanese teenagers in Japan. Although respondents were not necessarily bicultural, she concluded that globalization had contributed to inner conflicts between a collective and independent self. Such anxieties were seen as contributing to *ijime* (bullying) and other social conflicts, although it was also concluded that Japanese teenagers often retained a high degree of adaptive flexibility. Nishizawa (2004) suggested that her participants' abilities to reframe their

outlooks from ambivalence to resilience could provide a healthy self concept and inner strength for dealing with social anxiety.

A few studies sought to find variables that contributed to academic and social success for Japanese and other international students. Doring, Bingham, and Bramwell-Vial (1997) concluded that international and domestic students who recognized the framework of their new environment and made a conscious effort to adapt their behaviors to it had a greater chance of academic success. Ahn (1999) used the alternation model posited by LaFromboise et al. (1993) to understand second culture acquisition for Korean students in the U.S., but found no significant correlations between ethnic identity and college stress or ethnic socialization and college stress.

A few studies involving Japanese and other East Asian students looked to answer very specific research questions. Hom (1996), for example, investigated underutilization rates of mental health services among Asian-Americans and concluded that mental health services appeared less stigmatic to more acculturated individuals and to women. Ultimately, individuals from vertical collectivist societies (such as Japan) were determined to be the least likely to utilize mental health services.

Through investigations such as those mentioned above, interested parties may come to understand concepts about Japanese acculturation over time, Japanese attitudes about the U.S., Japanese and East Asian adjustment issues, specific Japanese values, and Japanese self-concept. The present study may serve, in part, to support or question some of the above findings, but its primary purpose is to offer a single work in which the experiences of contemporary Japanese undergraduates at an American university can be

presented within a comprehensible framework involving acculturation identity, cultural identity, and values.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEWS FOR ACCULTURATION IDENTITY AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

This chapter begins with an explanation of the two frameworks used in the present investigation: (1) Berry et al.'s (1986) bi-directional measure used to determine acculturation identity; and (2) Hofstede's (1984) work-related values used to determine cultural identity. A parsimonious and applicable framework linking the two is then introduced.

The first literature review explores various models of acculturation and acculturation identity with justification for choosing the Berry et al. (1986) bi-directional model. The second literature review begins with an explanation of Hofstede's (1984) work-related values and reason for its application to the study. A section follows that supports Hofstede's (1984) findings, namely that Japanese and American values are at different ends of the spectrum. Subtopics such as family, education, language, and the workplace are used to support common perceptions of Japanese and American values regarding power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity.

The Two Frameworks

I use two interrelated frameworks to present the experiences of Japanese undergraduates at an American university: one explores acculturation identity and the other cultural identity. The first framework assesses various models used to explain acculturation identity and provides reasons for selecting a bi-directional model with the added concepts of alternation and fusion. The second framework explores cultural identity based on contrasting sets of values. Hofstede's (1984) highly acclaimed study on

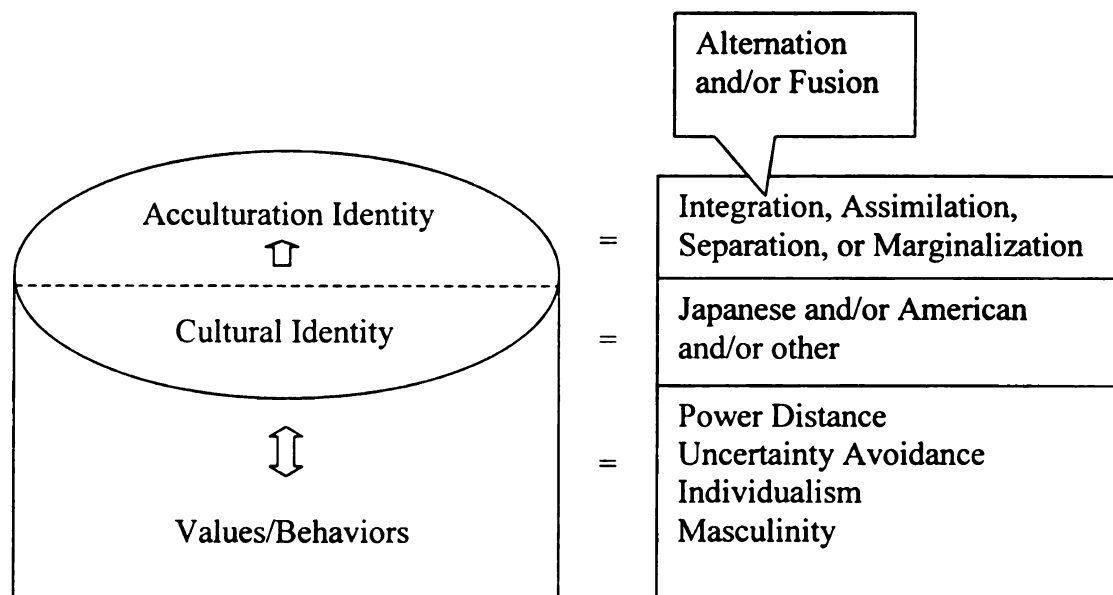
work-related values was ultimately chosen as a means to contrast commonly-held perceptions of Japanese and American cultural identity. Subtopics such as family, religion, education, and the workplace are explored to support or refute each of Hofstede's (1984) conclusions.

In order to provide a conceptual overview of these two frameworks, the connection between *behavior*, *values*, *cultural identity*, and *acculturation identity* should be established: *behavior* (verbal and non-verbal) is often a reflection of *values*; *values* (power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity) both reflect and suggest *cultural identity* (Japanese and/or American and/or other), which can be used to suggest *acculturation identity* (integration of the two, assimilation to the host culture, separation from the host culture, or marginalization from the two cultures). For those who claim both Japanese and American cultural identities, the question of whether these identities are alternated according to situation and/or fused into a cultural hybrid must be taken into consideration. Figure 3 depicts the interaction of these terms. The elliptical figure represents total personal identity, which is made up of (but not limited to) acculturation identity and cultural identity.

The section on acculturation and acculturation identity is presented before the section on cultural identity. The rationale is to first introduce current thinking on acculturation and acculturation identity and to provide the reader with the broadest and most general purpose of this study: an understanding of how people from one culture define their identity while immersed in another culture. After presenting the framework and current scholarship of acculturation and acculturation identity, I will then address how the two cultural identities targeted in this study--Japanese and American--have been

defined and differ. The section on cultural identity may then be viewed as a series of arguments and examples of how values associated with Japan and the U.S. differ, and how these perceived differences have been depicted in the literature. The information and framework established in the acculturation section may help the reader to better understand how Japanese undergraduates make sense of their personal identities in light of the many different values they may encounter at an American university.

Figure 3: Identity based on values



Acculturation and Acculturation Identity

The first framework spotlights individual-level acculturation defined as “the change in individuals whose primary learning has been in one culture and who take over traits from another culture” (Marden & Meyer cited in Kim, 2001, p. 15). Where distinctions need to be made, *acculturation* in this study denotes an individual’s process of change in a foreign environment, but *acculturation identity* refers to how an individual identifies on a specific measure of acculturation at a given point in time.

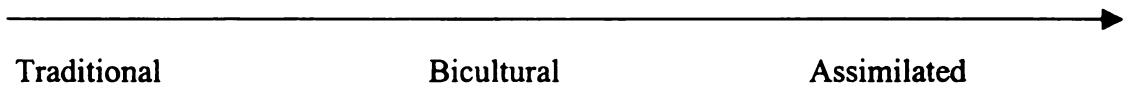
Although many researchers (Berry, 1997; Cabassa, 2003; Kim, 2001; Lee et al., 2003) have recognized the complexity of acculturation as involving specific domains (e.g., attitudes, language, behavior) and influences (voluntary-ness, mobility, and permanence), Flannery, Reise, and Yu (2001) noted that the two most common theoretical models used to conceptualize acculturation were the unidirectional model (UDM) and the bi-directional model (BDM). The following subsections explain the theory behind both the UDM and BDM while also citing empirical studies to provide a rationale as to why the BDM was ultimately chosen for this study. In addition, a speculative tri-directional model (TDM) is presented and discussed to clarify the distinction between acculturation and the creation of a newly fused ethnic identity called *ethnogenesis* (Flannery et al., 2001). Finally, an acculturation identity theory proposed by LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton (1993) is presented as a way to involve the concepts of alternation and fusion, two important elements ignored by the traditional models.

Unidirectional Model

The unidirectional model (UDM) served as the standard view of acculturation from the 1920s through much of the 1980s and beyond (Flannery et al., 2001). Put in its simplest terms, the UDM suggested that individuals and groups were acculturated along a continuum, moving from a traditional to an assimilated mode (see Figure 4). The theory suggested that as individuals acquired a new cultural system they would gradually lose their original cultural habits (Kim, 2001). Those who had not fully adapted to their new culture nor shed all remnants of their native culture were said to be bicultural, or somewhere in the midst of the continuum (see Figure 4). Although some viewed acculturation as a goal or progression toward modernity (Berry et al., 1986), it has by no

means been viewed as inevitable (Lee, Sobal, & Frongillo, 2003). In fact Kim (2001) described total assimilation as “[eluding] the reality of many long-term settlers” (p. 52).

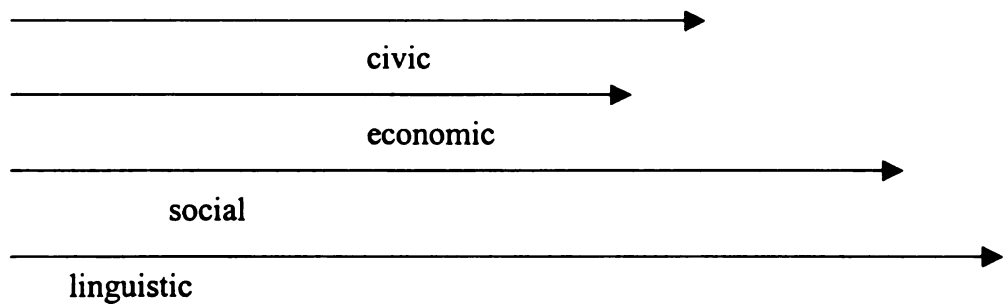
Figure 4: Unidirectional model



(Adapted from Flannery et al., 2001)

To accommodate the complexities involved in acculturation, models have been developed to include a number of topics or factors involved (Taylor, 1991). Many of these topics have been used and combined to measure acculturation levels. The Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (Suinn, Ahuna, & Khoo, 1992), for example, was the most widely used unidirectional measure among Asian Americans (Barry, 2001). It assessed language, identity, friendship choice, behaviors, generation status, and attitudes (Barry, 2001). Figure 5 serves as a representation of how various topics leading to assimilation may vary by individual.

Figure 5: Varying developmental aspects pertaining to acculturation



(Adapted from Flannery et al., 2001)

Despite its easy and parsimonious conceptualization, the UDM has been frequently criticized for its inability to recognize that an individual may identify

positively with both native and host cultures. Conversely, some individuals (especially refugees and displaced minorities) may identify negatively with both cultures (Berry et al., 1986). Although Flannery et al. (2001) recommended the unidirectional model as an economical proxy measure of acculturation, they suggested that the bi-directional model was superior for full theoretical investigations. Ryder, Alden, and Paulhus (2003) conceded that although the unidirectional measure showed a coherent pattern of external correlates, the bi-directional measure revealed independent dimensions corresponding to both native and host culture identification. The following section offers a conceptualization of the BDM along with current attempts to improve its measurement and validity.

Bi-directional Model

The bi-directional model (BDM) describes acculturation in terms of an individual's identification with a culture of origin *and* with that of a host culture. Proponents of the BDM insist that becoming acculturated in one society does not require a loss of cultural competence or loss of positive identification with one's native roots. According to Berry et al. (1986), immigrants and long-term sojourners identified with their native and host cultures in one of four ways: (1) integration or biculturalism, implying strong or positive identities with both groups; (2) assimilation, implying a stronger or more positive identification with the dominant group; (3) separation, implying a stronger or more positive identification with the minority group or (4) marginality, implying weak or marginal identification with both groups (see Figure 6).

Although participants may self-identify simply by answering (a) whether or not it is of value to maintain native cultural identity and characteristics and (b) whether or not it

is of value to maintain relationships with other groups, a multitude of scales have been devised based on Berry's model. Berry himself (1986) advocated for emic approaches to be tailor-made for each group and environment studied, suggesting, "We are a long way from achieving any etic (universal) constructs" (p. 309). Such determinations, he posited, should be based on questions about purpose, length, permanence, population, policy, and cultural qualities of both the host and native culture (Berry et al., 1986).

Figure 6: Berry's acculturation quadrant

		Advantages of identifying with native culture	
		Strong	Weak
Advantages of identifying with host culture	Strong	Bicultural Integrated	Assimilated
	Weak	Separated	Marginalized

(Adapted from Berry et al., 1986)

Several scales may be deemed appropriate for the present study involving Japanese undergraduates at American universities. Flannery et al. (2001) concluded that the Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (Suinn et al., 1992) and the Asian American Acculturation Inventory (Flannery, 1996) were quite comparable in topics and

phraseology. The Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale has even been updated to make it a bi-directional scale rather than a unidirectional scale (Ryder et al., 2000; R. Suinn, personal communication, 2005). A final possibility is the East Asian Acculturation Measure (EAAM) proposed by Barry (2001) as an improvement on Chataway and Berry's (1989) scale for Chinese and Korean students living in Canada. The East Asian Acculturation Measure was ultimately chosen for the present study due to its direct applicability to East Asians, its relative simplicity, and highly proven degree of validity (Barry, 2001). The EAAM will be used to cross-validate self-identified acculturation type and researcher-determined acculturation type based largely on Hofstede's (1984) work-related values.

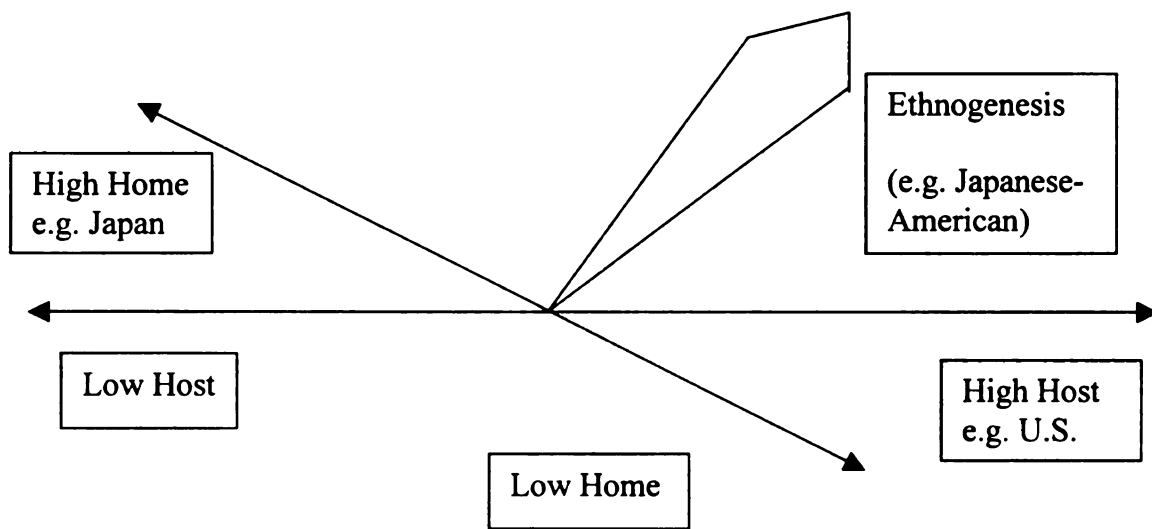
Tri-directional Model

Flannery et al. (2001) proposed a tri-dimensional model (TDM) that posited the creation of a distinct third culture based on native and host cultures (see Figure 7). This concept, known as *ethnogenesis*, describes emerging cultures that may not easily fit into either of the two cultures from which they had been derived. Flannery et al. (2001) suggested: "Asian-American acculturation cannot be reduced to home and host orientations, regardless of whether those orientations are orthogonal" (p. 1042).

Although the tri-directional model provides a useful conceptualization, little work has been done to provide accompanying scales. This disregard is understandable, given that acculturation scales generally rely on a two-way Likert scale and thus may pose difficulties in measuring a third culture that is neither well defined, nor diametrically opposed to the two other cultures in question. In addition, it would be foolish to suspect that any immigrant or long-term sojourner would not be at least somewhat affected by his

or her host culture (Kim, 2001), given to feeling somewhat disconnected from both cultures or caught somewhere in between the two. For this reason, it might be futile to ask Japanese undergraduates living in the U.S. to self-identify on the tri-directional scale. Based on pilot interviews with eight Japanese undergraduates (Brender, 2004), there is evidence that virtually everyone would identify as being part of the ethnogenesis group, though perhaps to varying degrees.

Figure 7: The Tri-directional model



(Adapted from Flannery et al., 2001)

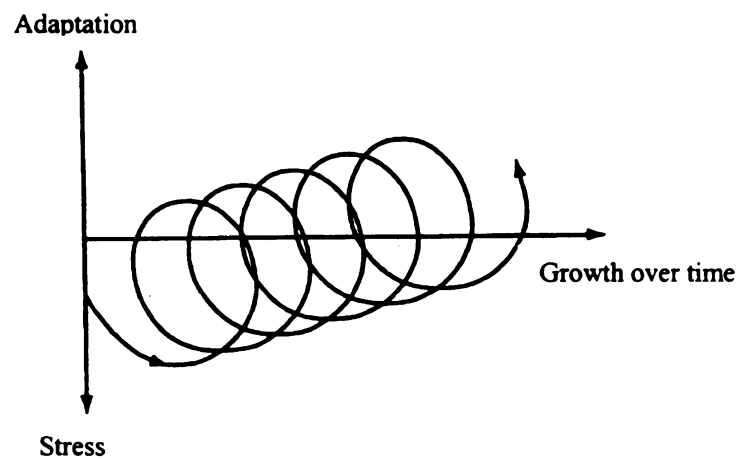
Limitations of the Directional Scales

All three of the directional scales discussed are limited to conveying snapshots, or the reflection of a single moment in time for each participant. Although some discussion of cultural adjustment will be revealed through responses to interview questions, it is beyond the scope of the present study to clearly or scientifically plot these trends.

Acculturation researchers and even casual observers have long been aware of the changes in emotions and attitudes that accompany one's adjustment to a foreign culture (Berry et

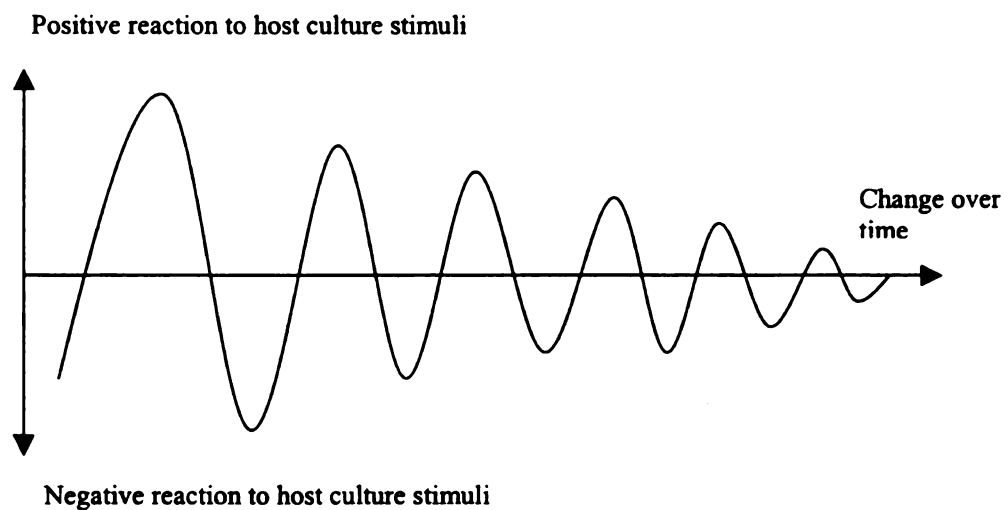
al., 1986; Kim, 2001). The old adage *two steps forward and one step back* typify many of these theories. Figure 8 represents the process of adaptation to a culture over time. Figure 9 suggests that adaptation to a new culture can be viewed as the diminishing amplitude of a sound wave; that is, the strong emotional reactions to various stimuli tend to dissipate as the sojourner becomes accustomed to a new culture over time.

Figure 8: The stress-adaptation-growth dynamic: A process model



(From Kim, 2001, p. 57)

Figure 9: The diminishing amplitude theory



A Non-Directional Scale

LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993) examined the psychological impact of biculturalism and proposed a non-linear model of acculturation identity based on high, moderate, or low competency in six different areas. Their theoretical model (depicted in Table 1) may be somewhat involved for the introductory purposes of this study, but two important concepts were defined that coincided with themes from the pilot study:

alternation and fusion. Alternation, for LaFromboise et al. (1993), assumed that “an individual can alter his or her behavior to fit a particular social context” (p. 9). Of the five models proposed by the authors, alternation was viewed as the most socially desirable and most representative of having high self-esteem and high mental-health status (LaFromboise et al., 1993). LaFromboise et al. (1993) defined fusion as representing “the assumptions behind the melting pot theory” (p. 12) where members combined the strengths and weaknesses of two cultures to form a cultural hybrid. Fusion may be consistent with the ethnogenesis theory proposed by Flannery et al. (2001) in which unique cultures would emerge based on the values and characteristics of two equally influential cultures. Interestingly, LaFromboise et al. (1993) suggested that communication competency and role repertoire would rate low for those who were undergoing fusion, but that “Once fused . . . the individual’s psychological reality would be indistinguishable from a member of the majority group” (p. 13).

A visual representation of the alternation versus fusion models can easily be depicted with Venn diagrams used in the pilot study and used once again for the current investigation. Participants in the pilot study tended to believe that total fusion was not possible for Japanese in the U.S. since the rules of the Japanese language mandated

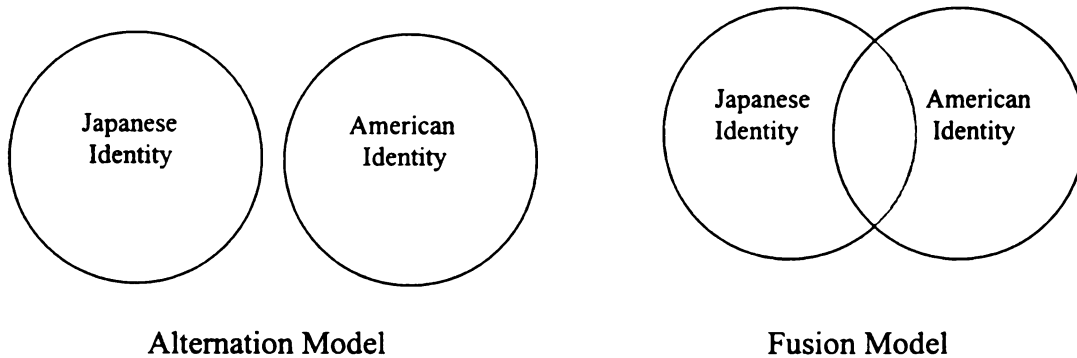
hierarchical distinctions that were seldom necessary in English (Brender, 2004). The fusion model in Figure 10 thus does not depict a total overlap of cultural identities.

Table 1: Process Variables Associated with Models of Second Culture Acquisition

Model	Knowledge of Cultural Beliefs and Values	Positive Attitude Toward Both Groups	Bicultural Efficacy	Communication Competency	Role Repertoire	Groundedness
Assimilation	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Acculturation	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low
Alternation	High	High	High	High	High	High
Multicultural	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Fusion	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate

(Adapted from LaFromboise et al., 1993).

Figure 10: Alternation vs. fusion models

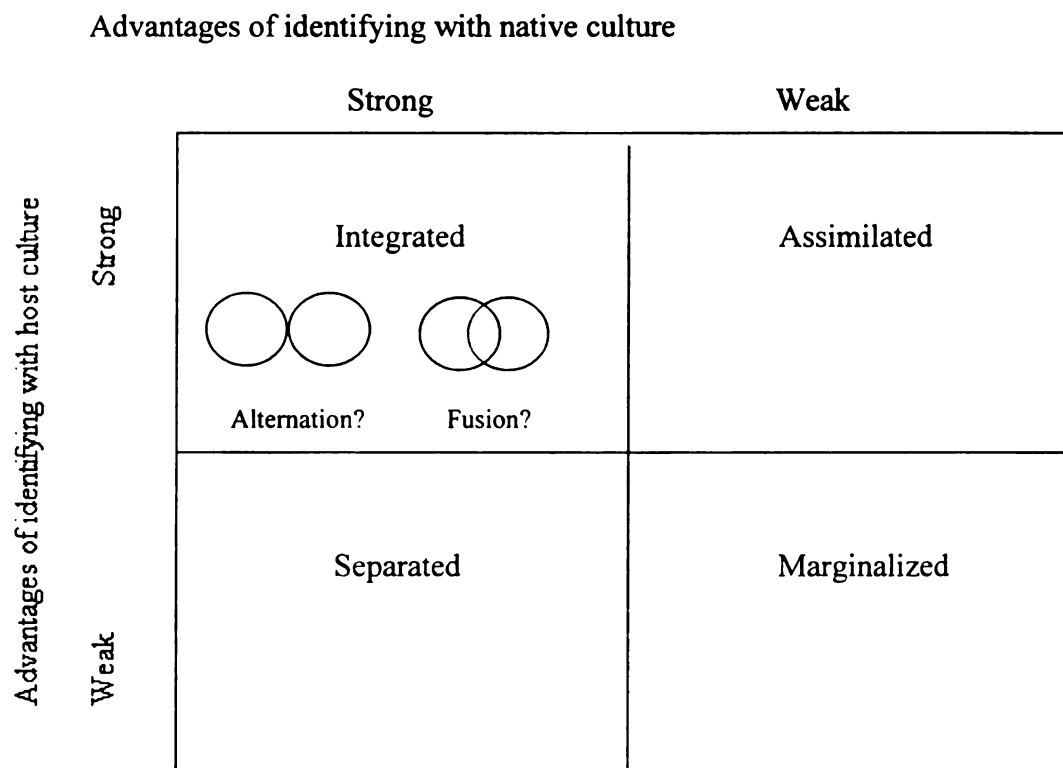


Refined Paradigm for the Present Investigation

Based on the existing models of acculturation identity, the present study opts to focus on the bi-dimensional acculturation measure posited by Berry et al. (1986) with the additive models of alternation and fusion proposed by LaFromboise et al. (1993). From information gleaned in the literature, the pilot study, and the current investigation, I concluded that Japanese influenced by both Japanese and American cultural values must choose between alternating or fusing these distinct values and associated behaviors.

While alternation and fusion are most relevant to those who identify positively with both cultures (i.e., those identifying as integrated), there is also evidence to suggest that those who identify with other acculturation groups (assimilated, separated, or marginalized) are also faced with many choices regarding how to comport themselves in various situations (Brender, 2004). With this concept in mind, Figure 11 is offered to depict acculturation identity possibilities for Japanese students at an American university.

Figure 11: Bi-dimensional measure with alternation/fusion additives



(Adapted from Berry et al., 1986 and LaFromboise et al., 1993).

Acculturation Identity: Research Questions

The research conducted in the pilot study suggested that Japanese undergraduates at the targeted American university are not predisposed to any one-acculturation type (Brender, 2004). With this diversity in mind, the focus of the acculturation section of this

study is to explore the experiences of Japanese undergraduates largely identified with each of the four-acculturation possibilities set forth by Berry et al. (1986). More succinctly, the research questions regarding acculturation will be stated as:

1. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *integrated*?
2. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *assimilated*?
3. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *separated*?
4. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *marginalized*?

Cultural Identity

Cultural Identity: Research Questions

If acculturation is based on the premise that an individual sees differences in his or her native and host cultures, it follows that whichever two cultures are looked at must somehow be defined in ways that distinguish themselves from one another. In the present study, the two research questions to be asked regarding identity are:

1. What values and behaviors do Japanese undergraduates associate with American cultural identity?
2. What values and behaviors do Japanese undergraduates associate with Japanese cultural identity?

To explain the perceived differences between Japan and the U.S., I employ four conceptual cultural values set forth by Hofstede (1984): (1) power distance; (2) uncertainty avoidance; (3) individualism; and (4) masculinity. Each of Hofstede's (1984) values is examined with subcategories such as family, religion, and education to provide arguments for specific cultural contrasts between Japan and the United States.

Hofstede's Framework

Hofstede's (1984) framework is among the most referenced in the social sciences (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001) and has been called "a watershed conceptual foundation for many subsequent cross-national research endeavors" (Fernandez et al., 1997, pp. 43-44). It has been widely employed in business literature, doctoral dissertations, and social science articles and has steadily increased in popularity since its original publication in 1980 (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). Its application to postsecondary students has been extensive (Hirokawa, Dohi, Vannieuwenhuysse, Bruno, and others, 2001; Kelleher, 2000; Matsumoto, 1990; Kim, Park, & Suzuki, 1990; Ohbuchi, Sato, & Tedeschi, 1999; Simeon, Nicholson, & Wong, 2001). Sivakumar & Nakata (2001) posited that Hofstede's conceptualization was "not highly problematic" (p. 558) and that he had "carefully provided both the conceptual basis and empirical evidence for the four factors constituting culture" (p. 558). Since the present study does not attempt to replicate any of Hofstede's (1984) quantitative methods, its reliance on his conceptualizations and general findings may be relatively well grounded.

Hofstede (1984) proposed four work-related values as likely to vary by culture: (1) power distance, the degree that differences in wealth and other endowments were accepted; (2) uncertainty avoidance, the degree to which individuals were uncomfortable with the unknown; (3) individualism, the degree of interconnectedness that characterized members of a culture; and (4) masculinity, the degree to which achievement and assertiveness were valued. In order to test his theory, he surveyed approximately 116,000 employees of a large multinational company in 40 different countries between 1967 and 1973 and from 13 additional countries in 1983 (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988).

Nations were ranked by mean scores in each category based on questions that Hofstede (1984) argued were valid for each of their respective constructs. Many of his findings, while not without criticism, have been correlated across time (Fernandez et al., 1997; Goodykinst & Ting-Toomey, 1988), and to some degree, even profession (Merritt, 2000). The Chinese Culture Connection (1987) found correlations between three of Hofstede's constructs and three constructs based on traditional Chinese values.¹ Such findings suggest that there may be equally clear cultural divisions between nations using alternative constructs (The Chinese Cultural Connection, 1987). The following subsections provide more detailed explanations of Hofstede's (1984) work-related values and how each might help to differentiate Japanese cultural values from American cultural values.

Power Distance

Hofstede and Bond (1984) defined power distance as “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations accept that power is distributed unequally” (p. 419). The assertion was that significant variations could be found between countries that accepted or preferred hierarchies, and those that preferred to minimize differences based on authority or power. In Hofstede's (1984) original study, Japan ranked slightly above the mean for power distance, while the U.S. ranked somewhat below the mean. Perhaps more interestingly, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and all the northern European countries surveyed ranked below the U.S. in power distance, while all other Asian countries ranked above Japan. An East-West division, with few exceptions, appeared to be highly evident. A subsequent study conducted approximately 20 years

¹ Integration was positively correlated with power distance; human heartedness was positively correlated with masculinity; moral discipline was negatively correlated with individualism. Confucian work dynamism was not correlated with any of Hofstede's four constructs.

later, however, showed that Japan and the U.S. both ranked below the mean for power distance, and that Japan ranked even lower than the U.S. (Fernandez et al., 1997). The fact that the research was conducted between 1989 and 1990, when Japan was at its economic zenith (Smith, 1997), may have accounted for the change in rankings. Hofstede (1984) noted in his original study that correlations could be observed between high GNP and low power distance.

Comparing Japan to the U.S. in terms of power distance can be a bit tricky, especially given Hofstede's (1984) conceptualizations. Hofstede (1984) measured power distance according to the amount of fear employees perceived in others who disagreed with superiors. He also used variations in preferred decision-making styles, assuming that less authoritarian styles promoted greater interdependence between superiors and subordinates (Hofstede, 1984). Given that many Japanese organizations are unique in their preference for consensus and nurturing relationships while also preserving a well-defined hierarchy (Hendry, 2003; Nakane, 1970), Hofstede's criteria may have been somewhat biased in its effort to capture the essence of power distance worldwide. Underlying principles of power distance and hierarchy in Japanese culture and in the Japanese language itself may dictate a degree of vertical separation that could not be properly accounted for in Hofstede's (1984) investigations or in the investigations of others who used his criteria. To clarify differences in power distance between Japan and the United States, I will turn to discussions of family, education, religion, and language.

Family

The Japanese family has traditionally been described in terms of the *ie* (Hendry, 2003, Kuwayama, 1996; Nakane, 1970). The *ie* describes the continuing line of a

Japanese household that includes the deceased as well as its unborn descendants (Hendry, 2003). An occupation was traditionally associated with the *ie*, and members were expected to contribute to it as they were able (Hendry, 2003; Kuwayama, 1996). While a male head was designated, “relations between members were hierarchically organized along lines of distinction based on age, sex, and expectation of permanency in the house” (Hendry, 2003, pp. 27-8).

The concept of the *ie* saw a legal demise during the Meiji period (1868-1912) when the centralized government, in an attempt to follow their Western counterparts, required what had been seen as collective property to be registered in the name of individuals (Hendry, 2003; Smith, 1997). The *ie* saw a further breakdown after World War II when occupying American forces, trying to end feudal and sexist tendencies, wrote in the Constitution of 1947: “With regard to choice of domicile, divorce and other matters pertaining to marriage and the family, laws shall be enacted from the standpoint of individual dignity and the essential equality of the sexes” (Article 24).

Despite changes that have come along with modernity, globalization, and legal attempts to modify the family structure in Japan, the *ie* still exists in various degrees, more strongly in the countryside, but also within the traditions of Japanese nuclear families (Hendry, 2003; White, 2002). The mid-year remembrance of ancestors, for example, where families return to their place of ancestral origin and perform traditional rites to honor those who have gone before them, is widely observed in Japan (Hendry, 2003). In this way, a continuing hierarchy is maintained, with greater reverence placed on the dead than on the living. According to Hendry (2003), “The Buddhist altar symbolizes the continuity and existence of the *ie*, and visiting members of the house will sometimes

walk right past their living relatives to greet ancestors before they acknowledge the human beings present” (p. 31).

Hierarchy is instituted among family members in a way that socially and linguistically differentiates older siblings from younger siblings. Older children, for example, are asked to give in to younger siblings since the younger ones may not yet be “old enough to understand” (Hendry, 2003, p. 51). Such reasoning, according to Hendry (2003), reassures “the long-term advantages of being older” (p. 51) and hence, the benefits of being in a higher position. Lexically, there is no Japanese equivalent for *brother* or *sister*; rather, *older brother*, *younger brother*, *older sister*, and *younger sister* are distinct terms (Mizutani & Mizutani, 1984). As Makino (2002) pointed out: “One becomes aware that, in general, one cannot completely share the same social space with another, even one’s siblings” (p. 37).

Family life in the U.S. may be much harder to depict than in a relatively homogeneous country such as Japan. To be sure, little formal legislation has been enacted to define family structure other than to outlaw polygamy, and in some states, same-sex marriages. As of this writing, the definition of marriage as the union between one man and one woman has been challenged in many states and redefined to include same-sex marriages in Massachusetts (Sartori, Morey-Barrett, & Schulte, 2004). There are few clear laws or standards regarding inheritance in the United States; decisions regarding which family members, if any, are to care for the aged are left completely to families and individuals.

The U.S. draws from no single tradition regarding hierarchical relationships in families, and no lexical distinctions are made for brothers or sisters based on age.

Japanese, on the other hand, are depicted in the literature as more likely to follow traditional cultural hierarchies based on the age and sex of family members (Hendry, 2003). In short, that family hierarchy and common parenting practices are discussed and disseminated throughout the Japanese media (Hendry, 2003) suggests that Japanese may be reared to accept hierarchical divisions much more readily than their American counterparts.

Education

By nursery school, Japanese children are subjected to what is commonly called *shūdan seikatsu* (group life) in which self-indulgence gives way to thoughtful consideration of others and the needs of the group as a whole (Peak, 1993). During this important transitional period, Japanese children learn to distinguish between *uchi*--behavior that is appropriate inside the home, and *soto*--behavior that is appropriate outside the home. According to Makino (2002) the metaphors of *uchi* and *soto* “have cognitive implications and underlie key concepts of the culture” (p. 29). Japanese communication, for example, is predicated on whether a listener or third person is determined to be in-group or out-group (Mizutani & Mizutani, 1984). The concept of having to perpetually distinguish between in-group and out-group may thus constitute an additional form of distance, if not power distance, overlooked or at least unmeasured in the Hofstede (1984) research.

From early childhood, children are taught to inquire about the ages of other children before admitting them into their group (Hendry, 2003). This information is important so that each child may be addressed with the proper respect, title, and language accorded to his or her age group (Hendry, 2003). Within any given club, school,

university, or business organization, the term *senpai* may be used as a term of respect for someone who is a senior by one year or more; the term *kohai* may be used for one who is a relative junior (Nakane, 1970). The *senpai-kohai* relationship, sometimes loosely translated as mentor-protégé, assumes a degree of respect and deference on the part of the junior member toward the senior, but also a degree of caring and responsibility on the part of the senior member toward the junior (Nakane, 1970). Befu (2001) defines this concept, known as *amae*, as “social and psychic dependency on others” (p. 5). Thus, while a *kohai* may be obliged to submit to the demands of a *senpai*, the *senpai* is expected to watch out for the welfare and well being of the *kohai*. As Nakane (1970) stated: “For the Japanese the established ranking order (based on duration of service within the same group and on age, rather than on individual ability) is overwhelmingly important in fixing the social order and measuring individual social values” (p. 26).

Hofstede (1984) noted that countries higher in power distance were more likely to have educational systems where there was “more rote learning, and the asking of questions by . . . students [was] seldom encouraged” (p. 99). McVeigh (1995) affirmed that Japanese students had trouble expressing themselves in class which he suggested made sense “in a society where being ‘shy’ is a strong cultural desirable” (p. 3). In addition, McVeigh (1995) characterized the cognitive style that emerged from the Japanese education system as being “useful for test-taking, which in Japan, is part of an elaborate mechanism that selects, sorts, and shunts students into a disciplined, highly stratified, and tightly managed workforce” (p. 1). Although McVeigh’s assessment may sound extreme, substantiation can be found by looking no further than the multiple-

choice exams that until very recently were the sole determiner for entrance into almost all Japanese universities.

Education in the United States, of course, requires few formally or culturally embedded demands based on age. Although some schools, most notably military academies, have traditions that afford special advantages to upperclassmen and disadvantages to underclassmen, this practice is atypical. Because admission to American universities has long been based on multiple criteria rather than a single entrance exam, schools in the U.S. are often free to teach their own curricula and to encourage active discussion in class (Bray, 1999). The active class participation encouraged in many American schools may help to lessen the degree of power distance between students and teachers, and ultimately between leaders and subordinates in work and family situations.

Religion

Although Buddhism and the indigenous practice of Shintō are commonly referred to as the major religions of Japan, Befu (2001) and others (Bellah, 1980; Hendry, 2003) have suggested that the major religion of Japan is an undeclared civil religion complete with prescriptions and taboos inherent in the Japanese language and culture. Reischauer (1981) insisted that: “Shintō and Buddhism are for most people more a matter of custom and convention than of meaningful beliefs” (p. 222). At the time of Reischauer’s (1981) writing, “new religions” (p. 223) based on an amalgam of folk religions were on the rise. Since the *Aum* group released poisonous gases into a Tokyo subway in 1995, however, Hendry (2003) noted that many Japanese had become quite suspicious of new religious sects.

Confucianism, which may be considered as much a philosophy as a religion, may arguably have the strongest influence on what many have termed *the Japanese religion*. Hendry (2003) noted that the Confucian values adopted in Japan included loyalty to one's superiors, obedience of children to their parents, the subordination of a wife to her husband, and the respect of younger siblings toward older siblings. Of the Confucian virtues, Morishima (1982) suggested that in Japan, loyalty ranked at the very top while love ranked highest in China.²

Hofstede (1984) posited that the influence of Confucianism "helped explain the respect for a vertical hierarchy in Japan" (p. 105) but cited studies by both Kawasaki and Yoshimori that suggested a preexisting hierarchy in Japan had made the importation of Confucianism a convenient fit. Oldstone-Moore (2002) corroborated this idea, stating: "For [the Japanese] Confucianism provided support to a centralized state and social hierarchy" (p. 103). After detailing the revivals of Confucianism in 17th and 19th century Japan and its subsequent challenges during the last 100 years, Oldstone-Moore (2002) concluded: "Confucian ideas have again become a part of the background to being Japanese, visible in the workplace, at school, and in gender roles and family structure" (p. 103).

In contrast to the hierarchical distancing central to Confucianism, Hofstede (1984) suggested a correlation between Protestant countries and lower power distance scores. Such findings have commonly looked to Weber's (1904/1958) view that Protestant religions supported and even insisted on an egalitarian worldview. Inglehart and Baker (2000) theorized that the decentralization of most Protestant churches opened the way for

² Japanese rankings were (1) loyalty; (2) ritual; (3) courage; (4) sincerity; and (5) wisdom. Chinese rankings were (1) love; (2) ritual; (3) justice; (4) wisdom; and (5) sincerity.

a greater tolerance of controversy. The U.S., whose Protestant population hovers around 59% (Datesman et al., 1997), is thus arguably not as low in power distance as countries such as Finland or the Netherlands where the percentage of Protestant populations are higher. Nevertheless, Hofstede's (1984) research revealed that power distance scores in the U.S. were lower than most countries where Catholicism, Islam, and Confucianism were strongly recognized as national or dominant religions.

Language

While much has been written about Japanese hierarchy, one need look no further than the Japanese language to find the notion of hierarchy permeating almost every utterable sentence. Choosing a pronoun or one of many verb endings inevitably conveys a hierarchical relationship between a speaker and listener. Unless two or more individuals are of the same sex, age, and group affiliation, they are unlikely to speak Japanese in a way that is hierarchically neutral (Barnlund, 1989).

In regard to Japanese pronouns, Kondo (1990) stated: "Choice of one pronoun over another is situationally negotiated and varies according to gender, class, region, and so on" (p. 27). In Japan, the Self is determined by its relationship to others in a given situation. Whereas the English language has only one first-person singular pronoun (*I*), Japanese has multiple words for *I* depending on the situation and the hierarchical relationship the speaker has with the listener. Gender, as Kondo (1990) pointed out, may also determine the choice of pronouns. Each different *I* in Japanese can denote a distinctly different self. Below are some of the most common examples:

Watakushi (formal *I* for men or women)

Watashi (standard, somewhat formal *I* for men and women)

Atashi (female *I*)

Boku (genteel male *I*)

Ore (masculine, gruff, male *I*)

Befu (2001) stated: “Because the Japanese language requires predicate endings that show the relative status between the speaker and the listener, Japanese are said to be highly sensitive to relative social status in face to face interaction” (p. 37). Azuma (1997) demonstrated that Japanese clearly differentiated forms and degrees of politeness in reference to the perceived hierarchy of each individual while Americans made only slight categorical distinctions. In asking young Japanese teachers to make a simple request of a senior teacher and of a student, clear delineations were made in predicate endings based on which of the two was being addressed. While Azuma’s subjects used a variety of different verb endings, there was absolutely no crossover between using polite forms with the senior teacher and informal verb endings with students (Azuma, 1997).

In contrast to the hierarchically structured Japanese language, English is arguably quite egalitarian. The English language has only one first-person singular pronoun (*I*) and since it has done away with the distinction between the formal second person *you* and the archaic, informal *thou*, it might be considered even more egalitarian than other European languages such as French (tu vs. vous), Spanish (tú vs. Usted), or German (Du vs. Sie).

In addition, English has no verb endings that denote a distinction between the formal and informal. A phrase that is uttered to a superior could easily go unchanged when uttered to an inferior, or even a child. *Please* and *thank you* are mainstays for many speakers of the English language, regardless of who is being addressed. In Azuma’s (1997) study, Americans used greater degrees of politeness as the imposition of a request increased; the status of the person addressed was comparatively inconsequential.

Summary: Power Distance

In this section, I have argued that power distance is learned and established in the Japanese family, in the Japanese educational system, in the Confucian value system, and in the hierarchical distinctions inherent in the Japanese language. So ingrained is the concept of power distance and hierarchy that mutually acceptable communication is virtually impossible in a Japanese context without each party accurately assessing a hierarchical order from the very first introduction. Americans, on the other hand, are unlikely to make or be concerned with such judgments. Even when a hierarchy is relatively clear, Americans can do little to change their speech patterns since the English language does not provide such cues as humble or honorific verb forms or multiple pronouns that convey distance or familiarity. In addition, a Protestant heritage, anti-aristocratic history, constitutional ban on titles of nobility, and a culture that at least in theory begs for equal treatment of all, may account for why many Americans value minimal levels of power distance.

Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance refers to “the extent to which members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations” (Hofstede, 1984, p. 113). The three indicators used to determine uncertainty in Hofstede’s (1984) research were: (1) rule orientation; (2) employment stability; and (3) stress. Japan and other East Asian countries have traditionally been associated with higher uncertainty avoidance levels than most Western countries (Fernandez et al., 1997; Hofstede, 1984; Maeda & Ritchie, 2003; Shuper et al., 2004). In Hofstede’s (1984) study, Japan ranked 4th of 39 countries with a score of 92; the U.S. ranked 31st with a score of 46. The mean was 64 (Hofstede, 1984).

Many subsequent studies have corroborated Hofstede's (1984) findings regarding uncertainty avoidance (see Maeda & Ritchie, 2003; Merritt, 2000; Shuper et al., 2004) although Fernandez et al. (1997) found a reversal in ranking between the U.S. and Japan. Japan's lower uncertainty avoidance average in the Fernandez et al. (1997) study was attributed to its powerful economic status between 1989 and 1990, the time the research was conducted, and the relatively less fervent economy in the U.S. during this same period. It has been suggested that economic trends may influence uncertainty-avoidance scores (Fernandez et al., 1997; Hofstede, 1984).

Closely related to uncertainty avoidance is uncertainty orientation. Shuper, Sorrentino, Otsubo, Hodson, and Walker (2004) distinguished between uncertainty-oriented cultures and certainty-oriented cultures. Members of uncertainty-oriented cultures "seek out information and engage in activity that will directly resolve the uncertainty" (Shuper et al., 2004, p. 460). Such individuals may thrive on exploring new ideas, concepts, and activities while becoming more passive or bored with routine or well-defined protocols (Shuper et al., 2004). Certainty-oriented individuals, on the other hand, prefer activities that maintain clarity and avoid unfamiliar areas (Shuper et al., 2004). When confronted with uncertainty, certainty-oriented individuals "will rely on others and/or on heuristic devices more [often] than more direct methods of resolving uncertainty" (Shuper et al., 2004, p. 461).

Japanese identity is commonly associated with high uncertainty avoidance levels while the general perception of American identity is more strongly linked to low uncertainty avoidance levels (Hofstede, 1984; Merritt, 2000; Shuper et al., 2004). In the terminology of Shuper et al. (2004), Japan can be seen as a certainty-oriented culture

where the U.S. can generally be seen as an uncertainty-oriented culture. Given this perceived generalization, it must be noted that uncertainty avoidance has been shown to be much more valid in comparing defined communities rather than entire countries or individuals (Shuper et al., 2004). Sorentino, Roney, et al. (1992) suggested, for example, that lay populations in the United States and Canada displayed greater tendencies toward high uncertainty-avoidance levels while university populations were given to significantly lower uncertainty-avoidance levels. This makes sense, especially given that most academic professionals base their *raison d'être* on exploring the unknown.

To substantiate the perceived Japanese tendency toward uncertainty avoidance, I will discuss topics that speak to Hofstede's (1984) defining characteristics of uncertainty avoidance: (1) adherence to rules; (2) continuous employment with a single organization; and (3) anxiety. Where necessary, I will also provide commentary on the perceived American tendency toward lower uncertainty avoidance. The topics to be explored are (1) family; (2) friendship; (3) religion; (4) education; (5) employment; and (6) language.

Family

The Japanese tendency toward uncertainty avoidance can easily be linked to one of the most prevailing concepts regarding Japanese culture: that of *uchi* (inside) and *soto* (outside) status. From an early age, Japanese children learn to associate the inside with what is clean and comfortable and the outside with what is dirty and less comfortable (Hendry, 2003). The universal and inflexible practice of removing footwear upon entering a Japanese house is just one example of how the dirt associated with the outside is not to enter the inner sanctum (Hendry, 2003). Given the early associations Japanese are taught to make between the positive familiar and the often negative unfamiliar, one

can begin to understand the likelihood of many Japanese to prefer the certain to the uncertain.

The *uchi-soto* distinction is inherent in the Japanese language; thus children learn appropriate words and phrases that refer to their own family or inside group and those that refer to outside groups. The Japanese word for one's own mother, for example, is *haha* while the word for someone else's mother is *okaasan*. The separation between inside and outside is further intensified by the common family practice of associating the outside with danger and fear, perhaps as an effort to keep children close at hand (Hendry, 2003).

While child-rearing practices in the U.S. may be much too diverse to summarize with any reasonable coherence, the concept of distinguishing between in-group and out-group will likely ring quite foreign to most Americans. To illustrate this concept, leaving young children in the care of babysitters, neighbors, or even day care workers is a largely accepted practice in the U.S. (Shellenbarger, 2005). To what extent these individuals can be distinguished as either in-group or out-group is not likely to be considered in an individualistic society such as the U.S. (Hofstede, 1984). In Japan, however, where the bond between mother and child may be virtually unbroken for the first year or more of life, children are rarely entrusted to anyone outside of a relatively well-defined in-group (Peak, 1993). From the Japanese perspective, American parental behavior may be seen as risky or perhaps somewhat neglectful. From the American point of view, Japanese parents may seem overprotective and perhaps somewhat smothering.

Friendship

Friendships in collectivist societies such as Japan tend to center around a relatively small number of very close, lifelong friends while friendships in individualist societies such as the U.S. tend to allow for a greater number of friends with perhaps varying degrees of closeness (Hofstede, 1984). Meada and Ritchie (2003) concluded that while Americans emphasized categories related to personal stimulation as important elements of friendship, the Japanese, in contrast, preferred comfort and ease. This distinction, they concluded, was consistent with the cultural differences noted in Hofstede's (1984) uncertainty-avoidance measures that placed Japan high in uncertainty avoidance and the U.S. as considerably lower (Maeda & Ritchie, 2003). The reasoning here, of course, is that those who avoid uncertainty will likely prefer the predictability of a comfortable relationship while those who happily face uncertainty will be more likely to thrive on the stimulation of creative, intellectual, or physically challenging interactions.

Religion

Religion, according to Hofstede (1984), is "one of three fundamental ways for human society to cope with uncertainty" (p. 137). Hofstede (1984) noted that largely Protestant countries, such as in northern Europe and the U.S., ranked much lower than Catholic countries in uncertainty avoidance, perhaps because "Protestantism, and especially Calvinism, encourages worldly ways to cope with uncertainty (technology and law) as willed by God rather than ritual ways" (p. 137). Thus, since Protestant countries have a tradition of deferring nebulous matters of law and ethics to the state and frequently to individuals, it may follow that its citizens have become more comfortable with facing,

debating, and negotiating uncertainties. Japan, in Hofstede's (1984) estimation, seemed misplaced among the Catholic countries, which all tended to rank high in uncertainty avoidance. His only plausible explanations about Japan were that it may have had stronger religious ties than would meet the eye, and that ancestor worship may have accounted for coping with uncertainty of the unknown (Hofstede, 1984).

Although ancestor worship may be widely observed in Japan during *obon*--midyear pilgrimages to ancestral birthplaces--ancestor worship is not a central or quotidian practice in the lives of most Japanese citizens (Hendry, 2003). Religion, as previously mentioned, may be considered something of a civic practice in Japan (Befu, 2002) with any number of anthropologically identifiable rituals that help lessen uncertainty. Although one may experience doubts and anxiety about the existence of God, the afterlife, or other major theological questions, comfort can often be found in performing familiar practices, especially where behaviors are systematically prescribed and can leave no doubt as to the completion of their performance or practice.

Shintō, the indigenous religion of Japan, has mainly been concerned with "notions of pollution and purity" (Hendry, 2003, p. 129). Eighty-five percent of Japanese citizens claim at least some degree of affiliation with Shintō, though it must also be noted that approximately 75% of Japanese also claim Buddhist affiliations (Hendry, 2003). Shintō is laden with deities to appease anxieties related to marriage, study, business, and other concerns (Hendry, 2003). It is filled with symbolism and almost choreographed ritual behaviors. People enter Shintō shrines at various times and for various reasons, but the ritual behavior is the same: they enter a temple or compound, wash their hands and mouth, approach the front of the shrine, make a monetary offering, ring a bell to call the

attention of the deity, clap their hands, and bow their heads in prayer (Hendry, 2003). Although Hofstede (1984) did not make specific comparisons between Shintō and Catholicism, such Catholic practices as making the sign of the cross before an altar or lighting a candle for the well-being of an individual may be similar, at least from an anthropological point of view. Such comparisons may help to explain Japan's positioning among Catholic countries in uncertainty avoidance rankings.

In contrast to the prescribed ritual practices in Shintō and Catholicism, many Protestant denominations in the United States adhere much less, though in varying degrees, to formalized ritual guidelines (Balmer & Winner, 2002). Some Protestants have come to reject established prayers in favor of spontaneous heartfelt devotions (Balmer & Winner, 2002). Whether the absence of a minister at Quaker meetings or parishioner-governed Congregational churches, one often finds what Balmer and Winner (2002) referred to as a "priesthood of believers" (p. 50) where democratic decision-making is applied to beliefs, missions, tenets, structuring of worship services, and/or ethical matters. In contrast, Catholicism and Shintō have both traditionally been presided over by individuals deemed infallible (the Pope) or divine (the Japanese Emperor until 1945). Hofstede (1984) cited Pareto to argue that uncertainty is sometimes avoided through confidence placed in authorities: "Logical behavior consists of activities which are logically linked to an end, not only in respect to the person performing them but also to those other people who have more extensive knowledge" (p. 112).

Buddhism encourages ritual practices in ways that are similar to Shintō. The prescribed manners that accompany prayer can be seen as yet another way in which uncertainty or awkwardness can be avoided. According to Hendry (2003):

A Buddhist temple is not much different from that of one who visits a Shintō shrine. In front of the altar, hands are held together silently, rather than clapped, and there may well be images of the Buddhist figure being invoked. Purification is usually with the smoke of incense rather than with water, and the receptacle is not necessarily at the entrance to the temple, as is the water at a Shintō shrine. But a variety of amulets and talismans are usually on sale here too, and it is again possible to have one's prayers written on an appropriate receptacle and hung in the buildings. It is also common to purchase a printed version of one's fortune to tie onto a convenient tree. (p. 132)

The Zen sect of Buddhism, more popularly associated with Japan than China, emphasizes prescribed and comforting rituals that leave little or nothing to chance. Japanese flower arranging (*ikebana*) and the well-known tea ceremony are but two endeavors devoted to following a highly prescribed set of rules. In the tea ceremony, the guests and hostess all play determined roles that follow limited speech and a minimum of individual or impromptu movements. Viewing the tea ceremony through Hofstede's (1984) lens of uncertainty avoidance, one finds a quintessentially prescribed ritual that lends comfort and peace through a complete avoidance of the uncertain.

In addition to the comfort of prescribed rituals, Buddhism can be seen as lessening the anxiety of death and all that it entails through "the memorial rites which [believers] understand will bring their souls safely to a secure state as ancestors" (Hendry, 2003, p. 131). Such memorials are generally held for 33 and up to 60 years after the death of an individual (Hendry, 2003). The Catholic Church similarly dedicates masses and encourages long-term prayers for the deceased, often relying on orders of monks (Catholic Encyclopedia, 2005). In contrast, most Protestants in the United States exclude prayers for the dead from public services (Catholic Encyclopedia, 2005). The contrast between Japan, a nation that reveres its ancestors, and the United States, a largely Protestant country that tends to avoid public or prolonged observance of the

departed, may provide support for the contrast between these two countries: the Japanese can once again be seen as striving for certainty (maintaining the deceased) while many Americans allow for uncertainty (leaving the soul of the deceased in the hands of the Creator).

Shintō and Buddhism may both be seen as lessening uncertainty through prescriptive rituals aimed at purification (Hendry, 2003). Shintō provides for the invocation of specific deities to aid the living while Buddhism offers religious practices that focus on the responsibilities of the living to the dead. Where these two religions focus on the lessening of supernatural uncertainty, a third religion, Confucianism, provides another set of elaborate rules for living in the here and now. As Hendry (2003) claimed: “According to Confucian precepts, an individual needs training in the virtues of benevolent action, loyalty and filial piety in order to participate properly in five basic relationships” (p. 138). These five relationships are ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, elder brother and younger brother, and friend and friend (Oldstone-Moore, 2002). The writings set forth by Confucius dictated a well-defined hierarchical society that was officially incorporated in Japanese government during given periods, and which arguably is inextricable from what is largely perceived as modern Japanese culture (Oldstone-Moore, 2002).

Education

Although Rohlen (1983) noted substantial differences between Japanese high schools based on their individual admission standards and corresponding rank in academic hierarchy, education at the primary level manages to follow prescriptive norms, leaving very little to chance or uncertainty (Hendry, 2003; McVeigh, 1995). In spite of

the sub-cultural differences between high, mid, and low-ranking Japanese high schools noted by Rohlen (1983), the supreme importance placed on university entrance exams coupled with the powerful central authority of the Japanese Ministry of Education stand in sharp contrast to the United States which has neither university entrance exams (at least not as sole determiners for admission) nor a national ministry of education. In terms of educational philosophies, deliveries, and administrative structuring, Japan tends to avoid uncertainty while the U.S. often seeks to embrace it.

Education in Japan is centralized in such a way that on any given day, there is likely to be little variation in classrooms whether they are in Hiroshima, Okinawa, or Yokohama (Hendry, 2003). The Ministry must approve all textbooks, and sometimes requires authors to rewrite passages or sections “to reflect the image the Ministry deems appropriate” (Hendry, 2003, p. 84). There is very little tracking in Japanese schools, and the curriculum often helps define a standard language, culture, and identity (Hendry, 2003).

Bray (1999) listed the U.S., along with Australia, Canada, India, and Nigeria, as having highly decentralized educational models. Given the diversity in the United States, putting control in the hands of individual teachers or school boards may arguably be more necessary than in a homogeneous nation such as Japan. As Stark and Lattuca (1997) pointed out: “The diversity within the broad concept of curriculum exists in part because, as the academic plan is developed, the planners are subjected to influences from society and its various agents” (p. 21). If one can assume a more homogeneous society in Japan, based on a common race, language, history, and cultural norms, it follows that Japanese educators are less subject to the influences of their local constituents.

While Japan and the U.S. differ sharply in terms of the certainty or centralization of curriculum, there is also a similar contrast between the traditions of their extra-curricular activities. In American schools, students are generally encouraged to participate in multiple clubs or athletic teams. Secondary schools, for example, offer seasonal activities such as football and soccer in the fall, basketball and swimming in the winter, and baseball and cross-country in the spring. In Japan, however, students are encouraged to join a single club year-round, and to the extent possible, throughout most or all of their school years (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). In this respect, there is a contrast between one country where students are encouraged to try their skills at multiple and sometimes new endeavors and another where students are encouraged to develop a single interest in which their familiarity with the activity and fellow club members leaves increasingly less room for uncertainty.

Japanese education is geared largely toward preparing students for entrance examinations that are the sole determiner of admission to any given university (Smith, 1997). The entrance exams, in most cases, consist largely or fully of right or wrong, multiple-choice questions (Smith, 1997). Hendry (2003) noted the prevalence of students who took practice entrance exams as often as twice a month in order to decide the best universities for which they might qualify. Ultimately, Hendry (2003) likened the modern Japanese education system to that of the traditional *ie*, insisting, “An eldest son may be assured of a future occupation as long as he is willing to follow in the footsteps of his forbears” (p. 82).

The Japanese leave little to chance in terms of education. According to Smith (1997), the average Japanese family spends a quarter of its income on supplementary

cram schools and other educational endeavors for their children in primary and secondary school. In order to transmit large bodies of factual knowledge that can be easily and objectively measured on all-important entrance exams, it is not surprising that many, if not most classes in Japan are taught using what Pratt (1997) termed a transmittal or lecture format. In contrast, many American teachers have the option to teach using other perspectives described by Pratt (1997) such as the developmental, nurturing, or social reform models.

McVeigh (1995) discussed the hesitancy of Japanese students to speak up in class suggesting that this commonality was attributable to the Japanese educational system's insistence on producing obedient students who work hard and are able to reproduce large quantities of information. In contrast to the preponderance of Japanese students who hesitate to answer questions in class, Datesman et. al (1997) observed: "American students are encouraged to express their own opinions in class and think for themselves, a reflection of the American values of individual freedom and self-reliance" (p. 177). Such an established norm, at least where it exists, may also help to clarify the greater likelihood of Americans to face and often welcome uncertainty.

Employment

Uchi no kaisha--our company--and a sense that company is family are themes trumpeted loudly in postwar studies of Japanese industry. The company as family idiom is presumably pervasive in Japan, shaping workers' lives and creating disciplined, loyal employees who strive to achieve group goals. Management practices such as lifetime employment, payment of wages by seniority, and quality circles--so goes the explanation--reinforce the family feeling, for a Japanese company is a community of people who share a common destiny. (Kondo, 1994, p. 173)

Although Kondo (1994) ultimately discussed the contradictions and complexities of the Japanese company as family, the commonality of this metaphor speaks volumes for

the way that many Japanese companies, schools, and other organizations are set up. Hendry (2003) noted that many large Japanese companies provided living accommodations, sports facilities, hobby clubs, and vacation sites for their employees. Employees are encouraged to drink together, play sports together, and go on outings together (Hendry, 2003).

At least in large companies that demand long hours and a six-day work week, many Japanese employees are provided for and subsequently shielded from the uncertainties of such endeavors as buying a home, finding friends outside the office, or making choices as to what they should do with their leisure time (Hendry, 2003). Company seniors even suggest and arrange for meetings with potential marriage partners, a Japanese custom known as *omiyai*. Hendry (2003) suggested:

Ideally, employees develop within such a framework throughout their working lives, and see their own interests as coinciding with those of the company. For those who prefer certainty and stability and not having to face the many uncertainties that come with a less structured lifestyle, this can be a comforting ideal (p.167).

In contrast, American companies tend to be far less paternal. Employees and especially women employees are often discouraged from mentioning their personal or domestic problems at work if they wish to get ahead (Axtell et al., 1997). For many American employees, revelation of personal problems can be viewed as a sign of weakness, or an inability to commit to one's career (S. Nakahama, personal communication, April 15, 2005). Although some provisions such as health care are standard, American employees are seldom provided housing and are not generally encouraged or expected to spend time outside of work socializing with superiors and fellow workers. The American company often sees itself as providing legalized contracts

that specify what is expected of the employee in return for an agreed-upon compensation (Klein, 1992). Often times, these contracts are replete with specified end dates that may or may not allow for renewal (Klein, 1992). Lifetime employment is not often desirable for employers who seek young, fresh, and less expensive talent; nor is it desirable for employees who crave new experiences, new venues, and the chance for pay increases that exceed what their current company is willing to offer (Klein, 1992).

Language

The Japanese language and its proper use are taught in schools with a degree of attention that would likely astound most American speakers of English. McVeigh (2002) called attention to a book on language etiquette endorsed by the Ministry of Education called *Wakai hitotachi no manā* (Manners for Young People). Subsections of the book included detailed etiquette for “posture and how to walk, how to sit, how to stand, how to bow, how to *aisatsu* (greet), how to carry and present things, and how to speak” (McVeigh, 2002, p. 128).

The Japanese language is rich in distinction: it employs exalting language (*sonkeigo*), humbling language (*kenjogo*), and polite language (*teineigo*) that make clear in-group and out-group distinctions (McVeigh, 2002). To the foreigner, the frequent use of set phrases known as *aisatsu* may seem cliché, unimaginative, or impersonal. As McVeigh (2002) suggested: “Practices associated with this socio-linguistic behavior, driven by sociopolitical and economic rationalization and bureaucratization, are seen in staged formalities which erect thick walls of rituality” (p. 130). This practice of maintaining social distance stands in contrast with politeness in the U.S., which “is often associated with barrier-breaking features” (Obana & Tomoda, 1994, p. 46).

Summary: Uncertainty Avoidance

Japan and the United States may be depicted as being quite different in terms of uncertainty avoidance. Although uncertainty avoidance varies as greatly by class and individual as by culture, it can be argued that Japan is perceived as higher in certainty avoidance than the United States. For the first year or more of life, the Japanese mother and child relationship continues virtually uninterrupted with co-bathing and co-sleeping as a cultural norm. Children are taught to revere and appreciate what is associated with the inside (*uchi*) and to regard with fear, discomfort, or deference people and things associated with the outside (*soto*). Friendship in Japan has been shown to revolve more around comfort than stimulation, an obvious preference for avoiding uncertainty. Japanese religions are often associated with ritual practices, ultimate authority figures, and the responsibility of praying for the dead, a practice that may add comfort and security about the unknown.

Education in Japan avoids uncertainty with its centrally controlled curricular decisions and emphasis on passing multiple-choice university entrance exams. For those who work hard and follow the rules, there are fewer surprises and greater guarantees than in the highly decentralized educational system in the U.S. Businesses in Japan have traditionally encouraged paternal relationships between bosses and employees, with bosses offering support for personal problems, living arrangements, and sometimes even marriage partners. In the U.S., work and personal lives are widely considered separate with recent legislation introduced to enforce individual privacy rights. Finally, the many ritualistic catch phrases known as *aisatsu* in Japanese provide a degree of expected comfort during instances of potentially awkward communication. In individualistic

cultures such as the U.S., the opposite is generally true: unconventional, ice-breaking behavior is what puts people at greater ease (Burgoon, 1988).

Individualism

Perhaps the most salient and validated of Hofstede's (1984) constructs has been that of individualism and its contrast with collectivist or group-oriented behaviors (Fernandez et al., 1997; Merritt, 2000; Schwartz, 1992; Smith et al., 1996). For the purpose of this study, I will equate individualism with Markus and Kitayama's (1991) definition of independent self-construal, which emphasized: "attending to the self, the appreciation of one's differences from others, and the importance of asserting the self" (p. 224). Collectivism in this study will equate to interdependent self-construal as defined by Markus and Kitayama (1991), namely: "Attending to and fitting in with others and the importance of harmonious interdependence with them" (p. 224). In no instance will there be an assumption that all individuals in a given society are either collectivist or individualist; neither will we assume that individuals can be classified as entirely collectivist or individualist (Hendry, 2003; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The aim in this study, as previously mentioned, is to explain and confirm overall *perceptions* of identity rather than to argue for an absolute or highly defensible truth.

Given the history of the United States and its emphasis (real or perceived) on personal freedom and individual rights, its rank as 1st among 39 countries on Hofstede's (1984) scale of individualism may not appear surprising. Japan, well known throughout the world as a collectivist society, ranked 22nd, just below the mean and median on this same scale. Highest in individuality were northern European and Anglophone countries; lowest were Asian and South American countries. Although Hofstede (1984) predicted a

decline in individualism for the U.S. and an increase in individualism for Japan, Fernandez et al. (1997) found approximately 20 years later that the U.S. had maintained its place as the most individualistic nation among nine countries studied while Japan remained essentially collectivist. There are signs that Japan is becoming increasingly individualist (Takano & Osaka, 1999), although contemporary research continues to support that Japan is still a fundamentally collectivist society (Befu, 2001; Hendry, 2003; White, 2002). As Befu (2001) insisted: “To those discussing what they see as the peculiarly Japanese social structure, no feature is more salient than the idea of group orientation, or group-ism” (p. 20).

To measure individualism, Hofstede (1984) relied on responses to questions positively related to personal time, freedom, and challenge, and negatively related to use of skills, physical conditions, and training opportunities. The positive loadings stressed each participant’s independence from the organization; the negative loadings stressed what the company could do for the individual (Hofstede, 1984). In order to validate the perceived differences between the generally individualistic society associated with the U.S. and the largely collectivistic society associated with Japan, I will cite arguments regarding (1) agricultural history; (2) family; (3) education; (4) friendship; (5) religion; (6) business management; (7) face; and (8) language and communication styles.

Agricultural History

The Japanese predisposition toward collectivism may have a great deal to do with its agricultural history. Tamaki (as cited in Befu, 2001) traced Japanese collectivism to the demands required for successful rice farming. The assurance of a proper harvest created a tightly knit, perhaps even tyrannical community that prevented members from

expressing individuality and asserting their rights (Tamaki as cited in Befu, 2001). This concept took many forms, from helping others save face to squelching individual accomplishments and desires (Tamaki as cited in Befu, 2001). To pay too much positive or negative attention to an individual could easily have produced feelings of superiority or inferiority, potentially alienating the individual and detracting him or her from the survival-oriented goals of the group.

The U.S. also had its roots in agriculture, although cultivating such crops as wheat, corn, and potatoes seldom depended on the strict group endeavors needed for successful rice farming. Befu (2001) referred to this agricultural practice as *pastoralism*, where “what is important is the individual ownership of the herd and the grazing land” (p. 19). Until the 20th century most American farms were largely family owned and operated, fortifying the ability for individuals to remain highly independent and self-sufficient. It was, in fact, the independent American farmer to whom Thomas Jefferson looked and whom he exalted as the early nation’s ideal citizen (Datesman et al., 1997).

Family

The Japanese *ie* or household, in contrast with most American families, traditionally put the needs and continuation of the group above the needs of the individual (Hendry, 2003). As Hendry (2003) stated: “Members were . . . expected to maintain the status of their particular *ie* within the wider community, and an individual who threatened to bring shame on the house could be cut off from membership” (p. 27). This collectivistic philosophy may be difficult to conceptualize for those of us who were brought up in the U.S. where the majority of families, educators, and the media emphasized--in theory if not always in practice--the importance of individualism,

diversity, and inalienable human rights (Spindler & Spindler, 1990). Kondo (1990)

summed up her difficulties as a Japanese American trying to fit into Japanese society:

In the face of dissonance and distress, I found that the desire for comprehensible order in the form of “fitting in,” even if it meant suppression of and violence against a self I had known in another context, was preferable to meaninglessness (p. 12).

Hendry (2003) echoed this idea in terms of the *ie*, insisting that: “The continuing entity was more important than any individual member, and individual members were expected to find their *raison d’être* in the maintenance and continuity of the *ie*” (p. 27).

Such an attitude toward the individual may sound inhumane or uncaring to many individually oriented Westerners, but in practice, nothing could be further from the truth. For those not growing up as part of a Japanese family, the sudden attempt to fit into Japanese society may seem harsh or psychologically taxing. For a Japanese reared to fit into the collectivistic nature of Japanese society, however, conformity is not without its share of benefits. Far from exhibiting an irreverent sink-or-swim mentality, Japanese, through their child rearing practices, may appear surprisingly permissive and coddling to many Westerners. There is logic in this approach, however, as I will explain.

Although the *ie* was maintained with relatively strict principles, Japanese children have been depicted in the literature as being allowed a strong degree of self-indulgence in the home (Hendry, 2003; Nakane, 1970; Peak, 1993). Part of this self-indulgence may have to do with the tendency for Japanese parents to establish a secure and comfortable environment that a child will ultimately come to support and depend upon. The Japanese concept of *amae* applies here and is frequently discussed in the literature regarding Japanese families and other Japanese groups and organizations (Befu, 2001; Doi, 1986; Hendry, 2003; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). *Amae* is defined as “the sense of being

accepted and cared for by others in a passive relationship of reciprocal dependence” (Markus & Kitayama as cited in Ellsworth, 1994, p. 38). In essence, Japanese families and other groups offer affection, acceptance, and reassurance in exchange for one’s loyalty and support. This concept is frequently applied to Japanese businesses and other organizations and is often attributed to being a major component in Japanese collectivism (Befu, 2001; Doi, 1986, Hendry, 2003; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Rather than applying rewards or punishment for individual behaviors, childrearing practices in Japan tend to emphasize harmony, proper behavior, and being thoughtful of others (Hendry, 2003). Japanese parents believe that children should be taught the importance of a congenial environment by example so that, ideally, a child should be happy and bright (Hendry, 2003). This cultural expectation becomes so ingrained that Japanese children who exhibit such negative emotions as crying or sulking will generally be referred to as *okashii* or strange (Hendry, 2003). Learning to maintain and not disrupt the peace of a shared environment is perhaps the first lesson that Japanese children learn in their collectivist education. By actually seeing the environment as something that one must share and maintain with others, one learns to hesitate before disrupting it with personal whims or unpleasant emotions. This lesson, assuming it has been learned, will follow a child to nursery school or kindergarten but the transition from the self-indulgence of home to the group-oriented life of school will require at least a modicum--and sometimes a great deal--of personal adjustment.

Education

By nursery school Japanese children are subjected to what is commonly called group life (*shūdan seikatsu*) in which self-indulgence gives way to thoughtful

consideration of others and the needs of the group (Hendry, 1989; Peak, 1993). During this important transitional period, Japanese children learn to further distinguish between *uchi*--behavior that is appropriate inside the home, and *soto*--behavior that is appropriate outside the home. In simplest terms, self-indulgence becomes associated with the home and yielding to the desires of the group becomes associated with school and the outside. According to Makino (2002) the metaphors of *uchi* and *soto* “have cognitive implications and underlie key concepts of the culture” (p. 29). Preschool is only the beginning.

Although the transition to preschool and to group life is not without its initial difficulties, Japanese teachers are well prepared for the task. Allowing only the first week to provide personalized attention, teachers strategically come to avoid paying special attention to children who cry or request individual help (Hendry, 1989). Meanwhile, children learn to see themselves as part of the group through their uniforms, identical activities, and frequent cooperative efforts (Hendry, 1989). Teachers address the class as a whole using the personalized collective *mina-san*, and “encourage the children to put pressure on each other to cooperate in the activities arranged for them, so that stragglers are urged to pull themselves together for the sake of the whole class” (Hendry, 1989, p. 169).

By junior high school, the concept of group life becomes so prevalent among Japanese students that few, if any, will share knowledge of their grades or scholastic achievements for fear of making others feel inferior. Likewise, students are often slow to answer questions in class so as not to appear showy or more intelligent than the rest of the group (McVeigh, 1995). In contrast to group-oriented Japanese students, Datesman et. al (1997) observed: “American students are encouraged to express their own opinions

in class and think for themselves, a reflection of the American values of individual freedom and self-reliance” (p. 177). Furthermore, American students exhibit few qualms about discussing their grades or personal achievements with classmates or peers.

Finally, a duty system is enacted in Japan where children take turns at various responsibilities that include leading, representing, and disciplining others (Hendry, 1989). One example that continues through high school is the allocation of responsibilities for cleaning and often maintaining the school (Ellington, 2001). Homerooms delegate times and responsibilities for cleaning hallways, bathrooms, chalkboards, and classrooms. Entire days are sometimes set aside for more thorough cleaning while athletic clubs are often responsible for maintaining their respective fields and play areas (Bussler, 1998). By contrast, American schools almost uniformly hire custodians or custodial staffs (Bussler, 1998).

Friendship

Maeda and Ritchie (2003) studied the values of friendship among college students in Japan and the United States. Their conclusions were that true to previous findings in collectivist cultures, Japanese college students valued interdependent relationships where personal problems could be easily discussed with friends who would listen sympathetically (Maeda & Ritchie, 2003). Maeda & Ritchie (2003) explained that members of collectivist cultures viewed the problems of an individual as potentially affecting the entire group and thus saw reason to help others overcome their difficulties. American college students, on the other hand, sometimes helped each other through hard times but tended to view “too much dependence on others...as personal weakness” (Maeda & Ritchie, 2003, p. 591). The purpose of friendship in cultures low in uncertainty

avoidance such as the United States has long been associated with providing stimulation or excitement rather than comfort (Hofstede, 1984). With the exception of some Latin based cultures, most individualist cultures tended to rank low in uncertainty avoidance as well (Hofstede, 1984).

Religion

Odaka (as cited in Befu, 2001) suggested that pantheistic religious practices helped account for Japanese group-ism. Calling this religious-based collectivism a destiny-sharing corporate community (*ummei kyōdōtai*), Odaka considered its concept as key in the organization of Japanese companies as well. The Japanese term for God, translated *kami*, “is also applied to natural objects regarded as sacred, such as trees, mountains, seas, birds, and animals, as well as to some human beings, usually but not always after they have died” (Hendry, 2003, p. 128). The view that humans, animals, and natural objects are all part of something greater speaks to a collective ideology that contrasts heavily with the American Protestant view in which individuals are expected to establish and maintain a personal relationship with God (Balmer & Winner, 2002).

Comparatively speaking, American Protestantism can be seen as much more individualistic than even Catholicism. While Catholic practice encourages prayer to a multitude of saints who serve as intercessors (Gillis, 1999), Protestant theology stresses the importance of the individual by insisting on a one-on-one relationship with the Creator (Balmer & Winner, 2002). Christian evangelism, whether Protestant or Catholic, emphasizes the importance of salvation for each individual soul. So great is the concern for individuals that many Christian evangelists may see their life’s mission as bringing their teachings and beliefs to one person at a time.

Business Management

Hofstede (1984) suggested that: “More collectivist societies call for greater emotional dependence of members on their organizations” (p. 152). According to Befu (2001), Japanese business management has prided itself on what are referred to as “the three sacred treasures” (p. 24): lifelong employment, seniority, and enterprise unionism. Each of these concepts is inherently paternalistic and collectivist in nature, providing employees with just treatment and concern for their welfare while simultaneously inspiring concern for the well-being of the company. As Befu (2001) suggested: “Underlying these [three] pillars are elements of Japanese group orientation such as communitarianism, treatment of members as whole persons, mutual trust, emphasis on harmony, and the like” (p.24).

Hofstede (1984) suggested that disharmony between a company and its employees may result in a shift toward individualism. The tendency for American companies to focus on short-term profits, hire employees on a contractual or consultative basis, and the frequency with which American employees move from job to job without stigma, suggests a highly individualistic society, especially when compared to Japan. The American tendency to herald the successful entrepreneur above the organization man is another indication of individualism in American work culture (Datesman et al., 1997).

Hofstede (1984) noted that many organizational theories originating in the United States emphasized extreme individualistic tendencies that often made them less relevant to managers in other countries. Japanese organizational theories such as Total Quality Management (TQM) and Theory Z (proposed by a Japanese American based on Japanese principles) emphasize the overall culture of an organization while many American

theories stress a reward system based on productivity (Welch, 2005). The idea of up or out, meaning that an employee will either be promoted or fired after a given term, is an American concept that may be viewed as unusually harsh if not counterproductive in a collectivist society such as Japan. This is not to say, however, that these ideologies have not made their way to Japan (Klein, 1992).

In recent years, the Japanese recession and the inflow of foreign capital into Japanese companies have begun to change some traditional practices. According to White (2002), only about one quarter of the workforce has jobs that are considered lifetime employment. Meanwhile, the percentage of workers who would like to change jobs increased from 4.5% in 1968 to 14% in the 1990s (White, 2002). Japan may not exhibit the same degree of individualism that is commonly associated with the U.S., but there appears to be a trend in that direction.

Face

Ting-Toomey (1988) asserted that in individualist cultures such as the United States, it is of great importance to maintain consistency between a private and public self-image. In collectivist cultures such as Japan, however, the self can vary--sometimes considerably--based on the relationship or situation (Ting-Toomey, 1988). A Japanese, for example, is likely to act quite differently with a boss than with a subordinate, or with family at home than with a client at a restaurant. Americans too may make slight speech or behavioral modifications depending on a given situation or relationship, but the rules will be far less defined or recognizable than for a Japanese. In collectivist cultures, the self is "bounded by mutual role obligations and duties and it is structured by a patterned process of give-and-take reciprocal face work negotiation" (p. 216).

Individualistic cultures such as the United States tend to be much more concerned with self-face maintenance while collectivistic cultures such as Japan tend to be interested in self-face maintenance *and* other-face maintenance (Ting-Toomey, 1988, Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2002). That Japanese students refrain from showing off their knowledge in class or sharing academic successes with their peers are two examples of other-face maintenance mentioned previously. As Ting-Toomey (1988) concluded: “Individualistic cultures value autonomy, choices, and negative-face need, while collectivistic cultures value interdependence, reciprocal obligations, and positive-face need” (p. 224).

Group identity is generally quite important to the Japanese. Whether the association is with family, friends, school, or work, the face of one can be a good or bad reflection on the face of everyone. Personal shame threatens to become collective shame. To remove shame from the group, political and business leaders have been known to extricate themselves through resignation and on extreme occasions even suicide. Sometimes the resignation is symbolic; that is, even if the leader has not committed any personal wrongdoing, the fact that wrongdoing took place under his or her guise is a shameful reflection on the leader. Casting public blame on others is considered dishonorable.

Extricating oneself from a group in Japan carries with it a loss of personal identity. According to Doi (1986) it is very difficult for an individual to disassociate from the family or group and to act on his or her own initiative. Acting independently is considered a betrayal among Japanese; thus, individuals may be ashamed to do anything

on their own (Doi, 1986). Such a statement reflects powerfully on just how collectivist a culture Japan may be.

Language and Communication Styles

A number of studies indicated that individuals hailing from collectivist or interdependent cultures such as Japan tend to use much more indirect styles of communication than people from individualist cultures such as the United States (Gudykunst, et al., 1996; Kim, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Ting-Toomey, 1988). Lakoff and Johnson (as cited in Ting-Toomey, 1988) suggested that indirect communication often involved using roundabout words, metaphor, euphemism, and hinting strategies. In a high context culture such as Japan, facial expressions and incomplete sentences help lessen the need for direct verbal unpleasantness (Ting-Toomey, 1988). In fact, in collectivist cultures, indirect communication is generally seen as a sign of strength, maturity, and social competence (Miyahara, 1999).

Indirect communication may be further intensified in Japan because of its homogeneity and predisposition toward being a high context culture (Ting-Toomey, 1988). High context cultures tend to be homogeneous and collectivist; individuals in low context societies generally understand cultural cues to the extent that verbal communication often becomes secondary or unnecessary (Ting-Toomey, 1988). In low context, heterogeneous cultures such as the United States, verbal communication is more necessary and there is a preference for explicit, rather than implicit, communication (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Low context cultures cannot afford the luxury of shared subtleties (Ting-Toomey, 1988).

Anger and bad news may be difficult to express for many Japanese (Hara & Kim, 2004). As Nakayama insisted: "In the case of Japan, when individuals have some kind of message they feel hesitant to utter, they often use indirect or ambiguous expressions from which others will be able to infer his or her true intention, because of over-thoughtful consideration for others" (as cited in Hara & Kim, 2004, p. 5). According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), many Japanese refrain from exhibiting anger because of the potential for disrupting harmony or threatening an interdependent self. In this sense, anger directed against another may be viewed as anger against the self.

Anger in Japan is not without outlets. Interdependent societies such as Japan and Korea tend to allow for a significant release of stress through exercise and occasional (though sometimes frequent) outings centered on alcohol consumption. In addition, it may be said that anger in vertical societies such as Japan is released more freely from top down; that is, superiors may exhibit anger or demands in a way that is less common or acceptable in societies or organizations with a more horizontal power structure. Suckle (1994) added credence to this tension-release theory in a study he conducted on Japanese directives or verbal mandates. According to his research on a white-collar Japanese family of four, those members who were considered of higher status expressed approximately twice as many directives as they received (Suckle, 1994). While this individual case study cannot speak for the whole of Japan, it may serve to illustrate that superiors release certain tensions (here in the form of directives) to inferiors much more readily than inferiors might toward superiors (Suckle, 1994). Anyone who has noted the *senpai* (senior) *kohai* (junior) relationships in Japan, and especially in Japanese athletic clubs, will note this behavior is quite common.

Summary: Individualism

In this section I have tried to support the commonly held assumption that Japan is a collectivistic society while the U.S. is highly individualistic. The agrarian histories of both countries suggest that rice cultivation in Japan required strict group cooperation while the corn and wheat harvests associated with the United States allowed for individual families to do their own farming. The Japanese *ie* structure has long held the continuation of the household to be more important than any individual member while the American family has tended to focus on individual happiness. The educational system in Japan systematically emphasizes the importance of group life (*shūdan sekatsu*), while American educators tend to encourage students to find their individual strengths and passions through interest tests and developmental assignments that allow for personal exploration.

Maeda and Ritchie's (2003) study emphasized that friendship in Japan was largely based on comfort and concern for others while friendship among American college students was often based on the stimulation one could find in the company of others. In terms of religion, the pantheistic associations with the Japanese term *kami* (God) helped to explain a collectivistic worldview, while the emphasis on the individual soul that is common throughout Christianity tended to reinforce individualism in the United States. Business management in Japan has long stressed paternalism, lifelong employment, seniority, and enterprise unionism, all of which can be linked to a collectivistic philosophy; contractual employment, separation of work and home life, and the lack of stigma associated with changing jobs are all indicative of individualism in the United States. Finally, face concern for others and indirect communication were shown to

be hallmarks in Japan where group harmony takes on great significance. In the time-is-money business environment associated with the U.S., other-face concern often takes a back seat to productivity and efficiency. Phrases abound in the U.S. such as *deal with it*, *get over it*, *suck it up*, and *if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen!*

Masculinity

Perhaps the most problematic of Hofstede's (1984) work-related values was masculinity. For the sake of simplicity, masculinity in Hofstede's (1984) investigation can be related to competition and ego while femininity may be summed up as nurturance. Many people familiar with both Japanese and American culture might agree that each country exhibits some characteristics that are masculine and others that are comparatively feminine, and that depending on the category, either country can be seen as more masculine or more feminine than the other. In some areas, however, there is a somewhat comparative degree of machismo. The Japanese samurai and the American cowboy, for example, have served as a symbol of masculinity in each respective country. Likewise, both Japan and the U.S. can be seen as quite competitive in terms of the values they place on business and economic success.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Hofstede's (1984) measurement of masculinity placed both Japan and the U.S. as above the mean in terms of masculinity; Japan ranked 1st and the U.S. 13th in a field of 39 countries. In this sense, masculinity served as the only one of Hofstede's (1984) four values where the U.S. and Japan were on the same side of the mean. Closer examination of these two countries, however, may reveal certain very different characteristics associated with nurturance, which Hofstede (1984) defined as a feminine characteristic. This section, unlike the previous sections on power distance,

uncertainty avoidance, and individualism, does not reveal a definitive contrast between Japan and the U.S., but makes the reader aware of certain areas in which the U.S. is likely to show more masculine tendencies, and others where Japan may display greater masculine tendencies. The subcategories in this section will include: (1) friendship; (2) cultivation of the arts; (3) language; and (4) attitudes about gender in the workplace.

Friendship

In terms of friendships, Maeda and Ritchie (2003) concluded that Japanese college students were much more nurturing with friends than were Americans. Americans, they observed, were willing to listen to a friend's problems but often regarded this kind of exchange as whining and an undesirable sign of personal weakness (Maeda & Ritchie, 2003). The American tendency toward supreme independence has been readily noted in the many loner heroes depicted in American films and television programs (Datesman, et al., 1997). Such solitary, unmarried heroes include but are not limited to: Rambo, Commando, Superman, the Lone Ranger, Charlie's Angels, Shaft, Kojak, Wonder Woman, Spider Man, and most of the roles portrayed by John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Sylvester Stallone. Wierzbicka (1994) cited Bellah et. al (1985) who suggested that Alexis de Toqueville's observations regarding American friendship rang true to the present:

In the mobile and egalitarian society of the United States, people could meet more easily and their intercourse was more open, but the ties between them were more likely to be casual and transient . . . In the new, mobile middle-class world, one autonomous individual had to deal with other autonomous individuals in situations where one's self-esteem and prospects depended on one's ability to impress and negotiate. Friendliness became almost compulsory as a means of assuaging the difficulties of these interactions, while friendship in the classical sense became more and more difficult (pp. 117-118).

Maeda and Ritchie (2003) also noted that where friendship in Japan and other collectivist societies was often based on feelings of comfort and intimacy, American friendships were largely based on the stimulation that could be garnered between individuals. Of course, friendship takes place in many forms in both Japan and the U.S., and the trends noted by Maeda and Ritchie (2003) and others are not meant to speak for entire nations by any means. Bellah et al. (1985) extrapolated on the idea that American friendships often lacked a commitment to the altruism or the common good:

In a culture dominated by expressive and utilitarian individualism, it is easy for us to understand the components of pleasure and usefulness, but we have difficulty seeing the point of considering friendship in terms of common moral commitments. For Aristotle and his successors, it was precisely the moral component of friendship that made it the indispensable basis of a good society. For it is one of the main duties of friends to help one another to be better persons: one must hold up a standard for one's friends and be able to count on a true friend to do likewise (p. 115).

Friendships in both Japan and the U.S. are likely to be based on some combination of nurturance and stimulation (if not competition), but it is interesting to note that the popularly held view of American friendship and its predisposition toward competition rather than nurturance has indeed been supported by the literature. Tannen (1990) discussed the tendency for American men to one-up each other in myriad ways, while the principal reason behind most female friendships centered on bonding and closeness. Interestingly Japan, by far the most masculine country on Hofstede's (1984) scale, is decidedly more feminine in terms of friendship. The same may also be true regarding cultivation of the arts.

Cultivation of the Arts

Benedict's (1946) classic anthropological study of Japan, "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword," depicted Japan as a nation of dichotomous contradictions:

The Japanese are, to the highest degree, both aggressive and unaggressive, both militaristic and aesthetic, both insolent and polite, rigid and adaptable, submissive and resentful of being pushed around, loyal and treacherous, brave and timid, conservative and hospitable to new ways. (p. 2).

The title chosen by Benedict speaks volumes in terms of contrast, choosing as Japanese symbols the highly nurtured chrysanthemum (feminine), and the violently aggressive and ultimately destructive sword associated with the samurai warriors (masculine). Perhaps most interesting to the American--whose understanding of machismo likely excludes floral cultivation--is that artistic endeavors (a.k.a. nurturance) have long been associated with the ideal Japanese warrior.

Hendry (2003) noted that the Japanese military was historically the greatest patron of such Japanese arts as *kabuki* and *nō* theatre, puppet shows, and “various forms of popular music, dancing, and singing” (p. 189). Even today it is common for Japanese men to dedicate themselves to any of the above arts or to calligraphy, gardening, or *bonsai* cultivation (Hendry, 2003). Flower arrangement (*ikebana*) and the Japanese tea ceremony tend to remain largely female endeavors, but can certainly be appreciated by men.

Within the U.S., masculine hobbies are frequently associated with sports, automobiles, and construction. If these endeavors do not allow for active competition, knowledge of these subjects allow for outright displays of superiority. Readily citing batting averages, engine capacities, and the advantages of various brickwork joints are masculine endeavors indeed. Meanwhile, hobbies associated with nurturing and appreciation such as theatre, art, and music have little use in the world of the middle or working class American man, save the occasional opportunity to display one’s superior knowledge of these subjects. Lee (2005) noted that in a recent interview with 30-40

straight men across the U.S. between the ages of 20 and 60, each instantly found the idea of two straight men attending an art exhibit together as “peculiar” (p. 2). The outright appreciation or cultivation of what might be considered beautiful or carry an undercurrent of homoeroticism may become suspect in the world of the American heterosexual male (Lee, 2005).

Language

Unlike the English language, Japanese differentiates between masculine and feminine roles in terms of its pronouns, word endings, and anticipated degree of politeness. Several first-person pronouns exist in Japanese, most of which denote familiarity or hierarchy for men. The only truly gender-neutral first person pronouns are *watashi*, *watakushi*, and sometimes *jibun*, all of which are somewhat formal. Aside from these pronouns, the only commonly used pronoun that is distinctly feminine is *atashi*. Meanwhile men have several pronouns to choose from, most of which are considered particularly masculine and which are used primarily between men in informal situations. When second-person pronouns are used (as opposed to the common practice of using a person’s name), men usually use *kimi* or *omae* while women are generally expected to use the more formal *anata* (Mizutani & Mizutani, 1984).

Mizutani and Mizutani (1984) suggested that women generally use the somewhat cushioning term *wa* after verbs and certain adjectives when they precede the emphatic *yo* or the tag *ne*; thus where a man might say *ii-yo* (it’s good!) or *ii-ne* (it’s good, isn’t it?), women would generally say *ii-wayo* and *ii-wane* respectively. Some variation has been known to exist across regions and among gay and lesbian populations; people from the Kansai area have chided men from the Kanto area for sounding effeminate while Kanto

residents have accused Kansai women of sounding manly (R. Masuda, personal communication, March 18, 2005). In addition, traditionally feminine speech forms have often served as indicators for gay men to recognize one another (McClelland, 2000).

Japanese rules of hierarchy determine which of two parties should defer to the other, and thus honor the superior with a more polite form of language. Japanese etiquette clearly states: (1) younger defers to older; (2) female defers to male; (3) student defers to teacher; and (4) seller defers to buyer (Condon, 1984). Since women generally defer to men, it is relatively common for women to use polite language with men while men tend to use plain, sometimes terse language with women. Mizutani and Mizutani (1984) indicated several gender-based examples where women were likely to use more polite verb endings while men used plain verb endings.

American English is not only egalitarian between the sexes but it has made for a plethora of sensitive--some might say nurturing--changes over the past few decades. The prevalence of political correctness has emphasized to the greatest extent possible, equality and sensitivity along gender, racial, religious, age, and ability lines. The word *woman* has replaced the popular use of the word *girl* for all female adults; the phrase *differently-abled* has replaced the formerly pejorative term *handicapped*; and so on. The nationwide movement to change the language has been evident in schools, the workplace, the media, and just about everywhere imaginable. In terms of nurturance and promoting equality, especially between the sexes, American English might be considered much more feminine than Japanese.

Attitudes about Gender in the Workplace

In spite of Japan's Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) of 1986, women in the Japanese workforce remained largely in supportive positions to men (Axtell et al., 1997; Befu, 2001; Hendry, 2003; White, 2002). According to Lam (1993) women were generally interviewed only after the pool of male applicants were exhausted, and if hired, were often put on a separate track from the men. Befu (2001) noted: "Women are absent from much of the hierarchy of the corporate structure that is taken as the prime manifestation of the Japanese group-ism. Most women are at the bottom rung in corporate structure or they are at home" (p. 44).

Japanese women have made some advancement in the past two decades, but change has been quite slow, especially in comparison with their counterparts in the United States. Hendry (2003) limited her examples of workplace advancements for women in Japan to the nation's first female governor in 2000 and first commercial airline pilot in 1997. Although women in the U.S. have by no means reached a point of total equality with men in regard to positions of highest prominence, American women have made considerable forays in recent years. While only 3% of airline pilots and flight engineers were women in 2003, 28% of all lawyers, 30% of all physicians and surgeons, and 66% of all psychologists in the United States were women (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.). In addition, the Institute for Women's Policy Research (n.d.) reported that between 1996 and 2002, "the number of women governors jumped from one to five, the number of women in the U.S. Senate grew from nine to 13, and the number of women in the U.S. House increased from 49 to 60."

Summary: Masculinity

In this section I have attempted to show that Japan and the U.S. may both display comparatively masculine and feminine cultural values. While Japan tends to be more nurturing in terms of friendship and men's involvement in the arts, the U.S. has generally been perceived as more inclusive and egalitarian in terms of its politically correct and gender-neutral language and its progress in providing increased access and more equal treatment for women in the workplace. Unlike the first three work-related values set forth by Hofstede (1984) where Japan and the United States were shown to differ dramatically, masculinity must be viewed with respect to various subcategories.

CHAPTER 4

METHODS

This qualitative investigation explores the acculturation identity, cultural identity, and values of Japanese undergraduates at a large Midwestern university. In this chapter I discuss the research methods employed in the study, including type of design, sample selection, data collection procedures, data collection analysis, role of the researcher, institutional research approval, transferability, limitations, and theoretical lenses.

Type of Design

I asked participants in this study to complete a survey instrument for measuring acculturation identity (Barry, 2001), respond to demographic questions, submit to an oral interview, self-select an acculturation identity, and draw a picture to represent their cultural or mixed-cultural identity. Interviews were conducted primarily in English with opportunities to use Japanese. Details and rationale are as follows:

As a way to help determine acculturation identity, I asked participants to complete the East Asian Acculturation Measure (EAAM) proposed by Barry (2001) as an improvement on Chataway and Berry's (1989) scale for Chinese and Korean students living in Canada. The EAAM was chosen for its direct applicability to East Asians, its relative simplicity, and highly proven degree of validity (Barry, 2001). In the pilot study (Brender, 2004), I also found a high degree of consistency between EAAM results and participant self-selection. The EAAM consisted of 29 questions employing a seven-point Likert scale. It was ultimately used to cross-validate participant self-selection of acculturation identity along with researcher-determined acculturation identity based on inductive reasoning.

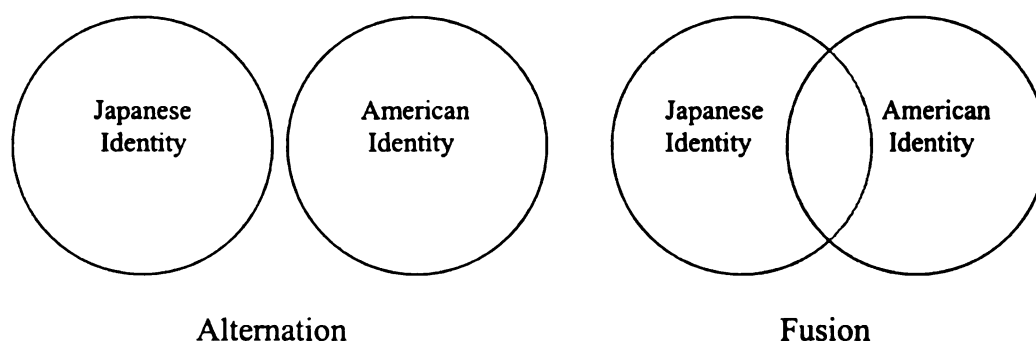
Demographic questions targeted gender, age, hometown, major, year in school, amount of time at U.S. postsecondary institutions, and amount of time at U.S. primary and secondary schools. Participants were also asked to estimate the percentage of their free time that was spent with Japanese, with other East Asians, and with non-East Asians. The demographic questions served to assist in writing biographical sketches and to aid in suggesting possible correlations with acculturation identity for future studies.

Open-ended interview questions were used to “minimize the imposition of predetermined responses” (Patton, 2002, p. 353). Interview questions were designed to solicit open-ended responses that would relate largely to acculturation identity and cultural identity. Acculturation identity questions targeted perceptions of self, free-time activities, and social behavior as a way to understand each individual’s preferences for Japanese, American, or other cultures. Cultural identity questions focused on subtopics from Hofstede’s (1984) values: family, education, friendship, business, male-female relationships, etc. Opinions garnered on these subjects were used to support or refute Hofstede’s (1984) conclusions about opposing values in Japan and the U.S. They were also indicative of individual preference for Japanese and/or American cultural values and helped to determine individual acculturation identity.

After the interview, Berry’s (1986) Four Varieties of Acculturation were presented in the form of a grid divided into quadrants. Respondents were asked to place themselves on the grid based on their identification with American culture and their identification with Japanese culture. As a way to discuss the issue of maintaining fused or alternating Japanese and American identities, respondents were also asked to draw a picture that would represent their cultural or mixed cultural identity. As an example, I

presented two Venn diagrams representing alternating and fused identities. Participants were encouraged to be as creative as possible. The Venn diagrams presented as examples are depicted in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Venn diagrams depicting alternation and fusion



The interviews were conducted principally in English, although I offered opportunities for respondents to use Japanese. One advantage for using English was that in the pilot study (Brender, 2004), participants frequently expressed that speaking English lessened the power distance between themselves and others. As one respondent noted in the pilot study, “English . . . makes me feel like I can talk to anybody equally, even a professor, or friends, or younger kids” (Brender, 2004, p. 32). Japanese, however, was employed on occasion to note potential behavioral shifts that were germane to the study. Some participants used words or phrases in Japanese to express themselves more clearly; none spoke Japanese exclusively for more than a few minutes at a time.

Another rationale for using English was that Japanese are likely to respond more directly in English because of the common Japanese perception that the English language and American culture lend themselves to more direct communication (Reischauer, 1981). In addition, those who speak a non-native language are more likely to be direct as a way to be understood; the art of being indirect or ambiguous is much more difficult in a

foreign language, especially since one cannot rely on non-verbal cues to be understood cross-culturally (Burgoon, 1988). In addition, since the United States is commonly identified as a low-context culture in which verbal directness takes precedence over non-verbal cues (Burgoon, 1988), Japanese respondents may find themselves compelled to be more explicit when speaking English.

A pilot interview (not to be confused with the pilot study) was conducted to determine whether questions should be rephrased or omitted. Special consideration was given to making questions easily understandable to the target audience while not exceeding a two-hour time limit.

Sample Selection

The campus targeted for this study, a research I university with an undergraduate population of over 35,000, claimed an international student population of approximately six percent (Office of International Students & Scholars, 2004). In the fall semester of 2004, 68 Japanese undergraduates were in attendance; 58% were women and 42% were men (Office for International Students & Scholars, 2004). After significant attempts to recruit participants for the present study, 12 volunteers were secured. Eight were women and four were men. In the prior year, seven Japanese undergraduates had volunteered for a pilot study; of that number, five were women and two were men.

As a means of recruitment for the current study, I sent personalized e-mails to undergraduate students with common Japanese surnames (or surname prefixes) who were accessible on the university web site. Excluded were students with non-Japanese first names *and* non-Japanese mailing addresses. I also recruited participants through Japanese contacts who had participated in the pilot study or the present investigation. A faculty

member recommended one interviewee. The majority of respondents were attained via personalized e-mail requests.

With an objective of providing three biographical sketches representing each of the four-acculturation identities (integrated, assimilated, separated, and marginalized) and a balance of gender that reflected the Japanese student population (58% female, 42% male), I drew eight respondents from the present investigation and four from the pilot study (Brender, 2004). With participants representing a mixture of gender and acculturation identity, Patton's (1980) criteria for purposeful sampling appeared to be met: "Decision makers and evaluators think through *what cases they could learn the most from*, and those are the cases that are selected for study" (p. 101).

For chapters six through nine, which look to perceptions of Japanese and American cultural identities, the 12 students recruited for the present investigation were used almost exclusively. Data from the pilot study, when referenced, were cited accordingly.

Data Collection Procedures

After formal introductions, I identified myself as a doctoral candidate who had spent some time in Japan and who understood the difficulty of adjusting to a foreign country. I explained that negative experiences were as natural as positive experiences, and that I would by no means be offended by anything negative said about the U.S. My interests, I made clear, were in obtaining honest and sincere answers that could be of benefit to future Japanese students who came to the U.S.

Before each interview, I read the consent form aloud, asked if the respondent had any questions or concerns, and then asked him or her to sign it. Each respondent was

asked to provide a second signature that granted permission for the interview to be recorded. When the consent form was signed and dated, I gave the respondent a copy of the agreement and then asked him or her to fill out the East Asian Acculturation Measure (Barry, 2001). A short section containing demographic questions followed.

Twenty-nine questions were asked from the established protocol, although not necessarily verbatim. Follow-up questions were frequently asked where appropriate.

Upon completion of the protocol, I presented and explained the bicultural grid proposed by Berry et al. (1986). Each respondent was asked to choose an area on the grid that best represented his or her cultural identity. No border or dividing line could be chosen.

Finally, each respondent was asked to depict his or her cultural identity in the form of a drawing. Although two Venn diagrams representing fused and alternating identities were presented, each respondent was encouraged to be as creative as possible in depicting his or her cultural identity.

The interviews took place in a large cafeteria, coffee shop, or university conference room depending on convenience or the respondent's preference. Gilbert (2000) noted that public and social places put her Japanese participants at ease and allowed them to take on a conversational tone. My experiences with interviewing Japanese students led me to a similar conclusion (Brender, 2004). Coffee and tea houses abound in Japan and are quite commonly associated with being venues for extraordinarily long conversations. Travel books on Japan frequently point out that the high prices charged at cafes entitle patrons to remain seated as long as they wish. Since an invitation to visit a personal residence suggests a degree of heightened formality in Japan,

understanding venues that are comfortable for Japanese may be important for conducting effective interviews.

Most interview sessions lasted between 90 minutes and two hours. No time limit was enforced for those who wished to continue talking for longer periods.

Data Analysis Procedures

Within a few days of each interview, I wrote up field notes and tabulated each respondent's score on the East Asian Acculturation Measure (EAAM). On a spreadsheet, next to the pseudonym of each participant, I entered demographic information, self-determined acculturation identity, and the corresponding acculturation identity scores as determined by the EAAM. From the 19 total participants, I chose 3 who best represented each of the four-acculturation identity types. Of these 12, 8 had self-selected an acculturation identity that matched the acculturation identity determined by the EAAM. In each case, I determined acculturation identity based on inductive reasoning that was later, at least in part, substantiated in the biographical sketches I wrote.

I transcribed each interview. In determining acculturation identity type, I looked to each transcription and jotted notes alongside statements and field notes that might substantiate or refute a given acculturation identity. I then wrote biographical sketches in a creative fashion, intertwining quotes with observations and descriptions. I kept each biographical sketch to approximately four pages to provide balance and to maintain as much reader interest as possible. An introduction and conclusion were added to the biographical sketches with transitional paragraphs.

For data analysis in chapters six through nine, I pasted each interview into a qualitative software program and coded them according to Hofstede's (1984) work-

related values and other emerging themes. In my pilot study (Brender, 2004), I found reason to use such polarized categories as hierarchy versus egalitarianism, collectivism versus individualism, structure versus freedom, ambiguity versus clarity, and quietness versus aggressiveness. I later discovered that each of these categories translated well into Hofstede's (1984) work-related values. I thus coded my new data into categories reflecting power distance (hierarchy versus egalitarianism), uncertainty avoidance (structure versus freedom), individualism (collectivism versus individualism), and masculinity (quietness versus aggressiveness). I later generated reports for each of the respective four categories, plugged them into the software program again and further divided each into subcategories such as family, religion, education, business, etc. I began by using the subcategories for each value used in Chapter 3, but frequently resorted to grounded theory. Finally, I converted each of these reports into word documents from which I further arranged the quotes and began analysis and writing. On occasion, certain passages were recalled and incorporated that had not been appropriately coded beforehand.

Role of the Researcher

I lived and worked in Japan for almost three years between 1984 and 1989. While working as a high school teacher and consultant at the Yokohama City Board of Education, I studied Japanese, read voraciously about Japanese culture, and interacted more frequently with Japanese than with non-Japanese. As a result of this background, I was able to present a relatively informed understanding of Japan. It was important, however, to make known that I was by no means an expert on Japanese culture (the somewhat rusty Japanese I sometimes interjected was likely testament enough!) and that

much of what I had learned was likely outdated. As Glesne (1999) warned: “You do not come as an expert or authority. If you are so perceived, then your respondents will not feel encouraged to be as forthcoming as they can be” (p. 41).

Because suppression of honesty and emotional expression are common features associated with maintaining group harmony in Japan, I encouraged each participant to speak as honestly and frankly as possible. Appealing to altruistic tendencies, I suggested that frank and honest answers could be of help to future Japanese students in the U.S. As a foreigner who once lived in Japan, I relayed my understanding of the ups and downs of the acculturation process and that not all feelings about one’s host culture were likely to be positive. In the interviews I conducted, there were relatively few instances where I felt any of the students had been less than straightforward with me.

Institutional Research Board Approval

I applied for and received general permission from the institutional research board to conduct the present study beginning in August 2005. I also received human subject approval for the pilot study in 2004.

Transferability

The findings in the current study may be transferable to Japanese students at other institutional types, in other regions, in other countries, and across time. Many of the general findings may also apply to other international students, especially those hailing from Pacific Rim countries. In addition to serving university professionals seeking an understanding of Japanese and other East Asian students, this study may be highly relevant for Western organizations that hire or seek to hire Japanese educated at Western colleges and universities. The study may also be informative for Japanese companies that

hire or seek to hire Japanese nationals who have studied in the U.S. or other Western countries.

Limitations

Patton (1990) noted, “There are no perfect research designs. There are always trade-offs” (p. 162). As with any qualitative study conducted at a single institution, the findings in this study are not necessarily generalizable to other students or other institutions. That the targeted institution was a large, research I university located in the Midwest may make it less transferable to postsecondary institutions of different sizes, with different entrance requirements, with different missions (e.g., religious), or in different regions of the country.

Classifying students according to acculturation identity types is a slippery slope. Although nearly half of the participants’ self identification matched the acculturation identity determined on the East Asian Acculturation Measure (Barry, 2001), more than half did not. Four students self-identifying as integrated, scored highest in the assimilated category on the EAAM. My own assessment, which relied on trends that supported Japanese or U.S. American work-related values, was undoubtedly colored by Hofstede’s framework as well as my own personal biases. Acculturation identity is clearly subject to change over time, and sometimes according to one’s mood at a given time. For this reason, answers to questions on the East Asian Acculturation Measure were likely subject to mood and subjective comparison while answers to interview questions may have been subject to mood or to individual reaction to me as an interviewer. That most interviews and observations were limited to single meetings may also have prejudiced findings and interpretations.

Since I am a white, American male in his early forties with a modicum of understanding about Japanese culture and the Japanese language, respondents may have reacted differently toward me than to a woman, a younger or older person, a Japanese national, someone from a country other than Japan or the U.S., or someone who knew more or less than I appeared to know about Japan. The interviews may also have been different if they had been conducted entirely in Japanese.

One final consideration is that all of the students interviewed for this study completed their primary or secondary education in Japan prior to 2002 when the Japanese Educational Reform Act went into effect. Because many have voiced concerns over the newer, more relaxed curriculum (Ellington, 2005), it is possible that in the very near future, Japanese students who come to U.S. colleges and universities may express very different outlooks and opinions from those who took part in the current investigation.

Theoretical Lenses

In supporting many of the claims in this study, I took a highly eclectic approach, borrowing from psychology, anthropology, social psychology, sociology, cross-cultural communication, religious studies, business management, and linguistics. The main framework of this study combines a bicultural measure proposed by Barry, a professor emeritus of psychology in Canada, with the work-related values proposed by Hofstede, a professor emeritus of Organizational Anthropology in the Netherlands. Hofstede drew from a number of disciplines himself, touting an M.S. in mechanical engineering and a Ph.D. in social psychology before becoming a fellow at the Institute for Research on Intercultural Cooperation, and Extra-Mural Fellow at the CentER for Economic Research.

I chose to write my findings chapters in ethnographic form, a genre associated with anthropology, in order to examine the culture of a given group of individuals who shared a similar origin and similar relocation from that origin. As Cresswell (2003) suggested, ethnographic inquiry should be employed to “learn about broad culture-sharing behavior of individuals or groups” (p. 183). In addition, I wanted to share my understanding and interpretations of Japanese culture to the uninitiated, which fit with Glesne’s (1999) view of ethnographic research: “Analysis of this data focuses on description and interpretation of what people say and do” (p. 9). In short, based on my research questions, targeted participants, and personal preference for storytelling, ethnography seemed an obvious choice.

My previous education, interests, and experiences undoubtedly influenced my decision to use a variety of sources in this study. An undergraduate concentration in theology brought a number of comparisons to mind regarding religion; a master’s degree in Romance linguistics and study of the Japanese language made linguistic comparisons evident; professors of graduate courses that I took in anthropology and cross-cultural communication introduced or led me to sources that explained and supported a great many assertions posited by participants and researchers such as Hofstede. In sum, I felt no qualms about using sources from multiple disciplines, as I considered each relevant and applicable to the present study.

CHAPTER 5

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Categorizing human beings is an often distasteful endeavor that can leave the researcher painfully aware of unexamined or unreported complexities in his or her participants; nevertheless, it is a fate I have endured in putting together this chapter. In spite of an appreciation for the depth and complexities of the subjects involved, I have compiled 12 biographical sketches of Japanese undergraduates to represent each of the four-acculturation types depicted in this study: 3 identified as integrated, 3 as assimilated, 3 as separated, and 3 as marginalized. The decision to categorize according to acculturation identity relied on each respondent's self-selection coupled with the results of the East Asian Acculturation Measure. I also based my decisions on inductive reasoning, sifting through each interview to support or refute suggested acculturation identities.

Drawing from 19 participants in the present and pilot study, I chose 12 based on gender, acculturation type, and potential interest to the reader. Two who identified as separated were excluded because they had studied in the U.S. for less than eight months. The other excluded participants--all women self-identified as integrated--revealed experiences that were largely captured in other biographical sketches featured in this chapter.

Depicting an individual in three to five pages may not do a great deal of justice; nevertheless it is my hope that certain personalities and perhaps even commonalities will come to light for the reader. It is with this spirit in mind that I offer portraits--undeniably

flawed by my own biases and interpretations--as an introduction to the unlimited variety of Japanese undergraduates presently enrolled on American campuses.

The names of the 12 students featured below have all been changed. Other small and relatively insignificant modifications have been employed to keep identities confidential.

Integrated Student 1: Kenta

At a crowded coffee shop outside of campus, Kenta sat forward on an overstuffed chair, sporting a white polo shirt and khaki shorts. Adding a splash of idiosyncratic style were three cloth wrist bands--one that resembled a woman's elasticized hair band. Aside from this uncommon accessory, Kenta was unusual only in that he was rather difficult to characterize. With manners that seemed neither wholly Japanese nor American, he displayed elements of both in ways that were not always immediately perceptible. Despite a strong command of English that came with being in the U.S. for six years, Kenta surprised me by requesting to speak in Japanese on occasion. In retrospect, his periodic, sometimes fragmentary use of Japanese may have been something of a brief invitation into his culturally fused world.

Kenta was the first to volunteer as a participant for my dissertation research. Answering an e-mail that solicited Japanese undergraduates, he reacted strongly to the idea of helping future Japanese students through his participation. If there was something he could do to make life easier or less painful for those who would follow in his tracks, Kenta was on board. Recalling his first two years at a small college in the eastern United States, Kenta found refuge principally among other Japanese students:

Kenta: . . . for two years I went to college in [an eastern state] . . . but I had a hard time talking--like, being accepted to . . . American groups. I was there for two

years . . . There [were] some people who [were] nice, but of course that's how my friends are to me here.

John: So at [this Midwestern college] has it been easier?

Kenta: I would say so, definitely. I think [this Midwestern state] itself, is more open minded, I think. People are nicer; people are more cheerful, I think. *Kekkō, taihen de*--I had a really hard time! There were people who just made fun of me for being, like, Asian. It happened, like, so many times back there. So from that experience I was having trouble . . . for developing new friendships actually . . .

John: So you didn't have a good experience there?

Kenta: Well, I had bad experience more than good experience, that's for sure. So I was having [a] hard time there, and I made really good friends with, like, Japanese people because, you know, they shared those struggles.

John: So were you more separated then?

Kenta: I would say so, yeah.

In spite of feeling separated during his freshman and sophomore years, Kenta now identified as being quite integrated in his new environment. While cultivating a variety of friendships at his new school, he seemed to honor both Japanese and American culture equally--and sometimes inseparably. He expressed his appreciation for both Japanese and American movies and his taste in music spanned genre and nationality. For Kenta, it seemed that he and the world around him were a nebulous blend of Japanese and American culture. His best friend--in support of this notion--was an American whom Kenta described as having strong cultural interests in Japan:

John: Tell me about your best friend.

Kenta: He's American and he learned Japanese--and he learns Japanese--and he has a Japanese girlfriend, and I guess he wants to get married with her . . . And I want to work here in the States but he wants to go to Japan to work . . . He is really serious about how things are working [in Japan] and I'm curious about how things work here . . . We give, like, information to each other, and he corrects my English, I correct his Japanese, and I don't have to worry about what to talk about.

Coincidental if not fitting thematically into Kenta's world of cultural fusion was his girlfriend who had grown up in Japan with a Japanese mother and American father. After graduating from the American college that Kenta had attended previously, she relocated to the Midwest with aspirations of settling in the U.S.:

John: How do you spend your free time?

Kenta: I spend free time . . . I have my girlfriend. I spend time with her . . .

John: Is she Japanese? American?

Kenta: Oh, she's *hambun*--"half" . . .

John: Was she born here or there?

Kenta: Mentally, she's like 90% Japanese, I think. She was born in Japan, spent a little childhood in Chicago, and went back to Japan. Her dad is from the States, so she has some background . . . being exposed to American culture . . .

John: Do you speak to her in Japanese or in English?

Kenta: Japanese.

John: Always?

Kenta: Mostly. 90% . . . 95%.

John: Whose English is better?

Kenta: Mine. You know, she knows more vocab, but she still has some accent, like more . . . She has kind of a weird accent! She's not exactly--she doesn't have exactly, like, [a] Japanese accent. I don't know where she gets that accent from.

John: Where did you meet her?

Kenta: I met her at [the first college I attended]. And I transferred in when she graduated from that college. And I was studying here for . . . you know--I still had two more years. And she didn't want to . . . because of her appearance in a way--she didn't want to be in Japan because her appearance is more toward, like, American, *dakara hito ga ijiru* (so people tease her)--like, people stare at her, you know what I mean?

John: So she doesn't feel at home in Japan?

Kenta: I think she does, but she's kind of tired of it in a way. Every time she speaks, like, she looks like [an] American--but she speaks perfectly, you know. She's Japanese! You know, when she meets someone they almost all the time say, "You speak good Japanese!" So she's kind of tired of it. So I guess that she didn't want to work in Japan and she wanted to come to the States, and I happened to be [here], and she kind of moved . . .

Surrounded by a best friend and girlfriend who brought a shared familiarity with things both Japanese and American, Kenta admitted that he was interested--very interested--in the topic of dual cultural identities. Coming with few defined notions, he proved to be thoughtful, insightful, and highly receptive to new ideas. In his struggle to define himself, he insisted--contrary to the conclusions of LaFromboise et al. (1993)--that the highest form of biculturalism was to fuse rather than alternate cultural values and behaviors:

John: What do you think about Japanese who change their behavior . . . by situation? Is it understandable? Is it unusual?

Kenta: I think it's [dangerous] for me to change my behavior. I don't want to have, like, two identities. But those who do that, I think that's the best way for them to deal with those two identities they have to have. There were times that I was doing exactly things like that too, but once I spent more time [thinking about] my theory or like my identity, . . . I reached the point where I don't have to work so hard . . . to act like somebody else . . .

John: So in your progression you've gone from [an alternated] identity to [a fused] identity?

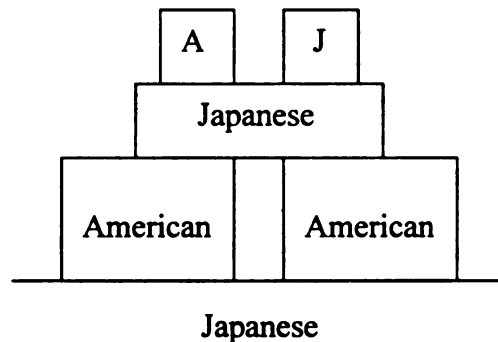
Kenta: I think so . . .

John: Do you see [fusion] as being at a higher level?

Kenta: I think so because they are learning how to express themselves. Because if your communication method is limited, then you always have to find a way to get by it, you know, like, make a way through it. So sometimes it's required to act different than how you usually do. So once you learn how to communicate with others better, I think it's . . . easier to express, like, [your] natural . . . self. Like, it's . . . easier to boil it down to, like, how you think, how I feel about something.

As it turned out, Kenta was not the only participant to see fusion as the highest form of biculturalism. The drawing he created to depict his fused identity, however, was unique. Insisting that the foundation of his identity was Japanese, he drew a horizontal line and wrote “Japanese” below the line. He then drew two large building blocks on top of the foundation line. These two building blocks he labeled “American.” Insisting that his newly found American identity had caused him to rethink his Japanese identity, he then drew a single block atop the two initial blocks and labeled it “Japanese.” Finally, at the very top, he drew two smaller blocks that he labeled “A” for “American” and “J” for Japanese. These two blocks, he reasoned were the culmination of his understanding of both Japanese and American culture and cultural identities. The entire picture, however, served to represent his total fused identity. Kenta’s drawing appeared as follows:

Figure 13: Kenta’s self-identity drawing



Kenta’s theory, I felt, was rather interesting and warranted serious consideration. In his values, in his behavior, and in his preference for friendship and culture, Kenta seemed a very layered and often fused combination of Japanese and American cultural identities. The way he depicted his identity, however, was a revelation that only he could

have provided. Whether or not his representation will be recognizable to other integrated or bicultural students will be left to future investigations. Regarding Kenta's personal struggle for identity, one thing appeared certain: after years of trying to compromise his behavior in order to be accepted and understood in his host culture, Kenta was finally able to display who he was on the inside, feeling confident that his fused identity was acceptable to both himself and to the wide variety of people he would meet.

Integrated Student 2: Naomi

Naomi arrived 20 minutes late for our meeting at a coffee house just outside of campus. She recognized me by the terse self-description I had e-mailed her, and I knew to greet her from hers--170cm tall and wearing a ponytail. Dressed in fitted khakis and a dark sleeveless top, Naomi was sleek, confident, and remarkably natural in both her manner and appearance. She wore little if any makeup, and her hair was neither tinted nor permed.

In spite of the norm in Japan and even the U.S., Naomi did not apologize for being late; she simply introduced herself with a handshake and a smile that seemed immediately affable. She was good-natured throughout the interview, offering philosophical insights and a willingness to speak candidly on a number of topics. She readily challenged ideas and thoughtfully considered opinions and theories that differed from her own.

Naomi had moved with her family to a Midwestern town when she was 13, so the topic of being bicultural was far from new to her. She was completely fluent in both Japanese and English, but as a senior majoring in linguistics, she was keenly aware of her

shortcomings in each. When asked whether she spoke English as well as Japanese, she assessed:

I think my Japanese is still a little bit better, but . . . both languages are not perfect at all. Like, in terms of like, my languages, like, I don't speak in English perfectly--I don't speak in Japanese perfectly either.

Although Naomi scored one point higher in the assimilated category than the integrated (33 vs. 32) on the East Asian Acculturation Measure, she self-identified as integrated, suggesting she maintained both a Japanese and American identity. That she could be both assimilated and integrated did not seem entirely contradictory in Naomi's case, given the nine years she had spent in the U.S. Arguing briefly for her assimilation, I might cite the disdain she revealed for more traditional, separated Japanese:

John: Are you most comfortable hanging out with a group of Americans, a group of Japanese, or a bicultural group of Japanese who have lived in the U.S.?

Naomi: Hmm. Definitely not with 100% Japanese group--it's not very comfortable for me because they're too Japanese, and they . . . I don't know, it's just . . . I feel like they're closed minded, especially when they're here. Like, why are they hanging out with themselves? . . . And they will never learn how to speak in English! And they will, like, be scared of American people the whole time! Like, that's what they actually say: they're like, "Oh, I'm scared of American people--they use too much drugs!" I'm like, "It's a different country, like, try to learn, and try to immi . . . --you don't have to do drugs, but . . . " [laughs]. You can be scared and not talk to American people the whole time! So I can't be comfortable with them.

Interestingly, Naomi acknowledged feeling more comfortable with Americans, although she admitted to feeling less comfortable with some Americans than with others:

Naomi: Um, all 100% American people, I'm comfortable with them . . . I'm fine with them [laughs], but the people who have experience with, like, Japanese culture--I find them comfortable, but I feel like, I feel like I'm just being their conversational partner or something [laughs]

John: Okay, so the Americans who want to learn Japanese [seem opportunistic]?

Naomi: But that's okay though.

John: Do you find that these people are equally interested in *anime*, *manga*, and things of that sort? Do you think they're a little bit *different*?

Naomi: Yeah, right! [laughs] But not all of them though . . .

The concept of Americans keenly interested in Japanese culture came up in a number of interviews--mostly in unflattering terms. Although cautionary prefaces were the norm, many respondents talked of American men interested in Japanese culture--and especially in Japanese women--as *otaku* or undesirable misfits. Of the various groups of Japanese and Americans we discussed, Naomi finally acknowledged feeling most at home with Japanese like herself who had spent considerable time in the U.S. or abroad:

Especially people who speak in English and Japanese really well--our language is very mixed. Like, one sentence can have both Japanese and English--not just words, but, like, phrases . . .

Naomi's allegiance in terms of friendship, music, and movies went both ways; she seemed to appreciate Japanese and Japanese culture every bit as much as Americans and American culture. On potentially divisive issues such as religion, feminism, and the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, she claimed to understand feelings--at least in part--on both sides.

Perhaps most revealing of Naomi's integrated identity was her desire to actively maintain both her Japanese and Western identities. Asked about how she imagined her future and the marriage partner she envisioned, Naomi seemed determined to keep one foot in Japan and the other outside of Japan:

I want [my husband] to be able to speak in Japanese. I want him to be willing to live in Japan, even though I'm fine with living in other countries; but I want my home to be Japan. That's the thing--I can live in other countries, I can live around--there are people who are like that. But I want my, like, home to be Japan. Like, I want my house, under my name, or, like, my husband's name or something, and I don't want to give up my Japanese citizenship. And I don't want to become another country's citizen either and I don't want to live in the same

country for more than, like, ten years or something. But the thing is, I would like to live in Japan, but not *live* in Japan. I would love to have a home in Japan, like, whenever I want to come home--it's Japan. But, I don't mind living in other countries. But I just don't want to settle there. I don't want to settle in other countries. That's what I want . . .

Because Naomi could neither fuse two countries into one nor physically be in two places at the same time, her yearning for integration--for comfort and adventure--could only be quenched by imagining herself transported often and easily between Japan and other countries. In terms of managing her personal identity, Naomi waxed philosophical on the idea of fusing her two cultural identities into one. Asked to depict her Japanese and American identities on paper, Naomi revealed:

I never will be American and never completely Japanese, so I can't do this (alternate) because I never really become totally Japanese when I'm talking to someone. So I think I'm always Japanese [laughs]--it's very hard . . . I don't know! I think it's always mixed, but I think . . . hmm . . . maybe this one . . . [laughs, pointing at a fused Venn diagram]. Like, I feel like it's more integrated, and, like, I'm consciously doing this too.

John: Consciously doing what?

Naomi: Like, integrating. Like, both identities together--to become one person.

John: Is it that you want to stay consistent with your values?

Naomi: Yes.

John: Then you don't want to have values that contradict each other?

Naomi: Exactly. Right.

Integrated Student 3: Noriko

Noriko wandered into the parlor of the mostly international residence hall where she lived. Chatting with some of her friends who had agreed to participate in my study, she learned of my research on Japanese students and wanted to become involved. Perhaps because so much of her life and identity had been enmeshed between Japan and the U.S.,

she was particularly enthusiastic about telling her story. At her behest, one of her friends introduced her:

“Hi, I’m Norrrrikyo” she said with the palatalized vowels of an upper-middle class American woman and a Midwestern “r” that would make a Michigan native blush. “Norrrrikyo?” I mused, using the same equally American pronunciation. We both smiled and then repeated her name simultaneously using the properly shortened Japanese vowels and single-flapped Japanese “r”. It seemed a fitting introduction for two people caught between the same two worlds, and sometimes not knowing which one to turn to.

A hospitality/business major in her sophomore year, Noriko had lived in the U.S. from grades one to four. Her father worked for a major Japanese company and had taken his family to Hawaii and then to Georgia. Recalling her return to Japan at age 10, Noriko was aware of being different but never felt ostracized because of it. Although a bit repentant for some of her early behavior, she felt little need to completely squelch the characteristics associated with her new American identity:

When I returned to Japan from Georgia, I was more aggressive. I wanted to be involved in more and I wanted to express myself more than other Japanese. People tried to treat me normally when I returned from Georgia. The teacher said to the students to be nice to me before I returned. The teachers treated me in a different way--especially English teachers. I felt bad after correcting my English teacher. I recognized in Japanese culture it isn’t supposed to be that way . . .

In Noriko’s comments, we see a small sample of the Japanese pro-active effort to eliminate the bullying problem. Knowing full well that the student returning from the U.S. would behave differently from other Japanese children her age, Noriko’s teacher had discussed her impending arrival with the class, instructing them to be especially kind and accepting of her. The fact that Noriko felt bad about correcting her English teacher points to her subsequent understanding of Japanese respect for power distance and collectivism.

Correcting a teacher, Noriko realized, threatened authority and consequently the ability of the group to act as a cohesive unit.

In spite of Noriko's deep understanding and willingness to embrace both Japanese and American culture, she nonetheless revealed an almost self-actualized understanding of her limitations and minor inadequacies in both worlds:

At first [Americans] would treat me like other international students but when they hear me speak, they are more frank and more comfortable. They treat me as an American compared to the international students, but not totally as an American. They still continue to speak politely to me--a little frank, but not totally. In Japan I felt I was a little different. In America, I feel like a Japanese. The Japanese here are more tolerant of different Japanese.

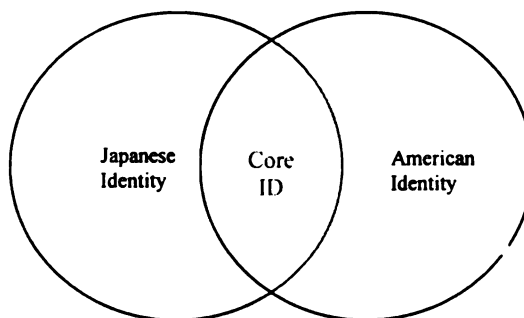
Thus, while Noriko felt a degree of acceptance in both worlds, she appeared to be aware of not being completely accepted in either. When I explained Berry's acculturation theory to her, she spent a good while trying to decide if she were more integrated, meaning she identified with both groups, or whether she felt marginalized, meaning that she felt a part of neither. After mulling it over, she chose the integrated quadrant. Interestingly, on the East Asian Acculturation Measure (Barry, 2001), Noriko scored quite high on integration but scored by far the lowest of 19 students in the marginalization category.

By definition, Noriko was likely much more integrated than marginal, although I could easily understand her feelings of not quite fitting wholeheartedly into either group. *Wholeheartedly*, however, is a strong word. Berry's acculturation quadrants do not call for absoluteness, I explained to Noriko. The quadrants merely divided up a grid that asked her to rank herself along two continuums. Did she feel more Japanese than not? Did she feel more American than not? She had a strong respect and understanding of both cultures and there was no sign that she had any reason to reject one in favor of the other.

She could think of no bad experiences in either Japan or the U.S. that would have alienated her from either. Had she been born 20 years earlier, the strong Western influence demonstrated in her Japanese personality might have been grounds for being less accepted or possibly even ostracized in many Japanese circles. That Noriko could recall no such experiences may be testament to a changing, more open, and more tolerant Japan than the one I had known 20 years earlier.

When asked to draw a Venn diagram of her bicultural identity, Noriko drew two, largely overlapping circles (see Figure 14). She described the overlapping center as her core personality, which she said constituted 50% of who she was. The other 25% on both sides represented her uniquely American and Japanese behaviors. This overlap was somewhat inevitable, she insisted, given the vast differences in the languages and cultures. A returnee friend of hers, she related, would have had a much less overlapping Venn diagram, evincing the friend's obvious preference to keep her American and Japanese identities separate.

Figure 14: Noriko's Venn diagram



Noriko's conscious or unconscious decision to meld her two worlds together would normally be indicative of a more Western approach to life--one with less

compromise and more philosophical absolutes. Noriko, however, was not nearly so absolute or uncompromising--she had no problem with accepting multiple and perhaps contradicting behaviors or religious practices. The common Japanese practice of having a Shintō baptism, Christian wedding, and Buddhist funeral, for example, posed no real contradiction for her. She understood and accepted the decision that other Japanese people might have for keeping their Eastern and Western worlds separate, but for her this was not a choice that felt right. In short, she appeared to be comfortable with who she was and not very comfortable with separating identities.

Noriko's observations of having both an American and a Japanese identity were unusually discerning and sophisticated. While her near-native English was superior to that of most participants in this study, she was immediately aware of the differences between her level of comfort in writing Japanese and her level of comfort in writing English. She expressed the fact that she was not able to articulate sophisticated nuances in English the way she might in Japanese. When I asked if she felt inhibited to express certain ideas or emotions in Japanese, she answered "No" with little hesitation. Since many Japanese tend to be rather guarded with their emotions and opinions in a Japanese context, this lack of inhibition seemed rather unusual to me. Noriko concurred with this idea, but said she had no qualms about being as open in Japanese as she had learned to be in English.

The three students identified as integrated in this chapter all reflected a strong, active desire to maintain their Japanese and American cultural identities. Choices of music, language, friendship, and significant others--real or imaginary--all seemed to involve a desire to incorporate both cultures either alternatively or together if possible.

The next group of participants, those who identified as assimilated, also embraced both cultures to some extent, but tended to favor American values such as lower power distance, lower uncertainty avoidance, and higher individualism. Interestingly, the three students who identified as assimilated in this study were all highly energetic women with a strong sense of adventure and temporal urgency.

Assimilated Student 1: Asami

I introduced myself to Asami at a university-sponsored social gathering one Friday evening. She was chatting with a graduate student from Turkey and the two of them were quite gracious about welcoming me into their conversation. When I told Asami about the research I was doing, she seemed quite interested and agreed to be interviewed the following week.

Asami proved to be a very outgoing young lady. She was immediately easy to talk to and never once gave the impression of being the least bit guarded. As a third-year psychology major, she demonstrated both self-awareness and insight about Japanese and American behaviors in general. We began the interview talking about her family:

Asami: I don't think they're very typical. Even though I used the word "cohesive," they still say children can do whatever they want. So it's not typical for a Japanese family. As long as we don't violate other people's ways, that's what they always say.

John: Would you say they're liberal or progressive in terms of their thinking or are they a traditional Japanese family?

Asami: I think they're kind of a mix. Basic philosophy is traditional one. They adopt, like, freedom and independence, which is not very typical.

John: Their basic Japanese philosophy is . . .

Asami: Like harmony and respect for the elderly. But they believe in independence also.

Asami's parents, I was beginning to sense, had achieved their goal, for their daughter truly seemed an independent young woman. In retrospect, the fact that I met her independently of other Japanese was significant in that Asami had made something of a conscious effort to spend her time almost exclusively with Westerners:

Asami: It's actually, surprisingly for me, it was very easy to socialize with American or non-Asian people, but I had a certain amount of difficulty socializing with other Asian people because . . . I think they study, like, their own problems. You know, like, they just start hanging around with, like, only Japanese or only Chinese or only Koreans, but they like gossiping all the time. They are homesick--even reinforcing the behaviors.

John: So it's hard to socialize with other Asians?

Asami: . . . they think like--that's actually typical, but they think that their culture is the best so they start talking [about] the negative side of America--that is not right (laughs). Because [they say] America is not a good place or something. It's, like, I don't feel comfortable hanging around with them. Maybe I have that kind of impression about America too, but I just probably didn't want to accept it. That's why maybe I feel kind of uncomfortable, I don't know . . .

While somewhat turned off to the local Asian community, Asami had forged a deep friendship with an African ex-roommate in another city. Two epiphanies she revealed had involved her ex-roommate as a catalyst. The first was a liberation story that seemed to parallel the irreverence theme from the Tom Cruise movie *Risky Business*:

Asami: There was one point where my roommate said, my best friend said to me: "Who cares?"

John: Who cares?

Asami: Just only two words: "Who cares?" Just changed my whole attitude actually. I always worried about what other people thought about me--like, what they think about me. I don't want to, like, misbehave or I don't want to be perceived like a negative person so I always try to be nice over there [in Japan]. Like here, like, who cares? Like, everybody's so different so it was more like open minded, so. . . I think it can be another reason I try to take risks because people, like . . . I don't know how to explain it. I don't have to worry too much about other people.

Virtually hidden in an individualistic society where people were often too self-involved to notice or care much about others, Asami learned to enjoy the advantages of anonymity and indifference rather than to dwell on the lack of attention accorded her. Asami's other epiphany came in the aftermath of her very first heated argument. Much to her surprise, she felt that a deeper bond had been forged with her ex-roommate because of, rather than in spite of, their adversarial exchange. In comparing the feelings she now had for her Western friends as opposed to her Japanese friends, Asami remarked:

[My Japanese best friend] is still a best friend, but compared with the African friend maybe [not as deep] . . . and you know that [Japanese] relationship of friendship is very superficial. We don't get into arguments, we just say: "Oh yeah, that's right, if you say so." I mean the discussion is over. It's like [to] establish a very deep friendship, we do have some kind of arguments.

Of all the respondents I interviewed, Asami was admittedly the most removed from the Japanese community on campus. Her best friend had been her African ex-roommate. While Asami claimed to spend about 20% of her free time with other Asians, she reported spending no time at all with other Japanese. She identified herself as being more assimilated to American culture than integrated, an assessment I could not argue with. She freely admitted to becoming a more optimistic and independent person than she had been in Japan. Independence, she explained, was something revered by Americans but seen as a selfish and negative trait by most Japanese.

Assimilated Student 2: Mika

I met Mika during check-in for international students. She was transferring in as a junior communication major from the local community college. When I checked her into the university computer system, I casually asked her a few of the questions in Japanese just for fun. She seemed amused--though not impressed--maybe because there is an

element of surprise when a red-headed American needlessly asks a question in Japanese. I met her a few more times while working at the International Students' Office. She remembered me and greeted me in Japanese, trying hard to contain her laughter. The second time she came in, I told her about my research and asked if she would like to be a part of it. She seemed interested and agreed.

A few days later, I waited for Mika at a table-for-two at the university food court. I had eaten at the same table the day before with a friend of mine who had played middle linebacker in college. The surface did not seem small then, but when Mika took her seat at perhaps barely a hundred pounds, the table seemed instantly smaller.

I knew Mika would be an interesting interview. She displayed an enormous amount of energy with bright eyes, a big smile, and ready laugh. Unlike most of the other Japanese I had interviewed, Mika actually sat slightly forward, while I unexpectedly found myself sitting slightly in the opposite direction. I took almost no written notes while she talked, as I somehow felt it would be rude to look away. Mika seemed comfortable in the spotlight, and spoke with the poise and self-assurance of a national TV anchorwoman.

Mika spent well over two hours talking with me from start to finish. The questionnaire that most of the other respondents finished rather quickly took her quite a while longer to complete. She was equally given to precision during the oral questions, but not in a pedantic sort of way; she simply wanted to give as much thought as possible to each question.

Mika's father, I discovered, was a district court judge who wanted to be with his family but who had been transferred to another prefecture. As is common in Japan, his

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wife and children remained in their established home at least while the children attended school. Mika's mother worked for a non-profit organization dedicated to preventing child abuse. Her younger brother was in college and her sister was busy with high school. She described everyone in her family as "very busy" and "on the go." Regarding her upbringing, Mika, like Asami, related that her family had encouraged a great deal of independence:

I think [my family] is really different, compared to other families [in] my generation. Like . . . I always felt different than, like, my friends' family. Their parents expect [certain things from] the kids . . . My parents are really always really liberal--they let us do whatever we want to do. They respect our desire, passion--so I never felt like my parents told me what to do. So yeah, I always have options and choices. But [there is] more responsibility in the kids. We have to decide, and we have to do everything by ourselves, and parents are there to support.

The responsibility Mika learned at home was being duly implemented in her sojourn to the United States. Throughout the interview, the subject of time presented itself as a major theme in her life. She was deeply aware of her temporal limits as an international student in the U.S. and wanted to make the most of every day she was here. While her opinions about Japanese, Americans, Westerners, and the local Asian community were philosophical, objective, and balanced, her decision to spend time almost exclusively with Westerners was resolute:

. . . I don't want to be completely in the Asian community or Japanese community. I don't want to be into it--not because I hate Japan, or that I hate Asians and I like Americans. It's because I don't want to lose out on the opportunities; because I'm here I want to contact everybody equally. Japanese, I have been connecting with them for 22 years--I spent 20 years in Japan, so it's okay to contact them within, like, the other bigger groups, like other Americans, other Africans, [other] Latinos; and if they're included in the diverse society or diverse situation I don't mind it, but if they're together as just Asians, just Japanese, I try not to be in that group. Like, I'm interested and I want to sometimes feel at home and comfortable--lazy--to be surrounded by Japanese. We

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When the formal interview was completed, we continued to chat for quite a while longer. Mika was clearly an outgoing yet clearly introspective person. She had, rightly I believe, placed herself in the assimilated section of Berry's acculturation quadrant, reinforcing my already strong impression that she had, at least in some ways, become more Americanized than she was Japanese. Everything about her demeanor seemed to me American, and there was little about her movements or style of communication that struck me as particularly Japanese. Her freely flowing gestures, eye contact, ready smile, and lack of tentativeness were not only reminiscent of an American woman, but of a rather polished one at that. While her English was not completely free of mistakes and not quite as linear as one might expect from a native speaker, she was clearly headed more in that direction than any of her Japanese counterparts who had not spent their younger years abroad.

Assimilated student 3: Kana

Kana came to my office prompting an immediate handshake, introducing herself as *Connie* with a near-perfect Midwestern accent. Scarcely five-foot tall with bright eyes, an extroverted personality, and rapid-fire speech that invariably rose at the end of each sentence, Kana was dynamism incarnate.

Having spent five years at an international school in Malaysia before finishing her senior year of high school in the U.S., Kana had lived the better part of nine years outside of Japan. As we talked, she displayed occasional Japanese gestures mixed with a greater number of American ones. A slight Japanese accent was discernable only in words with multiple laterals such as *soliloquy* or *philology*. Any speech difficulty she displayed lay

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Kana's sense of perpetual urgency sometimes led her to begin sentences without completing them, to retract, reformulate, and repeat--all at lightning speed!

Announcing that she had just accepted a marketing position with a company in Japan, Kana waxed or--in her case--*buffed* philosophical, wondering if she had made the right decision. She appeared marginally willing to return to Japan, though it may have been partly out of feasibility and partly out of a desire to please her parents. Our conversation on the subject began with her intimation of how interested the company had been in her candidacy:

Kana: Yep . . . this one company offered me a job, like, after only two interviews--that was amazing! The other people who work for the company, had, like, five or six interviews but I only had to go to two. And it was so, like, easy for me. I'm like, "Is this really okay?" And um [I was surprised] because I didn't think of going back to Japan-- because I wanted to stay here and raise my kids, you know? And be [able to] make them all Americans, but I couldn't, you know? I got lots of pressure from my parents--they are like, "They probably won't issue you a visa in American companies." And you know--"Your place isn't guaranteed, are you sure? Are you sure?" I'm like . . . I felt so much pressure from my parents, so I decided to look at a Japanese company. So I'm just regretting that I'm not able to use my English anymore in a Japanese company--I get picked and . . . but then you know, it's a secure place so I'll just do it . . .

John: So you'll have to go back to Japan for the job?

Kana: Yeah, I do. So I just decided this morning.

John: Wow! Congratulations!

Kana: Yeah . . . But I'm like, just not sure.

John: Is there a possibility they might send you somewhere else?

Kana: Yeah, yeah, just . . . because I chose the company originally because the company has some stores in Malaysia--Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China. So every year they send some people to Malaysia for like two years or so. That's why I applied for the job . . .

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In spite of feeling flattered by the company's uniquely accommodating gestures, Kana seemed ambivalent about returning to Japan. Her decision, however, left her with the possibility of escape--an escape that would strategically allow her to follow her own desires while simultaneously fulfilling her parents' wishes. Though generally philosophical about advantages and disadvantages in Japan and the U.S., Kana revealed dissatisfaction with certain aspects of Japanese society and pragmatically explained why she would prefer to settle in the U.S.:

Kana: Like, I went back to Japan this summer, and, like, everyone is, like, so materialistic in Japan--you have to have, like, branded bags and wear expensive clothes and, like, it's not me--like, I didn't really feel like [doing that] . . . like, here, like, no one cares like what you are wearing, you know? [Or] what you do, so they're able to [have] more freedom, [but even though] the educational level is maybe a little lower, it doesn't really matter. Like, if you just grow up in the American society, see, if you don't study and no one else studies as well [you're okay!]. So you know, getting decent dollars and get a job and be happy, so--time goes slower in here--and I like it! [laughs]

John: So people [in the U.S.] can grow up blissfully ignorant?

Kana: [laughs] Not ignorant! I'm sorry, but yeah . . . seems like, well if they're so ambitious they can just make it, you know? Like, regardless of what the other people do . . .

Being less conformist, less materialistic, less competitive, and less temporally-restricted were values that Kana associated with the U.S. Although many Americans may complain of living a rat race that incorporates all the above elements, Kana obviously noted greater extremism in Japan. That she hoped to one day have children who would take on what she saw as comparatively relaxed American values may have revealed a desire to assimilate and a willingness to leave Japan behind--at least physically if not always in mind and soul. In her seemingly perpetual quest to define her own identity, the word *wannabe* came up:

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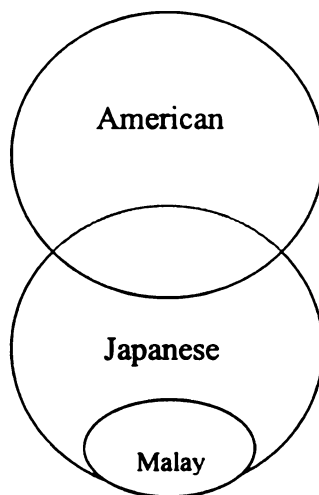
Figure 15: Kana's

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I'm so confused about myself, you know. Like, most of my free time, like, I just try to figure out where I stand--like, if I'm more Japanese side or American side. I'm, like, I think I'm an American wannabe, but I also don't want to lose my Japanese side.

When asked to draw a picture that represented who she was in light of her Japanese, Malaysian, and American experiences, Kana drew two overlapping circles on top of each other. The top circle she labeled "American" and the bottom circle she labeled "Japanese." Although the circles were approximately the same size, she explained that the American circle took precedence and was therefore placed in a higher position. Within the Japanese circle, Kana drew a smaller circle near the bottom, which she labeled "Malay." Explaining why the Malay circle was inside the Japanese circle and the smallest and lowest of the three, Kana said, "When I was in Malaysia I lived with other Japanese as a Japanese person, and Malay people treated me as a Japanese." Kana's drawing appeared as follows:

Figure 15: Kana's self-identity drawing



Similar to a number of other participants in this study, Kana identified her best friend as neither Japanese nor American, but as someone from yet another country who

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understood hardship and the struggles of acculturation and identity that so frequently--if not inevitably--accompany repatriation. Kana's best friend, Ana, was a young woman from the Balkans--a refugee--whom she had met in high school. Asked to describe her friend, Kana said enthusiastically:

Kana: She is amazing! She's, like, real skinny and tall and such a beautiful girl! She's also smart and um . . . um I used to hang out with her, me and the other two girls, they're, um, Dana and Jessica . . . But the other two girls are kind of ignorant--they're just fun to hang out with, but they don't understand what the life is about. Ana and I, we talk a lot about, like, you know, the political situation, and you know . . . how people are, like, so ignorant, or, like, [how] the Americans think different from us . . .

John: Do you feel closer with international students who've had similar experiences to you?

Kana: I think so, yeah. Because Americans, they're just so granted for what they have . . . like Dana and Jessica . . .

John: They're so what?

Kana: They just like, how do you say? They don't realize how much they're granted. Because Ana has, you know, she has such an experience coming through the internal war in her country, and I had to move a lot too, right? And I also experienced the big earthquake when I was 12--that was, like, such a turnover in me--I lost many of my good friends and my neighbors, but, like, other girls [in the U.S.], they're just, you know, they're happy and their parents are so supportive and you know, they're rich and kind of, you know: "We just do whatever we want and . . ."

Comparing her own family with Ana's, Kana continued:

It's like me and Ana's family, they're kind of conservative, so her parents don't let her go out, like, after 6 o' clock, and so, you know, my parents too. And I also think of . . . her mom [who] goes to [community college] and takes ESL class. Anyway, her family has been here for, like, nine years or so in the U.S., but they, after Bosnia, they went to Czech Republic and Germany and Arizona and Alabama, but her mom's English is not that good--and it's about the same level as my mom's, so they get along and you know . . .

Without pause, Kana discussed feeling protective of her expatriated family:

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I want the comfort--I don't care, I kind of just don't like my American friends to come over and see my mom's English is not that good--it just kind of hurts a little bit my feelings, not necessarily. . . like, I'm so proud of my mom, but, like, my biggest concern in the U.S. society is, like, I just want to help my mom out--she's such a nice person--she needs a lot of my help when she does things . . . well, not lately anymore. So I just want to help her out a little when she . . . it used to be, like, when there was a phone call I would do it for her or so . . .

Relating her own family's struggles with those of Ana's, Kana concluded:

But when Ana comes over, she's nice to talk to my mom because she understands what the non-English speaking moms would be like--and I would do the same to Ana's mom. So we, our family, well, not my brothers, but my mom and I and Ana's mom and Ana, like, we're so close to each other . . .

Among the Japanese participants in this study, those like Kana who identified as assimilated expressed a degree of negativity toward various aspects of Japan, but also spoke freely regarding things they did not like about the U.S. Nevertheless, if asked to express value preferences, it was obvious that Asami, Mika, and Kana all tended toward the lower power distance, lower uncertainty avoidance, and higher individualism associated with the United States.

In contrast to these three, highly energetic, introspective women were three participants who identified as separated. As will be seen, these students reflected a much greater appreciation of the values associated with Japan: higher power distance, higher uncertainty avoidance, and lower individualism. They also tended to be the least opinionated and least introspective of all participants in the study. Their interview transcriptions were significantly shorter--often more than 50% shorter in total word count--than those of students who had identified with any other acculturation group.

Separated Student 1: Kazuaki

Kazuaki was a somewhat reluctant volunteer who came to me at the behest of his girlfriend, Kana, who had interviewed with me a few weeks earlier. Kana had warned me

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that her boyfriend was not enthusiastic about being interviewed, but Kazuaki presented as immediately friendly, agreeable, and upbeat in a way that seemed more akin to the business world than to academia. With a pleasant smile, accommodating disposition, and a surprisingly articulate command of English, Kazuaki seemed well suited for the hospitality management field for which he was studying. He seemed innately capable of maintaining harmony and making others feel at ease. At times I wished he would confront my challenges to some of the thoughts he posed, but time and again, he would recoil and suggest that maybe I was right. That he placed a greater value on harmony than on wrestling with ideas seemed utterly apparent.

At 26, Kazuaki was the oldest of all the Japanese undergraduates I had interviewed. True to what I had read in the literature and heard from at least one of my respondents, older Japanese students--especially graduate students--tended to be less anxious and more secure in their native identities than their younger, undergraduate counterparts. Regarding Japanese graduate students in the U.S., one Japanese undergraduate remarked, "Like, they are so good at socializing with people. They know, like, how to make friends."

That Kazuaki was capable of socializing and making friends was not an argument I could have refuted. Although he seemed to possess the ability to mingle with anyone from anywhere, he preferred spending time with Japanese and other Asians rather than with Americans. His girlfriend, Kana, whose identity struggle contrasted strongly with his lack thereof, had noted her boyfriend was "almost all Asian completely" and that "He tries to do it."

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Kazuaki's reasons for spending little free time with Westerners were more due to convenience, comfort, and a satisfied sense-of-self than out of fear or disdain toward Americans and other Westerners. In answering why he had not made any American friends he suggested, "I think I feel more comfortable being with Asians, so I consciously or unconsciously choose to hang out with Asians and not to hang out with Americans."

I pressed further:

John: And within your program, do you spend much time talking with Americans?

Kazuaki: In class I talk to American--both Americans and Asians. But outside classes, I spend most of the time with Asians so . . .

There was no doubt in my mind that Kazuaki could blend easily in any number of environments, perhaps because he maintained a very diplomatic if not positive spin on things both Japanese and American. Our conversation on American and Japanese educational systems was one such example:

John: How would you describe education in Japan?

Kazuaki: In Japan, education is more like to memorize everything. Like, the answer is only one, so yeah. I feel like keep practicing, keep memorizing, like that . . .

John: How about education in the U.S.?

Kazuaki: Well, like, the key thing is like, it seems like there is more than one answer, so . . . like writing a paper . . .uh . . .

John: Which do you like better?

Kazuaki: Which do I like? Uh . . . I was comfortable with Japanese education, but I think in college it's better for--to me--to think about more answers, so yeah, in college, I think I like American education better. But in high school and junior high school I think Japanese education was good. I'm satisfied with that.

John: Do you think [Japanese high school] is better than American high school?

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Kazuaki: Um . . . I'm not familiar with the American education in high school and junior high, but Japanese education was good.

John: You're very diplomatic, aren't you?

Kazuaki: [laughs]

When asked if he had changed in any way since coming to the U.S., Kazuaki could think of nothing significant, but planned to adopt the American customs of displaying family pictures at the office and verbalizing his romantic sentiment more freely--at least in English. He also confessed to becoming something of a gentleman due in large part to his girlfriend Kana's insistence and expectations.

Kazuaki's movements were somewhat contained in a way that seemed slightly more Japanese than American. With medium-length hair divided loosely in the middle, a blue plaid shirt and blue jeans, his appearance was more inoffensive than stylish. Ultimately he impressed me as someone who had always been easily accepted in Japanese circles and who carried his affability effortlessly to American and other international venues. The struggle for identity or acceptance did not seem to be an issue for Kazuaki. Like Kana had offered, he was wholly Asian and felt no desire to change who or what he was. Kazuaki was fine with being Japanese--and fine with others who were not. For a while he inadvertently made me question if identity was even a legitimate issue.

Separated Student 2: Daisuke

Daisuke knocked on the door of the International Students' Office just a few minutes after closing time. I had been expecting him and signaled for a co-worker to open the door. Daisuke hesitated before saying anything, and ultimately said nothing--at least verbally--as I motioned for him to come in. He bowed in a slightly quick, but respectful

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way, further forward than he would have expected me to bow, emitting little more than a slight coughing sound that conveyed recognition and perhaps even surprise at finding me exactly where I said I would be.

Daisuke dressed in loose, nondescript clothing. He may have been wearing jeans, but most of the colors he wore seemed like dark brown or gray. His shaggy hair touched the top of his dark rimmed glasses, and as he looked downward--which was most of the time--all responsibility for maintaining conversation seemed to be magically transported to whomever stood in front of him. Or perhaps it was a hierarchical thing. More than any of the other participants, Daisuke may simply have responded to the fact that I was older than he was.

As we made our way down the corridor, Daisuke shuffling, I suspected that there would be more of my own voice than usual on the tape I would later transcribe. It was not that Daisuke had little to say, but one sensed that conversation for him would be much more about pinpoint accuracy than about ingratiating himself or amusing others. Interview questions, like perhaps everything else in Daisuke's life, would merit serious, thoughtful consideration.

"Tell me about your family," I began the interview. It was meant to be something of an icebreaker more than a mental probe.

"My family?" Silence. Silence again. "Hmmm . . ."

Though the interview was akin to squeezing juice from a frozen grapefruit, one sensed that whatever could be extracted from Daisuke might be something worth treasuring. In the five years he had spent on this American campus, virtually all of his friends had been Japanese. I wondered why Daisuke had chosen to attend an American

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university, or if he felt his sojourn had been worthwhile. In spite of appearing painfully shy and withdrawn, Daisuke felt that his American experience had changed him for the better:

John: Why did you choose to come study in America rather than go to a Japanese university?

Daisuke: Ummm . . . I . . . I didn't want to spend my life like regular Japanese student . . .

John: So what was the reason you came here? Just to be different?

Daisuke: I want to change myself and I want to have more experience about many things.

John: By coming here is there a way that you thought you would change? For example, what did you think would happen by coming here?

Daisuke: A way of thinking or . . .

John: How did you want to change in terms of your behavior?

Daisuke: Uhhh . . . I didn't have confidence when I was in my country, but now I have confidence by myself, in myself.

John: How about your thinking? Do you think differently?

Daisuke: Yeah, I think so.

John: Can you explain how you've changed in terms of the way you think?

Daisuke: Now I think more critically . . .

John: What do you mean by think more critically?

Daisuke: More perspectives . . . a way to think about something . . . umm...

Daisuke had difficulty articulating the details of his personal transformation in a way that indicated a lack of introspection. For Daisuke, this was a conversation without precedent--at least in English. Now in his senior year as a business major, Daisuke had been elected president of the Japan Club, an organization made up almost entirely of

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Japanese. While he had come to the U.S. with aspirations of meeting Americans and improving his English, the task had obviously proven to be quite formidable. After five years, he offered some terse observations, insights, and a bit of introspection, but surprisingly less than many of the students who had been here for less time.

Perhaps the most interesting revelation that Daisuke related as a generally separated student was that although he had difficulty behaving in a way he considered American while in the company of Americans, many of the traits he considered American had come to affect the way he related with other Japanese. In essence, while Daisuke appeared very Japanese in an American context, he had become somewhat Americanized with fellow Japanese:

John: Do you feel you have an American identity when you speak with Americans?

Daisuke: Not so much.

John: You don't feel more *akarui* (lively) when you speak with Americans?

Daisuke: I'm more *akarui* when I speak with Japanese. I'm quiet when I'm speaking with Americans.

John: Why do you think so?

Daisuke: Ummm . . . I usually find way to express myself in Japanese . . . when I talk with Japanese I can express myself in many ways and many words--more detailed words. I think I should speak like Americans when I speak with Americans but . . . I learned American way, but I cannot use it in front of Americans . . . but I can use that kind of non-verbal expression in front of Japanese.

John: So when you speak with Japanese, you feel you can be more American in some ways?

Daisuke: Yes, yes.

John: And around Americans you feel more traditionally Japanese?

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Separated Student 3: Miho

Miho was persuaded to volunteer for the present study by fellow members of the university's Japan Club. Arriving right on time for her interview, she was immediately polite with a ready smile and pleasant disposition. Although not ostensibly shy or businesslike, Miho seemed neither prone to small talk nor to deep, philosophical inquiry. I found this lack of verbal expression and curiosity somewhat perplexing given her communication major and exceptional English pronunciation. Her reticence to communicate may have been at least partially revealed when asked if she had experienced any barriers in getting to know Americans:

Miho: Yeah. Sometimes I don't know what to talk about.

John: What do Americans talk about?

Miho: They talk about nothing.

John: Do you want to give me an example of nothing?

Miho: Like, what happened today, or what you did today. I mean, it's nothing to me.

John: And what do Japanese talk about?

Miho: Nothing [laughs]. Because of language I can't talk about nothing in English. It's kind of hard.

John: In your communication classes you don't . . . talk . . . about American communication?

Miho: I'm doing interpersonal communication--about relationships. So it's not really about intercultural or something like that.

That Miho seemed unable to transfer her knowledge of interpersonal communication to intercultural communication seemed to follow suit with the

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predisposition she lacked for making comparisons between Japan and the United States. Similar to the other two students who identified as separated in this study, she appeared to have given almost no prior thought to issues of identity, adjustment, or even cultural differences. In some ways she seemed to simply go with the flow, unburdened by the struggles of those who actively tried to integrate or assimilate or even those who distanced themselves from Japanese and mainstream Americans. At one point, I asked a particularly open-ended question:

John: What were your first impressions after you arrived [in the U.S.]?

Miho: I found that American people are not that different from us.

John: Yeah?

Miho: Yeah. But sometimes I get surprised when I see like [a] man running the house . . . but other than that, there's no big difference between America and Japan.

John: Hmm. And are your impressions different now that you've been here a while?

Miho: No. They've stayed the same.

Getting Miho to expound on acculturation challenges, identity issues, or cultural observations proved to be challenging. In fact, many of the comments she made about the U.S. seemed rather superficial. Asked to describe any difficult experiences in adjusting to life in the U.S., Miho related:

The most difficult thing for me is the food. I wasn't really used to fatty American food when I just came here . . . I didn't really miss my family or my country--but I did miss my Japanese food. That's all.

Socially Miho estimated that she spent about 60% of her free time with Japanese, 30% with other East Asians, and only about 10% with Americans or non-East Asians.

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Her comfort zone was ostensibly quite limited to those who were most like her. Even the Americans with whom she spent time conformed more to her ideals than she to theirs:

Um . . . I talk to Americans who are more open to international culture, like more open to learning other cultures. I know there's many Americans who do not like international students so . . .

As I followed up with questions about why she felt this way, it seemed obvious that Miho's perceptions of Americans and American students had likely been formulated through some unpleasant or perhaps negative experiences. She was now left with limited interest to pursue friendships outside the local Asian community. In relating how Americans had treated her, Miho replied with candor:

Yeah, they do treat me differently from the way they treat Americans. Because I don't really speak English so they get slower when they talk and I feel like they try to keep some level of distance from me. They don't really want to be friends with me. They're, like, they talk to me only when they have some purpose of talking to me. Like, about class and about general stuff.

But in spite of fitting in with the Japanese community on campus, Miho admitted to not always feeling comfortable among her countrymen either:

Miho: When I talk to Japanese, I--how do you say--I behave the way they want me to behave. So I cannot really be myself when I talk to Japanese friends here.

John: How about in Japan?

Miho: In Japan it's different.

John: How is it different?

Miho: [laughs] Because the Japanese community here is so small and I don't want people to hate me. I don't want Japanese people to see me as so different from them. So I try to be same. But in Japan, I don't really care if people like me or not because there are lots of them. I can choose my friends so . . .

Miho was beginning to differentiate between Japanese on campus and Japanese in Japan. Noting that there were cultural differences between Japanese and Americans seemed by contrast, inevitable. Feeling the formal interview had been short and perhaps

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somewhat vacuous, I decided to take some extra time explaining Berry's acculturation quadrants and the Venn diagrams representing alternate and fused identities. It was upon looking at the Venn diagrams that the scant beginning of an epiphany might have taken place. Miho suddenly seemed, perhaps for the first time, cognizant that whenever she had an encounter with an American followed by a Japanese that some kind of switch went off in her head:

I've never thought about this before and when I'm talking to you I realize that I'm different, but I can't explain how different am I. But, I do kind of shift my identity when I talk to say, Americans, Japanese here, [and] Japanese back home. I think there's kind of a little switch or something in my mind or my head or whatever. It's kind of...but I don't know when or how that switch shifts me. It's kind of automatically like it's a natural thing. So I can't explain . . .

The composition teacher in me could not help but go back to the first page and point out how she had claimed there were no real differences between Japanese and Americans. "Did I say that?" she gasped with utter sincerity. Miho seemed perhaps slightly embarrassed but still too caught up in her revelation to be concerned. I went back to the beginning of the survey and a number of things seemed to make better sense to her. She said she would think about them and consider contacting me for a follow up interview.

A month or so later, I invited her and some of the other participants to my house. She was a lovely guest and stood in slight contrast to the other young women with her impeccable Japanese manners. My wife who had spent four years in Japan commented that Miho was far more traditionally Japanese in her movements and behavior than the other women who had joined us that evening. Miho still seemed very much a part of the Japanese community then. Only time would tell if her journey would change course.

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While assimilated students in this study expressed a preference for American values and separated students tended toward Japanese values such as high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance and low individualism, the participants identifying as marginalized did not reveal a uniform preference for values. Of the three students who identified as marginalized, two held strongly American values while one was more grounded in the Japanese values depicted in this study. Rather than being renegades or products of given subcultures, marginalized students in this investigation either had a difficult time feeling accepted by Japanese or American mainstream groups or they simply avoided being a part of them. All admitted to having few or limited friendships. Being marginalized, as will be seen, had much more to do with social acceptance than with values.

Marginalized Student 1: Naoki

Naoki was a senior engineering major who had come to the U.S. with his family during his sophomore year of high school. With an athletic build, gray warm-up trousers, and tinted hair, he admitted that many of his friends in Japan joked that he looked like a martial-arts film star. Adding to this effect were his controlled, almost choreographed movements. Reaching for a can of iced tea, he appeared to ritualistically move his shoulder forward before extending his already creased arm toward the beverage. I had never thought of it before, but he reminded me of a third-generation Japanese-American friend of mine who, like Naoki, was quite athletic, and had also been chided by native Japanese for looking like a martial-arts film star.

If I had to choose a word to describe Naoki, it would be *controlled*. He seemed every bit the careful designer of his own movements, facial expressions, and answers to

questions. In spite of this self-awareness, he was surprisingly uncontrived and unguarded. In fact, Naoki was remarkably candid, opinionated, and perhaps even judgmental--though often with humorous overtones. Regarding Japanese in the U.S. who seldom interacted with Americans, he related:

. . . when I am in the U.S. I'd like to study English as much as I can . . . and I see some Japanese people hanging out with only Japanese and doing what Japanese people do in Japan--but I don't think it's right because that's wasting money or something [laughs].

When asked what he thought about the Japan Club on campus--a club whose membership was almost exclusively Japanese, Naoki replied without hesitating that he thought it was "stupid." He could not fathom the idea of seeking Japanese experiences outside of Japan. Perhaps somewhat ironically, a discussion of how he came to regard himself as a more open-minded individual went as follows:

John: Can you describe any ways you've changed since you've come here?

Naoki: Well, when I was in Japan, I was looking at people as so crazy, but now I can look at people's inside right now.

John: You mean what they're thinking?

Naoki: What they are thinking or I always wonder what kind of person this is, or not just a surface but a personality, yeah--which is pretty good . . .

John: So you see people on a deeper level?

Naoki: Correct.

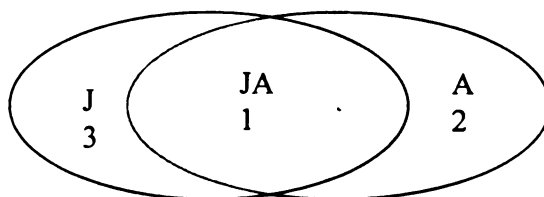
John: So was there something in terms of a friendship or a class that you took, or an experience you had that may have opened your mind?

Naoki: There is a big difference between Japan and the U.S.--like, I've been exposed to American things, right? And what I think is I've heard a lot of Americans in general who are nice, but Japanese are nicer on the surface [but] they don't look at the inside usually-- they just look at the surface. So, they're nice to, like, more like a beautiful people, or better looking people, I guess--but I'm pretty sure. And then Americans are more like, I view Americans more like

looking at themselves, and I'm exposed to . . . I have a lot of friends who are Americans, so I changed to how I am.

While Naoki insisted that his values on individualism, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance were more American than Japanese, he considered himself first a combination of Japanese-American, second as American, and third as Japanese. To represent his identity, Naoki drew two overlapping ovals, deliberately making the overlapping portion in the middle largest. This middle area he labeled "JA" for "Japanese American." The second largest area was to the right and was marked "A" for American. Finally, the smallest remaining section, the section to the left, he labeled "J" for "Japanese." To emphasize the order of largest to smallest area, Naoki used corresponding numbers, with "1" for the largest and "3" for the smallest. His drawing appeared as follows:

Figure 16: Naoki's self identity drawing



That Naoki identified more as marginalized than as assimilated or integrated might have had much to do with his indifference to being a part of any cultural group and his apparent lack of concern for what anyone--Japanese or American--thought of him:

John: So do [your Japanese friends] think anything makes you different besides your ability to speak English?

Naoki: You mean, like, personality? Yeah . . . I don't have friends in Japan except my junior high school friends, right? So I guess I'm more, like, isolated than other

of my friends, you know what I mean? Like, I don't have much of friends, and what I do in Japan is pretty much just hanging out with junior high school friends, and . . .

John: How do you think your personality or values are different from what you would consider to be more typical of Japanese?

Naoki: I would say I am more aggressive--maybe aggressive. Yeah, a lot of Japanese try not to express their feelings a lot of time--they don't become emotional. But if I don't like something to do, I say, "No, I don't like it--I don't want to do [it]. Here's something I will do." I'm like more clear.

John: So you're saying you're more direct?

Naoki: Yeah. That's correct.

John: And more individualist?

Naoki: Perhaps. Maybe more individualist. I don't know what does it mean exactly?

John: Well, if you're collectivist, you feel it's very important to be part of the group, and you might subdue your personality . . .

Naoki: Oh yeah, I'm individualist!

John: So who you are is important as opposed to who you're attached to?

Naoki: Yeah, I don't care what people say to me or I don't care what people tell me about myself.

Marginalized Student 2: Isamu

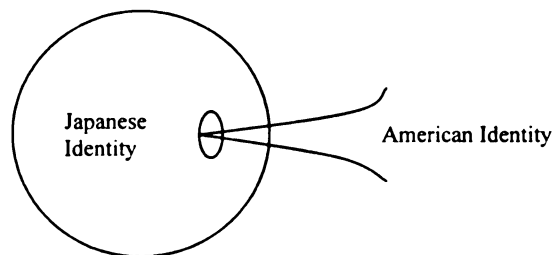
Isamu was tall and slim with medium-length hair divided roughly in the middle.

Dressed casually but neatly, he sported a plain, navy blue t-shirt, jeans, and highly fashionable silver-rimmed glasses. From my office, Isamu accompanied me to the university food court walking slightly round-shouldered down the corridor and up the stairs.

Like most of the other Japanese students I had interviewed, Isamu was personable, candid, and easy to talk to. A senior majoring in international relations, he

expressed his desire to work outside Japan after graduation, saying he would rather avoid the rigidity of a Japanese company or organization. In the time he had been in the U.S., Isamu had admitted to taking on what he perceived to be more and more of an American identity. In fact, when asked to depict his Japanese and American cultural identities, Isamu drew the following picture:

Figure 17: Isamu's identity drawing



Without being prompted, Isamu, ever introspective and philosophical, clarified:

I think my American identity or just my American culture is growing and breaking [out], but not coming into my [Japanese identity]. It's just like going inside and breaking some of my ideas [that] I thought would be a correct way . . .

In his explication, Isamu was relating how the introduction of ideas and values contrary to the ones he had developed in Japan had truly shaken--but not destroyed--the core of his cultural identity. He was now still Japanese--and would always be Japanese--but had come to allow his previously unquestioned values to come under scrutiny, attack, and ultimately renovation. Although the process could not have been easy, Isamu seemed to portray his present metamorphosis in a positive light, with his new identity branching out in ways that implied limitless, ever-expanding growth. As I pressed him to be more specific about the shifts he had noted in his value system, power distance emerged at the top of the list. In fact, so radical was his desire to transform that Isamu had actually come

to avoid speaking his native language with Japanese who could also speak English. Our conversation on the subject went as follows:

John: Can you give me any [Japanese] values . . . [that are hard for you to accept]?

Isamu: . . . I cannot take, like, if you are younger you have to use, like, special language to the older person . . .

John: *Keigo* (polite language)?

Isamu: Yeah, *keigo*. Like, I cannot do it. Like, it's just everywhere--even here. So, just if you meet people and you find out . . . how old he is, and then if he's older or younger that decides, like, our relationship, and it's so hard to change it. I mean, unless you get really friendly or familiar.

John: Is it uncomfortable?

Isamu: Yeah, so uncomfortable. Like, I was traveling in the first half of the summer and I met, like, some Japanese travelers, so of course they tried to speak Japanese to me. But I just feel comfortable speaking English. Just, yeah, so . . .

That Isamu insisted on speaking English with fellow Japanese was something perceived as rather disconcerting in the eyes of another Japanese informant. Mentioning an encounter she had had with Isamu, Kana appeared not so much offended by as worried for Isamu and the virtual rejection he displayed of his mother tongue. She also seemed concerned that Isamu had been putting forth an excessive amount of effort in his studies since he had appeared to her to be quite stressed.

But nothing in Isamu's demeanor seemed unbalanced or out of control as far as I could discern. Self-identifying as assimilated, there was evidence from his interview that he had thoughtfully and consciously decided to take on many American values. On the East Asian Acculturation Measure, Isamu scored 44 in the marginalization category and 38 in the assimilation category; his separated and integrated scores were only 18 and 21 respectively. That his marginalization score exceeded his assimilation score may have

had more to do with his intense feelings of isolation than with his choice of values. He was indeed largely assimilated in terms of values, but also socially marginalized. The subject of friendship came up a number of times in our discourse. Admitting several times that he had relatively few friends, Isamu confessed that he consciously avoided spending time with Japanese and that forming close bonds with Americans and other internationals had proven to be difficult:

Uh, I'm trying to not to hang out with many Japanese, so I don't have many Japanese friends. And as I said to you before, most of Japanese friends I know is senior to me, so I don't feel I'm talking to my friends--even if I don't use *keigo*. And I don't have, like, many opportunities and time to get to know new international students and to get closer to them, so I don't have like . . . yeah, I have only a few international students friends. I know many people, but not friends. Just, like, to say "Hello" and "How's it going?" but yeah. And Americans, like, some people I had a class with many times or yeah, those people I can get closer [to] so I still hang out, but yeah, maybe 50/50 Japanese and Americans in terms of numbers. I don't have many friends, so yeah . . .

In some ways, Isamu seemed to be without peers. Undeniably intellectual beyond his undergraduate status, he spoke of feeling drawn toward the Japanese graduate students on campus. The differences in their ages and status, however, proved to be somewhat unsatisfying for Isamu, especially in light of his quest for erasing hierarchical distinctions:

Yeah. Like, I have some [Japanese] friends here; like, most of them are older than me--like, five years or even, like, ten years and I don't use *keigo* to them and they feel okay about that, but still--it's my problem but I still think I'm talking to older people--senior to me. So that kind of distance--there's distance between me and those friends, so it's kind of hard . . .

When pressed to name a best friend, Isamu talked about a fellow international student, a gregarious and intelligent young man from Eastern Europe challenged with a physical disability:

Isamu: Maybe here . . . okay, he's from Poland. I think he is here since maybe high school, or I would say junior high school--he came here with his family. And I remember the first day I came here at [this school], [the] first class, I didn't speak English at all and I was so having difficult time . . . but it was [a] small class and he was sitting in front of me and he just talked to me and he was the only friend I had the first year [laughs]. So yeah, he talked to me a lot. And he didn't care, like, how my English was bad, and he just talked to me and he just listened to me, so . . . yeah, he's my best friend.

John: So when you do things together, what kinds of things do you do?

Isamu: Usually . . . he cannot walk because of his disease, so he's using a walker, so he cannot play sports . . .

John: So he's disabled?

Isamu: Yeah, he's disabled, so he likes playing video games, but I always tell him to study but [laughs] yeah, that's one way to relax ourselves so yeah, I play sometimes. And he just likes talking to people, yeah. He's so friendly to everyone--he's always making new friends, so he always introduce me to new friends, and yeah, we just talk . . .

At one point, I asked Isamu if it had been easy for him to make American or international friends:

Easy? Hmm . . . uh...easy to get friends, but difficult to get closer, that's what I would say. But that's kind of the same to Japanese, so . . . yeah, I would say it's so easy to get to know new people--especially, like, Americans--but it's so hard to get closer to them, so . . . international students are, I think, much easier to get close [to] as long as you spend enough time with them, but still, yeah, still difficult to get close--but Americans are even more difficult to get close with, yeah. . .

Finally, in discussing how Japanese perceived him in his native country, Isamu felt he conveyed his otherness through personal behaviors he could not always articulate:

John: How would you say other Japanese see you in Japan?

Isamu: I think maybe they look [at] me weird or strange . . .

John: Why?

Isamu: Well . . . hmm . . . because they think I think different way than they do. I mean, I have to express what I think to them, but it's obvious, like, from my . . . I

don't know, I cannot give you specific examples, but maybe, like, the way I talk to them or the way I buy something . . .

John: The way you [what]?

Isamu: Buy things from them--like those small actions. I kind of, like, show my thinking . . .

John: Do you think your movements are different?

Isamu: Movements or actions . . . it's not moving, like, weird, but, like, those small actions that . . . yeah, I can't give you like specific examples . . .

John: What about gestures?

Isamu: Gestures? Oh, yeah, I'm pretty sure I overreact things, so . . . yeah, like body language. Like, Americans like doing those things so . . . like, to support your feelings or, like, showing your expression. You can show how surprised you are or how glad you are, so I like those things [too] so, yeah, but if I do it in Japan . . . they think I'm crazy . . .

John: Your facial expressions--do you use more?

Isamu: Yeah, I think so. I cannot tell by myself because I don't carry a mirror [laughs], but yeah . . .

Marginalized Student 3: Saori

Running almost ten minutes late from an earlier interview, I met Saori in a coffee shop just off campus. Sitting in a corner and reading the latest Harry Potter book, she announced in neutral tones, "I was about to leave." I apologized, bought us some refreshments and started the interview. Saori seemed happy to talk.

A 25 year-old accounting major from western Japan, with a round face and shag haircut, Saori spoke emphatically and without hesitation. Like many women I had met from the Kansai area in western Japan, she joked good-naturedly about how Kansai women tended to act like men while Tokyo men tended to act like women! Combining Saori's straightforward Kansai manners with the precision required for her accounting

major, she was a woman who seemed to value substance over delivery and, to some extent, logic over emotion. That did not preclude her, however, from expressing and sometimes venting her feelings of isolation from both Americans and Japanese:

John: Has it been easy or difficult for you to meet Americans and other international students?

Saori: Very difficult to meet or get to know them, you know? . . . In the United States, like, everyone wants to be [a] couple, right? So normally, they're going to be with, like, the same nations, the same nationalities. Americans talk to Americans, and, like, Asians talk to Asians.

John: So is it easy to meet Japanese here?

Saori: No, it's not easy.

John: Do you go to Japan Club ever?

Saori: No, I don't bother. You know, I've been in the United States for, like, five years, so I know that some Japanese don't want to talk to Japanese at all. Because actually I met one Japanese--she [sub-leased] my house so that's why she became my friend--but she said she don't want to get any international students and she don't want any Japanese friends except me and, like, her and a friend. [It's because] she came to the United States, you know, she came here to study American culture and, like, English, so, like, she don't see any point to be friends with other international students or Japanese friends.

In terms of making friends, Saori seemed to have constructed negative images that rendered other Japanese students as either too cliquish or so bent on making Western friends that just being Japanese excluded her from their circles. When asked how she spent her free time, Saori answered:

Free time? Well, since I have no friend right now studying [laughs], I don't know what I'm doing--I'm making *origami* or, like, reading a book or I'm practicing English, studying, and checking mirror, but I'm kind of tired of just watching TV [laughs]. I don't want to watch TV anymore!

In spite of having spent the past five years in Europe and the United States,

Saori fretted--perhaps unnecessarily--over her English ability, ultimately claiming to have become more withdrawn as a result of her inability to communicate:

John: Can you describe any ways that you've changed since you've come here?
Are you the same person you were in Japan?

Saori: No, I don't have any confidence in the United States at all.

John: You don't have any self-confidence?

Saori: No, I don't have any self-confidence in here. Because, like, I just felt like it's so difficult to express myself in English.

John: So have you become shy?

Saori: Not shy--it's just like I can do better than that, but I just can't, you know? I don't know--I just feel like . . .

John: Still?

Saori: Sometimes, because I can't fight with somebody--like, you know, they told me something like, you know, "It is not good to say such things and rararara..." but, like, I never understand what the right way to say or, like, what's the best way to say [something], so, like, I just say something, but they say like, "In English this means rararara . . ." and, like, I never know!

John: And so it's difficult to argue especially?

Saori: Yeah, I mean, like, I feel like disadvantaged in English . . .

John: And then knowing the cultural rules of what is and isn't acceptable . . .

Saori: I don't know! I just didn't know! And also, like, in the group meetings, even though I said something they just sometimes don't understand me and, like, you know, so I just didn't. But, like, when I was studying in Japan, I was more eager to work with them because I speak Japanese, they speak Japanese, so it's more easier...but here, like, I just can't speak English, so I just feel like I don't . . . I didn't feel comfortable. I just didn't feel like . . . I was just disappointed because I couldn't do this.

When asked where she saw herself on the bi-directional acculturation quadrant, Saori chose the most negative point from both a Japanese and American identity. Her highest score on the East Asian Acculturation Measure was also in the marginalized

category. Perhaps because she considered Japanese from Tokyo as the quintessential mainstream, Saori related that her Kansai roots made her feel like an outsider among some of the Japanese on campus:

I don't know--I think the problem is, like, dialect? Because I'm from Kansai, you know? When I talk to them, they're, like, when they speak--you know, we have a different speech--and, like, just I didn't fit their conversation. So I change my accent when I speak to a friend from Tokyo or something like that, but I just didn't feel comfortable at all. Because like, it's just not, like, possible. But, like, if I make a funny joke, like, they don't laugh because they don't know the point. But if I speak my accent in, like, my hometown, they laugh, and like, I have more fun. So I don't know . . .

In spite of feeling on the outside socially, Saori revealed a number of rather conservative Japanese values. While many of the Japanese students I talked with were either laudatory of or neutral about developmental American teaching methods that emphasized argument over pre-determined answers, Saori lamented the recent Japanese trend to relax memorization-based education:

John: How would you describe education in Japan?

Saori: It's like educational system is changing right now. They have threw out a lot of things in one year, but now they changed, you know? They say, like, we should form more American ways. But after, like, two years or three years research they realize that that's [producing only] a little bit of knowledge . . . so we should go back to like before or something.

John: So do you think education is becoming more liberal now in Japan?

Saori: Actually I didn't live in Japan right now, so I really don't know what to say, so I think . . . I don't really think [the students] are smart [laughs]!

John: Do you think it's getting worse?

Saori: Getting worse, maybe. Even though, if I compare myself with people at age of 30 or 40, 50, I think they are much better than we are, so now we are in [a] different system. It's getting bad, I think . . . But they try to focus on something else too, you know, like, now--like focusing on having more fun or physical stuff, or exercise, or, like, art and music. Before when I was in high school you have to go to school from Monday to Saturday, and then we have just one-day break and

we have to go back to school. But now we have two days off and then just go to school for five days a week. But I don't know if it's good or not.

In contrast to Isamu, who seemed to identify as socially marginalized with assimilated values, Saori appeared to identify as socially marginalized with separated or more traditionally Japanese values. In spite of characterizing her family as somewhat strict and traditional, Saori admitted that it was her family that had encouraged her to study abroad as a way to broaden her thinking:

John: Do [your parents] encourage you to be different?

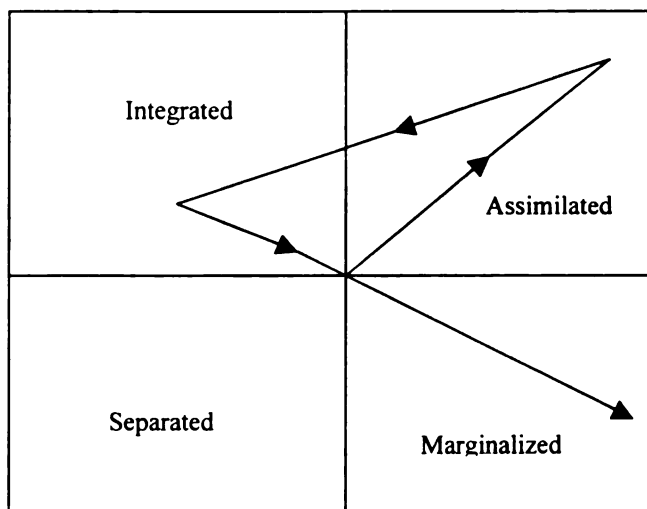
Saori: Yeah, sometimes. They thought, like, I'm very conservative. Yeah, because I'm very conservative comparing to my mom or, like, to my parents sometimes. Like, my mom is [a] more open person, but, like, I'm very conservative, so, like, they want me to see more, like, the world--want me to think more like seeing more than one point [of view].

John: More open minded?

Saori: Yeah, or maybe they want me to study more or study another person's thinking or, like, other culture or something like that, I guess.

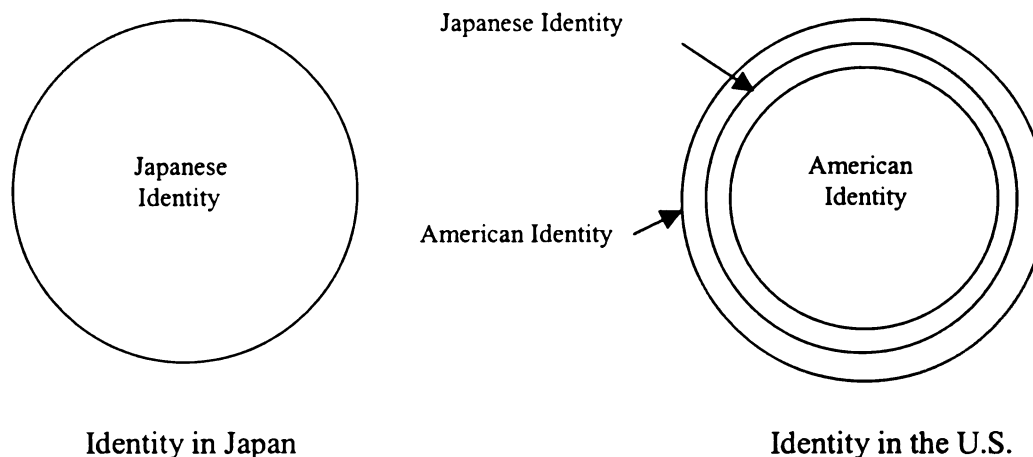
Near the end of our discussion, I asked Saori to what extent she had been influenced by American values or behaviors. Her answer was that American values and behaviors had manifested themselves and influenced her most strongly at first and perhaps least strongly at present. Using the Berry et al. acculturation quadrant, Saori sketched her journey from neutral to assimilated to integrated and then finally to marginalized. Her drawing is recreated in Figure 18.

Figure 18: Saori's acculturation journey



Finally, as a way to depict her present cultural identity, Saori insisted on making separate drawings (see Figure 19) based on whether she was in Japan or the United States. As for her identity in Japan, Saori saw herself as simply Japanese, a statement that spoke to the strong sense of Japanese values she had related throughout the interview. In the U.S., however, her identity appeared to be a bit more complicated. She drew a large core, which she labeled “American Identity” surrounded by a thin layer of Japanese identity, and finally coated with a surrounding American exterior. In this respect, Saori related that she largely alternated her cultural identities, but that in the U.S., there was always a sense of being Japanese--even if not at the core of who she felt she was. Perhaps it was this thin, underlying layer of Japanese identity--representing the frustrations she expressed with the language and the nuances of American culture--that made her feel so unavoidably different and marginalized.

Figure 19: Saori's alternating identities in Japan and the United States



Discussion

The twelve Japanese undergraduates depicted in this study may help to introduce distinct acculturation identities found on American college campuses today. While generalities are impossible in a qualitative study, I have found a few notions that may be worthy of future investigation. I will try to note my observations and finish with what higher educational professionals in the West might consider in their encounters with Japanese undergraduates.

Of the seven total students I spoke with who self-identified as integrated, six had been in the U.S. for at least five years. Kenta related that he had felt quite separated during his first two years at an Eastern college, but that he had since come to identify as highly integrated in the years since. Another observation was that students identifying as integrated seemed quite social without displaying personalities that were especially extroverted or outgoing. For these students, especially Naomi, finding Japanese, American, and international friends seemed to pose little if any difficulty.

A final observation had to do with how integrated students held a constant yearning to be surrounded by both Japanese and American cultural reminders. Recalling Kenta's closest American friend enmeshed in the Japanese community, his girlfriend's ties to both Japan and the U.S., Naomi's desire to spend the rest of her life moving back and forth between Japan and other countries, and the aspiration that all three participants had for establishing a fused identity, spoke to how strongly some integrated students try to find perpetual inclusion of their two very different worlds.

The three students identified as assimilated in this study were all highly energetic, outgoing women with a keen sense of temporal constraints. Knowing they had only a limited amount of time in the U.S., each seemed determined to socialize as much as possible with people other than Japanese or fellow East Asians. A final commonality was that while Mika and Asami both described their families as unusually progressive, Kana's relatively conservative parents had at least exposed their children to several years of living outside of Japan. The idea of assimilated students hailing from relatively progressive, non-traditional backgrounds, is one that may merit future investigation.

The separated students in this study proved to be by far the least introspective of the Japanese undergraduates I interviewed. With each of them I encountered a bit of frustration in terms of soliciting cultural observations and personal struggles. Some of the participants identifying as separated were considerably shyer and less outgoing than their counterparts in any of the other three categories. Some had been outside of Japan for relatively short periods of time, or in the case of Kazuaki, had arrived after the age of 22, a point depicted in the literature as generally incorporating a more fully developed sense of cultural identity.

Finally, the students identified as marginalized were bound together only by their rejection of or frustration with establishing Japanese and American friendships. While Naoki confidently rejected people he didn't like, Isamu and Saori felt somewhat frustrated with their inability to find peers who fully accepted them. Notable among the marginalized students was that their values tended to be either more as American as was the case for Naoki and Isamu, or decidedly more Japanese as was the case with Saori.

Although most of my respondents understood that Japan and the U.S. were culturally different and were able to provide certain specific details, few were able to articulate a comprehensive framework that suggested well-defined opposing values. Revealing Hofstede's (1984) work-related values hit home for many of the interviewees and appeared to be enough of an epiphany that I--and many of them--would recommend presenting it during orientation periods at U.S. colleges, high schools, and places of work. For many, I believe, it could serve to lessen the severity of culture shock.

Regarding the Berry et al. (1986) acculturation quadrant, I might suggest that whether students identified as integrated, assimilated, separated, or marginalized, there appeared to be no definitive hierarchy or ideal acculturation identity. There were few if any instances in which I felt judgmental toward any respondent for choices regarding either values or acculturation. Value preferences invariably came with reasons and rationale. There is, in essence, no absolute right or wrong. Each value, whether high or low power distance, high or low uncertainty avoidance, individualism or collectivism, comes with its own advantages and limitations.

What we are left with is not so much what Japanese and other East Asians can do to make their experiences more enjoyable at American colleges, but what those of us on

American college campuses can do for our international guests. Whether students, faculty, or staff, it is paramount to provide opportunities and venues for international students to become involved in groups outside of themselves. I discuss social integration extensively in Chapter 10, but opportunities for linking international students with domestic students exist in the classroom, on class projects, in residence halls, during orientations, and in student activities. Integration and assimilation in terms of cultural values may not necessarily be the most desirable end result, but social integration is, and will likely yield greater learning experiences--and improved global understanding--for internationals and Americans alike.

Having presented the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identifying by four different acculturation identities, I now offer chapters six through nine as a way to compare Japanese cultural identity with American cultural identity. Using Hofstede's (1984) work-related values as a framework, I present Japanese undergraduate perceptions of Japanese cultural identity and American cultural identity as each relates to power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity. Each of these chapters is subdivided by relevant topics such as family, education, friendship, the workplace, etc. My hope is that the reader will come to understand how Japanese undergraduates in the U.S. perceive the values of their home country as different from the values they associate with the United States. Understanding cultural differences may be quite helpful for future Japanese students coming to the U.S., and for university personnel in the West interested in retaining and better servicing Japanese and other East Asian students.

CHAPTER 6

POWER DISTANCE

In this chapter, the first of four focusing on Hofstede's (1984) work-related values, I look to perceived differences in power distance between Japan and the United States. My arguments for value distinctions are based primarily on interviews with twelve Japanese undergraduates at a large university in the Midwest. The objective is to use power distance and Hofstede's other three values (uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity) as a way to define both Japanese and U.S. American cultural identities. By defining cultural identities, I hope to provide the reader with a deeper understanding of the varying acculturation identities already explored in Chapter 5.

Hofstede and Bond (1984) defined power distance as "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations accept that power is distributed unequally" (p. 419). As mentioned in Chapter 3, Hofstede's (1984) original findings placed Japan slightly above the mean for power distance, while the U.S. ranked somewhat below the mean. With Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the northern European countries ranking below the U.S., and all other Asian countries ranking above Japan, an East-West divide was duly noted. Based on the literature, Chapter 3 ultimately provided argumentation that supported differences in power distance between Japan and the United States, especially as they regarded families, education, religion, work, and language. In the present chapter, I examine interviews with Japanese undergraduates at an American university to convey perceptions of power distance in Japan and the United States. More specifically, I present participant opinions as they relate to families, higher education, contemporaries, and the workplace. Finally, I examine changes in behavior

noted among participants as they engaged in speaking English, formal Japanese, and informal Japanese.

Family

In Chapter 3, the traditional Japanese family was depicted as incorporating a strong sense of hierarchy with no two family members occupying the same level or position (Hendry, 2003). With an historical emphasis on financial interdependency and continuity of the unit, the traditional Japanese family, or *ie*, was often viewed--at least by American standards--as downplaying the importance of individual happiness and emotional connectedness (Hendry, 2003). Although the family structure in Japan has obviously changed in recent years, many participants in this investigation were quick to point out significant differences in power distance between Japanese and American families.

Little if any prompting was needed to extract commentary on power distance in regard to Japanese and American families. Kazumi, a senior anthropology major, noted distinctly different communication styles between the American families she had observed and the Japanese family in which she grew up:

Kazumi: I see [American families] being really equal. Even though, like, parents have authority, they speak to their child really friendly and frankly.

John: Do you think that's good or bad?

Kazumi: The way I grew up, it's not like that, you know? And sometimes I think it's really good, but I like the way my parents are and [the way] my home mother [is] right now, so it feels good [either way] . . .

Aika, a senior studying music therapy, was impressed with the range of emotion she had observed in an American family she had stayed with:

Ah, they are more very attached and close--very close! And that's [what] I really liked, and because, for example, husband-wife, they really love each other and they're so expressive. Of course they fight too [laughs]! And when they fight they

really fight so aggressively and when they understand it . . . they laugh . . . and they are really close to each other [laughs]. And that's what I feel is really impressive . . .

Without pause, Aika commented on the differences in outward affection between her American host family and her own family back in Japan:

And when [American families] have children, the mother and the father really show their love to the children--like hugging or kissing and when their children does something good, the parents praise them. Like, I feel it's just so much exaggeration, but for them it's normal--and it's very different from my family. Like, even though I go home and my parents wait at the airport for me to arrive in my airplane, . . . after we meet, we never . . . [yell]: "Oh, long time no see!" (stretches arms as if to hug). We never do that--we just say, "Hi" (laughs) "Long time no see" and have a distance. But the distance in American family is really close.

A few participants spoke about the unilateral power and decision-making they considered to be a hallmark of Japanese families. Kazumi, a senior from Kagoshima--a relatively conservative city in southern Japan--recounted the unchallenged authority of her grandmother while growing up:

Like, my mother, . . . she changed family when she got married, okay? My mother [had] kind of arranged marriage--do you know *omiyai*? So, like, my mother cannot say anything about stuff she does, or if she wants to do [something] or [there is] somewhere she wants to go to [because of] my grandma. So like . . . [now that my grandmother has passed] she's like really outgoing right now and she does whatever she wants.

While Kazumi relayed a significant change in her mother's personality with the transference of matriarchal power, Nobuyuki, an engineering major from the outskirts of Yokohama, expressed that in contrast to American families, communication in Japanese families generally went from top down:

And [in Japan] you see older people as having pretty much power to say something. Older people don't like to listen to younger people or seeing their value. If the parents are older, they don't listen to the kid at all, but in the U.S., parents listen to their kids. If your children show you their opinion, parents will listen to you. That's something I was amazed about.

Although participants in this study generally agreed that power distance was greater in Japanese families and that outward affection was more prevalent in American families, Kenta, a graduating business and marketing major, noted that Japanese parents were much more likely than American parents to spend time and money on their children:

I think perfect Japanese parents are taking care of their kids as part of their family, but at the same time, American families are, like, American parents are--well, not well balanced--they tend to spend more time on themselves . . . More time and money, I would say.

White (2002) and others would surely support this assertion, pointing to the tendency for Japanese couples to have fewer children in order to fully support them through cram schools and other expensive endeavors deemed necessary for entering competitive high schools and universities. The additional financial support that Japanese parents provide for their children might be seen as a manifestation of love, but also a way to foster a relationship in which children are dependent and thus (at least theoretically) subordinate to their parents.

In sum, Japanese participants in this study viewed American families as much lower in power distance than Japanese families. In support of this assertion, many suggested that Japanese parents were more authoritative, less demonstrative, and less willing to listen to their children's opinions than were their American counterparts. In addition, Japanese parents were seen as providing greater financial support for their children, a manifestation not only of love but of maintaining power over their dependents.

Higher Education

Responses to open-ended questions about higher education in Japan and the U.S. were remarkably similar among participants in this study. Although only a few could comment on Japanese higher education from personal experience, most respondents emphasized that the degree of power distance they perceived between American professors and their students was considerably less than what they knew or assumed to be the case in Japan. Key to their impressions were that American professors frequently asked to be addressed by first names, that they were friendly, that they made time for students after class, and that they genuinely seemed to care about their students. Below are 10 excerpts from 8 participants:

Ayumi: Even my professors, they ask [the] class to call [them] by a name because they feel weird if they call [them], like, “Professor,” yeah... and I know like in Japan I’m not going to call them by first name for sure!

Akemi: [American professors are] nicer, I think. Because, you know, in Japan, like, all the professors are kind of like . . . they [are] just, like, so higher up and don’t really listen to, like, students’ opinions. But I guess it depends, because I can’t really judge because I’ve never been to university in . . . Japan. But, like, as far as high school teacher goes and middle school teachers, they were like, “Uggh!” I hated my high school teacher because I went to a private high school so it’s really strict--like, my high school was, like, so strict . . .

Aika: [American education is] more free and the teacher--the relationship between teachers and the students are really close and friendly. Maybe in Japan . . . the teacher should be maybe very, very respectable--like a teacher--but here: “Hey, teacher!” [laughs] And they’re more friendly--and they’re thinking about each students more . . .

Aika: Uh, maybe I would say [American professors are] very friendly, and thinking about students really closely. And the very good thing is that they try to remember the name of the students and so when I raise my hand, they say, “Yes, Aika” and then I go, “Ooh!” It’s very nice. And it’s more like they’re putting the name card in front . . . so “Aaah” . . .

Isamu: Over there in Japan there’s almost no interaction with professors and students unless you talk to them and get to [know them] . . . it may be a cultural

thing but professors are not as much friendly as Americans. [Japanese] professors obviously have a difficult time to get closer . . .

Isamu: I can talk to [American] professors just like friends--some of professors but not everyone. But yeah, I can express my opinions.

Kana: American professors? They're so friendly compared to Japanese professors, I think. Because, like, in Japan, I don't think you would go talk to them like a friend, but they . . . some of the professors like, well, most of the professors are so friendly--they do have office hours and they welcome you in . . . it's nice . . . it's like a friendly environment to build a relationship with the students and the professors . . .

Kazuaki: . . . I think they're more casual [in the U.S.] . . .

Kazumi: I've never been to a Japanese college so I don't really know them, but some [American] professors care for students so much and they are really into their subject that they are teaching. That makes me enjoy that class a lot. And they see student really equally. I wouldn't say all of them--I had a really, like, bad teacher [laughs]. But still, compared to Japanese, they expect students to have respect for him or her, but at the same time, they expect them to be frank, to be friendly to him, so they can understand and learn together.

Kenta: [I meet with American professors] during office hours, or I make appointment, or I just talk to them afterward. They spend time for me to talk to them. I am really pleased with how they are here--like I feel sometimes like personal attachment to professors, or the advice they give me. You know, of course it depends; and some professors don't want to get involved with those, like, some students either, but there are always good professors that I really like. Speaking of those professors, they're really nice and they give us, like, really insights of a study--how they think about it, and if I don't understand, they make it clear and they take time, so I am really happy with how they are.

In slight contrast to the students above, Naomi, who had been in the U.S. since the seventh grade, felt that Japanese and American professors were similar in terms of how they related with their students:

I think they're about the same. Because I'm sure a lot of . . . I've talked to Japanese professors too, but I . . . they're the same. I don't see any difference.

Although Kenta had suggested that American professors were friendlier than Japanese professors, he wanted to imagine that both would be equally approachable and receptive to student questions:

Kenta: I think . . . I've never asked a Japanese professor [a question] before so I don't know . . . I mean, it really depends on the person I think. I don't want to see much difference between Japanese and American.

Hofstede (1984) noted that countries ranking higher in power distance were more likely to have educational systems that emphasized "more rote learning and the asking of questions by . . . students [was] seldom encouraged" (p. 99). Several respondents supported these assertions noting that their American classes often took discussion formats where multiple answers were possible and where student input was perceived as highly valued. Below are six comments made from four participants:

Aika: I like the small number of the class and then I'm really impressed that students raise hands and say their opinions and then [teachers] pretend [to be] really curious and [interested] in each opinion. Sometimes teacher in my [Japanese] high school after listen to me, like, "Yeah, but it's wrong!" [laughs] And I was, "Oh, okay . . ." [laughs]

Isamu: There's more places I can express my opinion--in papers, class-- just like office hours--I talk to professor, and even outside class. But in Japan, like mostly professors are just like, talking for like an hour or two hours . . .

Isamu: I think [Japanese education is] so based on textbook. Like you have textbook first and then you have to follow it, so there's no other way to teach or to learn--so there's only one way. But here I guess, like, there's more than one way.

Kazumi: And it's really different, because Japanese style is teacher teach and student listen. And, my example is like high school, nobody really raised hands, and I really hate that! [laughs].

Kenta: There's more discussion in the classes in the States, actually. I think teachers are more close to the students here. I haven't really thought of that much . . . but I think that . . . *tabun keigo toka ga nai kara* (perhaps because there is no distinct, formal language in English)--they're easier to talk with.

Based on the interviews in this study, there seemed to be little doubt that compared to Japanese universities, American tertiary educational environments allowed for greater interaction and less power distance between students and educators. These more frequent and less formal exchanges may be due in part to historical economic advantage; that is, American universities are plentiful and have long had the advantage of providing smaller classes than their Japanese counterparts. Other reasons for differences in power distance may be steeped in tradition, such as the customary respect that is socially and linguistically dictated between Japanese of different age groups. With these ideas in mind, the following section examines the relationships between *sempai* and *kohai*, terms that have been loosely translated as *mentor* and *protégé* or *senior* and *junior*.

Contemporaries

I just feel it's impossible to become best friends with somebody I have to use keigo (formal language) with, because it's just so odd. But I was just talking about that with my Korean friend because my best friend who just went back to Korea--she is like 25 years old and I'm 21--and you know, in Korea they have keigo too. So, like, we were just saying that if we were to meet in Japan or Korea and speak in Japanese or Korean, we would never be able to become such a good friends. But while we are talking in English, we can forget about our age and we could just be really close; but if you are talking in Japanese or, like, talking with Japanese you always have to keep in mind that that person is older than you or younger than you. And especially for me, if I'm younger than somebody and I'm talking to Japanese, talking in Japanese with them, with Japanese people. . . I have to kind of put myself down a little bit, you know? Like, I shouldn't oppose their ideas too much. Like, I would sometimes suggest something to them, but I always have to keep in mind that I'm younger than them, and stuff like that . . . (Akemi).

In the above excerpt, Akemi seemed to speak for most if not all of the Japanese undergraduates interviewed for this study. From discussions on language and peer relationships concerning power distance, several themes emerged: (1) formal Japanese language (*keigo*) customarily required of younger individuals impeded friendship; (2)

Japanese social conventions often prevented juniors from expressing opinions or displaying abilities; (3) some Japanese undergraduates in the U.S. would prefer that their juniors (*kohai*) not use formal language with them; (4) some students preferred using English--even with fellow Japanese--as a way to eliminate hierarchical separation; and (5) the rules for using *keigo* amongst Japanese had become less clear in the U.S.

According to Confucian principles, friendship is the only relationship in which two individuals are able to treat one another as equals; all other associations (parent-child, employer-employee, buyer-seller, and husband-wife) are considered vertical. Given the Japanese tradition of hierarchy that has paralleled Confucianism (Oldstone-Moore, 2002), students separated by as little as one school year are reared to address and treat one another as *senpai* (senior) or *kohai* (junior). In most instances, *kohai* address *senpai* using a formal version of Japanese known as *keigo*; *senpai* may use *keigo* but generally use plain Japanese to their *kohai*. Given this convention and its lack thereof in the United States, several participants articulated the difficulties in making friends with fellow Japanese who were either older or younger than they were. Many contrasted this realization with the lack of concern they felt for acknowledging age differences in the United States. Below are quotes detailing the power distance noted in relationships among Japanese:

Isamu: Yeah, *keigo*. Like, I cannot do it. Like it's just everywhere--even here. So, just if you meet people and you find out, like, how old he is, and then if he's older or younger, that decides, like, our relationship--and it's so hard to change it. I mean, unless you get really friendly or familiar.

Kenta: I do use [*keigo*] when it is necessary, but if my *senpai* says it's okay, then I'll be like more friends with that person . . .

Isamu: To me English is much easier to introduce myself and at the same time to know someone. But *keigo* is just . . .

I don't think it's preventing people from being friends or getting close, but it just, yeah . . .

I just don't like the way *keigo* fixes our relationships. Do you know what I'm saying?

Isamu: Yeah. Like, I have some friends here, like most of them are older than me --like five years or even, like, ten years, and I don't use *keigo* to them and they feel okay about that. But still--it's my problem. But I still think I'm talking to older people--senior to me. So that kind of distance--there's distance between me and those friends, so it's kind of hard . . .

The above excerpts suggest that although it is not impossible for Japanese to become friends with people of different ages, it can be difficult and made increasingly so by the need to use honorific language. Even when honorific language is eliminated, as Isamu pointed out, some distance may still be perceived.

In addition to differences in language usage, many participants in the current investigation talked about the importance of showing behavioral submission to their *sempai*. This submissive behavior included reserving or withholding their thoughts and opinions as well as playing down their abilities. The following quotes speak to the decorum expected of *kohai* in Japanese sporting clubs. Nobuyuki, who came to the U.S. as a high school sophomore, discussed the differences between his Japanese and American baseball clubs:

Okay, I was in sophomore [in the U.S.] and I was already on a varsity [team] because all the people, all the players don't feel bad about it because you know, I could throw better, I could hit better--maybe they just look at what I can do--for what I am. Like, in Japan, I was also playing baseball when I was in middle school, and usually all the people just, if I do good, they don't feel good, because they're older and they should be better, right? But if I'm better, they're going to get mad! [laughs] Maybe they're judging me as a servant or as younger--that's about all.

Akemi noted differences in custom between sporting clubs in Japan:

Akemi: I don't think it's impossible [to become friends with *sempai*], but for me it's harder because, like, [when] I was in middle school I played badminton, and then you know how Japanese like . . . the sports club? Um, like, they really [distinguish between] like, *sempai* and *kohai*--I have to use *keigo*; I have to respect them. I have to, like, listen to them; I have to do whatever they tell me to do, especially for playing sports, you know? So for me it's harder to become friends with *sempai*.

Perhaps as a result of living in a host environment where lower power distance was valued, many of the Japanese participants expressed that it was important to relax their expectations from younger Japanese. Some, such as Kazuaki, may have been surprised by the casual norms among some Japanese at this university, but admitted to adjusting to the idea favorably:

Kazuaki: Yeah, I don't want younger people to speak to me in a polite way because sometime I felt I am different from them. I feel like I slighted . . . them. Yeah, so I like [that] they talk to me like I talk to them.

John: Was [the informal language you sometimes heard from *kohai*] surprising at first?

Kazuaki: Um . . . I already forgot about it . . . I might have been surprised the way they talk to me.

John: Did you think it was rude in the beginning?

Kazuaki: Yeah, I may have been . . . a little bit.

Like Kazuaki, Kenta was also an advocate of relaxing formal language usage, although he still referred to the importance of maintaining respect. When pressed further, he seemed almost in favor of abolishing the *semp-kohai* custom. Our conversation on the subject was as follows:

John: How do the younger Japanese students treat you here in the U.S.?

Kenta: Oh, they're polite--real polite. I'm a senior, so those, like, newcomers, are real polite to me. And I don't like how they--if you be polite, it's a really good thing--but at the same time, you're kind of, like, making them distance between

me and them, so I try not to make that distance so far. So I tell them that: “You can be polite” but as long as they have respect to me, I don’t care if they. . . speak *keigo* or not. So I try not to be like *sempai* to them, and I can’t be, like. . . I can maybe advise them for, you know, for something that they’re not sure about, but, you know, I’m not the one who. . . comes out with what’s wrong or whatever. You can’t really be, like, you know, be *here*, so. . .

John: So you feel that your position as *sempai* is less here, or that you don’t want to be a *sempai*?

Kenta: Yes, I don’t want to be.

John: But in Japan?

Kenta: I don’t want to be either. This marks my personal theory.

John: So you think you’ve changed, maybe? So, like, when you were in junior high and you were *sempai* . . .

Kenta: I’m just not used to being *sempai*. . .

As a way to avoid making social distinction by age, some participants expressed that they actually preferred speaking English. One quote from a communication major identifying as assimilated stood out from my pilot study (Brender, 2004):

[Speaking] English . . . makes me feel like I can talk to anybody equally, even a professor, or friends, or younger kids. It’s easier to interact with people language wise. Because of the language it makes me feel like I can talk to anyone. So I feel more open, more interactive--more aggressive with American people than Japanese.

While some participants echoed this sentiment, none were more extreme than Isamu who had become known in the local Japanese community for his insistence on speaking English with other Japanese. During his interview, he told me about meeting some Japanese tourists in Thailand:

Like, I was traveling in the first half of the summer and I met, like, some Japanese travelers, so of course they tried to speak Japanese to me, but I just feel comfortable speaking English. Just yeah, so . . .

While Isamu's insistence on using English with other Japanese may be unusual, the convention of using formal language with elders appeared to be dissipating among Japanese undergraduates on this American campus. It would be incorrect to say that it had disappeared by any means, but according to respondents in this study, the degree of power distance between Japanese *senpai* and *kohai* may be notably less than in Japan. A conversation with Kazuaki, who was 26 and the oldest of the participants in this study, ensued as follows:

John: How old are most of your Japanese friends?

Kazuaki: I think 22--between 20 and 25 or . . .

John: So you're the *senpai*! You're the top dog!

Kazuaki: [Laughs] But it doesn't matter here!

John: Does it matter with all the other Japanese here? Do the Japanese here treat you with all the same conventions as in Japan?

Kazuaki: Oh, some of them talk to me in the polite expression, but some of them don't use polite expression.

John: Does that happen in Japan?

Kazuaki: Oh, not often.

Ayumi, who had been in the U.S. since the seventh grade and admitted to being less comfortable with speaking *keigo*, offered the following perspective:

Ayumi: I think I did use *keigo* to *senpai* [in the U.S.] but not all the time. Sometime I went back to my usual, like, how I talk to my friends, so . . .

John: So do you think you are less rigid about using *keigo* than someone who just came from Japan?

Ayumi: Yeah.

John: You probably use less *keigo* than other Japanese?

Ayumi: Yeah.

John: And you're probably more likely to use plain Japanese with more people?

Ayumi: Yeah, I think so. When I was in Japan I never had to be in, like, strict power position, so I never actually experienced too much power because, like, the swim team . . . was so loose and they didn't even care, but if it was marching band, like, my friend was [in], it was so strong and I wouldn't make it. If that's what I want to do I would probably do it because it's the way I can get into higher on top.

Finally in a vein similar to Nobuyuki's comment about age and ability on his Japanese baseball team, Kazumi expressed some frustration with the idea of having to show deference toward those for whom she felt little genuine respect:

John: On the Japanese side, do you ever feel it's oppressive to respect your *senpai* or your professors?

Kazumi: Yeah. Mostly I think it's oppressive when that person is older but I see him or her not experience much and don't know anything about it. I see those kind of people a lot. And I don't like it.

Thus, in exploring power distance between and among Japanese undergraduates on an American campus, one begins to see a degree of discomfort and questioning about hierarchical practices common to the Japanese language and culture. In some cases, students have asked their underlings to refrain from using formal Japanese with them while others use it less or not at all with older Japanese students. Although it was common for Japanese students to express feeling freer and more "aggressive" when speaking English, only 1 of the 12 participants expressed a preference for using English with Japanese peers.

The Workplace

Many participants were quick to note differences in power distance between Japanese and American places of work. Although most were familiar with differences

primarily from hearsay, Kazuaki, who had worked for both a Japanese and an American hotel chain, offered the following:

John: How would you characterize Japanese companies compared to American companies? Have you worked for a Japanese company at all?

Kazuaki: Yeah, I worked there. It's more . . . you know, *sempai-kohai* relationship I guess. Because, like, here you can call your boss [by], like, first name, but we never call your boss [by] first name--like Mr. So and So. So it's more . . . authoritative--Japanese company. But American company, it's more like flat. You talk to the same way your boss, or your subordinates.

John: Do you plan to work for a Japanese company or an American company?

Kazuaki: I plan to work for an American company.

John: Is there a reason why?

Kazuaki: I like the environment--like, casual environment. It's not authoritative. When I was working in a Japanese company I was more stressed. But when I was interning in an American company I feel more comfortable.

John: Why did you feel more stress with the Japanese company?

Kazuaki: Like, in Japanese company the boss or *sempai* is more strict to you than here.

John: Strict meaning?

Kazuaki: Like, if you make a mistake or something they try, sometimes they yell at me, but it's never happened here, so . . .

Obviously Kazuaki could not speak for all of America, and the fact that he worked as a low-paying intern in the U.S. may have explained the comparatively affable treatment he received. Nevertheless, he made some interesting points echoed by other participants. Akemi, a senior communication major who had spent two years at an American high school and hoped to one day work as a counselor at a Japanese university, commented:

Yeah, I mean, I'm not used to all this *sempai* and, you know, all the seniority stuff, so it would be hard for me to get used to that when I go back and work in Japan.

Additional concerns were heard regarding the added power distance between men and women at Japanese companies. Two female participants, Kana and Akemi, related similar reservations about returning to work in Japan:

Kana: All the people, like, my Japanese friends who have worked in an American company tell me I've got to work for American company so that, you know--there's no real seniority in American company whereas there is in Japanese company. Like, if you're young and, you know, you're a girl then there is no sexual preference maybe Then American society, if you're good, if you can deal with the work, you know, it's just going up high. So, all my friends tell me, you know, I better work for American company--I think that's true.

Akemi: I think there is a lot of discrimination against women in Japanese company, and they care a lot more about seniority--like older people and people who have been working there for a while.

That there are differences between Japanese and American companies and management styles is a common perception which may hold a degree of truth. Nevertheless, there are certainly exceptions based on work environment type and the people who set the tone. Undoubtedly some interesting comparisons and contrasts might be found between specific professions such as educators, journalists, accountants, or firefighters. This study, however, is limited to the perceptions of undergraduates who were only minimally familiar with Japanese and American work environments.

Behavior

As a final topic regarding power distance in Japan and the U.S., I examined and discussed changes in behavior when respondents switched between speaking English and Japanese. I also asked about the long-term effects that each language and culture had had upon the other. Having long observed a metamorphosis in others and myself who toggled

between English and Japanese, I became aware of changes in gestures and degrees of modesty and self-deprecation. In addition, I noted that when speaking Japanese, observations were heightened for determining hierarchy--underlings were treated more brusquely, superiors with greater reverence. Topics appropriate for discussion were also altered in myriad ways. Among the respondents in this study, there appeared to be a wide range of behavioral changes ranging from those who distinctly alternated their behavior to those who did very little when switching from one language to the other. In the following excerpts I have included Romanized Japanese where it was used, providing translations in parentheses. My first discussion was with Kazumi, a senior communication major:

John: *Demo, Nihongo de hanashitara, jesuchā toka te no ugoki toka hyoujou wa kawaru to omoimasuka?* (But when you speak Japanese, don't you find that your gestures, hands, and voice change?)

Kazumi: *Chigau to omoimasu.* (I think they're different) [her shoulders seem to tighten as she responds in Japanese] *Chigau to omoimasu!* (I think they're different!) [laughs]

John: *Naze sonna ni kawaru n desuka?* (Why did you change so much?)

Kazumi: Umm . . .

John: *Watashi ga toshi ue dakara desuka?* (Is it because I'm older?)

Kazumi: [laughs] *Sore wa nai kedo, tabun, Nihongo o shaberu toki wa, keigo de tsukau kara, dakara, nanka, keigo no shisei mo souyu fu ni keigo o shabete iru toki no shisei to iu no ni natte tte. Demo, Eigo no bai wa keigo to iu no sai ga nai kara* (No, not because of that. Maybe it's because when I speak Japanese I sometimes use formal language, therefore, how can I say it? When I use *keigo* I also take on the posture or formality that goes along with it. But when I speak English, there is no formal language and so I have no formal way of acting to go along with it.)

Wondering whether my age was a factor in determining how younger Japanese spoke to me in Japanese, I was assured by Isamu that being a non-Japanese excluded me from serious hierarchical consideration:

John: Is there a difference between--I don't know if you've spoken Japanese with many foreigners--*demo watashi to Nihongo de hanashitara, ano, dou yuu fu ni hanasu n desuka?* (but if I speak to you in Japanese, how do you speak to me?)

Isamu: *Keigo de, mochiron, dakedo yappari, gikochinai tte iu ka, hanashinikui--* (in *keigo*, of course, but it's as you would expect, it's difficult to speak) it's difficult! It's so uncomfortable.

John: So there's a difference in the way you're talking to me right now when you suddenly switched to . . .

Isamu: Yeah, it's *keigo*. Yeah, especially if I meet you and I spoke to you in English the first time and then if you switch to Japanese, so . . .

John: Then suddenly you have to become aware that I'm older than you are?

Isamu: Uh . . . no, when I'm talking to, like, foreign people, I don't see age as a factor to make me speak *keigo* . . . it's because you spoke to me in *keigo*, so that's why--we are first time, so if you are okay, I don't use *keigo*. But yeah, like the force that makes me to speak *keigo* is much stronger when I'm talking to a Japanese older man than when I'm talking to an American man.

Kazuaki, who came to the U.S. at 23 and spent the bulk of his time with other Japanese, admitted that although he had changed little during his time in the U.S., he had undoubtedly become more casual:

John: If we were to talk about respecting authority, in terms of respecting professors, or respecting *sensei*, do you feel that you still have the same Japanese values? Because professors here [may] say, "Call me John."

Kazuaki: [laughs] Oh yeah!

John: So how do you feel about that? Are Americans too informal? Are Japanese too formal?

Kazuaki: Oh, yeah, I think I changed a little bit because I used to be more polite to my professors, but here, like, professors are [more casual] . . . I think I became more casual when I communicate with, like, professors or, like, other people.

Miho, who also spent most of her time with Japanese and appeared to be considerably less introspective than other participants, ultimately identified a shift in her behavior when switching from English to Japanese:

John: Could I just speak to you [the way I do] in English and just use Japanese words?

Miho: No. That's weird. In Japanese we have to be polite when we talk to older people, but in United States it's kind of same but to me it goes like . . .so there will be a problem if you speak the same way you do in your country.

John: What about if you speak with someone younger than you . . . in Japan?

Miho: I guess pretty the same. I don't actually care about how I speak, just . . .

Hence, there appeared to be a big shift between speaking formal Japanese and informal Japanese, or between formal Japanese and English. The difference between speaking informal Japanese and English, according to some participants, was less pronounced. Kazumi related the following:

John: Let's say we're old friends, and we're the same age, and I approach you in Japanese, like, "*Genki?*" (Doin' all right?)

Kazumi: Yeah, I will be very friendly. I will be like American, like this [slackens posture].

John: So you feel that if you're informal you'll be the same in Japanese as in English?

Kazumi: Um hm.

Undoubtedly there are behavioral differences between speaking informal Japanese and informal English that were not always accounted for in the various two to three hour interviews. Finding answers to such questions might require more introspection and observation than was possible in the time allotted, but for one to give a reliable account of these behavioral shifts, he or she might need to have near-native ability in both

languages. Isamu, whose English was excellent in my estimation, expressed his linguistic shortcomings:

John: Okay, do you feel you behave the same way with Japanese as you do with Americans?

Isamu: No, no . . . if I could speak better English, I think it would be much easier for me to express myself in front of American friends than in front of Japanese. But now because of the language problem it might be easier for me to express myself in front of Japanese, but there's uh . . . but most of my friends are seniors so there's, like, certain culture of power or constraint so that makes me hard to behave as I want.

John: So with the Japanese there's sort of a cultural constraint but with Americans it's a personal limitation with the language. Is that fair?

Isamu: Yeah, that's right.

John: So if you spoke more English, you'd feel more comfortable with English.

Isamu: Yeah, that's true.

In spite of an excellent command of English, Isamu was still frustrated by a limited vocabulary that did not allow him to express himself in a way that felt sufficient; in his native language he felt inhibited to express himself due to cultural conventions. An ability to articulate oneself equally in two languages is much more difficult than many may realize; that Isamu could fathom expressing himself more fully in English than in his native language spoke volumes about how the Japanese language is subject to the mandates of culture.

Summary

This chapter presented Japanese undergraduate perceptions of power distance regarding families, higher education, contemporaries, and the workplace in Japan and the United States. It concluded with observations and discussions about changes in participant behavior when switching between Japanese and English-speaking

environments. These behavioral shifts were discussed as they related to changes in power distance.

A number of participants perceived American families as more emotionally demonstrative and less authoritative than Japanese families. As Nobuyuki claimed, “In the U.S., parents listen to their kids. If your children show you their opinion, parents will listen to you. That’s something I was amazed about.”

This, of course, did not imply that American families were closer than Japanese families. As Kenta suggested, Japanese parents likely spent more money and made more sacrifices for their children than most American parents. Kana and Kenta both noted that American families encouraged their children to be independent at younger ages than did most Japanese families. Lower power distance might understandably relate to cultivating independence.

Regarding postsecondary educational institutions, most respondents emphasized that the degree of power distance they perceived between professors and their students in American universities was considerably lower than what they knew or assumed would be the case in Japan. Key to their impressions were that American professors frequently asked to be addressed on a first-name basis, were often friendly, generally made time for students after class, and often seemed to genuinely care about their students. Several participants noted that the discussion format associated with American classrooms lent itself to much more comfortable exchanges between students and professors. To that idea, Kenta added that the absence of formal language in English made American professors “easier to talk with.”

Mentor-protégé (*sempai-kohai*) relationships, inherent to and delineated by age in Japanese culture, were perceived as contributing to stronger and more prevalent displays of power distance in Japan and among Japanese in the U.S.. Although some informants observed more relaxed norms among Japanese students in the U.S., most agreed that speaking Japanese required a heightened awareness of power distance, especially since many communication choices depended on it. In terms of cultivating friendships, Akemi, Kazumi, and Isamu expressed advantages in using English because of its hierarchical neutrality. Isamu, however, was the only one to insist on using English with fellow Japanese.

Regarding power distance in the workplace, participants were generally in agreement that Japanese companies incorporated higher degrees of power distance. Kazuaki, who had worked at both a Japanese and American hotel chain, insisted that mentor-protégé (*sempai-kohai*) relationships were ubiquitous in Japanese companies and that negative reinforcement was more commonly utilized. When asked about differences between Japanese and American companies, some participants believed that American companies offered more opportunities for rapid promotion, given their comparative lack of age-based and sometimes gender-based hierarchical distinctions.

Finally, I noted shifts in behavior between participants who spoke formal Japanese (*keigo*), plain Japanese, and English. Some participants admitted to feeling uncomfortable using formal Japanese, especially if they had had little practice using it in Japan. Kazumi insisted that she made few shifts between speaking English and plain Japanese, but that speaking formal Japanese caused her to make behavioral changes analogous to formal Japanese norms. Interestingly, Isamu conveyed that speaking

Japanese with older foreigners did not precipitate the same formal linguistic and behavioral shifts as speaking with older Japanese men. Few behavioral changes reflecting power distance were noted between speaking plain Japanese and speaking English, although much investigation remains to be done in this area.

Having presented Japanese undergraduate perceptions of power distance between Japan and the United States in terms of families, higher education, contemporaries, and the workplace, I now offer a chapter that focuses on how this same population distinguishes between Japan and the United States in regard to uncertainty avoidance. In Chapter 7, I specifically target how Japanese undergraduates perceive uncertainty avoidance regarding family, friendship, religion, education, employment, and language.

CHAPTER 7

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

Uncertainty avoidance refers to “the extent to which members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations” (Hofstede, 1984, p. 113). The three indicators used to determine uncertainty avoidance in Hofstede’s (1984) research were: (1) rule orientation; (2) employment stability; and (3) stress. Japan and other East Asian countries have traditionally been associated with higher uncertainty-avoidance levels than most Western countries (Fernandez et al., 1997; Hofstede, 1984; Maeda & Ritchie, 2003; Shuper et al., 2004), suggesting a greater adherence to rules, less career changing, and greater levels of stress. In Hofstede’s (1984) investigation, Japan ranked 4th of 39 countries with a score of 92; the U.S. ranked 31st with a score of 46. The mean was 64 (Hofstede, 1984).

In the review of literature, it was argued that mainstream Japanese were more prone to avoiding uncertainty than U.S. Americans in each of the following areas: (1) family; (2) friendship; (3) religion; (4) education; (5) employment; and (6) language. In this chapter, the views of Japanese undergraduates at an American university will be presented as they pertain to these six categories. An additional section on general rule orientation will follow. Religion was not routinely discussed as I did not want to arouse discomfort or undesired feelings of controversy; the section on religion will thus be limited.

Family

In Chapter 3, much of the literature supported Hofstede’s (1984) assertion that Japanese valued greater uncertainty avoidance in terms of family relationships. One of

the hallmarks of Japanese families was shown to revolve around the concept of *uchi* and *soto* (inside and outside). One premise of *uchi-soto* is that Japanese children are kept at bay by learning to associate that which is good, comfortable, and clean with the inside (i.e., the family) and that which is bad, uncomfortable, and dirty with the outside (Hendry, 2003). It was suggested that American families were not generally aware of any such formalized concept and therefore differentiated much less between rules and expectations inside and outside the home. Given the universal prevalence of the *uchi-soto* concept in Japan, it can be inferred that learning to associate the outside in negative ways may contribute to a Japanese tendency toward uncertainty avoidance.

If American families stress greater behavioral consistencies between the home and the outside, it may relate to a strong value for independence. It was suggested in one interview that American families encouraged independence earlier than is typical in most Japanese families. Kana, a senior who had spent a year at an American high school while living with her family, offered this observation:

John: How about the structure of American families--I mean if you compare it to what you know of Japanese families, are they similar?

Kana: No, I don't think so . . . Americans are, like...sometimes people go out of state to a college, right? They don't come back very often, right? Well, there's just, like, two or three times a year. I feel like . . . to Americans, graduating from high school is a big thing, right? To Japanese, graduating from college is a big thing, you know? A big start about your life . . . so I feel really different [about] that point. Because when I was graduating from high school [in the U.S.], I didn't throw a big party--it was not that big deal for me, but for all my friends, they had, like, such a big parties . . . you know? It's [as] if they're not coming back anymore . . . so that was, like, something I felt strange [about] . . .

John: So do you feel that most Americans separate from their families at 18 and Japanese more at 21 or 22?

Kana: Yeah--at the early age. Yeah, I think American kids are more independent.

Independence and self-reliance are certainly well documented hallmarks of American culture. Datesman et al. (1997) considered freedom and independence as the first among three overriding values in mainstream American culture. Kana's observation that Americans raise their children to be independent earlier than Japanese may be a topic worthy of future investigation.

Naomi, who had lived in the U.S. since the seventh grade, reinforced the notion that Americans embrace uncertainty more than Japanese. From her experience, she had observed that American families change residence at a much greater rate than Japanese families. At least according to Naomi, this had everything to do with the greater desire Americans have for social mobility or perhaps what is commonly referred to as the *American dream*:

Naomi: American families? I think they love to progress. Like, they're always looking for progression. Like, they want to go higher . . . like, status-wise in society, like, always--they never stop!

John: Isn't that true with Japanese?

Naomi: I don't think so. Some people are just like . . . maybe it is, but I don't think Japanese people move that much--like, in terms of housing--unless you have to . . . [if] your father's job is transferred or something. But American people just move because they want to live in a better house.

Although it is difficult to compare housing migration patterns between Japanese and U.S. Americans, Noguchi and Poterba (1994) suggested two feasible explanations for the American predisposition toward changing residence: (1) the surplus of housing in the U.S. compared to housing shortages in Japan; and (2) the variety of credit market institutions available to Americans that make homeownership easier in the U.S. than in Japan. Beyond these economic incentives, it is difficult to say for certain whether

Americans change residence more frequently than Japanese for reasons of social advancement. Naomi's assessment may not be far off, however.

Contrary to Japanese valuing greater uncertainty avoidance than U.S. Americans is that Americans may take more routine steps to avoid litigation. Naomi aptly pointed out that it is Americans and not Japanese who require legal agreements to send children on routine field trips:

Naomi: American mothers are very protective about safety and stuff like that. And like--it might be just a cultural thing and just a law thing--but every single thing . . . whenever you're going on a field trip you have to sign a paper, and just why??? And they complain whenever they get hurt! I mean, kids fall down! [Laughs] And why does it matter?

Naomi's observation appears to suggest that in terms of litigation, U.S. Americans are more likely to cling to security than Japanese. Closer examination, however, may reveal that such fear is an inevitable byproduct of a society that has learned the many dangers of routinely facing uncertainty.

Friendship

In Chapter 3, the most notable difference characterizing Japanese and American ideals of friendship stemmed from Maeda and Ritchie's (2003) study. Their conclusion was that while Americans emphasized personal stimulation as an important element of friendship, Japanese preferred comfort and ease. This, they concluded, was consistent with the cultural differences noted in Hofstede's (1984) uncertainty-avoidance measures that placed Japan high in uncertainty avoidance and the U.S. as considerably lower (Maeda & Ritchie, 2003).

In the present study, preference for stimulation over comfort varied largely by acculturation identity. Japanese undergraduates self-identifying as integrated often found

it difficult to choose between stimulation and comfort as a priority for friendship. Some integrated students also appeared less able to differentiate between the nature of their friendships with Japanese, Americans, and other international students. The following excerpts are taken from conversations with four students who self-identified³ as integrated.

Integrated Student #1: Ayumi

John: I don't know if it's very easy to compare, but would you say that friendships with Japanese are different from friendships with Americans?

Ayumi: I think they're basically the same--it's just like between people and people, not like any nationality and stuff, yeah . . .

John: Are there certain people you would talk to about problems?

Ayumi: Yeah, like if they're in kind of same situation, it's kind of easier for me to talk because I know they would understand. Or if they are, like, talking to me about the same kind of stuff I know they have same kind of problem, so I feel easier . . .

John: So when you said you shared the same kind of situation, is there a difference between an American or a Japanese in terms of friendship?

Ayumi: Um, no I don't think so.

John: So you can talk to a Japanese about a problem or an American, it doesn't matter?

Ayumi: Yeah.

Integrated Student #2: Akemi

John: When you think of someone who is a really good friend, which do you prefer, a friend you feel relaxed with or a friend who is intense and likes to talk about issues all the time?

Akemi: I like them both. I have, like . . . that's why I have several different best friends--some of them are, like, more laid back, some of them are, like, more talkative. But I think I would rather have somebody who I can be really

³ EAAM scores and researcher determination did not always match self-selected acculturation identities

comfortable with, you know, just to be myself--you know, to be by myself. Yeah [with] two of my best friend I can be like that . . .

John: And those friends, are they Japanese or American?

Akemi: One is Korean; one is American.

John: And you don't feel you have to talk for long periods?

Akemi: Yeah, no . . . I can just hang out . . .

John: You're not uncomfortable?

Akemi: No, I'm not uncomfortable.

Integrated Student #3: Isamu

John: If you choose a friend, would you prefer someone who is very talkative and likes to discuss issues or someone you can be quiet and comfortable with?

Isamu: If I have close friends? I think I'm talkative so I want someone who I can talk to and listen to me. At the same time, I don't just want to keep talking to him just like whole time, but maybe 50/50 is the best.

John: So sometimes it's okay to be quiet?

Isamu: Yeah, I'm comfortable. I'm comfortable with that.

Integrated Student #4: Naomi

John: So if you have a choice between two friends, one you can feel comfortable with and another one that is very interesting or stimulating, which friend would you prefer to be with?

Naomi: I'd prefer the friend who I would hang around with. Um, actually the fact that, like, what kind of problem I have . . .

John: For your identity problem?

Naomi: Right. For my identity problem I'd talk to my Japanese friend who has the same background. She lived in both Japan and America, but for other things I can just talk to American friends or just international friends or, I mean, anyone.

John: So if you were given the choice between a friend who is quiet and easy to be with or one who is stimulating and intense, which would you choose?

Naomi: Oh right, I think I would like to talk to the person who is very interesting too, because I am a college student and I'm interested in doing [things] and I like having, like, an interesting discussion and stuff like that--and I really enjoy it, but I would prefer the person that I feel comfortable with because I can just be with them and [especially] since I'm not with my family, I would like to have someone to stay close [with] and just, like, be in the same room [with] even though we're just happy to be. And I will need someone who I just feel comfortable with, being in the same room and not talking even, and not feeling awkward.

While the students self-identifying as integrated were somewhat torn between whether stimulation or comfort was most important in a friendship, Kazuaki, who self-identified as separated, expressed corresponding Japanese values regarding friendship:

John: When you get together with friends do you expect to talk and do something stimulating, or would you prefer just to relax?

Kazuaki: Just . . . to be relaxed.

John: And what about talking about troubles--problems? Or things . . . is it easy for you to talk to friends about problems?

Kazuaki: Yeah!

John: Or to listen to people when they have problems?

Kazuaki: Yeah.

John: You don't see that as negative? [As whiny?]

Kazuaki: No.

On the other side of the equation, Kazuaki's girlfriend, Kana, who identified as decidedly assimilated, preferred stimulation in a friendship:

Kana: Hmmm . . . Um, because I'm not a stimulating person, I'd like the other person to be so stimulating and very excited, I think . . .

While Kana expressed her preference for a stimulating friendship, her self-assessment of being non-stimulating was beyond the call for self-deprecation. In terms of energy and intensity, Kana was a dynamo!

Not specifically found in the literature was an assessment made by Naomi. Naomi insisted that many Japanese students at her American college dutifully avoided the uncertainty of venturing outside of Japanese circles:

Naomi: I feel like [Japanese students are] closed minded, especially when they're here. Like, why are they hanging out with themselves? I mean, usually, you know, people who study here, like, people who are just, like, coming here to study--not like I am--like I am studying here but I'm kind of like forced to study here, you know? Because of the consequence [of my family moving to the U.S.] . . . but those people, like, they choose to study here--they choose to come. Like, why are they still hanging out with themselves? And they will never learn how to speak in English! And they will, like, be scared of American people the whole time! Like, that's what they actually say: They're like, "Oh, I'm scared of American people--they use too much drugs!" I'm like, "It's a different country! Like, try to learn, and try to immi . . . -you don't have to do drugs, but . . ." [laughs]. You can be scared and not talk to American people the whole time. So I can't be comfortable with them.

Naomi supported her claim that local Japanese avoided uncertainty through her observations of nightlife and other diversionary experiences in the community surrounding the university:

Naomi: Most of the Japanese people here don't go to bars because first they don't want to spend money, and secondly they don't have fun because they don't dance, they don't get that buzzed [laughs]; they don't hit on girls, or girls don't hit on men, so. . .

John: What's your perception of *nampa* (getting hit on)?

Naomi: I think it's great!

John: It's okay?

Naomi: It's not okay . . . I mean, it's okay, I mean, it's fine. If you're in college, fine . . . I mean, I don't go off with some random guy or anything, but...I mean, you're having a good time, like, listening to music, dancing, drinking and getting a little buzz, I think it's fine! [Laughs] I just don't like that part of Japanese people here, because they're just so, like--conservative?

Depending on one's point of view, *conservative* may seem either a complimentary or uncomplimentary word. In either case, to generalize that Japanese at American

colleges fall under either category is unfair. As demonstrated in the biographical sketches compiled in Chapter 5, there is likely a wide range of diversity among Japanese undergraduates in terms of their personalities and responses to acculturation: some integrate, some assimilate, some separate, and some identify as marginalized. Many reported that their acculturation identity had changed over time. Nevertheless, that some Japanese actually fear involvement with Americans--for whatever reasons--may support the general theory of greater uncertainty avoidance among Japanese. That the widespread use of drugs in the U.S. has impeded some Japanese and other internationals from pursuing friendships with Americans may be an issue for student development practitioners to address--with both domestic and international students. The approach, of course, will depend on each school, its mission, its administrators, and research on the topic, all of which are beyond the scope of this investigation.

Religion

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Hofstede (1984) saw Japan as seemingly misplaced among Catholic countries, which all tended to rank high in uncertainty avoidance. Hofstede's (1984) only plausible explanations about Japan were that it may have had stronger religious ties than would meet the eye, and that ancestor worship may have accounted for coping with uncertainty of the unknown (Hofstede, 1984). Upon closer examination, the present study added that the authoritarian leadership and prescribed rituals found in the traditional Shintō and Buddhist religions of Japan closely paralleled Catholicism.

The only student who chose to discuss religion without prompting was Naomi, who had attended a Catholic school in the U.S. in both junior high and high school.

Naomi shared the following observations about religion in the U.S.:

Naomi: Um, oh, people are very religious--very, very religious. And that was my first impression, but since I went to a Catholic school, obviously they should be religious, right? But after a while, especially when I came to [this university], there are so many religious people--like religious people who didn't even go to Catholic school. So, I was, like, "Okay . . ."

John: What is your feeling about religion now?

Naomi: Well, being religious is fine, but I don't know. I don't really practice anything, so . . . But whenever I take religion classes . . . I didn't take it as something that I have to do, because first I wasn't Catholic [laughs]; second, I didn't agree with [it]; thirdly, I don't know, it was just difficult. I didn't think it was important for me to change my values. Just because I have to kind of like . . . you know . . . be more liberal about accepting other cultures--it didn't mean that I had to change my feeling--like the way I feel or behave or anything.

In a sense, Naomi may have been similar to many Japanese who, although aligning themselves with one or more religions when surveyed, were seldom highly devoted followers who took their life's cues from theological authorities (Hendry, 2003; Befu, 2001; Reischauer, 1981). In this sense, one might conclude that the seemingly non-religious Japanese seek less uncertainty avoidance than their American counterparts. But the picture would be incomplete. What has been termed *the Japanese religion* (Befu, 2001) is steeped in prescribed traditions that often parallel Confucianism. To that end, one could still argue that religious traditions in Japan affect uncertainty avoidance as a value. Americans, on the other hand, approximately 57% of whom are Protestant (Datesman et al. 1997), may still identify with lower levels of uncertainty avoidance given the lack of hierarchical structure and emphasis on theological debate found in many of its traditions. Naomi's comment, while valid in terms of noting the religious

convictions and fervency of many Americans, is not sufficient to suggest any conclusions about uncertainty avoidance one way or another.

Education

In Chapter 3, I argued that the Japanese educational system, from kindergarten through university, left little to chance or uncertainty. In contrast to the United States, Japan has maintained a powerful, centralized ministry of education that oversees a high degree of uniformity among its country's schools. With a shared, nationwide goal of passing entrance exams for the most competitive high schools and universities possible (Hendry, 2003; Smith, 1997; McVeigh, 1995), Japanese students and their parents generally insist on measurable fairness that requires precise answers over the subjectivity of argumentation or creative thinking. In order to most efficiently expose themselves to the knowledge required for success in this environment, Japanese students rely on teachers who disseminate relevant information in efficient, lecture formats.

Having spent the vast majority of their lives immersed in both Japanese and American educational systems, the Japanese undergraduates interviewed in this study often had more to say about education than about any other topic. From the interviews conducted, the following claims were frequently expressed: (1) Japanese K-12 education was much more demanding than American K-12 education; (2) American postsecondary education was more demanding than Japanese postsecondary education; (3) American education offered greater personal choice than Japanese education; (4) Japanese K-16 education emphasized lectures and precise answers to test questions; (5) American K-16 education emphasized class discussion, reasoning, and grounded argumentation over

precise answers. These claims will be addressed under the following three themes: (1) assessing the two systems; (2) choice; and (3) teaching methods.

Assessing the Two Systems

Although students agreed that Japanese K-12 education was far more demanding than in the U.S., opinions differed as to which system was better or more effective: some preferred the American system, some were diplomatic or philosophical, and some preferred the Japanese system. Naoki and Akemi were the harshest critics of the Japanese system. Naoki spoke without reservation:

Oh, [education in Japan is] terrible. Because Japanese education is just trying to make things hard--not really teach. Like, exam, exam, exam; and exam to get into high school and exam to get into college. And there's a school named *juku* (cram school), and kids have to go to *juku* to get into a good school, and if they don't get into a good school that affects them in the future because they cannot get into a good company.

Echoing Naoki's sentiments about excessive work and pressure, Akemi added:

Um, I really don't like how it works in Japan because like, you know, when you [are] in, like, middle school and high school you have to study so hard to get into the university, and once they get into the university they don't do anything . . . I think it's, like, really stupid. Like, I don't like the way they're set up in Japan. Like, I think they should be able to enjoy, like, you know, making friends and having fun when they are younger, and then become serious in college. But in Japan it works like the other way around.

Aika corroborated with the idea that Japanese K-12 schooling was difficult, but stopped short of labeling it better or worse than American education:

Uh, it's more strict than here [laughs] and, but teacher give us everything what to do--and it's homework, homework, homework, homework! Do that, that, that, that, that! But . . . even in the summer break, they give us a ton of homeworks, and even though we have 40 days of vacation, we have just ten days for free time because we spend most of the time for the homework [laughs]. And, maybe as you know, getting into the university is really hard--the examination is really, really hard, . . . and even the society are giving us the pressure of getting, like,

diploma at least; otherwise we don't have any job. So the family--even me--puts us in the cram school after school and just study, study, study! And just cram them into [our heads] 18 hours a day . . .

In contrast to Naoki and Akemi, Saori was the biggest proponent of the Japanese education system. Although she was philosophical about American classroom discussions, she was partial to the efficiency she saw in Japanese education:

I think I like Japanese way because it's more, like, I don't say easy . . . more effective. Not like [where] they talk about something supported by a lot of, like, argument or theory, right? So just receiving and learning and remembering--so we can get the, like, right knowledge.

Saori, who had just earned her degree in accounting, appeared to have great confidence in the Japanese ministry's curricular decisions. Continuing with her support of the transmittal teaching perspective that frequently characterized Japanese education, Saori mentioned that experimentation with more liberal forms of education were deemed, in the estimation of many, ineffective and inappropriate in Japan:

It's like educational system is changing right now. They have threw out a lot of things in one year, but now they changed, you know? They say, like, we should form more American ways. But after, like, two years or three years research they realize that that's [generating only] a little bit of knowledge . . . so we should go back to like before or something.

The educational reforms that Saori mentioned went into effect in 2002 (Ellington, 2005), after most students in this investigation had left Japan. In that year, approximately one third of Japan's national curriculum was eliminated to allow for an integrated studies component calling for field trips, hands on experience, studying local issues, and practicing English with foreigners. Most importantly, the integrated studies component was to be taught without textbooks or examinations. The controversy of lowering standards in the curriculum and shifting values from collectivism to individualism has

been duly criticized in Japan (Ellington, 2005). The Ministry of Education has announced plans to reevaluate the Integrated Studies program (Ellington, 2005).

Regardless of which system students preferred, there was strong agreement that Japanese education, at least in grades K-12, was far more demanding than in the U.S. Students in Japan were consistently depicted as working diligently to memorize a prescribed body of knowledge with the ultimate goal of attaining the best possible and most secure employment. These images supported the idea of a strong Japanese value for uncertainty avoidance, especially in light of Hofstede's (1984) criteria that emphasized high degrees of stress, rule orientation, and employment stability. In essence, hard work and fear of failure warranted stress while acceptance of the ministry's prescribed curriculum suggested adherence to rule orientation. To endure stress and follow the rules could thus be seen as the greatest assurance for attaining stable employment and avoiding an uncertain future.

Choice

Ayumi and Naomi brought up the concept of choice when asked about differences between Japanese and American education. In terms of uncertainty avoidance, it is easy to see that the limitations of choice in the highly centralized Japanese educational system shielded students and their parents from uncertainty. When options are limited, so is the anxiety of making choices. Ayumi offered the following:

American education is more, like, optional, because, like, in high school, after . . . they took requirement classes they can choose, and if they don't want to study they can take, like, easy classes and get away [with it]. And, like, at the same time they had more option if they wanted to study more--like, they had AP and they can take college-level classes at the community college and stuff--so I think they have more option in one way.

Echoing Ayumi's thoughts, Naomi offered her opinion on the advantages and disadvantages of choice in K-12 education:

I think American education is--it encourages students to do what they want to do, from the start. Like, they don't force you to do math--like, higher math, if you can't do it. But they encourage you to do the stuff that you can do, and they . . . want the students to accelerate in the subject that they really like and they can do. That's America.

Having substantiated her argument that American schools offered greater choice, Naomi continued in a more philosophical vein about what she saw as limitations in the more regulated Japanese system:

But in Japan, you have to do all subjects. You have to do good in all subjects, so like, even smart students in Japan, they struggle, because they get perfect scores for all subjects and they can do anything, [but] they find it difficult to find what they want to do. Because I think Japanese education holds them back sort of thing, because you're not allowed to fall behind, but you're not allowed to go further . . . either, so it's bad, I guess.

Suggesting that Japanese education might be stifling for highly capable or gifted students, Naomi found little resolve in the American practice of double promotion:

But I don't really know about skipping grades . . . in the U.S. because some students skip, like, three years and then you're in college--they graduate college when they're like 18--which means they're only like 15 or something, like, when they get into college, and they might be very smart, but it's not really--it doesn't go along with the college, um, you know? College teaching 15 year olds, like it might be too much.

For every yin there is a yang. Whether an educational system opts for greater control or greater freedom, there are undoubtedly advantages and disadvantages. The purpose of this chapter, of course, is not to extrapolate upon or resolve such issues, but to illuminate differences between Japanese and American values regarding uncertainty avoidance. In this respect, the present section has demonstrated that according to Japanese participants, greater choice exists in the decentralized American educational

systems than in the highly centralized Japanese system. Participants noted choice in the variety and levels of classes available and occasionally in the option of double promotion.

As an appropriate transition between the subtopics of choice and teaching methods in Japanese and American educational systems, Aika offered the following observation:

But in Japanese university maybe, the professor gives you everything what to do. So like, "Okay, if you do that homework, I don't care if you come into school or not; if you do that, I give you 4.0." It's just everything is assigned to students. Then maybe it's less responsibility--it's less their own responsibility--they don't have any question of, like, we have to study otherwise we can't pass this school.

Aika thus painted a picture of Japanese education as being rather cut and dry. As will be seen in the following section, respondents generally viewed Japanese education as more straightforward and objective than American education, while American education was depicted as more participative and sometimes less efficient.

Teaching Methods

Chapter 3 used the literature to describe vast differences in Japanese and American teaching goals and methods. Particular attention was paid to the Japanese preponderance of multiple-choice exams (McVeigh, 1995; Smith, 1997), ultimately used on university entrance exams (Smith, 1997). It followed logically that the most efficient method for disseminating factual information applicable to this testing format was the lecture or transmittal teaching perspective described by Pratt (1997). The U.S., in contrast, was shown to operate in a highly decentralized manner (Bray, 1999) that afforded a greater use of curricular freedom and teaching perspectives.

Few if any surprises emerged from participants in this study. Universally gleaned from the interviews were the following concepts: (1) Japanese education was associated

with lecture formats while American education was associated with class discussion; (2) Japanese education focused on single correct answers and interpretations while American education allowed for multiple answers and interpretations; and (3) Japanese education stressed memorization while American education emphasized critical thinking skills. The following are excerpts from six different participants, highlighting one or more of the above themes:

1. Isamu

How would I describe [education in Japan]? Like in sentence or words? I think it's so based on textbook. Like you have textbook first and then you have to follow it, so there's no other way to teach or to learn so there's only one way. But here I guess, like, there's more than one way, so . . .

Isamu continued with a personal example that supported his theory:

And there was one time . . . there was a special instructor from Japan who taught Americans or Japanese here how to use Japanese sword and I was interested so I went there. It was, like, last month after I've [been] spending, like, three years here and then knowing, like, what kind of American education, what American education is. And then I went there and then the way he taught us was just so fun, like, "Okay, you have to do this, you have to follow this; first you have to do this." . . . It's just, like, so textbook style. Do you know what I'm saying? He's Japanese old guy and, like, he was basically saying, "Oh you have to put *katana* in this way and . . . then you have to grab like this, and you have to go like this, and then you have to change like this"--and even, like, degrees . . . how I hold a Japanese sword. It was kind of, like, nostalgic because that's the way I was taught in Japanese schools. But I was so--not uncomfortable--but, "Oh I cannot do this!" [Laughs]. Like, I cannot do [it]. It was interesting, seriously, yeah, but it becomes too rigid to me, but yeah, it was completely interesting.

Since Isamu had attended a Japanese university for a year before coming to the U.S., he was able to attest that not all his exams were multiple-choice, but that even essay exams required highly specific content:

I took [essay exams], yeah, but I think the answer was just one, so I read one book and then I just summarize or, like, as long as I read this book I get this opinion and that's the answer, so . . .

2. Kazuaki

Kazuaki, the only participant who had graduated from a Japanese university before enrolling as an undergraduate in the U.S., offered a comparison between Japanese and American higher education that was consistent with Isamu's:

Kazuaki: In Japan, education is more like to memorize everything. Like the answer is only one, so yeah. I feel like keep practicing, keep memorizing . . .

John: How about education in the U.S.?

Kazuaki: Well, like, the key thing is like, it seems like there is more than one answers, so . . . like, writing a paper . . . uh . . .

3. Kazumi

Kazumi discussed her experiences at a junior high school in Japan where she felt it was not always socially acceptable to ask questions in class:

Kazumi: Actually I always question to my teacher in Japan, and here, going to teacher is like [a good thing] . . . so like . . . yeah.

John: [laughing] *Jama datta no?* [Were you considered bothersome / a pain in the neck?]

Kazumi: I don't know . . . Some teachers think it's really good, but, like I raised [my hand] and then she points at me like five times in a row, and people are thinking, "Why is she asking so much questions?" And I can feel it, like what people are thinking, and I don't really like it because students don't understand what she is saying and they get, like, really bad grades, and I do better than them all the time, so like, "Why don't you ask if you don't understand?" But at the same time, teacher, even though teacher asks students to say something, they don't expect them to say something.

4. Kenta

In a somewhat lengthier exchange about Japanese and American education, Kenta, interjecting some of his ideas in Japanese, discussed some of the pros and cons of the two educational philosophies:

John: *Shiken wa muzukashii to omoimasuka?* (Do you think the tests are difficult [in Japan])

Kenta: *Muzukashii to omoimasukeredomo, dakedo, rekuchā no imi ga nai; dakara hontou ni, Amerika no daigaku ni kite, rekuchā o kiite, dakara* (I think the exams [in Japan] are difficult, but the lecture content has no meaning; but honestly, if you come to an American university and listen to the lecture)--you have to understand what he says or what she says.

John: *Nihon de wa, chottou regurgitation dake da to itte iru n desuyo ne?* (In Japan, you're saying it's basically just regurgitation without having to show you understand?)

Kenta: *Hai.* (Yes). *Dakara* (therefore), there is no question or statement that you really have to think about.

John: [Are you saying] . . . critical analysis is more important here?

Kenta: I think so, but you really have to [use] critical analysis if you really have to express yourself, and by doing that you process more for yourself and it helps you develop your personality in a way, I think, but *dakedo, Nihon da to wa arubaito suru to* (but in Japan, by doing part-time work), they see the real world; they see how everything works out; in that way they develop their purpose or their identity or they are educated in that way too. So of course they are paying for tuition to go to Japanese universities, but at the same time they are making money and they are getting education from that too. So in terms of education, I think that American universities are more detailed, and you have to really get yourself involved to pass. *Dakedo Nihon dewa*, (but in Japan) I don't want to say anything bad because this is only my perspective.

In an interesting twist, Kenta, ever philosophical, pointed to the part-time work phenomenon among Japanese college students as an important form of experiential learning. Whether these part time jobs, often menial in nature, serve as an important learning device unique to Japanese students is a question for further investigation. To be sure, many American college students are also quite familiar with part-time work, and to a much greater extent than in Japan, often begin such employment during their high school years. During my initial months in Japan, I was surprised by the stigma attached to working at part time jobs during high school. Witnessing the rigors of Japanese high

school and the importance of passing college entrance examinations, however, I eventually understood why employment was frowned upon and even prohibited in many schools.

5. Saori

Saori concurred with other participants regarding the Japanese preference for transmittal teaching methods and the American preference for the developmental:

Traditionally, Japanese teacher wrote their knowledge down on the blackboard and then students just go home and remember it, but here it's different. They want students to question him. You know, they want students to talk about something more, but in Japan we just learn from teacher, not, like, discuss with them the things . . . they're just receiving knowledge from teachers.

Unlike most of the other participants however, Saori expressed what she saw as a shortcoming of American discussion formats:

In the United States they are talking to each other. I think it is good too. You know, because they know how to explore stuff, they know how to, like, argue with the other people. I think that's a good point. But, I don't know, I just felt like sometime it's, like, wasting time . . . Like, the student asks a question to teacher, but the question sometime you can find in [the] textbook, you know? But I felt like, you know, you should study the textbook first and then ask question [laughs]. I mean, you don't need to waste the teacher's time. That's what I feel sometimes. But like sometimes it's useful. Like sometimes some student has more knowledge and they ask some difficult question to teacher. Yeah, I think it's good.

Saori raised the only dispute to the theory that there is greater uncertainty avoidance in Japan than in the U.S. Although she recounted only a single incident between some American friends, it is likely one that has been heard throughout the U.S.:

I was surprised--like, my friends were talking about the SATs. They complained because they found a question which they didn't learn in the high school. It was normal in Japan. You know, we don't find any question which you learn from high school on the exam.

John: You don't find questions that you learn in high school?

Saori: No! You have to learn more, you know. High school is just, like, high school. You have to learn more to, like, pass exam, you know? So, like, you didn't find the same question which you, like, learned in high school or something. But here, they complained because they said, "Well I never see such questions in high school so it's not fair" or something. I felt like, "Well, maybe that's [how it should be]." That's what I said. I was just so . . .

Although many Americans might scoff at these comments or write them off as idiosyncratic, Saori may have a valid point in that some American high-school students have come to expect an exaggerated degree of certainty when it comes to testing. Assessing American education, for all its decentralization and diversity, is a task far beyond the scope of this investigation, but there are likely vast instances of both high and low uncertainty avoidance. Every American teacher, school, or school board, for example, must decide on grading policies. Some policies are highly objective and allow for minimal uncertainty; some are highly subjective, allowing for a great deal of uncertainty; and some are mixture of the two. Just as American teachers and institutions may offer a plethora of grading policies, so too are there gradations of uncertainty avoidance as it relates to education in both Japan and the United States.

6. Naoki

Finally, in a declaration worthy of transition between the topics of education and employment, Naoki was the only participant to allude to the entrepreneurial spirit sometimes found on American campuses. To Naoki, a college degree did not appear to be as essential as in Japan where meritocracy seemed comparatively heightened; that is, he saw a plethora of opportunities in the U.S. that did not depend on one's degree or university affiliation. Naoki's assessment was as follows:

The U.S. is more like a business--like a business town, like, all over the U.S. I still love the country but you can sell a lot of cars by yourself, you can start a business, and I see a lot of my friends starting a business. And the majority of my friends go

to school, but that's because, I don't know, maybe a lot of them study business because they need a degree to be safe.

Employment

In Hofstede's (1984) original research, uncertainty avoidance was largely measured not only by rule orientation but also by employment stability and stress. Countries with greater job stability and higher stress levels were also seen as having greater levels of uncertainty avoidance. In this section on employment, employment stability and stress will be examined. Kana and Kenta had very definite opinions regarding job stability in Japan and the U.S. Kana, who had just accepted a position with a Japanese company, had this to say about her decision:

Kana: But it's also, like, if you're in an American company they just lay people off, like, so quick, so immediate . . .

John: [You mean] fire people?

Kana: Yeah, fire people. But I think the Japanese company is more secure, kind of. Once you are hired, your position is guaranteed, you know? Almost secure . . .

Kenta was of the same mind. Although he expressed a preference for working in the U.S., he offered similar concerns:

From what I've heard, I think Japanese companies are more feeling attached to . . . like, persons. Like, it's not about results all the time. Sometimes it's . . . like if . . . person A is performing bad, [and] person B is performing well, but person A has a good personality but person B is like really *ijiwaru* (bullies people), it's more obvious for American companies to fire the one who is not performing well. But for Japanese companies, I think there is a personal attachment to person A, so until the last minute, I don't think Japanese company will fire [person A] . . . So I think American companies outweigh the results thing over personality, maybe. I don't know, I may be wrong, but that's how I see it--in Japanese companies you really have to work hard to get through those hard times.

Kana and Kenta's comments were indeed consistent with Hofstede's (1984) research regarding greater employment stability in Japan. As Befu (2001) mentioned, the

first of the three sacred treasures of Japanese business management is lifelong employment. In regard to stress levels, Kazuaki was able to share his thoughts about working for both a Japanese and an American company:

John: So after you finish your degree, do you plan to work for a Japanese company or an American company?

Kazuaki: I plan to work for an American company.

John: Is there a reason why?

Kazuaki: I like the environment--like casual environment. It's not authoritative. When I was working in a Japanese company I was more stressed. But when I was interning in an American company, I feel more comfortable.

John: Why did you feel more stress with the Japanese company?

Kazuaki: Like, in Japanese company the boss or *sempai* is more strict to you than here.

John: Strict meaning?

Kazuaki: Like, if you make a mistake or something they try, sometimes they yell at me, but it's never happened here, so . . .

Of course, Kazuaki's experience was limited, but it remains consistent with the assumption that stress levels in Japan are likely greater than in the U.S. Naomi shared her thoughts about stress in Japan and the U.S. When asked why she thought Japanese men were so stressed out, she replied.:

[It's because of] work and being successful--about being successful. Like if they don't, like if they don't have a job for, like, two weeks they're. like . . . I mean it's true. But I think a lot of American men can go without a job for, like, a year. And they will just be, like, "Oh, I'm just taking a break." Like, in Japan, for example, after you graduate college, you either work right away or you go to grad school right away. You don't take a year off. But in America, a lot of people take a year off and go study abroad or something.

Although not all Americans have the luxury of being able to take a year off, the concept of doing so does not necessarily carry the same stigma as in Japan. Adding to the

stress of many Japanese men is the long working day that many continue to experience. Because of the temporal work demands, Naomi reasoned, Japanese men were perhaps more dependent on women than were their American counterparts:

I think in the U.S., people seem to understand that Japanese men are being, you know, sort of like a master and treating women assertive or something. Like, I don't think it's true. I mean, they work till 11 PM. You can't do laundry [laughs], they can't cook either--they don't have time for it. And they wake up at six in the morning and go to work at seven, so . . . I think it's working too much.

Thus, in the above comments, participants agreed that there is both more stress and greater job security in Japan than in the United States. Both of these factors, according to Hofstede (1984), are hallmarks of a nation that values high uncertainty avoidance.

Language

The most pronounced aspect of uncertainty avoidance in the Japanese language might be found in the multitude of ritualistic greetings or *aisatsu*. As mentioned in Chapter 3, McVeigh (2002) posited: "Practices associated with this socio-linguistic behavior, driven by sociopolitical and economic rationalization and bureaucratization, are seen in staged formalities which erect thick walls of rituality" (p. 130). These formalized, almost rehearsed exchanges stand in stark contrast with politeness in the English language, which as Obana and Tomoda (1994) pointed out, "is often associated with barrier-breaking features" (p. 46). Kenta illustrated these points by explaining the apprehension he felt in introducing himself to Americans. Our conversation began with him discussing some things he had learned after transferring to a midwestern university:

Kenta: I learned how to introduce myself.

John: *Meishi o douzo towa yuwanai n desuka?* (you don't say "Please accept my business card?")

Kenta: [laughs] *Nihon de, karuku, karui to iu kimochi de, shokai suru koto ga dekiru to omoimasu* (I think that in Japan, self-introductions are easy). Like, I'm not concerned with introducing myself.

John: You mean in Japan it's easier to introduce yourself because it's such a prescribed ritual?

Kenta: *Un* (yeah). I don't have to worry about it anymore here.

John: Were you uncomfortable with the uncertainty?

Kenta: Yeah, I was.

John: We don't have such ritual exchanges here. Are you more comfortable with it now?

Kenta: Yeah, I think so. It took me a while--about four or five years.

Whether Americans say, "Nice to meet you," "Good to know you," or "What's up?" when introduced is seldom a concern or preoccupation, as it might be for many Japanese. As Obana and Tomoda (1994) implied, Americans would prefer to break the ice quickly and put one another at ease rather than pay homage or show deference. After recently giving a presentation on Japanese business etiquette to a large group of American business professionals, I heard many comments on how surprised people were that the Japanese had so many formalized rules and rituals when it came to exchanging business cards. Most commented that they had never even thought of paying special acknowledgment upon receiving someone's business card. Further illustrating his apprehension with American greetings, Kenta recounted how he became accustomed to the lack of prescribed linguistic rituals in the U.S.:

In my junior high textbook, you know, it was not "How you doing? How are you doing?" Like, I learned it that way: "How do you do?" You know what I mean? Almost nobody says that around here. So, like, everything that was taught, in a way, was what I learned. Of course, I had the basics, you know--I learned it from my junior high. Some of them were useless, of course, but at least I had a basics

of how I structure sentences; but every time I, you know, talked, I learned like, new things, new ways to say it. You know, new words, new things, new vocab, new slang, all that. Every day was like all new, I think. It was surprising, but I think I'm used to it and I'm more, I am really to learn how it goes, how we speak, I think.

Perhaps due in part to the uncertainty Kenta described in his salutations and exchanges with Americans, Aika reported feeling more mature when speaking Japanese and less mature when speaking English:

Oh . . . when I communicate with Japanese I'm more calm--quiet--talk more quietly, and yes. I feel like I'm more mature than acting or communicating with American when I feel like I'm being like kid--not kid, but being more younger.

Although Aika's feelings may have strongly related to her sense of proficiency in each language, they may also have stemmed from the predictable exchanges in Japanese known as *aisatsu*. There can be comfort and self-assurance in doing exactly what is prescribed in social situations; the idea of simply greeting someone in the U.S., as Kenta alluded to, can be daunting in a culture where the cliché is negatively viewed as impersonal, distancing, and unimaginative (McVeigh, 2002).

Finally, Kazumi discussed learning to face uncertainty by sometimes starting conversations with total strangers; a custom she felt was more common in the U.S. than in Japan:

I was shy before [laughs]. But now I can speak to people and . . . because I grew up in really, really countryside, and it's kind of unnatural to speak to someone who you don't know, and here people speak to someone they don't know, really naturally--frequently. But in Japan, it's really, really different. But still, I wasn't this--what's the opposite of shy?--outgoing before, so I think I've changed in that way.

Rule Orientation

A few participants commented on the general differences between rule orientation in Japan and the U.S. Claiming that rules readily defined and governed much of Japanese life, participants routinely recognized--for better or worse--that there were fewer rules to abide by in the U.S. Akemi related her impressions of the U.S. while still in Japan:

John: What impressions did you have of the U.S. before you came here?

Akemi: Um, I felt like it's really open . . .

John: Open how?

Akemi: Like, people are friendly, and, like, not, like, so uptight about the rules and regulations. But I really didn't know much about the U.S. before I came here, so I didn't know what to expect . . .

After being in the U.S. for a while, Akemi confirmed her original impressions, reflecting on the advantages and disadvantages of rule orientation:

Akemi: I think American people are more straightforward, you know? They tell you what they feel. I think that American people doesn't care about rules and regulations as much as Japanese do . . .

John: Okay. Is that good or bad?

Akemi: I think it's good, but sometimes, like, I guess it depends. Sometimes it's good but sometimes it's bad. I think, like, Japanese people have, like, too much regulations, but at the same time I sometimes feel irritated when, like, people don't follow the rules and just, like, always just trying to, like, get around and, like, yeah . . .

In making distinctions between Japanese and American attitudes toward rule orientation, Akemi supported the idea that Japanese tended toward greater uncertainty avoidance through adherence to regulations while Americans were more likely to break or bend rules in spite of known or unknown consequences. Drawing from an interview in

the pilot study (Brender, 2004), Asami perhaps best articulated the repercussions of living in a society that lacked a strong sense of rule orientation:

John: Are your impressions different now that you've been living in America for three years? How are your impressions different?

Asami: It's not quite free here, even though I thought, like, so much freedom here. I was not aware that we need to have this responsibility when we have freedom--so a great amount of responsibility. Like, nobody gonna protect you with so much rules like Japan. It's, like, wear this, wear that, do like this, do like that! Actually I think that that kind of rule is protecting us, but there's no rule here. Like, there's rule, but it's not many so we have to decide what we're gonna do, and at the same time we have to take responsibility.

Thus, as Datesman et al (1997) made abundantly clear, freedom comes at the price of personal responsibility. Whether in family, religion, education, employment, or verbal exchanges, participants largely agreed that in the U.S. the choice was freedom; in Japan it appeared to be security.

Summary

This chapter focused on Japanese undergraduate perceptions regarding uncertainty avoidance in Japanese and American culture. These perceptions spanned: (1) family; (2) friendship; (3) religion; (4) education; (5) employment; (6) language; and (7) rule orientation.

Participants insisted that American families embraced uncertainty when it came to changing jobs and residence, and in raising children to be independent at an earlier age than in Japan. In contrast, one student pointed out that Americans were more cautious than Japanese in regard to litigation avoidance. I responded by suggesting that the American fear of litigation might be an inevitable byproduct of a society that has learned from routinely facing uncertainty.

Regarding friendship, Maeda and Ritchie (2003) suggested that Japanese preferred ease and comfort compared to Americans who generally sought stimulation. The present study suggested there might be a correlation between self-selected acculturation identity and type of friendships preferred. That is, integrated students seemed to prefer both types of friendship; separated students preferred comfort; and assimilated students reported a preference for stimulation.

Religion was not consistently investigated. Naomi's observation that many Americans were religiously fervent did not suggest that Americans avoided uncertainty through dogmatic beliefs. To the contrary, a majority of Americans affiliate themselves with Protestant sects that favor democratic leadership, theological debate, and loosely prescribed rituals.

Education was the most popular topic regarding uncertainty avoidance. Participants compared the Japanese and American K-16 systems, agreeing that: (1) K-12 education was more demanding in Japan than in the U.S.; (2) American postsecondary education was more demanding than Japanese postsecondary education; (3) American education offered greater personal choice than Japanese education; (4) Japanese K-16 education emphasized lectures and precise answers to test questions; (5) American K-16 education emphasized class discussion, reasoning, and grounded argumentation over precise answers. In general it was found that the tightly controlled, centralized Japanese education system fostered uncertainty avoidance through its incorporation of Hofstede's three defining characteristics: (1) It induced a great deal of stress regarding examinations; (2) it prescribed very definite rule orientation in regard to its standardized curriculum; and (3) the reward for success was often greater employment stability. In contrast,

participants in this study viewed American education as less stressful, limited in prescribed curriculum, and a lesser factor in determining employment stability.

Participants in this study agreed that Japanese faced greater stress at work than Americans but were less likely to be laid off by their employers. Hofstede (1984) saw both of these traits--stress and employment stability--as indicators of greater uncertainty avoidance.

The Japanese *aisatsu* or ritualistic verbal exchange was seen as contributing to uncertainty avoidance. Participants expressed surprise when their expectations of systematic greetings and exchanges were not met in the U.S. It appeared that even self-introductions could be daunting for Japanese, who were generally conditioned to expect greater predictability upon meeting people. Conversely, an informal observation of American business people suggested that Americans might be equally surprised at the ritual etiquette involved in Japanese greetings and business card exchange.

Finally, when asked about general impressions, some participants commented on the lack of rule orientation in the U.S. Coming from a highly developed homogenous culture with a preponderance of sophisticated rules to one that has gradually made provisions for people from every country and culture of the world, Japanese students are likely to be taken aback. Like other immigrants to the U.S., Japanese undergraduates are faced with layers of uncertainty.

Having dedicated this chapter to Japanese undergraduate perceptions of uncertainty avoidance in Japan and the United States, I now turn to Hofstede's third work-related value: individualism. Chapter 8 is thus dedicated to how Japanese undergraduates in this study view both individualism and collectivism, and how they

view these two opposing values as indicative of American and Japanese cultural identity. As a way to present these two contrasting national values, I have compiled excerpts from participants and occasionally supported their claims with research findings that pertain to appearance, family, education, face, language, and communication styles.

CHAPTER 8

INDIVIDUALISM

In this chapter, I investigate Japanese undergraduate perceptions of individualism and collectivism in the United States and Japan. Individualism in Chapter 3 was equated with Markus and Kitayama's (1991) definition of independent self-construal: "Attending to the self, the appreciation of one's differences from others, and the importance of asserting the self" (p. 224). Collectivism was equated with Markus and Kitayama's (1991) definition of interdependent self-construal: "Attending to and fitting in with others and the importance of harmonious interdependence with them" (p. 224).

In Hofstede's (1984) research on individualism, the United States ranked 1st among 39 countries; Japan ranked 22nd, just below the mean and median. Highest in individualism were northern European and Anglophone countries; lowest were Asian and South American countries. To measure individualism, Hofstede (1984) relied on responses to questions about personal time, freedom, and challenge. Conversely, collectivism was measured by long-term investments made in working conditions and training opportunities for employees (Hofstede, 1984).

In order to validate the perceived differences between individualism and collectivism in the U.S. and Japan, Chapter 3 turned to the literature regarding: (1) agricultural history; (2) family; (3) education; (4) friendship; (5) religion; (6) business management; (7) face; and (8) language and communication styles. The present chapter looks to Japanese undergraduates in the U.S. for their perceptions of individualism and collectivism in the United States and Japan. Based on these interviews, the following

topics will be discussed: (1) appearance; (2) family; (3) education; (4) face; and (5) language and communication styles.

Appearance

Physical appearance, whether related to grooming or fashion, was a common topic brought up by participants in this study. Overall, there appeared to be consensus that Japanese were far more concerned with physical appearance than their American counterparts. Although the link between appearance and individualism/collectivism may not seem obvious, the connection makes sense when considering Markus and Kitayama's (1991) definition of collectivism or interdependent self-construal: "Attending to and fitting in with others and the importance of harmonious interdependence with them" (p. 224). Based on this definition, the goal of fitting in and attending to others can be seen as manifesting itself in maintaining--and expecting from others--a pleasing or acceptable appearance. Kana and Akemi both separated themselves from other Japanese women, based primarily on their limited concern with appearance. Kana came to this realization during a recent trip to Japan:

I went back to Japan this summer, and, like, everyone is, like, so materialistic in Japan--you have to have, like, branded bags and wear expensive clothes and, like, it's not me! Like, I didn't really feel like [it] . . . Like, here, like, no one cares . . . what you are wearing, you know? [Or] what you do, so they're able to [have] more freedom.

Kana seemed to equate American apathy about appearance with individualism and freedom from judgment. When one is an individualist and relatively unattached to a specific group, there is little pressure to conform or to look a certain way. The idea of being more collectivist whereby one represents others--and feels subject to their approval--understandably heightens the preoccupation with personal appearance.

Akemi, like Kana, also saw herself as somewhat different from Japanese women based on her casual appearance. She became suddenly aware of this when she returned to Japan for a visit:

John: How would you say that other Japanese see you in Japan? Are you a *futsu no Nihonjin* (typical Japanese)?

Akemi: *Amari!* (Hardly!) [laughs] Maybe not. Because all the Japanese girls are more, like, high maintenance--very submissive, kind of; not necessarily, but compared with me . . .

John: When you say "high maintenance" what do you mean?

Akemi: You know, they always care about how they look--they have to, like, look perfect from the head to the toe and everything, and um . . . but, like, I don't think I'm, like, too deviant from them, but a little bit different maybe . . .

Akemi continued with a supposition as to why she thought Japanese women might be more preoccupied with their appearance than many American women:

But, like, I don't know--Japanese people are, like, so critical about the appearance, especially for girls. They're like, "Oh, what is she wearing???" And, like, things like that. I know that not all Japanese people are like that, but some people . . .

In the above passage, Akemi illustrated the group judgment of others that may be a natural byproduct of collectivist circles. As Markus and Kitayama (1991) expressed, interdependence includes: "Attending to . . . others" (p. 224). Such a tendency is obviously not unique to Japanese or perhaps even collectivist cultures, but may be heightened when one feels that the appearance of others is a potential threat to self or group identity. Interestingly, Akemi suggested that while being accepted in Japan often required looking one's best, being accepted among some Japanese groups in the United States depended on looking more casual:

John: I'm curious, are [the Japanese on campus more] critical of people who overdress or under dress?

Akemi: I guess it all depends. Because if you are in Japan, then they laugh at the people who dress down; but then, like, if you are in here, if you are dressing too much like Japanese then maybe they'll just say something, like, "She looks like she just came back from Japan" or whatever . . .

I asked the above question based on some comments I heard during my pilot study (Brender, 2004). During one interview, Yumi introduced me to the concept of FOB--Fresh off the Boat:

John: Do you feel you're adjusting yourself to American culture when you're here? Do you *not* put makeup on because you're here in America, for example?

Yumi: Yes, because maybe I'm in [this college town] . . . if you wear [a] skirt, or, like, high heel boots, they would think of me: "What she is dressing for? Just a class?" You know what I mean? But, like, "Is she going to the party or to some nice dinner or something?" . . . They would think of me weird. Same thing, like, if I go to Japan, if I wear just jeans and tennis shoes and you know, just . . . clothes [with a college logo], they would think of me as just "What she is wearing [that] for? And without makeup! What is she?" I think it's the same thing here, just in opposite way.

Thus, Akemi's and Yumi's statements suggested a form of collectivism manifested not in dressing up or dressing down, but in dressing similarly to those in one's social circle or targeted environment. It is possible that American college students may also be rather conformist in that many tend to dress quite casually. Nevertheless, according to Akemi and others, the concern for what others wore or did was heightened more within the local Asian community than elsewhere.

Based on interviews in this study, one possible explanation for the Japanese concern with personal appearance might be a fear of being talked about in the local Asian community. In the following passage Akemi discussed the prevalence of gossip among Japanese students on campus:

Akemi: I think they're kind of gossipy--Japanese people. I know American people gossip too, but, like, my American friends don't gossip nearly as much as, like,

Japanese friends. It's, like, Japanese community is so small and tight, they're, like, always talking about other Japanese people, like, "You know, she did this and this and that and that" and I really don't like that . . .

John: Is there much gossip about non-Japanese people?

Akemi: I don't think so. I think it's just, like--other Asian international students too, they're like, "I heard that she has, like, five boyfriends and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah" and, like, "You don't even know her, you know?" I mean, who cares if she has five boyfriends?" I don't know, but they are always, like, talking about somebody else--I don't know.

The idea of gossip being more prevalent in the Asian communities on campus first came to my attention during an interview with a student in my pilot study (Brender, 2004). When asked as a follow-up question why she felt it was more difficult to be accepted in the Asian community than in American and Western circles, Aki postulated:

Because they study--I think they study, like, their own problems. You know, like they just start hanging around with only, like, only Japanese or only Chinese or only Korean--but they like gossiping all the time.

Thus, in both Akemi's and Aki's statements, it appeared that Japanese and other Asian students were much more fixated on their own ethnic groups than on any outside groups. Of course, whether such gossip has an underlying purpose of regulating group behavior or whether it serves some other function (such as bonding) cannot be clearly surmised from these statements. Discovering the underlying reasons for gossip within collectivist groups, however, may be a topic worthy of future investigation.

In contrast to the idea that Japanese women were more particular about appearance than American women, Naomi observed that seventh graders in her American junior high school were wearing makeup while it would have been unthinkable in Japan:

Thirteen-year old girls in Japan, they don't put makeup on, and they do here. So that was kind of shocking. It was very shocking! Like, why are they putting makeup on??? Like, we're still kids! Come on!

Comparing seventh graders in Japan with seventh graders in the U.S. may not serve as a relevant example here, since regulations in Japanese schools generally forbid makeup and even a number of hairstyles. In fact, the convention of *not* wearing makeup in Japanese schools may support the argument posed in this section--that based on appearance, Japanese tend to be more collectivist than Americans. As Akemi and Yumi pointed out, collectivism through conformity of appearance--whether dressing up in Japan or dressing down in the Midwestern United States--is still a form of collectivism.

Family

American families look at kids as like, individual. But Japanese families don't look at kids as mature enough. --Naoki

In this succinct phrase, Naoki captured what many participants viewed as a major difference between Japanese and American families: American children were reared to be independent while Japanese children were reared to be dependent or interdependent. In Chapter 3, the Japanese concept of *amae* was discussed as it concerned family relationships. *Amae* was defined as “the sense of being accepted and cared for by others in a passive relationship of reciprocal dependence” (Markus & Kitayama as cited in Ellsworth, 1994, p. 38). In essence, Japanese parents were depicted as offering affection, acceptance, and reassurance in exchange for their children’s loyalty and support. The concept of mutual dependence is frequently applied to Japanese businesses and other organizations and is often attributed to being a major component in Japanese collectivism (Befu, 2001; Doi, 1986; Hendry, 2003; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). With the idea of mutual dependence in mind, it may be easier to understand the surprise some Japanese undergraduates felt upon encountering American families that encouraged a strong sense of independence and individualism. Kenta expressed his observations:

John: Was [the American family you lived with] just like your Japanese family? Were there any values that struck you as unusual?

Kenta: I recognize from my friends' parents that many [American] parents don't give their children so much money because they want them to work for their living, and . . . I don't know, it's more, they're more strict about money in a way, but at the same time, my impression for that is because parents want them to know how to manage money--to take care of themselves and working for some other company or some restaurant or any kind of experience [that] will be beneficial to them. So I was thinking that was the difference . . .

John: But beyond money, is there a value that you see? Like independence?

Kenta: I think perfect Japanese parents are taking care of their kids as part of their family, but at the same time, American families are, like, American parents are--well, not well balanced. They tend to spend more time on themselves.

John: American parents spend more time on themselves?

Kenta: More time and money, I would say.

Kenta was not the only participant to suggest that Japanese parents spent more time and money on their children. Akemi concurred:

John: Okay. What impression do you have of American families?

Akemi: I think American families, just the divorce rate is too high and it's so complicated, because when I talk to my friend, like you know, "My step-step-sister and my dad is living here and my mom is somewhere else" and then just like . . . and I don't know. I think they're more independent, because [they] know how. Japanese family, like parents are expected to take care of their children as long as they're in school, but you know, in here, they have to get their own loan or something. Like, you know, [American college students] work and pay for their own schooling and stuff. So, yeah, I think, like, Japanese students are kind of spoiled, but I don't know. Yeah, they're more independent I think--like, American students, like, American families. They kind of, I think it's a little bit cold and strict in a sense, but if parents [in the U.S.] . . . can afford to support the children, I know they do support the children and, like, there are some, you know, college students whose parents are paying for their own stuff, I mean, you know, for the schooling and stuff . . .

Kenta and Akemi's observations regarding financial expenditures have been noted in the literature (Reischauer, 1981; White, 2002). Japanese families commonly

spend large portions of their household income on their children, and especially their children's education. The cost of educating a child to be academically competitive in Japan has become so burdensome that many Japanese parents have chosen to have only one child (White, 2002). Afternoon and evening cram schools are a virtual requirement for students seeking to enter a reputable Japanese university. As a byproduct, working at a part time job during high school is viewed quite negatively in Japan since the primary duty for most teenagers is to study diligently in preparation for university entrance exams (White, 2004). There may be no greater way for Japanese children to fulfill their role than to enter a prestigious university and thereby bolster their parents' estimation in the community.

Although Ayumi did not mention differences in financial support between Japanese and American families, she concurred with Kenta and Akemi that American families valued independence to a much greater degree than Japanese families:

John: What impression do you have of American families? When you think of American families, is there anything that shocks you or anything that stands out? Are they different from Japanese families?

Ayumi: Um . . . I feel like sometimes it's more independent in one way but they are, like, close together.

John: So what do you mean when you say they're "independent"?

Ayumi: Hmm. Like American parents kind of encourage the kids to be independent and, like, get work and drive around and get their own life. But at the same time they have--well maybe not a strong connection--but when something happens they have, like, a lot of connections.

John: You mean emotional?

Ayumi: Probably, yeah.

While noting the greater independence and individualism fostered in American families, Ayumi pointed to what she saw as an interdependent or collectivist support system that was available during times of difficulty. Although she appeared to view American families as independent and perhaps “a little bit cold and strict” as Akemi had suggested, Ayumi ultimately perceived a safety net that made American families seem a bit more interdependent than would first meet the eye.

Like the other participants, Naomi depicted American families as being more independent than Japanese families. As an example of what she saw as independence in American families, Naomi pointed to her observation that all members of a typical American household tended to share domestic responsibilities, a practice that would leave no single member of a household completely dependent on any other:

John: Have you ever stayed with an American family?

Naomi: I actually have. I think women are very, very independent. I think that's what I feel.

John: Is that good or bad?

Naomi: It's a good thing, yeah. And . . . domestic work or some housework is divided among the family members--not just the wife doing everything, so that's something good.

In addition to seeing each member of an American family as willing and able to perform various household tasks, Naomi felt that American children were further encouraged to become independent by trying their hand at a large variety of extra-curricular activities:

Like, when I think of American family, there's just, like, two middle-aged parents and, like, kids. It makes me think that American parents let kids do anything they want to do, kind of--in a good way. They let them try out anything, like . . . American kids play any sport--you know, they've tried it before. They've tried all--most of the sports before. They've tried to play soccer; they've tried playing

baseball, stuff like that. But in Japan, I think most of the time, they do like a couple of, like, maybe three sports, or different things at a time, but I think parents want them to, like, concentrate on one thing so they can kind of--perfect it, kind of . . .

Whether being exposed to a variety of household tasks, sports, or part time jobs, American children, in the estimation of respondents in this study, were reared largely to provide for themselves rather than to fulfill a specialized interdependent role within their family. Naomi's observation that American children were encouraged to participate in a number of sports fit well with the arguments made about uncertainty avoidance in Chapter 7. In this respect we see that a nation or culture that values independence also tends to encourage its children and citizens to willingly approach a variety of tasks and disciplines with minimal apprehension. This connection between high individualism and low uncertainty avoidance makes sense, as it is important to become skilled at a number of tasks in order to become highly independent. Conversely, when individuals learn to depend on others in interdependent or collectivist households, they may lack encouragement to attempt things they are not immediately skilled at doing.

Building on the theme of Japanese interdependence within the family, it becomes apparent that the perceived successes and failures of each family member constitute a family group identity; when an individual flourishes, so does the estimation of each individual within the group. Conversely, when the failure or shortcomings of an individual become apparent to the outside community, shame can reverberate within the family. With this in mind, it becomes understandable that each family member has a vested interest in the perceived success or failure of other members. Below are excerpts from conversations with Aika and Naomi that illustrated group shame and group pride,

respectively. Sadly, Aika discussed the social difficulties of growing up with a sister who was developmentally disabled:

Then my mother used to worry about kind of social communication in the neighborhood--very sensitively. Like, my younger sister is actually a little disability child and I really didn't understand she really wanted to hide about the fact to the society because this is a very bad thing about Japan--especially in a small community. People kind of wants to dig up the kind of negative part of the family or negative part of the person and then making a rumor about it. And unfortunately it happens in my community, so people who, you know, have a problem in the family wants to hide about the fact and then they [can be] kind of sheltered about it . . . Now my mother and father kind of accepted that and my little sister has a problem now, and they don't have to worry--it's just wasting time to just hiding it, so . . .

Although attitudes are said to have changed in a way that reflects Aika's mother's transformation (Hiyashi & Kimura, 2004), perhaps the most unfortunate hallmark of family interdependency in Japan was the shame that some families harbored over their physically or developmentally disabled children. Mackelprang and Salsgiver (1998) discussed a traditional moral model in Japan in which disabled people were viewed as "suffering the consequences of wrongdoing that they or their ancestors committed in their current or previous lives" (pp. 61-62). While this moral model is largely rejected today (Mackelprang & Salsgiver, 1998), Aika's story is evidence that children with disabilities have, at least until recently, been perceived as stigmatic.

On the other side of the spectrum from shame is the concept of pride. Whereas parents may be depicted as feeling shame for their children's failures or shortcomings in an interdependent society, so too are they likely to feel a strong sense of pride in their children's accomplishments. When the success of one's children is seen as an extension of personal or group identity, there may be added motivation for parents to project their ambitions. One offshoot of this interdependency is the education mother (*kyouiku mama*)

in Japan. Throughout Japan, people are well aware of mothers who are obsessed with their children's academic success. Naomi had some interesting things to say on the subject:

John: Do you think that the *kyouiku mama* (education mother) is about social climbing in Japan? Like, "*Todai ni hairanakuchanaranai!*" (You have to get into Tokyo University!). Is that . . .

Naomi: Maybe it is, I think it is, but . . . I think it's social climbing but . . . I think it's more about what other people see them as. So if your kids go to *Todai* (Tokyo University), then your family looks so much better from outside, from their neighbors, like, from the perspective of your neighborhood. Or their friends will respect you more, or something like that. I think that's what it is. Of course, it's about social climbing, but I think what's encouraging mothers to become *kyouiku mama* in Japan is more about those superficial things.

Thus, Naomi affirmed that in Japan the perception of each family member served as a strong reflection of the family unit as a whole. To have a son or daughter enter a prestigious university was but one important way for Japanese parents to feel esteemed within their given social circles. Undoubtedly this sense of vicariousness is familiar to many Americans, although it is my sense--and the sense of many respondents in this study--that it is generally not as strongly felt or as consciously sought after as in Japan.

Education

As detailed in Chapter 3, Japanese students were taught the importance of collectivism or group life (*shūdan seikatsu*) as early as nursery school (Hendry, 1989; Peak, 1993). Group life was loosely defined as replacing self-indulgence with thoughtful consideration of others and placing the needs of the group above those of the individual (Hendry, 1989; Peak, 1993). Thoughtful consideration of others was shown to manifest itself in a tendency for Japanese school children to repress their opinions in class and to avoid boasting or sharing their accomplishments with others (McVeigh, 1995).

In contrast to the Japanese value for collectivism or group life, American schools were perceived in the literature as placing much greater emphasis on the individual. Datesman et al. (1997) supported this assertion by stating: "American students are encouraged to express their own opinions in class and think for themselves, a reflection of the American values of individual freedom and self-reliance" (p. 177). As a way to investigate the common assumption that the Japanese educational system values collectivism while American education favors individualism, this section looks at the perceptions of Japanese undergraduate at an American university. Based on multiple interviews, three major themes emerged: (1) tracking was more common in American education; (2) pressure to conform was more evident in Japanese schools; and (3) unlike American schools, Japanese schools commonly enforced a duty system whereby students cleaned and maintained their classrooms, buildings, and grounds.

Educational tracking refers to dividing students into separate groups according to ability, achievement, or needs. Though a common practice in the United States, it remains a hotly debated topic because of its potential for misallocating resources and reducing positive spillover effects that occur when grouping lower and higher achieving students together (Zimmer, 2003). Although the Japanese educational system does not theoretically make allowances for tracking in grades K-8, students must generally pass entrance examinations to attend high schools of varying prestige. In spite of this ultimate separation by ability in Japan, the national curriculum is mandated in all classes and in all schools with minimal allowance for deviation. In spite of this stratification by school, Japanese respondents in the present study were surprised that American schools often

separated students by ability and level within schools and classrooms. Naomi offered the following observations:

I think American education is--it encourages students to do what they want to do from the start. Like, they don't force you to do math, like, higher math, if you can't do it. But they encourage you to do the stuff that you can do, and they . . . want the students to accelerate in the subject that they really like and they can do. That's America. But in Japan, you have to do all subjects. You have to do good in all subjects, so like, even smart students in Japan, they struggle, because they get perfect scores for all subjects and they can do anything, [but] they find it difficult to find what they want to do. Because I think Japanese education holds them back sort of thing, because you're not allowed to fall behind, but you're not allowed to go further, like, yeah, either, so it's bad, I guess.

Although Naomi pronounced Japanese education as "bad" in the sense that it limited individual pursuits and occasionally potential, she also took issue with the American concept of double promoting exceptional students:

But I don't really know about skipping grades though in the U.S. because some students skip like three years and then you're in college--they graduate college when they're, like, 18--which means they're only like 15 or something, like, when they get into college. And they might be very smart, but it's not really--it doesn't go along with the college, um, you know? College teaching 15 year olds, like, it might be too much.

Naomi was not the only participant to bring up the idea of double promotion in American schools. Kazumi, a senior anthropology major, saw it as a vehicle to further promote individualism:

American schools are about individualism. I've heard that many kids--not many kids, but there are kids--in the school [that] can skip one grade and then go to the next because they're really smart or something. But Japanese don't do that. And Japanese sees students as a class--people in a class, students in a class. But you know, in the States they see the individual more than a group of people in class A or class B. And, um, so Japanese education system tries to turn into one class and raise them in their groups equally, or try to make the not-really smart kids--to encourage them to be like the one in the class who is really smart. And yeah, I think that's it.

Thus, without making an explicit value judgment, Kazumi put into perspective the idea that American schools emphasized the individual while Japanese schools preferred the advantages of group life and the spillover effect alluded to by Zimmer (2003).

Of course no educational system is without disadvantages. While tracking practices in the United States may limit positive spillover effects, Japanese group-oriented education may spawn other potential drawbacks. One byproduct of Japanese collectivist education, at least according to some participants, may be a strong pressure to conform. The oft-quoted Japanese proverb, “The nail that sticks up must be hammered down” manifested itself in the form of a nationwide bullying problem that culminated in the 1980s (Nishizawa, 2004). While the bullying problem in Japan has subsided substantially in recent years (Omori, 2001), some interviewees revealed that various forms of hazing continued not only between students, but also between teachers and students, and parents and teachers. Akemi, who appeared outraged at the thought of how one teacher treated her, felt verbally abused after making an alteration in her school uniform:

But then, like, nobody want[ed] to wear . . . the skirt that long because, like, at that time . . . it was popular to make it shorter. But I made mine like this [points to above knee], and it’s not even short! I’m, like, one day I was walking around the campus and, you know, like, all Japanese girls are so short, and, like, I was one of the tallest ones in the class, and then when I was walking around, my teacher—he is, like, between 40 to 50 years old—and he’s a male teacher, and [he] just came up to me. He was like, “Akemi, you are so . . . huge and gigantic. Like, nobody wants to see your ugly legs. Why don’t you make your skirt a little bit longer?” And the tone of voice was just, like, so monotone. And he’s not even joking!

Although Akemi’s teacher may be the exception rather than the rule, his abuse was directed (or misdirected) at her lack of conformity to school regulations. From my own days as a teacher at a Japanese high school in the 1980s, I recall weekly assemblies

at which teachers would painstakingly inspect their homeroom students for uniform and hairstyle infractions. Sleeves could not be rolled up, ties had to be straightened, and students were reprimanded for walking on the backs of their canvas footwear. Hair could never be too long, permed, or dyed. But while teachers tended to conformity in their pupils' outward appearance, students sometimes monitored physical or social differences in their classmates. Though beneficent intentions were apparent, teasing about physical features and social behavior was also surprisingly commonplace. Bullying was talked about but not always apparent to us as teachers.

In a conversation with Ayumi, who said she avoided other Japanese on campus, I probed to find out the reasons behind her systematic exclusion. Although she did not want to offer details, she appeared to have suffered from some degree of bullying or ostracism at the hands of her schoolmates in Japan:

John: Do you not want to spend time with Japanese [on campus] or would you like to?

Ayumi: I mean, like, if I find a person I could get along with I guess I don't mind, but I just don't see anybody. I just didn't meet anybody I could get along with, so that's probably why. But if I had a chance, I guess I don't mind. I'd be friends--hanging out with them.

John: Is there anything about the Japanese on campus maybe that you don't like, or any reason that you don't hang out with them?

Ayumi: Well so far the only Japanese I've seen on campus and I know is guys and I know that, like . . . I don't know. Like, after a long time in middle school there were, like, people I hated. So some people are in that group that kind of make me remember about middle school and that I don't like, so I'm probably not going to . . . what is the question again? I kind of forget . . .

John: I'm just wondering if there's any reason that maybe you might not want to be friends with Japanese. I mean some Japanese [may] have . . . ideas or stereotypes of the Japanese on campus and some of them say, "I don't want to be part of that group."

Ayumi: Well just because I don't want to remember and, like, I don't want to be in the trouble in middle school. I'm just, like, trying to get away from those trouble[s] I had. It was just hard during that time.

John: What kind of trouble? Was it *ijime* (bullying) or something like that?

Ayumi: Yeah, some sort of.

John: So do you think a lot of Japanese tend to be, I don't know, what's a good word?

Ayumi: Pick on people?

John: Maybe.

Ayumi: I think it just depends on who they are and if they have a strong leader to lead other people to do that, [then] they might be doing [it]. But without leader I don't think they would be.

It is important to keep in mind that Ayumi's experiences are not necessarily representative of or applicable to all Japanese schools, nor is bullying unique to Japan by any means. Nevertheless, her comment about strong leadership and bullying appeared to be somewhat consistent with Hara's (2002) supposition about bullying in Japan: "It is possible that the group orientation of the Japanese may have some influence on the justifications for bullying" (p. 203). Yoneyama and Naito (2003), however, cautioned that it was important to rethink other conjectures associated with bullying in Japan such as authoritarianism, hierarchy, alienating modes of learning, regimentation, severe chastisement, or interventionism in group-oriented social environments.

When I asked Saori about bullying in Japan, she claimed that the focus of abuse in Japanese schools was shifting from students bullying other students to students and parents bullying teachers:

John: In general, do you see a lot of *ijime* (bullying)?

Saori: Well if you ask me when I was a student, we have a lot. But now maybe, my mom told me that now students are hard on teacher. You know, like students *ijime* (bully) teacher. Because now [there are] so many adults--like parents--who are, like, sensitive to the teachers' attitude to their son or child. [Teachers] cannot speak or . . . cannot do anything, so, like, the child knows they can do anything because the parents will protect them. But, like, I heard one story that children don't sit on the chairs--even during the class. They just goes to the playground, and, like, teachers [are] going to and catch around like children to the playground, right? So while the teacher's gone, the children are going somewhere. So, like, the teacher was so tired and she decided to leave the school. So it's like getting changed--that's what my mom told me. So, like, my mom said the teachers are getting so weak, but that's because the parents are getting so strong and they become very sensitive to *ijime* or, like, hard things or something like that.

John: So the parents complain to the teachers?

Saori: Yeah, so, like, teachers cannot do anything to their own students. So even if they do something, the children talk to their parents and parents say something to the school, you know? So some teachers don't know how to handle the kids . . .

Pressing Saori for an explanation of this recent phenomenon, she again relied on her mother's opinion of recent events:

My mom told me, like, the generation of parents changed. Like, for example, my mother's generation, it's more like, "Teachers are great--teacher is the best or better." But I felt like now that [has changed]. My mom told me that the generation of parents are changing. [The kids] are getting a lot of money from parents, and then women are in positions and they say like, "We should be treated equally like man do." They, like, more insist on women's rights. In the past a woman became a mother and people who have such mothers became the parents, you know?

According to Saori--or Saori's mother--Japan recently underwent substantial changes in school culture. Whether these alleged changes were the result of female empowerment, children's increased access to money, the 2002 Education Reform Act that eased curricular requirements, the result of an increasingly global society, or some combination of the aforementioned is beyond the scope of this investigation. At any rate, the changes appeared to be recent and potentially reversible, especially if the Ministry of

Education reverts to stronger curricular demands after reviewing the Integrated Studies programs that now constitutes one-third of Japanese K-12 curriculum (Ellington, 2005).

One aspect of collectivism in Japanese education that has changed little in recent years is the duty system. As mentioned in Chapter 3, Japanese students are responsible for cleaning and often maintaining much of their school property (Ellington, 2001). Homeroom teachers delegate times and responsibilities for cleaning hallways, bathrooms, chalkboards, and classrooms while athletic clubs are often responsible for maintaining their respective fields and play areas (Bussler, 1998). Kazumi discussed the learning benefits of the duty system:

Kazumi: One thing that I learned from the class is that Japanese have, like, cleaning hours, cleaning stations, do you know it?

John: Of course! *Souji no jikan!* (Cleaning Time--as announced daily via loudspeaker in Japanese schools).

Kazumi: *Souji no jikan!* [laughs]. And it's teaching that not just cleaning up but taking care of selves, taking responsibility to what you've done, or what you're doing, or what classroom you're in, and to be responsible. And the classroom is not just a place to study, but to make friends, to learn how to socialize, or how to take care of yourself or take care of your surroundings. Because you have your desk, and your place to put your stuff in, and it's like a little house--really half of yours--and you need to take responsibility for that space. And [in the] United States, they have locker room, but the class is set, and the class is just a place to study. Then the outside somewhere--it's--outside, is a place to make friends or something else.

Kazumi summed up some of the basic collectivist philosophies derived from her Japanese education. In cleaning time, she saw that lessons were learned in taking personal responsibility for a shared environment. Classroom maintenance fell on the group as a whole but each member had tasks and functions to perform so that the entire group could benefit. In likening the classroom to a house where individuals felt part ownership, Kazumi illustrated the ties between each student and their shared

environment. By contrast, she saw none of these things in the U.S. where classrooms appeared to serve as a mere temporary physical space for academic exchange.

Face

Chapter 3 showed that in individualist countries such as the United States, people tended to be highly concerned with self-face maintenance while in collectivist cultures such as Japan, people were generally interested in both self-face maintenance and other-face maintenance (Ting-Toomey, 1988; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2002). Self-face maintenance dealt with concern for one's own image. Other-face maintenance was manifested in praising others and avoiding behavior that might cause others to feel uncomfortable or inferior. That Japanese students refrained from flaunting their knowledge or sharing academic successes with their peers were two examples of other-face maintenance provided in Chapter 3. The present section looks to conversations with Japanese undergraduates in the U.S. regarding perceptions of face in Japan and the United States. From multiple interviews, the two most prevalent concepts were: (1) Americans were more outspoken and consistent about their opinions while Japanese were more likely to be passive and compromising; and (2) Americans were generally more boastful than Japanese, indicating high self-face maintenance and low other-face maintenance.

One of the most common observations made by participants was that Americans often expressed their opinions with little regard for the feelings of others. Kazuaki, who was uncommonly diplomatic throughout his interview, expressed mild surprise at how freely Americans made their opinions known:

Kazuaki: I feel like most of Americans have their own opinions whatever the issue is . . . and . . . yeah, that's all. I think Japanese . . . many Japanese often

don't have their own opinion. So that's the difference between Japanese and American people.

John: Do you think they don't have their own opinion or that they just don't express their opinion?

Kazuaki: Yeah, sometimes they have opinion, but they can choose not to express their opinions--especially in the case of that opinion is different from others.

In his comments, Kazuaki suggested that Japanese often suppressed their opinions out of consideration for others. Such a practice is consistent with Ting-Toomey's (1988) other-face maintenance concept in which ideas, knowledge, and stories of personal success were withheld to avoid threatening someone else's image or peaceful state of mind. On the contrary, Americans and those from individualistic cultures tended to prize factual or intellectual exchange over group harmony (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Isamu seemed to share this perception, especially before coming to the U.S.:

John: Before [your first U.S.] home stay, what image did you have of the U.S.?

Isamu: I think people are so, uh, assertive and active. I think that's the strongest image I had before I came here for the first time. So, yeah, I was always thinking if I had a complaint or if I had something I want to say, I just have to say it, . . . [but] Japanese don't usually say it. You just think or you just keep [it] in your mind . . .

In spite of his initial impressions, Isamu came to a deeper understanding about American culture after a few regrettable incidents:

John: So you had an idea that Americans were more direct and now you realize that they're not quite that direct. Was there a time or an incident that made you realize that or understand that? Can you think of a time that might have shaped your thinking?

Isamu: I don't remember exactly, but there was one time--not one time but a couple times I was spending with my friends and I think I said something to one of them. I think it was kind of a negative thing--I don't remember exactly, but like, basically other friends who were around us said, "Oh, I was surprised you said that!" So they are thinking we are not expected to say those things in person. I'm sorry, I cannot remember exactly.

John: But it sounds like you overstepped your bounds . . .

Isamu: Right, yeah. I realized though . . .

Trying to make cultural adjustments requires a lot of trial and error as Isamu illustrated. While one culture may allow for greater personal expression than another, chances are that certain parameters and nuances exist. Opinions may be expressed more openly and frequently in the United States than in Japan, but there are undoubtedly points at which most Americans are likely to become surprised, irritated, or offended.

Kana was one of the few participants to mention face directly. Inadvertently, she illustrated part of Ting-Toomey's (1988) theory on the subject: that in individualist cultures such as the United States, it is of great importance to maintain consistency between a private and public self-image; in collectivist cultures such as Japan, the self can vary--sometimes considerably--based on the relationship or situation. Having just accepted a job offer in Japan at the behest of her parents, Kana related the following, observations about women in the U.S.:

And I think the American women are strong willed--they do what they decide. But, like, a Japanese person, if they end up pressured, they're so quick to change their mind, you know? I did too. Like, you know, if my dad wants me to go to a Japanese company I will, and you know . . . [Japanese] try to keep their face or their parents' face. They don't really have a very original role--they don't know what they want to do. So they just look to other people, or they do what's expected in the society, I think. But here, yeah, American women are so independent. To me, if you get concerned, I'll talk to my parents, you know, seek the way out. But you know, American women are like, "Well this is my matter." Like, you know, you don't talk about it, you know? "I've decided!" And you know, they're just like individual matters. Like, they don't want anyone else to touch it. They're strong willed and stubborn sort of . . .

Kana, in accordance with Ting-Toomey's (1988) assertions, perceived American women as individualist, maintaining a consistency of self, and relatively uninterested in

the concerns and opinions of those around them. Conversely, true to Ting-Toomey's (1988) research on face, Kana also viewed Japanese as being ready and willing to change the self as the relationship or situation demanded. For Kana personally, this meant accepting a position with a Japanese company, even though she might have preferred working for an American or other international firm.

Saving face in a collectivist culture such as Japan has been shown to involve withholding thoughts or opinions that could infringe upon the happiness or public image of others. As mentioned previously, boasting about one's achievements--or even about the achievements of closely associated individuals--also stood to make others feel inferior or uncomfortable in Japanese society. That many Americans were quick to mention their successes and accomplishments was frequently noted in interviews. Kazumi discussed the shock of listening to Americans boast, although she understood that some of it was in jest:

Kazumi: Of course, there was an example--my friend said, like, "I'm really smart!" He says it all the time, like, "I'm really smart--I can do everything!" "I can write a paper in, like, 30 minutes and I will get an 'A' all the time." And then, I didn't like it at first, because, you know, it's like boasting--it's saying that he's really good and kind of giving me . . .

John: Was it in a funny way? Like trash talking?

Kazumi: Yeah, trash talking, but still . . . yeah joking . . . I do know that it's okay to do those kind of things, but I thought people always should be modest about their intelligence or, like, their hard working. But he always do that and I saw some other people that [say]: "I'm really hot!" or something saying, you know?

John: Some people say they're "hot"?

Kazumi: Yeah. So maybe, like, I can say that too if I really think that way or I don't really want to be modest.

John: So you can say it seriously?

Kazumi: Uh, not all the time, but if you know, some professors tell me I have really, really unique ideas and [say]: "I really like it" and [if] I'm Japanese I will say, "*Je, sono koto arimasen yo!*" (Oh, that's just not true at all!). But [in the U.S.] I will say, "Thank you."

Learning to boast about personal abilities or accomplishments can be quite uncomfortable for many Japanese, especially since bragging is quite negatively perceived in Japan. From my own experience of returning to the U.S. from Japan, I can attest to moments when fellow Americans suggested that I had "low self-esteem" based on my initial uneasiness with acknowledging personal achievements or accepting compliments. To succeed in the U.S., however, I soon discovered that the Japanese premium on modesty was only minimally applicable and sometimes even detrimental. Self-deprecation in the U.S., I concluded, was sometimes equated with low self-esteem or incompetence; self-promotion--if not excessive--seemed to equate with self confidence, competence, and self-worth.

Boasting may be a slippery slope in the U.S.; when it pertains to one's self, it is not always positively received. There are often subtle ways to make abilities and accomplishments known, however, without necessarily being labeled a braggart. What few Americans may understand about modesty in Japan is that it involves not only what an individual says about him or herself, but also what an individual says about those who are closely associated. Thus, in Japan, bragging about a family member, colleague, or close friend is considered unacceptably immodest behavior, especially when conveyed to someone considered more distant. With this in mind, I challenged Kazumi by requesting that she boast about her father not only in English but in Japanese:

John: So how do you deal with the whole concept of being modest--especially in Japanese?

Kazumi: I wasn't really used to saying good things about my parents and brother and some people asked me, like, "What does your father do?" Or what do you think about your family or something? And I used to say that, like, my father is really, really conservative, I don't like him, or, like, he's not outgoing--he's really shy, or something really, really negative. But then after talking to some American people saying, "My father's great! He's like my buddy" or something, I started to realize that I can say good things about them, even though I wasn't used to [it]. So I kind of started talking about I respect my father a lot and he's a great person and, um, he's good at computer or something really positive . . .

John: Can you say that to me in Japanese now?

Kazumi: Um, yes. Actually, right now? *Watashi no otousan wa . . .* (my father . . .) [laughs]. It's kind of embarrassing, but . . . *Watashi no otousan wa, nanka, shigoto ga sugoku suki dakara, kare wa shigoto ga dai suki dakara, watashi wa sono koto o sugoi sonkei suru shi, kare no ikikata o sugoi sonkei shimasu* (My father, um, really likes his work--he really likes his work and so I really respect him for that, and his lifestyle too-- I really respect him for that as well.)

John: Okay. Is it comfortable for you to say that in Japanese?

Kazumi: I kind of got used to it because I think it is a good idea for me to say that about him.

John: Now you can say that to me as an American, but if I were Japanese would it be different?

Kazumi: Well, I talk to my friends here about my father, and I say [the] same thing, so . . .

John: To your Japanese friends?

Kazumi: Yeah.

John: And do they find that unusual?

Kazumi: Probably [laughs]. Because they say, "I don't like my father at all" [laughs]. And I say, "Well, you can find some good, some other good things." But they're like, "No--I don't like him."

John: Because when you were just telling me about your father in Japanese, your face turned a little red--you seemed a little uncomfortable saying that.

Kazumi: [Laughs] Um, I'm not comfortable, but I like to say it.

John: But is it like *kimochi warui* (giving you a bad feeling) to say that?

Kazumi: Just a little.

John: So it gives you kind of a bad feeling?

Kazumi: Not that bad a feeling. It's not bad feeling, but still I feel a little bit weird saying it [laughs].

In another conversation about boasting, Isamu insisted that the concept of Japanese modesty allowed for some subtle opportunities to self promote:

John: [Americans] can say, "My father was a good basketball player" or "My father was a good accountant" but in Japanese I find that difficult to say . . . or you might say "I'm pretty good at something" in English but if I said, "*Watashi wa takkyu jouzu desuyo*" (I'm really good at table tennis), I mean, it just sounds bad in Japanese . . .

Isamu: Yeah, I know Americans like doing things [like that], especially when you meet someone new, some new people, because that's the way you can show yourself--you can [promote] yourself and you...but Japanese, they don't say like those things when you meet people first time, but they are so good at like intertwining, like, those phrases into, like, natural--usual conversations. Like when you're talking . . . like, if you're talking about, like . . . okay let's say there's huge international tennis events and we are talking about tennis and you can say, "Okay, I played tennis in high school and we went to, like, higher places—tournaments."

John: Like, "My team won the prefectural championship?"

Isamu: Yeah, they are not, yeah it's showing off but it's . . .

John: More subtle?

Isamu: More subtle, but it's easy to get boastful with those phrases. You can tell he's talking about himself and he's trying to raise his image . . .

John: So there are subtle ways you can boast or brag in Japanese?

Isamu: Yeah.

While Isamu pointed out that subtle forms of boasting were evident in Japan, he still maintained that Americans were generally less modest than Japanese. Kana, however, who had moved away from Japan at the age of 13 to live in Malaysia and then

the U.S., appeared much less aware of differences in modesty between Japanese and U.S. Americans. Identifying as highly assimilated to American culture, her apparently limited understanding of Japanese modesty and humility seemed to come almost solely from her father who had given her some advice before she interviewed with a Japanese company:

John: If somebody asks you a question in Japanese and you know the answer, do you immediately tell them the answer?

Kana: [immediately] Yeah.

John: Do you ever worry that they might feel stupid that they don't know the answer?

Kana: What do you mean?

John: Well, some Japanese, if you ask them a question and they realize that by answering the question quickly you might feel stupid, they [might] pause and say the question is difficult--they hem and haw, etc.

Kana: I never do that. I answer as soon as possible as I can, you know? I just realized recently, you know, if you make a pause a little bit and you after a little pause you answer, that's the way that can make [yourself] look like smart, you know? You have, like, big authority kind of things.

John: In Japanese?

Kana: In Japanese. But I don't do it. I'm like I answer whatever from the top of my head and my dad tells me not to do it at my interview so I did . . .

John: Told you to hesitate?

Kana: Yeah, so Japanese will think I have more deep thoughts after, you know, answering after a little pause.

John: You don't suppose that opposed to deep thoughts, it has to do with being considerate of the other person so as not to make them feel foolish for not knowing the answer?

Kana: [Laughs] I don't consider that.

In contrast to Kana who had lived almost half of her life outside of Japan, Kazumi, who was majoring in anthropology, was much more resolute about the

differences between Japanese and American modesty. I tried to get her to brag about herself in both English and Japanese:

John: Can you brag in Japanese?

Kazumi: Brag?

John: Can you say, for example, "*Watashi wa Eigo jouzu desu yo!*" (I'm really good at English!)

Kazumi: I would probably say, "I can speak English." I said it like sometimes some Japanese say, "You're really good at speaking English compared to other Japanese people." And I say, "Thank you." Like, I don't say, "No, no, I'm not really good at it" or something.

John: So you don't say, "*Sono koto wa nai desu*" (No that isn't true)?

Kazumi: I don't say it.

John: In Japanese, you don't say, "*Eigo umai desu yo!*" (My English is really great!)

Kazumi: [Laughs loudly] In Japanese maybe not! I would say, "*Ie ie*" (No, not at all!) It's just . . .

John: *Kimochi warui deshou?* (It's kind of nauseating isn't it?)

Kazumi: Yeah!

John: It's hard to say!

Kazumi: Yeah, it's really hard to say, yeah, you're right [still laughing]!

John: I'm just curious if that crosses over.

Kazumi: Yeah, yeah . . .

In Kazumi's uncomfortable reaction to boasting in her native language, it becomes increasingly evident that for most Japanese it is a virtual taboo to say anything that could cause shame or feelings of inferiority in others. In addition, bragging has likely become a simple faux pas in Japan that causes people to react unfavorably simply by

hearing it. Withholding opinions and personal accomplishments were two examples of other-face concern demonstrated in this section. In the following segment, participants in this study confirmed that Japanese communication tended to be less direct and less verbal than in the United States. Both of these tendencies related to other-face concern in that they served to keep others from feeling shame, inferiority, or discomfort.

Language and Communication Style

In Chapter 3, I argued that individuals hailing from collectivist or interdependent cultures such as Japan tended to use much more indirect styles of communication than people from more individualist cultures such as the United States (Gudykunst, et al., 1996; Kim, 1994; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Ting-Toomey, 1988). Lakoff and Johnson (as cited in Ting-Toomey, 1988) suggested that indirect communication could involve using roundabout words, metaphor, euphemism, and hinting strategies. The present section highlights four participants who related their frustration communicating with both Americans and Japanese, though for different reasons.

Kana was struck by the tendency for many Americans to outright verbalize their abilities and accomplishments:

Well . . . I knew that Americans would be so stubborn and individual--like independent, but some of the people I've met has, like, such a strong egos and you know, if you're Japanese or Asian, you know, you look into eyes and you don't say anything, but you understand, and you know, and just have a modesty--but they don't. Like some of the Americans don't. So like, you actually have to say it in a word in order to have them understand what you want . . .

Japan is considered a high context culture, meaning that non-verbal communication cues are largely understood among members of its culture (Ting-Toomey, 1988). The U.S., on the other hand, is considered a low context culture where verbal communication takes necessary precedence over the potential dangers and

ambiguities of non-standard and varying cultural cues (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Given these differences, it is not surprising that Kana expressed her frustration with having to verbalize unpleasant feelings or disapproval with Americans. For her, to communicate through facial expressions or tone of voice that were obvious to Japanese seemed frustratingly ineffective with Americans:

Kana: I'm living with my roommate, but like, after you use your kitchen--like, cleaning up after yourself is, you know, something expected--not necessarily in the Asian culture. But like, you know, she doesn't do it at first, so like if you're Asian, like, you look into the dirty kitchen and like, you know, they'll understand, and like, "Oh, oh! I'll clean it up!" But with my roommate I will be, like, "Hey Amber, you have to clean this up after yourself!" right? And then she does it. But like, you know, it's an individual thing, not necessarily whole American, but, you know . . .

John: So you have to verbalize?

Kana: Yeah, verbalize, yeah right. You have to say it, yeah. You have to say what you're thinking, and almost they don't try to understand what--[or] try to see your mind, so . . .

Ting-Toomey (1988) suggested that in high context cultures such as Japan, facial expressions and incomplete sentences help lessen the need for direct verbal unpleasantness. For Kana and other Japanese to express verbal unpleasantness may thus be even more awkward than for many Americans. Adding to the frustration of having to verbally express negative emotions, Aika expressed the disappointment she felt in not being heard or seriously considered in group discussions:

John: Since you've been here, have your impressions changed?

Aika: Some yes and some no [laughs].

John: What's changed?

Aika: Uh, maybe I've seen many bad parts [laughs]. Like, [being] really individualistic is really good thing I thought, but sometimes it's too much and I feel like it's a lack of communication or some supporting each other, or how can I

say it? Um . . . [Americans are not] agreeing [with] each other sometimes because [they are] existing too much of themselves; they sometimes forget about other side of opinions or idea. But to me sometimes it hurt me. Like, "Listen to me!" [laughs] sometime, like . . .

John: So people are too concerned with their own opinions, their own ideas?

Aika: That's what I feel Sometimes I feel it [laughs]. But I have adjusted [laughs].

The idea of going from a culture where individuals place a high premium on others to one where people may place a greater emphasis on their own personal ideas and goals may be understandably upsetting. On the other side of the spectrum, Kazumi expressed the frustration of dealing with fellow Japanese who refrained from verbalizing:

John: Is it frustrating [to argue] with Japanese sometimes?

Kazumi: Yeah! Because I know that they have different opinions because I'm Japanese and I can feel it. And I warn them to say something, but they are, like, too afraid to say it. So I might be really, really offended, or I might be really, really get angry.

John: Does it bother you if they [Japanese] just smile?

Kazumi: Yeah! It does! I will say, "Say if you want to say something!" And still, they don't say [laughs].

The above conversation I found interesting in that it seemed to almost refute Gudykunst's (1988) theory of uncertainty and anxiety in communication, which presupposed: "At least one participant in an intergroup encounter is a stranger vis-à-vis the in-group being approached" (p.126). In Kazumi's case, however, her frustration was expressed in terms of communicating with people from her *own* culture. As she expressed: "I'm Japanese and I can feel it." Nevertheless, after living in the U.S., a low context country where greater verbalization is expected (Gudykunst, 1988), Kazumi came to demand additional verbal clarification even from fellow Japanese. Only if one sees

Kazumi in light of becoming a stranger to Japanese--or Japanese as having become strangers to Kazumi--is the theory of uncertainty and anxiety applicable. Perhaps developing uncertainty and anxiety with one's fellow natives is a telltale sign of acculturation change.

Summary

In this chapter, I looked at Japanese undergraduate perceptions of individualism and collectivism pertaining to the U.S. and Japan. Based on multiple interviews, the following subcategories emerged: (1) appearance; (2) family; (3) education; (4) face; and (5) language and communication styles.

In terms of appearance, there was consensus that most Japanese--especially Japanese women--were much more concerned about appearance than their American counterparts. This was deemed collectivist behavior in light of Markus and Kitayama's (1991) definition, which suggested the importance of fitting in with and attending to others. It was thus argued that Japanese commonly placed a greater premium on appearance as a way to be accepted by others, but also as a way to avoid being scrutinized or judged by their interdependent group members. Since Japanese tended to dress more fashionably in Japan and more casually in the United States, importance seemed to be placed largely on conformity to the standards at hand. Americans, in contrast, appeared to be free from the judgments of highly interdependent groups, and thus displayed less concern about personal appearance.

Participants in this study depicted American families as encouraging independence in their children while Japanese families generally cultivated a system of interdependence. American parents were depicted as encouraging their children to try a

large number of sports and activities, learn a wide variety of household tasks, seek part-time jobs while in high school, and manage their own money from an early age. Japanese parents and children were described as taking on specialized but limited roles. Within this system, Japanese parents were portrayed as encouraging their children to master a limited number of activities and to concentrate on schoolwork as a way of making themselves and others proud. In the meanwhile, parents saw their role as tending to their children's various needs.

Japanese education was largely described as emphasizing group life (*shūdan seikatsu*) where the needs of the group overshadowed individual desires. In consideration of their classmates' feelings, Japanese students were described as repressing their opinions in class and keeping personal achievements to themselves. American educational goals, on the other hand, emphasized expressing opinions and developing personal interests and abilities. A number of students mentioned tracking and double promotion as examples of individualistic education in the U.S. As a way to reinforce collectivism in Japanese schools, interviewees pointed to teacher and student pressure to conform and a duty system that required students to clean and maintain their schools.

Face was discussed, especially as it pertained to Japanese sensitivity toward others and their feelings. Participants generally found Americans to be less sensitive about how their opinions affected others. In short, Americans were generally seen as assertive, boastful, and consistent about their opinions regardless of the people around them. Japanese were depicted as compromising personal views, withholding opinions, and downplaying personal accomplishments in an effort to maintain group harmony. Boasting about personal or in-group accomplishments was generally understood to make

others feel inferior or uncomfortable. Bragging about personal or family accomplishments was demonstrated to be difficult or unnatural for Japanese when speaking English, but especially uncomfortable when speaking their native language.

In terms of language and communication styles, Japan was depicted as a high context, homogeneous culture where non-verbal communication was readily conveyed and understood. The U.S., however, was seen as a heterogeneous, low context culture where verbal communication was necessary to cut across many cultural and sub-cultural boundaries. Japanese undergraduates sometimes felt frustrated with Americans for requiring explicit verbal communication, although some also admitted to feeling frustrated with fellow Japanese who refused to express themselves verbally. One participant admitted to having been too explicit with Americans before learning where to draw the line. In general, Americans tended to value clear and direct communication with relatively minimal concern over group harmony; Japanese were depicted as valuing group harmony over direct, verbal communication, relying on non-verbal communication that was readily understood, at least among fellow Japanese.

In Chapter 8 I have explored Japanese undergraduate perceptions of individualism in Japan and the United States. The two countries were shown to differ perceptibly in terms of appearance, family, education, face, language, and communication styles. In the following chapter, I explore how Japanese undergraduates perceive differences in masculinity between Japan and the United States. Unlike in the previous chapters on power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism where participants generally perceived contrasts as relatively consistent across subtopics, the chapter on masculinity shows that in some areas the U.S. is perceived as more masculine, and in other areas

Japan is perceived as more masculine. Participants generally viewed Japan as more masculine in terms of the hierarchy in the Japanese language, gender inequality in the workplace, sex-role differences at home, and the competition fostered in K-12 education; participants saw Americans as more competitive in terms of their reluctance to apologize, and the competition fostered in their postsecondary educational system. In Hofstede's (1984) investigation, both Japan and the United States were deemed masculine countries.

CHAPTER 9

MASCULINITY

Masculinity in Chapter 3 was summed up as relating to competition and ego while femininity was largely equated with nurturance. Unlike Hofstede's (1984) other three work-related values (power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism) in which Japan and the United States were placed on opposite ends of the spectrum, both countries ranked high in terms of masculinity. On Hofstede's (1984) scale, Japan ranked 1st of 39 countries while the U.S. was 13th. Closer examination revealed that each nation displayed varying levels of perceived masculinity and femininity, depending on the aspect of culture examined. Based on the literature, I argued in Chapter 3 that Japanese were more nurturing in respect to friendship and cultivation of the arts; U.S. Americans were deemed more nurturing in terms of linguistic equality, language inclusiveness, and attitudes about gender in the workplace. The present chapter, drawing from interviews with Japanese undergraduates at an American university, focuses on masculinity as it relates to: (1) language; (2) women in the workplace; (3) male-female relationships; (4) K-12 education; and (5) postsecondary education.

Language

In Chapter 3, I demonstrated that in contrast to English, the Japanese language categorically required divisions based on hierarchy and often gender. English, on the other hand, was determined to be hierarchically and gender neutral, as demonstrated in its pronouns, verb forms, and lack of honorific affixes. Perhaps the most poignant explanation of how each language impacted behavior came from Mika during an interview in my pilot study (Brender, 2004):

John: Okay. Do you behave the same way around Americans as you do with Japanese?

Mika: Americans and Japanese? Yeah, I act different, I behave different . . . not a lot of big, big differences, but yeah, I feel like I'm acting different in front of Americans and in front of Japanese. Especially the language wise because English and Japanese are really different and the Japanese language itself separates the class or status level--like who I'm actually talking to. Even though I don't want to act differently, the language separates so I have to act differently [laughs]. When I speak to older people, I feel like I'm more polite because the language makes me be polite--politer than when I'm speaking to younger people. But English, on the other hand, makes me feel like I can talk to anybody equally, even a professor, or friends, or younger kids. It's easier to interact with people language wise. Because of the language it makes me feel like I can talk to anyone. So I feel more open, more interactive, more aggressive with American people than Japanese. I feel more conscious about the way I am, like which level I am, and I act different along with the language.

Other Japanese students reported similar changes in behavior when switching between Japanese and English, as have numerous Americans I have known. When shifting from English to Japanese, one must make immediate decisions about hierarchy that are scarcely if at all considered in English. One does not want to make the mistake of insulting an older or more powerful person in Japanese by using inappropriate verb forms or pronouns that are too familiar. Conversely, it is not always considered appropriate for Japanese to use polite language with subordinates. From my time in Japan, I recall a young Japanese teacher being admonished for his use of polite language with students. The assistant principal warned that students might lose respect for teachers who did not treat students as decidedly inferior.

Apart from the obvious linguistic differences that impact behavior, Isamu was quick to share his observations that Americans--and especially American men--frequently communicated in ways that were more masculine than was common in similar Japanese settings. His immediate observation pointed to behavior with cashiers at restaurants:

John: What about American men and Japanese men?

Isamu: [laughs] Very different.

John: How?

Isamu: How? Americans are more muscular.

John: Muscular or masculine?

Isamu: Masculine. Maybe both of them--but not everyone. But both of them, masculine yeah . . .

John: How so? What do you think of as masculine?

Isamu: Like, just the way they talk, you can tell from that. Like, [it] sounds they try to speak or pronounce, like, low--and clothes so masculine . . . I don't know, it may be perceptual things so I don't know if everyone thinks the way I do, but yeah . . . and they speak that way--masculine--and at the same time I think they are trying to be speaking that way, so . . . But Japanese don't care, yeah . . . I know, like, some Japanese [men] speak like a woman [laughs], but I don't feel it's that unnatural. Yeah, there may be some Americans trying to speak, to show his masculinity . . .

John: How do you think an American man shows his masculinity?

Isamu: Show? Besides speech? Very confidence. And they're always--I don't know if it's just guys--but I think it's the same for girls, but they always think or they always expect others see him, so typical American guys, they're always trying to look confident so, yeah . . . like, behave cool. I don't know. *Cool* is very vague word so I want to avoid using those words, but, like, yeah, like, when you're buying certain things like at [a fast food restaurant] or like at family restaurants and there's a line and the American guy goes to the cashier and he makes something mistake but he's trying to be cool because he knows like those people in the line are seeing him so he just say [in low voice], "Oh, okay, that's fine" or those things. You know what I'm saying? Yeah, that's one way to show your confidence or to be cool or, so yeah . . . But Japanese maybe just like to be, "Ah! Ah!" Just like to be . . . maybe, yeah, it's same because they are always expecting others are seeing him, but it's completely opposite way--maybe Americans are trying to be more confident but Japanese is just humble and maybe shy and maybe just bow a lot . . .

Isamu's observations resonated strongly as I listened. Coming back from Japan I remember being chided for acting too polite when making inquiries over the phone or

paying for items in stores. In Japan, apologies seem to roll off the tongue whether warranted or not. In many respects, Japanese apologies may serve as preventive maintenance to assure the listener that one is humble and seeks group harmony rather than immediate respect or admiration. Upon returning to the U.S., my speech was inundated with phrases such as “Excuse me” and “I’m sorry,” until finally I understood it was perceived as a lack of self-confidence. Having made a conscious effort to become more assertive and less apologetic after returning to the U.S., I wondered if Isamu recalled undergoing similar adjustments:

John: What about apologies?

Isamu: Apologies? Yeah, I know Americans don’t want to say “I’m sorry” a lot, so yeah, we just keep saying, yeah, Japanese keep saying, “I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry” so...but Americans just say “sorry”, like every time--not every time, but when I’m talking to Americans, if I say like, “Oh, I’m sorry”--it’s so easy for us to say “I’m sorry” but they don’t expect that a lot--that many “I’m sorries,” so if I say, “I’m sorry” usually those Americans, like, think, “Oh, it’s not so bad--it’s okay, it’s okay!” so . . . So when I compare when Japanese think “I’m sorry” and when Americans think “I’m sorry” I think Americans’ “I’m sorry” is more . . .

John: More heartfelt?

Isamu: Right! [laughs]

In line with Isamu’s observations, Oetzel and Ting-Toomey (2002) concluded that Americans and people from individualistic cultures were more likely to use dominating conflict strategies than Japanese or people from collectivist societies. Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998) supported this idea by noting that Americans focused largely on outcome strategies while Japanese used strategies (such as apologizing) to *avoid* conflict. Hence, in Japan, apologies are commonplace even from blameless parties (Haley, 1986). In respect to offering apologies, U.S. Americans are arguably much more masculine and competitive than most Japanese.

In spite of the masculinity perceived in the American tendency to avoid apologies, U.S. Americans were generally depicted as more verbally expressive of love and affection than most Japanese. Kazuaki, who identified as separated and relatively unaffected by American values, said he had become more openly expressive, albeit more in English than in his native Japanese:

John: Anything else about American families that you've noticed? Is there anything that has shocked you?

Kazuaki : Oh, American says like, "I love you" to your families, but we don't say that usually. It's because of the difference in language but, yeah; it's a little bit different . . .

John: Do you think you could say "I love you" more easily in English?

Kazuaki: Yeah.

John: If you had, like, a child--not a romantic love—but . . .

Kazuaki: Yeah . . .

John: What about with a girlfriend, is it easier to say, "I love you" than "*Aishite iru?*"

Kazuaki: Yeah--it's much easier saying it in English, because . . . yeah . . .

Kazuaki could not give a reason for why he could express affection or romantic sentiments more easily in English than in Japanese. Perhaps the idea of expressing verbal affection in Japanese is such a deeply ingrained faux pas that to suddenly utter one's affection for someone would resonate uncomfortably for all concerned. Itasaka (as cited in Befu, 2001) insisted that Western couples constantly repeated their love for one another because *for them* the idea of love could only be communicated verbally. The high context culture in Japan allows for these sentiments to be conveyed in non-verbal ways (Ting-Toomey, 1988).

Other participants in this study expressed equal shock at how frequently Americans voiced their affection for one another. Kazumi expressed surprise at how easily her American peers said, “I love you” to family members:

John: What impressions do you have of American families?

Kazumi: Well, it’s probably language somewhat, but when I heard that people like my roommate and my ex-roommate calling on the phone that definitely they say, “I love you” at the last--it’s really weird [laughs with embarrassment].

John: Why?

Kazumi: Because we don’t say it--I will *never* say it!

John: What do you think about people who say “I love you?”

Kazumi: It’s fine for me. Well, at first, I thought it’s sort of, like, inappropriate because I didn’t know the culture before. But then I found that, you know, “I love you” is just an expression, or like, the way they say it. They don’t really mean--well, they mean it, but when they talk on the phone, it’s, like, a just-have-to-say thing. If you don’t say it, they’ll feel weird, right?

John: It totally depends on the family, I think.

Kazumi: Yeah, but the people I talk to, like, if you don’t say it, they feel like, “What happened to you?” [laughs] And they feel so anxious about why you did that--why the persons didn’t say, “I love you” a lot, so...

Although Kazumi acknowledged that verbal affection among American family members was sometimes reduced to a closing salutation, she did not feel it was simply a formality. Had she seen “I love you” as just another American greeting, she might not have been so adamant about refusing to say it herself. Interestingly, her refusal to articulate affection--even in English--stood in contrast with Kazuaki’s adapted willingness to say, “I love you” in English, though not in Japanese.

Summing up masculinity and its relation to language and verbal expression, participants in this study saw Americans as less nurturing when it came to apologies but

more nurturing in terms of verbalizing affection. Although it was argued in the review of literature that American English accommodated more inclusiveness and political correctness than Japanese, none of the participants addressed this issue in a way that would provide a notable contrast between the two languages.

Women in the Workplace

Chapter 3 demonstrated that in spite of Japan's Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) of 1986, Japanese companies were significantly less accommodating toward women in the workforce than were their American counterparts. Women in the Japanese workforce were said to remain largely in supportive positions to men (Axtell et al., 1997; Befu, 2001; Hendry, 2003; White, 2002). According to Lam (1993) women were generally interviewed only after the pool of male applicants were exhausted, and if hired, were often put on a separate track from the men. Befu (2001) noted: "Most women are at the bottom rung in corporate structure or they are at home" (p. 44).

Although Ayumi could not say for certain, it was her impression that the Equal Employment Opportunity Law of 1986 was largely unenforced when it came to maternity leave:

John: How about the way that men and women treat each other in Japan and the US?

Ayumi: Well, kind of like traditional idea in Japan is, like, kind of like man is superior than woman, and that idea kind of exists both in US and Japan, but sometimes I feel it's stronger in Japan. Like, work condition and stuff, it's kind of, like, harder for woman . . .

John: At home or at work?

Ayumi: At work.

John: Why is it harder for women?

Ayumi: They have program taking place for, like, pregnancy and, like, having birth and stuff, but with men they're [not] understandable for those problems and stuff so they're not, like, helping them.

John: So the law doesn't get after them the way it does here with maternity leave?

Ayumi: Yeah. I'm not in those situations and I don't know, like, actual people who are in those situations so I can't say too much about it, but I think that that's the one thing.

Although Ayumi was somewhat tentative about the situation for women in Japan, Akemi was much more resolute in her portrayal of how women were treated in the Japanese workforce. With anger and frustration in her voice, she insisted that women in Japan were still expected to leave their jobs upon getting married and that unmarried women over 30 were often viewed with disdain:

John: When you graduate, would you prefer to work for an American company or a Japanese company?

Akemi: Yeah, I mean, I'm not used to all this *sempai* and you know, all the seniority stuff so it would be hard for me to get used to that when I go back and work in Japan. But at the same time I have to keep in mind that I'm the minority in here, so if I were to work in a company in here it's not going to be as easy as I think. So there's always plus and minus, you know? Whether I go back to Japan--there are some good things about Japanese companies, there are some bad things. But being female, really I'm worried if I go back to Japan and work in, like, Japanese company, but, like, we are just not as value[d] as, you know, male workers, and we are just expected to get married and, like--I don't know if you've heard about the whole culture about, like, *make inu*?

John: *Make inu*?

Akemi: Like, *inu* is dog, and *make* is, like, defeated. And we have a lot of sayings using *make inu*, like *make inu no tooboe*⁴ (literally: "howl of the defeated dog"). I don't know if you've heard about that, it's like, you know, like a loser. *Make inu* is, like, loser. And, like, recently we have this term for, like, *make inu* spreading all over the Japan, and that's, like, a woman who is, like, over, like, 30 years old and not get married. And they call them just, like, *make inu*.

⁴ *Make inu no tooboe* can refer to excuses given when one has failed at a business endeavor. It can also refer to a woman's ranting about virtually anything, especially if she is unmarried and over 30 (R. Masuda, personal communication, February 7, 2006).

John: And that's specifically for women?

Akemi: Yeah, I think so.

Informal investigation suggested that phrases such as *make inu* and *make inu no tooboe* were used in self-deprecating ways, but that they were also used somewhat derisively by comedians and behind people's backs (R. Masuda, personal communication, February 13, 2006). Given that most words referring to older, unwed women have long been considered politically incorrect in the United States and Great Britain (Oram, 1992), the reported widespread use of *make inu* may attest to a lack of sensitivity or willingness for many Japanese to accept women outside of traditional roles. In Hofstede's (1984) investigation, the percentage of women in technical and professional jobs was negatively correlated with masculinity. His assumption suggested that highly masculine countries discouraged women from being independent breadwinners.

Akemi, who expected she would face difficulties in the U.S. for her race and nationality as well as her gender, maintained that working in Japan might be even more difficult for her as a woman:

I mean being a woman they just expect us to kind of . . . like, I know society is changing in Japan as well, but at the same time, you know, like . . . because, like, I take sociology classes in here too, and even in the United States women are still discriminated and, like, what [is] going to happen if I go back to Japan? I know it's, like, ten times worse over there so, like, I don't know about work and, like, I think it's going to be really hard, so, like, I don't really want to work in company, I want to work at [a] school . . .

Kana, who had just accepted a position with a Japanese company, expressed similar concerns:

John: How do you characterize Japanese and American companies?

Kana: All the people like, my Japanese friends who have worked in an American company tell me I've got to work for American company so that, you know--there's no real seniority in American company whereas there is in Japanese company. Like if you're young and you know, you're a girl then there is no sexual preference maybe, but if you're a girl and you know, 22 and young, you know, they don't really weigh you. Then American society, if you're good, if you can deal with the work, you know, it's just going up--high. So, all my friends tell me, you know, I better work for American company--I think that's true. But it's also like if you're in an American company they just lay people off, like so quick, so immediate . . .

In the midst of discussing the pros and cons of working for a Japanese or American company, Kana considered the alleged lack of sexual discrimination at American companies, and suggested that sexual discrimination still played a part in hiring and promotion at Japanese companies. A number of statistical reports confirm that women currently face more discrimination in Japan than in the United States. According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research (n.d.), in 2002, 32 percent of all women workers in the U.S. workforce were in professional and managerial occupations. By contrast, in that same year, women in Japan made up only two percent of managers at the director level and only four percent of section managers (Web Japan, n.d.). In terms of accepting women in the workplace, U.S. companies--though far from perfect--are clearly more nurturing and, by definition, more feminine than their Japanese counterparts.

Male-Female Relationships

Hofstede (1984) suggested that masculinity was positively and significantly correlated with societies where sex role differentiation was greater. From the interviews conducted in this study, there was consensus that much greater role divisions existed between male-female couples in Japan than in the United States. Respondents seemed to agree that Japanese women were more likely and more pressured to assume traditional nurturing roles than were American women. There was also agreement that Japanese men

were commonly more authoritative than American men. American women were viewed as independent, strong-willed, and somewhat demanding of men, while American men were depicted as chivalrous and relatively accommodating toward women.

In individual interviews, participants answered open-ended questions about family, and were ultimately asked to contrast Japanese and American families. Many interviewees chose to discuss differences they had observed in male-female relationships in Japan and the United States. When asked about her family in Japan, Aika commented on how her mother perceived women's roles:

My mother is like, "Women don't have to work and the woman's job is supporting family and raising children and you know, protect the family, and the father is, like, man have to work and earn money and things, help family" [laughs]. So what I thought was funny was like my mom went, "After you graduate from the university you don't have to work and you just get married and support your family" And I was like, "Yeah" [laughs].

Obviously Aika had different ideas from her mother. Nevertheless, she maintained that Japanese women were still somewhat dependent on others, especially in comparison with American women:

John: Are there differences between American and Japanese women?

Aika: Oooh . . . different. Maybe some Japanese women are more reserved. And . . . hmm . . . more calm . . . weaker . . . and still kind of need of support from somebody...well, but depends [laughs]. But my kind of impression about American woman is really independent and then strong and more direct [laughs].

Kazumi, a senior anthropology major, shared a similar view about Japanese and American women, adding that Japanese women were much more likely than American women to praise or compliment their boyfriends or husbands:

Kazumi: I think that American women and Japanese are different. I think American woman are really independent and strong--*extremely* [laughs]! And they express themselves and they are strong basically. They say anything they

want to say. But Japanese try to be modest and try to raise guys or something, like, not raise but not lift, but . . .

John: Praise?

Kazumi: Praise. Praise boys a lot . . .

John: And American women don't try to do that a lot?

Kazumi: If they think that guy is a really nice person or like respectful--respectable, they will do it. But still, they cannot fake it. Like, if they are really good person . . .

In her comparison of Japanese and American women, Kazumi seemed to imply that while Japanese women gave frequent and sometimes false praise to their husbands or boyfriends, it was their intention to "lift" or "raise" them to greater levels of confidence and achievement. This was not, in her estimation, the case with American women whom she saw as complimenting men only when the occasion seemed warranted. If Kazumi's assessment holds validity, it would appear that there might be almost a reversal in sex roles between Japanese and American couples--at least as perceived by Japanese participants in this study. That is, while Japanese women regularly tended to men and their emotional needs, American men, according to participants, were generally seen as more attentive to and complimentary of women. Aika commented on what she saw as American chivalry toward women in general:

Uh . . . men in U.S., first of all, are more polite to woman. Oh, for the small thing, it's just ladies first. And when [they] open the door for you--[it's] more kind of caring mind and attitude to woman. And maybe Japan too, but I think a little less [laughs]. You know, like, men care for women who are very close to you, like a girlfriend, wife, or friend, but the other people, "I don't care!" [laughs] Like, "Open it? Oops?" [laughs] But here, generally all men are really, really nice to woman--any woman. And I think it doesn't matter where you're from--like race is not really problem . . .

While Kazumi saw American men as more attentive to women outside their circles than were Japanese men, Aika insisted that American men were also more attentive and accommodating to women who were closer to them:

Aika: The husband care--in America--husband cares the wife really much. It's, like, always, like, "Are you okay?" or "If you're tired I can cook for you" [laughs]. But my father [laughs], he's like, "Do it! Do it! I'm hungry! Do it!" [laughs]

Of course one can see a bit of self-deprecation in Aika's comments. To extol one's own country or family members to outsiders is generally considered a faux pas among Japanese (Kurman & Sriram, 2002). To discuss or joke about the idiosyncrasies or shortcomings of family or in-group members is an expected norm--as is taking a more flattering tone toward outsiders (Kurman & Sriram, 2002). In spite of these conventions, it is curious that while Japanese participants depicted American men in a relatively positive light, their portrayals of American women were arguably somewhat negative. Such opinions were consistent among Japanese female and male participants in this study.

Two of the men in the study, Isamu and Kazuaki, made similar observations in terms of the way American men treated women. Interestingly, both Isamu and Kazuaki suspected that this chivalrous behavior stemmed from American women's expectations:

John: Are there differences between Japanese and American women?

Isamu: Women? [laughs] I don't know many American women so [laughs] I think yeah, in terms of women I think stereotype image--I think that applies, like, to Japanese women . . . more humble--I don't say humble because some Japanese women are very active, especially when you get close, they become so active and assertive, but it's generally more humble than American women . . . And yeah, there are so many women here and they are all different so I cannot say [they're] difficult but . . . I guess--and maybe you can correct me if I'm wrong--there has to be some way that girls expect guys to do something, like, when they are doing

something on a date or like group project they expect guys to be, like, doing certain things . . .

John: Such as?

Isamu: Such as, like, I don't know--maybe like opening the door--like those things we don't have. And I don't think Japanese girls expect that much. And if they came here, if you have experience coming here, they might expect, but Japanese women in Japan generally don't expect that much . . .

Like Isamu, Kazuaki also believed that American women had very different expectations from Japanese women when it came to men:

John: Are there differences between Japanese and American women?

Kazuaki: [long pause] I think American women is more used to being treated like a lady, but Japanese girl is not . . .

John: If they're not treated like ladies, what are they treated like?

Kazuaki: Oh, they like to be treated like lady, but sometimes they don't care as much as American girls do, I guess. And they . . . [long pause]

I gave Kazuaki a moment to regroup. I knew he had been dating Kana, another participant in this study, for quite a while. Kana, who identified as being more American than Japanese, had left Japan in the seventh grade for Malaysia and later the U.S. Kazuaki claimed that Kana's expectations were much more in line with those of an American woman, and that he had, in turn, learned to follow her expectations:

Kazuaki: I guess American men is more gentlemanly . . . like when you go to a date, American men open the door for her—but . . . Japanese men don't do that. And Kana hates that!

John: That you open the door?

Kazuaki: Like I wasn't a gentleman when I started dating with her, so she trained me to be like a gentleman, like, carry her bags or open her, like, car door for her and things like that . . .

I suddenly remembered a conversation with the assistant principal of the Japanese high school where I worked in the 1980s. Fearing he might be seen as what he termed “henpecked,” he once admitted that he would never open the car door for his wife in front of the neighbors. Other Japanese friends and colleagues confided similarly. With this in mind, I asked a much younger Kazuaki if he had plans to continue acting with the same degree of chivalry when he and Kana returned to Japan:

John: How will your Japanese friends react? If you go back to Japan with Kana and they see you opening the car door for her, how will they react?

Kazuaki: “Oh, you’re a gentleman!” Like that I guess.

John: Will they laugh?

Kazuaki: Yeah, some of them may make fun of me but, hmm . . . they might be surprised how I act . . .

John: But you will continue to do that in Japan?

Kazuaki: Yes.

John: Even if people laugh at you?

Kazuaki: [Laughs] Yes.

Perhaps as a combined result of their experiences in the U.S., Kazuaki and Kana might adopt certain American norms or values. Of course, both will face imminent reverse culture shock when they return to Japan; values may then have to be rethought or renegotiated in accordance with unforeseen variables. Undoubtedly the balance of power between men and women is a challenging negotiation for couples who have been exposed to very different values regarding sex-role orientation.

Kazumi, a senior anthropology major who echoed other participants in this study, insisted that in Japan, men held more power in male-female relationships but that in the U.S., it was women who held the greater share of power:

John: And are there differences between the way American men and women treat each other and the way Japanese men and women treat each other?

Kazumi: I think it all depends; because, like, the way couples work is different. But still, in America, mostly from what I see, girls have more power to men [laughs].

John: More than men?

Kazumi: More than men. Yes. And Japanese, probably boys have more power--they decide what that couple wants to do. And girls expect that too. And it's really, really difficult to say, like, if girls ask her boyfriends to do something and if he says, "Whatever" or "I don't care" or something, it's really bad for Japanese. Because most girls want a man to be really like, "Okay, let's do this and do this and do this," so she can follow him . . .

While Kazumi's opinions seemed to be in line with those of other participants in this study, I wondered if her own upbringing might have provided a special lens for her interpretation. Having grown up in a conservative family in Kyushu, she told me about the differences in how she and her brother were raised:

Kazumi: I really remember when I was young . . . like, I have a brother--and I'm girl and he's boy--and my parents really didn't say anything about what my grandmother says, so like, we're pretty, like, a little bit sexist, um, so, like, I always had a kind of like upset, and so . . .

John: You were upset because your grandparents were sexist?

Kazumi: Well, I wouldn't really say sexist, but they had really different regimens to me and to my brother.

John: Okay, explain . . .

Kazumi: My grandma asked me to do all the chores she wanted others to do. But she [sometimes] asked my brother, but it's always after she asked me first. And then if I said "No," she'd ask again and say something: "You've got to learn to do it!" or something. And then I don't really do any . . . I totally go, like, somewhere

else. So my grandmother asked my brother to do it, but it totally continued until, like, junior high school. And I complained about it to my father a lot, but my grandmother was, like, the strongest person in my family, so he couldn't say anything about it.

Kazumi continued with her story, explaining that from the beginning her grandmother held her grandson in higher esteem than she did her granddaughter:

Kazumi: I think one of the reasons that my grandma treated me and my brother differently was because my brother is supposed to take over my house--my family, to the next generation. So like, she treated him like a treasure or something. So I heard one story about my grandma when my brother was born. My mother was pregnant, and she gave birth to my brother. The first thing my grandma said was, "I'm relieved it's boy!" I'm like, "Yeah." Because my mother got really, really depressed by that because she thought the reason why grandmother is really happy is because that's boy--not [because] she gave birth to a child. So I kind of grew up, like, noticing it that my brother is much, much [more] important than me in my family. So, and I think it used to be really traditional or really common in past Japan.

John: So do you feel--this is obviously a typical family in older Japan--but do you think it was a typical family growing up where you were in southern Japan?

Kazumi: No, I don't think so at all.

Kazumi's case was likely very unusual in contemporary Japan. Nevertheless, her story points to a powerful tradition that may not have perished entirely. The distinction in sex-role orientation she described in her household was consistent with the notion that Japanese men were still expected to be served and to wield power in relationships while women were expected to play supportive, nurturing roles. To Americans and even Japanese raised with strong feminist ideals, this disparity in sex-role orientation may seem chauvinistic or grossly unfair. Naomi, who had spent nearly half her life in the U.S., however, had a different take on male-female relationships in Japan:

John: How about the way American men treat women and the way Japanese men treat women? Is there a difference?

Naomi: . . . Yes, but it's a cultural thing. I mean, like, in the U.S., it's ladies first and all men treat you like princess, you know? But in Japan, in terms of, like, holding doors, yeah, I think Japanese men are more, like, powerful . . . powerful to live in society. But I think at the same time they know--I'm talking about in Japan--they know that women are very important in their lives in terms of helping them--not just like sexually, not just for reproduction. They know that they need women to help them and they can't live without women because, I mean, they're not using women for domestic work, but they know that women are great help. But I think in the U.S. people seem to understand that Japanese men are being, you know, sort of like a master and treating women assertive or something. Like, I don't think it's true. I mean, they work till 11 PM. You can't do laundry [laughs], they can't cook either--they don't have time for it! And they wake up at six in the morning and go to work at seven, so . . . I think it's working too much.

In contrast to the clear divisions in sex-role orientation she had observed in Japanese families, Naomi pointed out that husbands and wives in American families shared domestic responsibilities more or less equally. This alleged equality between the sexes did not convince her, however, that American families were preferable to or less exploitative of women:

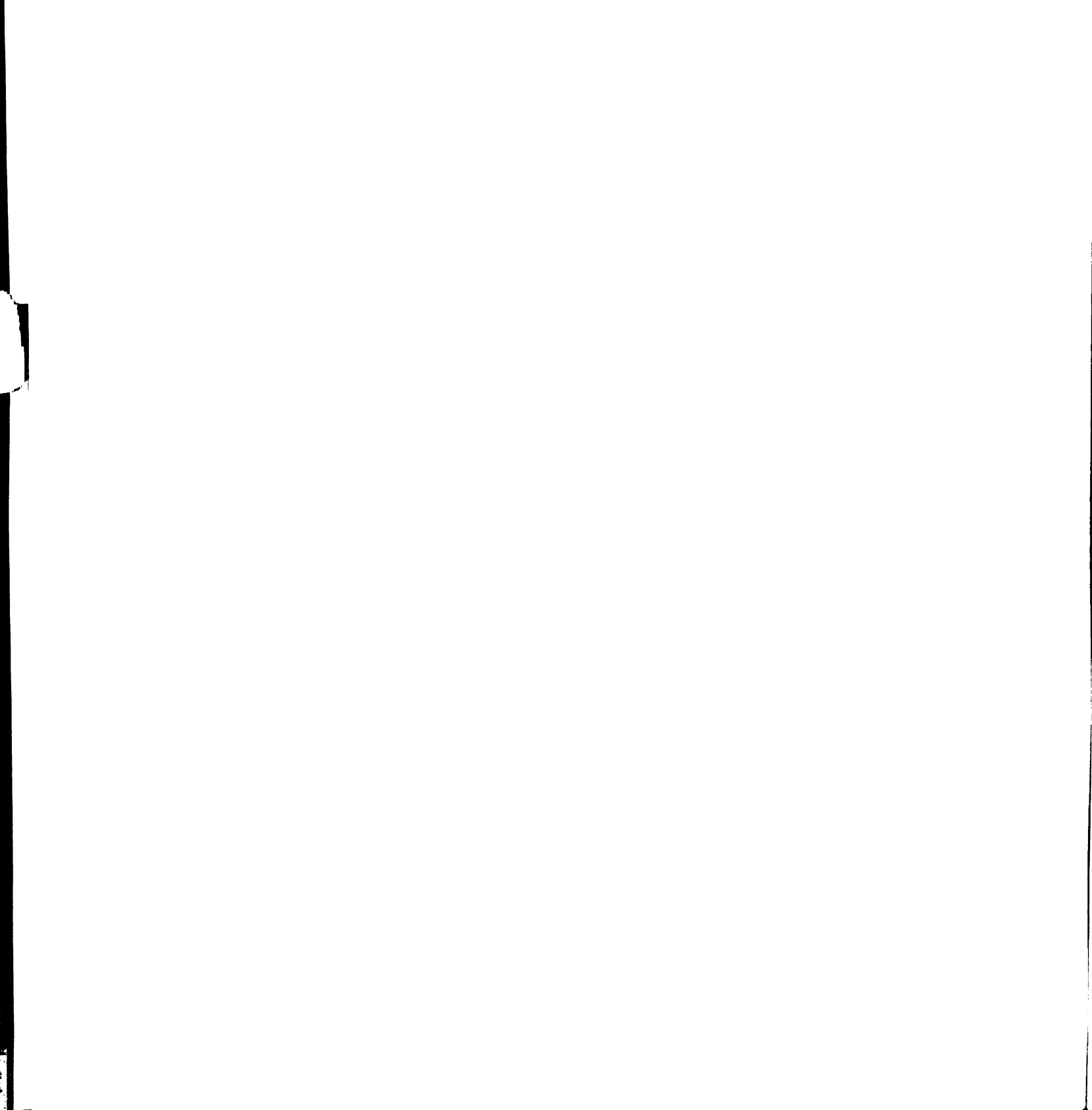
Naomi: Yeah [laughs]. In American families, I think both parents have to, like, maintain power. Because, like, there are so many kinds of work--like, many mothers work in American families too. And many fathers cook too. So I think they are equal--like totally equal, you know? But in Japan, they have, like, completely different roles, but they know how to work it out. It's not like 30% of Japanese men are beating women or anything [laughs]--it's not that, so . . . You know how to work this out . . .

John: It's an old system . . .

Naomi: Right, it's an old system, but I think it works. I mean men and women are different!

Our discussion on the roles of men and women continued. I pressed to find out Naomi's opinion of recent societal changes between men and women in Japan, and the idea of women being accepted as equals in male-female relationships:

John: You know a large percentage of Japanese women are choosing not to get married?



Naomi: Right.

John: What's your feeling?

Naomi: I understand what they mean, because more women are more educated, and they earn money, and if they get married they probably would have to quit job. And also . . . a lot of times it's hard for intelligent women to get married compared to people with lower education, because in Japan, men have to be more educated than the women--they're like, men have to be more intelligent and, like, smarter than wife, right? Wouldn't that be weird if, like, women are, like, Dr. and Mr. or something? Like, if your wife is a doctor and you were, I don't know, just high school graduate or something, would that work out? You know? Like, it doesn't, right? I mean, it's an exaggeration, but . . .

I pressed Naomi further on her ideas of inequity between men and women, and asked whether she felt there was a difference between male-female relationships in Japan and the U.S.:

John: Do you think it's harder for a Japanese man to accept an educated woman than for an American man to accept a more educated woman?

Naomi: I think it's more difficult to expect the Japanese man to have more educated woman, I think. Because I think they want to feel powerful, but I think American men are more liberal about it. They're like, "Oh yeah, my wife is very, like, smart, or like, she has status, or like, she's a doctor or something." Then he is part of her, right? But in Japan, like, if that happens, it's kind of, like, degrading effect, so yeah, in terms of that, I like Americans.

I was initially struck that contrary to the argument that Japanese were more collectivist than U.S. Americans, Naomi pointed out that in terms of male-female relationships, at least some American men found their identities enmeshed with their wives' professional careers. According to Naomi, this tendency for American men to pride themselves in their wives' accomplishments was not at all the case with Japanese men. To the contrary, Japanese women (as I argued in Chapter 8) were more likely to seek validation in their husband's or children's accomplishments. In all, it appeared that this observation was not so much a question of collectivism as of sex-role orientation;

that is, while Japanese couples may experience greater disparity in their sex-role orientation, American couples appeared to share not only in breadwinning and domestic chores, but in the pride of one another's professional accomplishments.

I continued the discussion with Naomi on couples and education levels by paraphrasing something I'd heard from several Japanese coworkers back in the 1980s:

John: My Japanese teacher friends back in the 80s used to say, "For a wife, high school is too little, four years of college is too much, but two years of junior college is just right" . . .

Naomi: Right, I know what you mean.

John: But for me as an American, I found that a little offensive.

Naomi: Because you're degrading women?

John: I think so.

Naomi: Yeah, I personally prefer someone with higher education than I am. I don't think I could marry a man with the same education as I do. Because it's more interesting to hear someone who is smarter.

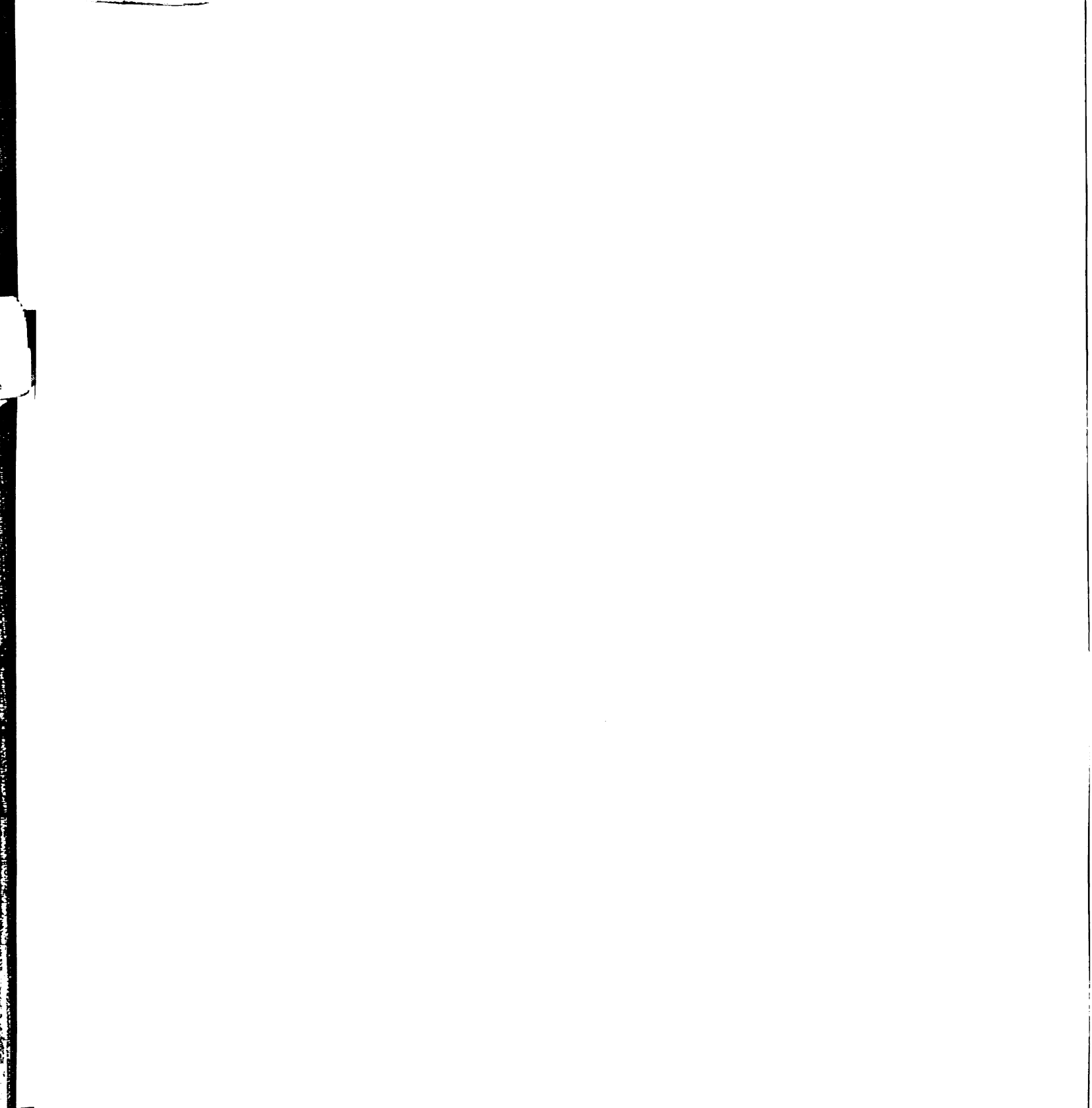
John: Do you think it's less interesting for the man?

Naomi: Yeah! That's what I don't understand [Astonished]! I don't understand, I don't know . . .

John: Do you think the man has a need to feel superior, or paternal, or something like that?

Naomi: I think so.

Naomi's commentary is important in that it serves as a reminder that certain values--though potentially objectionable to some--take very different forms across cultures and among individuals. As has been seen in the recent trend of many Japanese women choosing to stay single and in Naomi's unresolved thinking on male-female relationships, values are subject to change. In spite of the potential for transformation in



Japan, participants in this study uniformly insisted that male-female relationships in the U.S. were currently more prone to an equal balance in education, power, and domestic responsibilities than in Japan. Given Hofstede's (1984) supposition that countries with greater sex role distinction were higher in masculinity, Japan may clearly be more masculine in terms of relationships between men and women.

K-12 Education

Participants in this study were unanimous in that they saw Japanese K-12 education as far more competitive--and by extension more masculine--than American K-12 education. By contrast, participants--especially those who had attended high school in the U.S.--saw American K-12 education as relatively nurturing. Although the present group of students had all completed their Japanese education prior to the Education Reform Act of 2002 that relaxed curriculum standards, some provided accounts of a Japanese educational system that had undergone controversial changes in recent years.

As mentioned in previous chapters, Japanese students were not only subject to the demands of a centrally mandated curriculum, but many students also attended cram school (*juku*) after their regular school day had ended (Stevenson & Baker, 1992). Competition to attend prestigious universities was so fierce that Japanese commonly abided by a conventional wisdom that warned: Sleep four hours, pass; sleep five hours, fail (Stevenson & Baker, 1992). Kana recounted her experiences in Japanese elementary and middle school before moving to Malaysia with her family:

Um . . . what I came to was, like, Japanese education system was pretty good--well, when I was in elementary and middle school everyone was expected to study hard, and I even went to a private tuition school after school--*juku*--yeah, I went there for, like, so many years. But here, I don't know, because I don't feel like a lot of Americans don't study that much--I feel like they don't study that

much compared to Japanese. Because they're not that serious about getting a jobs and you know, making it in their life or so . . .

The idea that K-12 education was more competitive in Japan than in the U.S. was discussed extensively in Chapter 8 where opinions similar to Kana's were commonplace. Kenta and Naoki who, like Kana, had attended a year or more of high school in the U.S., provided accounts of how their American teachers were more nurturing than their Japanese teachers had been:

John: How would you describe education in the U.S. and in Japan?

Kenta: High school was different. [American] teachers were different; like, they give more credit to those people who are working hard--I think so. If you show them the effort you will get rewarded. I used to go see my professor, like, every day, and, like, purely from my scores I could, like, fail, but because I did so much to . . . because I spent so much time trying to understand that kind of things, he gave me some kind of, like, high credit, and I didn't deserve that. Generally, like, that kind of stuff.

John: So you think that Americans award more for effort?

Kenta: I would say so.

Kenta was not the only student to mention that American teachers were generally more lenient than Japanese teachers. Naoki's experience in an American high school appeared similar to Kenta's. Having described Japanese education as "terrible," Naoki seemed to appreciate that his American teachers were more interested in teaching than in assessment:

And [American] high school is always much easier. I think [American] teachers are more trying to teach more than make it hard. They consider and they grade on a curve, which Japanese usually don't. Because I don't see most of the teachers look at what the students got for, you know, their lines. Like, if you get 80% you get an "A" and that's the Japanese way, pretty much.

Kana also said the K-12 American educational system was much easier than in Japan. Revealing that she would like to raise a family in the U.S. one day, Kana began by assessing American schools, which she felt were inferior to Japanese schools:

I think American educational system is kind of falling apart, I mean, not in [the suburb where I attended high school]--the ability level was, like, good, you know? Kind of better part of the educational system compared to the rest of the state--the rest of the American other states. But then it was still, like, kind of easy, you know? We didn't get that much homeworks every day, and so compared with Japanese educational system, like, students are not expected to do well--like as much as in the Japanese high school because many of the kids are not serious about going to college--although they go--because I know in Japanese college you have to have an entrance examination. It's like one shot, yeah, you have to enter in one try, so, but . . . But here in American society, I don't feel like SAT and ACT and, like, other school works are fine, and plus your school work is not that difficult--they don't really study hard, you know?

Transitioning from her seemingly negative assessment of American schools, Kana proceeded to explain why she would prefer to raise children in the U.S.:

Kana: It's . . . the reason I wanted to stay here because, not for myself, but if I get married and, you know, if I want to raise my kid, the American system would be better, you know?

John: Better to grow up in? Why do you say that? . . . [If] you think Japanese education is a little more rigorous and a little better education, why do you want your children to grow up here?

Kana:: Like here, like, no one cares, like, what you are wearing, you know, what you do--so they're able to [have] more freedom, just that you know, the educational level is maybe a little lower, it doesn't really matter, like, if you just grow up in the American society. See, if you don't study and no one else studies as well, so you know getting decent dollars and get a job and be happy, so time goes slower in here, and I like it! [laughs]

John: So people can grow up blissfully ignorant? [laughs]

Kana: [Laughs] Not ignorant! I'm sorry, but yeah . . . seems like, well, if they're so ambitious they can just make it, you know? Like regardless of what the other people do . . .

Kana seemed to feel that the rigors of Japanese education for her and for many Japanese children might have been excessive. In addition, she seemed to view Japan as a meritocracy where students had one chance to set their life's course by passing an entrance exam to a competitive university. In spite of the contrast she provided, a few respondents--including Kana herself--pointed to the idea that the Japanese K-12 system was presently in decline. Kana's discussion on the differences between education in Japan and the U.S. continued as follows:

Kana: So, I feel, like, in Japanese society, like, Japanese educational system is a bit better, but then I don't know if the Japanese educational system is [that good] . . . because they did more, like, ethical, like, what is it? *Doutoku* (ethics) classes? It's like teach the guest how--the ethics . . . so that, yeah . . . the society in class, so they don't cram . . .

John: Like proper *aisatsu* (greetings)?

Kana: Yeah, they don't cram the kids anymore nowadays . . .

John: Cram?

Kana: Yeah, like, they don't let the kids study a lot . . .

John: Like they used to?

Kana: Yeah, it's getting slower, so . . . I think now the American study would be better, so . . . you know . . .

In spite of seeing Japanese education as historically superior in its rigor, Kana expressed reservations about what she understood to be a recent decline in standards. In spite of her tentative reservations, it seemed clear that the majority of respondents in this study still viewed Japanese education as decidedly more competitive (i.e., masculine) and American K-12 education as comparatively more nurturing (i.e., feminine).

Postsecondary Education

Contrary to opinions about primary and secondary education where participants viewed the Japanese system as more competitive (i.e., masculine) and the American system as comparatively nurturing (i.e., feminine), the general consensus regarding postsecondary education was that U.S. institutions were more competitive *and* more nurturing than their Japanese counterparts. Consistent with what I had heard and seen in the 1980s, Japanese college students were depicted as working hard in high school but treating their undergraduate experience as a time for enjoying themselves and working at part-time jobs. Kazumi summed it up as follows:

John: Do you think [Japanese college students in Japan] work hard?

Kazumi: Some people, maybe, but the majority of people no. Because, probably you know it, but high school kids try to get into the university and study so hard and then once they get in, they stop studying and just do whatever they want. And I think it's kind of true.

Kenta, who had not attended a Japanese university but communicated with friends who did, had similar things to say. In the following excerpt, he related the semester cycle that he perceived as common among college students in Japan:

You really have to work hard to graduate here [in the U.S.]. I haven't been to a Japanese university--I have friends--but mostly they work so much, they work every day--like, *arubaito* (part time work). *Arubaito shite, okane tamette, ginkou ni itte* (they work, they save money, they go to the bank), and a lot of people a couple of days before exams, they buy notes from their friends who has been attending class every day and they just study for their finals. So, *zuttou benkyou shite, tesuto ukeru* (they cram a lot and take their exams). So the lecture doesn't really mean anything. *Tesuto owattara, arubaito shite, yasumi nattara, yoku nete, mata kaette kite, arubaito shite, tesuto ga attara, mata noto o katte; soyu koto o yoku kiku kara* (When they finish their tests, they work at part-time jobs, take a vacation, sleep a lot, return home, work part-time jobs, and when the tests come up, they buy notes again; I hear that kind of thing a lot . . .).

Kazuaki, who had attended a competitive foreign language university in Japan, provided a similar portrayal:

John: How would you describe college in Japan compared to college in the U.S.?

Kazuaki: Like, American university is where you study your major, I guess. Japanese university is where you are looking for what you would like to do in the future.

John: What do you mean?

Kazuaki: Like, usually Japanese don't study about your majors. I mean you study but just some people don't go to class--just take the exams. And you're trying, like, many things, like, outside of campus. So it's a time to what . . . you want to do after you graduate.

John Working *arubaito* [part time jobs]?

Kazuaki: Yeah, working *arubaito* or join some association or something--anything that you might be interested in. But here, students already know what they want to do--like you, students choose their major--but more, like, in Japan, most of the people don't know what do you want to do after you graduate university; they just pick the university--not major.

What Kazuaki meant by picking the university instead of the major was that in Japan, the quality of the university is often more important than the major one selects (Ishida, Spilerman, & Kuo-Hsien, 1997). Japanese companies, while less prone to hiring graduates in the humanities, are often more concerned about employee attitude and a general ability to learn than about incoming skill sets (Ishida, et al., 1997). Although Japanese companies are now looking more toward specific abilities than in the past (A. Brender, personal communication, 2005), they have customarily trained workers upon entry, and often times at varying tasks throughout their careers (Ishida et al., 1997).

Understanding that companies are willing to provide employees with needed skills upon entry, many Japanese college students may feel minimal incentive to master the curriculum set forth by college professors. Kana had not attended college in Japan but

was surprised at what she saw when sitting in on an English class at a Japanese university:

I think Japanese students, like, I don't know, spend a lot more time playing with their friends and going to *karaoke* (singing establishments) and you know, that stuff. But, like, here, most of the people study a lot more than Japanese college students, so I think that's good, because, like, you know, in American college, [it's] easy to enter but hard to graduate, right? Opposite of the Japanese college, so . . . the Japanese feel once they get in, it's easy to graduate, so . . . um . . . yeah . . . I've been to Japanese college a couple of times so . . . I went to an English conversation class with my friend. But I was so surprised at the English level of the Japanese students in college. It was so easy--like, there was American teacher and he was saying something, you know, he was making announcements in class and then not many of the people could understand what the guy was saying, so I was trying to help them out and, like, you know, I didn't want to speak [English] like that in the Japanese class; I was just trying to go slower, but the kids were, like, so amazed, like, "Oh my Gosh! Your English is so good! How did you get it?" and stuff. And like, it's like nothing, if you would just study a little bit harder in English, I don't know . . . like, I was so shocked at the Japanese kids' English level--they're so, like, low! And the teacher speaks like, "Okay . . . how . . . are . . . you?" And, like, they don't understand it. I think it was kind of like a shame!

While Kenta, Kazuaki, and Kana depicted college in Japan as less demanding than in the U.S., Kazumi posited that some schools in Japan--especially those with an abundance of foreign faculty--were every bit as rigorous as in the United States.

Ironically, the university she alluded to was the very one that Kazuaki had attended:

John: How would you describe college in Japan?

Kazumi: It's real difficult [to say] because I've never been there.

John: But you have friends?

Kazumi: I do, and it sounds like they don't . . . well, one of my best friends go to one university, and she, her school goes by English all the way through. So, like, it's kind of the same situation.

John: She goes to a Japanese university with English all the way through? Where?

Kazumi: X Gai Dai (X Foreign Language University). Not all the classrooms, but some of. And she is in, like, some kind of, like, exchange student expert classes or something, so she needs to speak in English all the time.

John: Is that a *kokuritsu daigaku* (a public university?)

Kazumi: No, it's a *shiritsu* (private). And she told me it's really difficult to do, like, to do good in the classes. So I thought it's kind of same as me doing here, but . . .

Having assessed the majority of college students in Japan as less serious than in the U.S., several participants turned their attention to some of the things they appreciated about American universities. Since most of the students had freely chosen to attend college in the U.S., it may not be surprising that their opinions were somewhat biased.

Kazuaki, having graduated from a university in Japan, offered perhaps the most informed opinion:

John: What impression do you have of American professors?

Kazuaki: I think American professors are more committed to their classes. They, yeah . . . they are more well prepared than Japanese professors do for their classes, I guess. And for example, in Japan some professors don't make syllabus--just do whatever they want in the classes, or . . . yeah, I think that's different.

John: Did you have some classes in Japan that were interesting that you attended a lot?

Kazuaki: Oh, I like the international relation classes. Because the professor studied at a university in England and New Zealand, so they're more like American professors. Like he's more committed to his classes, so he's very enthusiastic about what they're teaching about. So yeah, that's the class I enjoyed a lot.

Kazuaki appeared to distinguish professors who had studied in the West from those who were credentialed in Japan, suggesting that occidental-educated professors were more dedicated to and enthusiastic about teaching.

Although Naoki cautiously prefaced his opinion of American professors by declaring he had never been to a Japanese college, he was pleased that his American

professors--like the teachers at his American high school--took his effort into consideration:

John: What impressions do you have about American college professors?

Naoki: They're pretty knowledgeable. I've never been to a Japanese college, so I don't know any Japanese professors. Yeah, but [American professors] consider my effort, and yeah, they're really good.

Saori, who had attended a junior college in Japan, was the only participant to question the validity of class discussions, which she said were more common in the U.S. than in Japan. A recently graduated accounting major, she seemed to prefer lecture formats for their efficient dissemination of knowledge:

John: What impressions do you have of American professors compared to the Japanese professors you knew in Japan?

Saori: Traditionally, Japanese teacher wrote their knowledge down on the blackboard and then students just go home and remember it, but here it's different. They want students to question him. You know, they want students to talk about something more, but in Japan we just learn from teacher, not like discuss with them the things . . . they're just receiving knowledge from teachers. No doubt, you know?

John: Which do you like better?

Saori: I think I like Japanese way because it's more, like, I don't say easy--more effective. Not like which they talk about something supported by a lot of, like argument or theory, right? So just receiving and learning and remembering, so we can get, the like right knowledge. In the United States they are talking to each other. I think it is good too. You know, because they know how to explore stuff, they know how to, like, argue with the other people. I think that's a good point. But, I don't know, I just felt like sometime it's, like, wasting time--like, sometimes. Like, the student asks a question to teacher, but the question sometime you can find in textbook, you know? But I felt like, you know, you should study the textbook first and then ask question [laughs]! I mean, you don't need to waste the teacher's time. That's what I feel sometimes. But, like, sometimes it's useful. Like, sometimes some student has more knowledge and they ask some difficult question to teacher, yeah, I think it's good.

Thus, in her assessment of Japanese and American teaching perspectives, Saori noted advantages and disadvantages in both. Although she preferred the lecture format that she associated with Japan, she also saw validity in the developmental teaching styles she had come to experience in the U.S. While debates on pedagogy may be interminable and beyond the scope of this study, opinions about Japanese and American postsecondary education in this study were clear as they related to masculinity; that is, participants generally viewed American universities as both more competitive (i.e., masculine) and more nurturing (i.e., feminine) than Japanese universities.

Summary

The present chapter focused on masculinity in Japan and the United States. Based on interviews with Japanese undergraduates, American culture was deemed more masculine in some respects while Japanese culture was seen as more masculine in others. In some categories it was possible for one country to be perceived as both more masculine *and* more feminine, or more masculine in one respect and more feminine in another.

While I discussed hierarchical aspects of the Japanese language and compared them with the more egalitarian limitations of American English in Chapter 3, participants in this study provided additional observations in regard to masculinity and communication styles. Isamu noted that Americans purposefully displayed more self-confidence in public and were much less likely to offer apologies than Japanese. In contrast to this competitive or masculine tendency in American English, several participants expressed their surprise at how verbally affectionate many Americans were

with family and friends. In terms of language and communication, there were distinctly masculine and feminine traits in both Japanese and American English.

According to the literature and a number of participants in this study, women in the Japanese workplace had decidedly fewer opportunities for advancement than men. Ayumi, Akemi, and Kana all viewed American companies as much more willing to ignore gender and to promote individuals based on merit. Given Hofstede's (1984) suggestion that masculine cultures distinguished sex-role orientation more fervently than feminine cultures, Japan was viewed as more masculine in this respect.

Japan also appeared to be much more masculine in terms of male-female relationships. Although White (2004) pointed to many recent changes among Japanese families, respondents seemed to agree that Japanese women were more likely and more pressured to assume traditional nurturing roles than American women. Participants also said that Japanese men were generally authoritative, unwilling to do housework, and unlikely to take pride in their wives' professional accomplishments. American women were viewed as independent, strong-willed, and somewhat demanding in their expectations of men, while American men were generally depicted as chivalrous and accommodating toward women.

Participants in this study were unanimous in that they saw Japanese K-12 education as far more competitive--and by extension more masculine--than American K-12 education. By contrast, participants saw American K-12 education as quite nurturing. Although the present group of students had all completed their education in Japan prior to the Education Reform Act of 2002 that relaxed curriculum demands, some provided

accounts of a Japanese education system that had undergone controversial changes in recent years.

The general consensus regarding postsecondary education was that more competition *and* more nurturance were found in American postsecondary institutions than in Japanese colleges or universities. Japanese college students were depicted as working hard in high school but treating their undergraduate experience as a time for enjoying themselves and working at part-time jobs. Many respondents depicted Japanese professors as less demanding, less accessible, and less dedicated to teaching than their American counterparts.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS

In the present investigation, there were two sets of research questions. In the first set of questions, I looked to the experiences of Japanese undergraduates at an American university. Since the pilot study (Brender, 2004) suggested Japanese undergraduates assumed a variety of acculturation identities, I proposed the following questions for investigation:

1. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *integrated*?
2. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *assimilated*?
3. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *separated*?
4. What are the experiences of Japanese undergraduates identified as *marginalized*?

With the second set of questions, I sought to define how Japanese undergraduates at an American university perceived differences in Japanese and American cultural identities. Using Hofstede's (1984) work-related values as a backdrop, I proposed the following research questions:

1. What values and behaviors do Japanese undergraduates associate with American culture?
2. What values and behaviors do Japanese undergraduates associate with Japanese culture?

In this concluding chapter I highlight key findings from the present study, offer recommendations for faculty and administrators, propose implications for retention and recruitment of other East Asian students, discuss moments of contradiction in my findings, and suggest future research for qualitative investigations.

Key Findings

Acculturation Identity

In the present study I examined acculturation identity based on participant self-selection, scores from the East Asian Acculturation Measure (EEAM), and inductive reasoning. Although suggestions for future research are based on interviews with 12 participants from a single American university, some common observations were noted for each of the four-acculturation types. Given the qualitative nature of this study, findings are intended to suggest further research rather than to proclaim reliable generalizations. Table 2 displays observations associated with participants identifying with each acculturation identity:

Table 2: Acculturation Identity Findings

Integrated	Assimilated	Separated	Marginalized
Lived in host country > 5 years	Aware of temporal limitations	Shorter time in host country or arrived after age 22	2.5 - 7 years in host host country
Somewhat outgoing	Outgoing	Shy; least introspective	Somewhat outgoing
Ease making Japanese or American friends	Preference for non-Japanese friends	Preference for Japanese friends	Reported difficulty making friends, but preferred non-Japanese friends
Reported fused identities	Preferred American identity but did not reject Japanese ID	Maintained Japanese identity	Reported either American or Japanese identity
Moderate families	Progressive families	Traditional families	Moderate families

Based on the above observations, some meaningful hypotheses may emerge for future quantitative research. A clearer understanding of variables that predict acculturation type may aid university administrators to target and encourage certain individuals for inclusion in non-Japanese social networks, which may improve retention,

student satisfaction with the college, and ultimately influence whether the student will advocate the school to others in his or her home country. Quantitative research may also help admissions counselors at competitive universities decide whether certain variables will predict success (however the university defines it) at their institution. The goal here is not to encourage a given acculturation identity since there is no evidence to suggest that one acculturation identity is preferable to any another; the goal is to promote understanding of different acculturation identities and to provide additional venues that encourage *social* integration, especially for those who could benefit most.

First, it may be of interest to note correlations between acculturation type and length of stay in the U.S. In the current study, participants identifying as integrated had generally lived in the U.S. for five years or longer, the highest on average of Berry et al.'s (1986) four-acculturation identities. Since many of these students were seniors, this included at least one year of attendance at an American high school. While some integrated students had come to the U.S. with their families, others reported that their parents suggested a year or more of high school in the U.S. prior to attending an American college or university. It may be that experience in an individual's host country prior to university allows for one to become integrated rather than assimilated, separated, or marginalized. It may also be that length of stay contributes to identifying as integrated.

Assimilated students tended to share a temporal urgency. The three students who identified as such all understood that their time in the U.S. was limited and wanted to make the most of each day. Two of them very consciously avoided spending time with other Japanese; the third had a Japanese boyfriend but otherwise spent her free time with

non-Japanese. Testing for temporal urgency or adherence to strict or full schedules may correlate positively with identifying as assimilated.

Some of the separated students had lived in the U.S. for shorter periods of time; one arrived at the age of 23. Because a few separated students had been in the U.S. for three or four years, the correlation between length of time and identifying as separated may have only minimal significance. Since the present study dealt exclusively with undergraduates, most were less than 22 years of age. The most notable exception, Kazuaki, arrived at the age of 23 and had been in the U.S. for three years. Some literature exists to suggest that Asian students arriving after the age of 22 are less likely to change their core values (Shih & Brown, 2000; Sugimura, 2001). Future studies on Japanese graduate students in the U.S. may help confirm or refute this hypothesis.

In terms of personality, I observed that students identifying as assimilated were notably outgoing; students identifying as separated tended to be rather shy. Participants who identified as integrated or marginalized were less notably shy or outgoing. It may be possible to test for correlations between acculturation and personality type by using the East Asian Acculturation Measure along with an appropriate measure to determine whether one is shy, outgoing, or somewhere in between. Testing for introversion and extroversion may also yield significant correlations with acculturation type.

Assimilated students, while gravitating toward American values and exhibiting behaviors that were decidedly American, generally held positive impressions about Japan and Japanese culture. Although it seems possible that an individual identifying as assimilated might reject many aspects of his or her native country, this negativity was not particularly evident in any of the three participants who identified as assimilated. In spite

of what was found here, it could be interesting to find if assimilation in some individuals is tied to negative connotations with their home country.

Marginalized students appeared to identify as such not out of rejection for Japanese or American values but because of difficulty making friends or out of a desire not to make friends with certain groups of people. In terms of values, two tended strongly toward assimilation while the third appeared somewhat separated in terms of her preference for Japanese values. If any suggestion can be made about marginalized students, it is that marginalization has much more to do with one's ability or desire to make friends than with a preference for Japanese or American cultural values. Since only three students identified as marginalized, more work needs to be done on this particular acculturation identity.

Two of the three assimilated students described their families as decidedly progressive, insisting that their parents encouraged a great deal of independence and personal decision-making as they grew up. In contrast, some of the separated students suggested that their families were more traditional. While there were no immediately discernable patterns among integrated or marginalized students, measures to determine family descriptions and acculturation type may yield significant correlations.

A final observation was that, contrary to LaFromboise et al. (1993) who insisted that the highest form of bicultural competence was the ability to alternate behaviors between cultural environments, the majority of integrated students saw *fusing* their cultural identities as the highest manifestation of bicultural competence. Kenta summed it up by saying:

I think it's [dangerous] . . . to change my behavior. I don't want to have, like, two identities. But those who do that, I think that's the best way for them to deal with

those two identities . . . There were times that I was doing exactly things like that too, but once I spent more time [thinking about] my theory or, like, my identity, . . . I reached the point where I don't have to work so hard... to act like somebody else . . .

In sum, much remains to be done in finding predictors for Japanese acculturation type in the U.S. As suggested earlier, the goal should not be to change anyone's acculturation identity; students appeared to be leading relatively happy, productive, and satisfying lives regardless of acculturation choice. Acculturation identity as it related to values was relatively unimportant, but a number of participants--especially those identifying as marginalized or separated--expressed an interest in spending more time with non-Japanese or non-Asian students. Providing venues for such socialization to occur may be vitally important if U.S. postsecondary institutions are to be successful in retaining and recruiting Japanese and other international students.

Cultural Identity

Hofstede's (1984) assertions regarding differences in power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism between Japan and the United States were strongly supported by Japanese undergraduates in this study. Hofstede, of course, looked at values across 39 countries rather than focusing on two as was done in the present study. While offering informed insight on both Japan and the United States, Hofstede's work was not intended to focus intensively or exclusively on these two countries. The present study was unique in offering a number of subcategories such as family, education, language, and the work place for each value. In almost every subcategory, participants reinforced Hofstede's (1984) conclusions that Japanese valued high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, and low collectivism while U.S. Americans tended toward low power distance, low uncertainty avoidance, and high individualism.

Masculinity was perhaps the most interesting of values explored in the current study since there were several aspects in which each country was perceived as higher or lower in masculinity than the other. Most notably, U.S. Americans were perceived as more masculine (i.e., competitive) in terms of preferring confrontational approaches to apologies and fostering greater competition in postsecondary education. Japanese were considered more masculine in regard to the linguistic hierarchy in the Japanese language, reticence to express verbal affection, competition fostered in K-12 education, and the differences noted in sex-role orientation. In the review of literature, Japanese were deemed more feminine in terms of their goals for friendship and cultivation of the arts.

Recommendations for Faculty and Administrators

With a goal of retaining, recruiting, and better serving Japanese and other international students at Western universities, several recommendations for faculty and administrators have emerged from the present study. Some of these recommendations relate to understanding concepts about Japanese students at American universities in general, while others are geared specifically toward faculty, staff, administrators, domestic students, or Japanese and other international students.

First and foremost is the idea that Japanese students in the U.S. are likely to take on a wide variety of acculturation identities and should perhaps be treated accordingly. To assume that a Japanese individual will respond positively or negatively to a given value, behavior, cultural accommodation, or teaching style should not be determined solely on nationality.

How then should various Japanese students be treated? The answer is not hard and fast given that the rules of intercultural communication are complex and subject to

many variables. In his review of the literature, Gudykunst (2003) noted factors such as self and self-concept, motivation to interact with strangers, reactions to strangers, social categorization of strangers, situational processes, and connections with strangers as determinants that could facilitate or impede communication between people of different cultures. Although Gudykunst (2003) mentioned self and self-concept, he did not specifically mention acculturation identity as a factor for determining interaction. Based on the current research, assessing an individual's acculturation identity may contribute to how successfully Western administrators communicate with Japanese and other international students. Although future research is imperative, the idea of assessing an international student's needs or preferences may be linked to acculturation identity.

Perhaps more important than an ability to make assessments of Japanese or other international students, is an individual's willingness to communicate kindly, patiently, and respectfully. When asked about experiences with non-faculty employees, many respondents complained that university staff had treated them more abruptly or with less respect than was noted with domestic students. This appeared to be more pronounced during telephone encounters than face-to-face interactions, but both were frequently cited. The following conversation with Akemi dealt with a non-university employee, but echoed many of the sentiments expressed toward university employees:

Akemi: Like, sometimes I would make a phone call to the company to ask about their service or something, and when I call them they don't really explain much. And then my [American] roommate, like, she was really nice, she was very helpful, and she was like, "Ok, let me call them." And then when she called, they were, like, just give me like [a] bunch of descriptions even without her even asking about the service. And I'm like, "Okay, what's going on here?" You know? I don't know, but . . . Because it makes me sad, you know? So, like, I try to just let those things go, and, like, try to think that it's not a discrimination. Like, just maybe because, like, I didn't ask them well enough or, like, but I don't know . . .

John: Is it mostly on the phone do you notice?

Akemi: Yeah, like, on the phone and . . . but it's tolerate someone being mean to you just because you're Asian or just because they're having a bad day or . . ., you know? I try to give people benefit of doubt . . . so, like, when you are like interrupting these people it's harder to tell but, like, on the phone it's a little bit more easier because, you know, I'm just asking one or two things and, like, they're just like, "Oh this is that, this is that . . ." It's not like they're being rude or they don't help me but the way they help . . . when my roommate called, it's just completely different, you know? And she even noticed that. She was like, "Oh my gosh! They are giving me like bunch of informations, you know?" Yeah, so . . .

Akemi's frustration with service employees may be a reaction to prejudice, but it is also probable that many Americans are unlikely to empathize with the difficulties of speaking a foreign language or navigating a foreign culture. As Lambert (1987) insisted: "There is nothing more damaging to the American capacity to cope in a global society than the abysmally low level of foreign language competency of most Americans" (p. 10). It may well be in the interest of many Western universities to train their employees on how better to interact with international students. Simulated workshops may be effective in addition to mandating policies that emphasize more accommodating service for international students. At the risk of sounding trite, the face of every university employee is potentially the face of that university!

Given that a number of participants in this study reported current or initial difficulty making friends with Americans, administrators should provide as many venues as possible to pair domestic and international students. According to an unpublished study by Brender, Lembright, Leone, and Thomas (2004), international students at one Midwestern university frequently complained that attempts to unite international students often excluded domestic students; thus the international community met people from various countries while domestic Americans tended to join in relatively small numbers.

Many things could be done to integrate domestic and international students.

Domestic students could be recruited to be involved in international student orientations, international and foreign-language clubs, and international fairs and exhibits. Mentoring or buddy systems could be put into effect where American students meet with designated international students from time to time. Curriculum could require or encourage domestic Americans to seek input or perspectives from international students and vice versa.

Housing administrators could actively encourage integration between domestic and international students rather than passively allowing students to choose housing locations with people who are most similar.

Of course simply putting domestic and international students together does not guarantee that their encounters will be positive or fruitful. Learning to find mutual topics of interest is of prime importance if any continued interaction is to occur. An unfortunate but common occurrence I have noted is that many American college students seem unaware when they are discussing culturally exclusive topics such as American music, sports, comedy, or television programs. These arcane conversational topics are especially evident in group discussions as opposed to one-on-one conversations. Regardless of an international student's English proficiency, following arcane, culturally specific references can be frustrating if not impossible. Feeling excluded from such conversations, some international students withdraw from social interactions with Americans. In the pilot study (Brender, 2004), one participant expressed the following:

Some Americans don't ignore me but when Americans are talking with Americans they are, like, it looks like more fun. They have mutual topics--about music or TV programs. I don't know much about music or TV programs because I am just here for eight months. I think because of that it's a little hard to make the conversation.

Of course blame should not be placed solely on those from a given host country. It would be helpful if international students learned to take more initiative in asking questions or steering conversations into areas where they can more readily participate. The idea of finding inclusive topics is simple, but one that should be made known to domestic and international students alike. Workshops in cultural sensitivity might be helpful, while faculty and housing directors could find ways to point out inclusive and exclusive topics in intercultural communication. Exclusive topics need not be ruled out, but students should anticipate that explanations might be necessary.

Internationalizing domestic students may be paramount for universities and colleges that hope to retain and recruit international students in an increasingly competitive world market. Among the dimensions of internationalization proposed by Mestenhauser (2003), is the concept of educating students to view ordinary situations from an emic standpoint; that is, viewing another culture through that culture's internal logic. According to Paige and Mestenhauser (1999), internationalization is not simply about exchanging persons and ideas across the globe, but should be defined as "a complex, multidimensional learning process that includes the integrative, intercultural, interdisciplinary, comparative, transfer of knowledge-technology, contextual, and global dimensions of knowledge construction" (p. 504).

Although most respondents in this study could express a variety of specific details about differences between Japanese and American culture, few were able to articulate a comprehensive framework that suggested well-defined opposing values. Revealing Hofstede's (1984) work-related values hit home for many of the interviewees and appeared to be enough of an epiphany that I--and many of them--would recommend

presenting it during orientation periods at U.S. colleges, high schools, and places of work. For Japanese nationals coming to the United States, having an idea of what to expect in their host culture might lessen the severity of culture shock and perhaps propel them toward a more pleasant experience in the U.S.

Japanese and other international students who are satisfied with their experiences at American institutions are much more likely to be advocates for their schools than those who are dissatisfied. If U.S. and other Western institutions of higher education are truly concerned about recruiting and retaining Japanese students on their campuses, strategies to foster positive experiences should be thoughtfully considered and implemented, whether for faculty, administrators, domestic, or international students.

Implications for Retention and Recruitment

During the summer and fall of 2005, I developed and taught a course based on the first three chapters of the current dissertation. My audience consisted largely of Korean, Chinese, and Japanese professionals between the ages of 30 and 55. Since the majority of participants were Korean and Chinese, a great deal of discussion was generated on the differences between their respective cultural values and those presented as Japanese. Although a number of minor differences were noted between Japan and its Pacific Rim neighbors, many of the basic values set forth in this study were deemed highly applicable to Koreans and Chinese as well. In spite of historical and political conflicts, participants conceded that especially in contrast to the U.S., East Asians were much more alike than they were different.

Moments of Contradiction

The idea of determining acculturation identity is a slippery slope. Some participants in this study reported experiencing changes in acculturation identity over time and some found self-selecting their current acculturation identity quite difficult. In addition, although more than half of participant scores on the East Asian Acculturation Measure (EAAM) matched student self-selected acculturation identity, nearly half did not (see Appendix D). To further complicate matters, the four scores on the East Asian Acculturation Measure (integrated, assimilated, separated, and marginalized) were often close in number even for some students whose self-selection matched their top EAAM score.

Although the idea of fusing two cultural identities into one appealed to most of the integrated students, one participant identified as marginalized and two identified as separated reported experiencing alternating identities. The idea that only people identifying as integrated should struggle with making sense of two or more cultural identities is far from accurate. As seems obvious from interviews, the EAAM, and reported struggles with self-identification, students are not likely to serve as perfect examples of any acculturation identity, but varying mixtures of all. The final quote from the 1985 movie *The Breakfast Club* speaks to this phenomenon:

You see us as you want to see us, in the simplest terms, in the most convenient definitions. But what we found out is that each one of us is a brain, and an athlete, and a basket case, a princess, and a criminal.

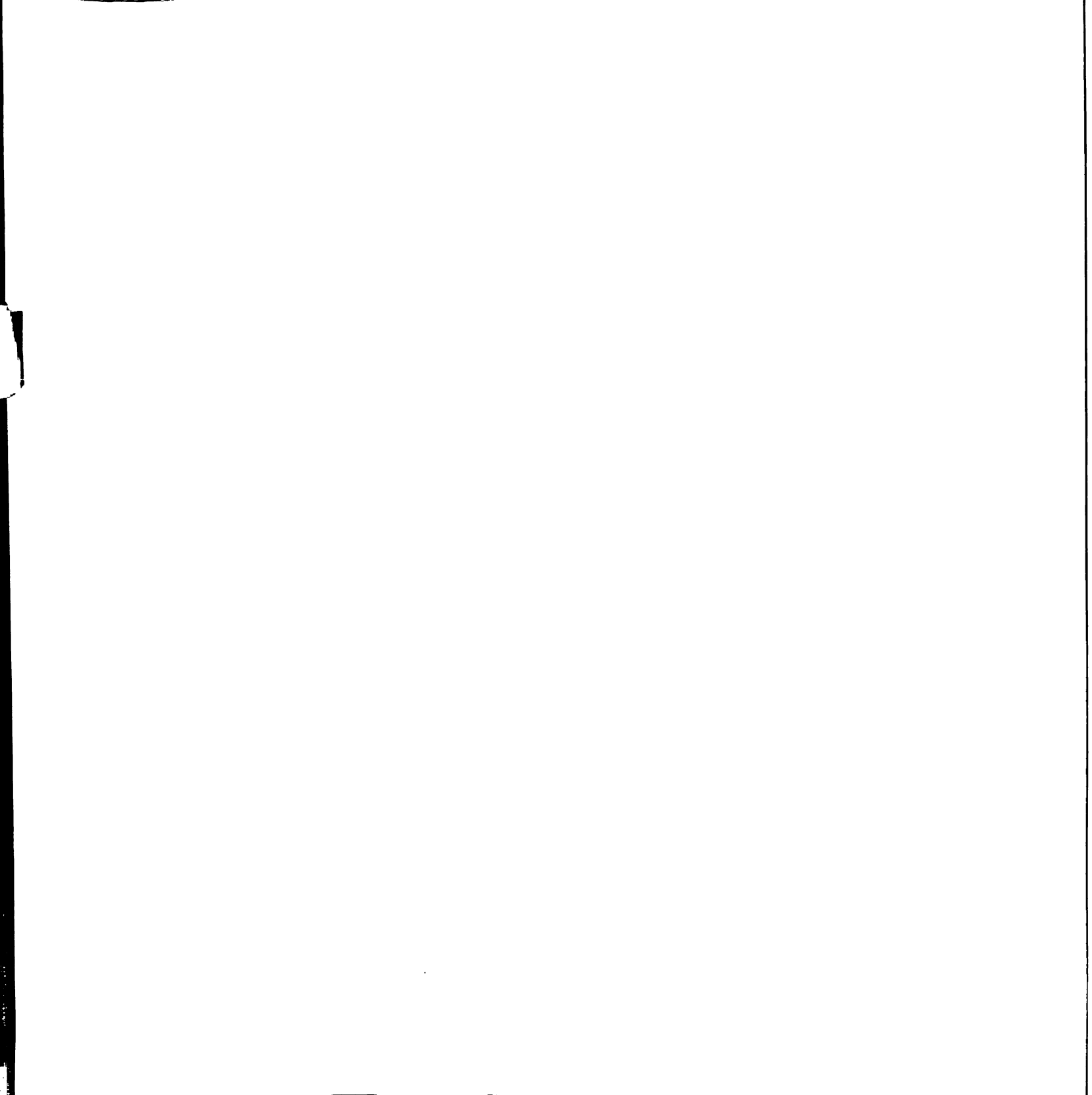
Future Qualitative Investigations

While future research similar to the present study should focus on Koreans, Chinese, and a multitude of other international students, I submit from my

aforementioned teaching experiences that the contrast in work-related or cultural values between Japan and the United States may hold largely true for Koreans and Chinese as well. I believe that it will be especially interesting to conduct research on the acculturation identities and values of Koreans and Chinese undergraduates and to contrast them with the findings that have emerged in the present investigation. Discovering whether Koreans, Chinese, or Japanese are most likely to integrate, assimilate, separate, or become marginalized may prove to be of interest to university professionals who seek to socially integrate the most separated or marginalized international students on their campuses.

It may also be important to investigate similarities and differences between Japanese undergraduates at U.S. tertiary institutions in various regions and at U.S. tertiary institutions with various missions. Comparing the experiences of Japanese undergraduates at comparable institutions in New England, the South, the Midwest, for and the West Coast, for example, may unveil important differences. Likewise, conducting similar studies with Japanese undergraduates at varying institutions may yield substantially different results. Japanese students who choose to study at community colleges, for example, may reveal experiences that are different from Japanese students who attend highly selective universities, regional universities, four-year colleges, religious-based colleges, and technical or vocational schools. Contrasting Japanese students at U.S. urban institutions with Japanese students at U.S. suburban and rural institutions may also yield important similarities or differences.

Studies across time may prove to be of importance. Since the participants in the present study had all completed their education in Japan prior to the Japanese Education



Reform Act of 2002, it may be interesting to see if students educated under the new, more relaxed standards report different experiences from those who studied under the previously mandated curriculum. Globalization and other societal changes in Japan such as the declining birthrate may also prove to be important catalysts.

While it may prove important to investigate differences in Japanese undergraduates at different institution types, in different regions, and across time, it may be of equal or greater importance to investigate Japanese alumni of American institutions who have returned to Japan and those Japanese alumni who have remained in the U.S. for employment or other purposes. Information in these two areas could prove invaluable not only for Western institutions looking to assess their services relating to Japanese students, but for Japanese and American companies eager to hire and effectively manage this group of individuals.

Of course, Japan and the United States are not the only two countries of interest for the kinds of studies proposed here. Investigations of any significant cultural population studying at postsecondary institutions in a given host country will be of importance to both that population of students as well as to the institutions who seek to recruit and retain that given population. Institutions in Australia, Canada, Germany or the U.K., for example, may find reason to study the Chinese, Turks, or Pakistanis who attend their institutions of higher education. The combinations and permutations that can emerge from this study may well be infinite!

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Consent Form

Japanese Undergraduates at an American University:
Acculturation, Cultural Identity, and Values

This study is designed for Japanese students between 18 and 24 years of age who are attending American universities. The purpose of this study is to note the experiences, values, and cultural identities of Japanese undergraduates in the United States. It is hoped that this study will inform university administrators, scholars, and other interested professionals about Japanese students so that appropriate changes in instruction and student services might be considered. As a willing participant, you will be asked to supply demographic information, answer a brief written survey, and answer a series of interview questions.

The study should take between 60 and 90 minutes, although you may continue as long as you wish. To avoid misquoting or misinterpretation, your interview will be audio taped.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate at all. You may refuse to answer any question. You may also discontinue the interview at any time at no consequence.

As a participant in this research study, you will not be identifiable in any report of research findings. Upon request and within these restrictions, results may be made available to you. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact the investigator, John Brender, by mail at 4847 Sugar Bush Lane, Holt, MI 48842; by e-mail at brenderj@msu.edu; or by phone at (517) 694-4139.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact - anonymously, if you wish - Peter Vasilenko, Ph.D., Chair of the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) by phone: (517) 355-2180, fax: (517) 432-4503, email address: ucrihs@msu.edu, or regular mail: 202 Olds Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study

Signature

Date

I agree to be audio taped.

Signature

Date

Appendix B

Interview Protocol for Japanese Students

Demographic Questions

Gender: M F **Age:** _____ **Hometown/Country:** _____

Major: _____

Year in school: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Grad

Amount of time at U.S. college: _____ Years _____ Months

Amount of time at U.S. secondary school (9-12): _____ Years _____ Months

Amount of time at U.S. primary school: (K-6) _____ Years _____ Months

I spend _____ **% of my free time with people from my country**

I spend _____ **% of my free time with other East Asians**

I spend _____ **% of my free time with non-Asians**

Open Ended Questions

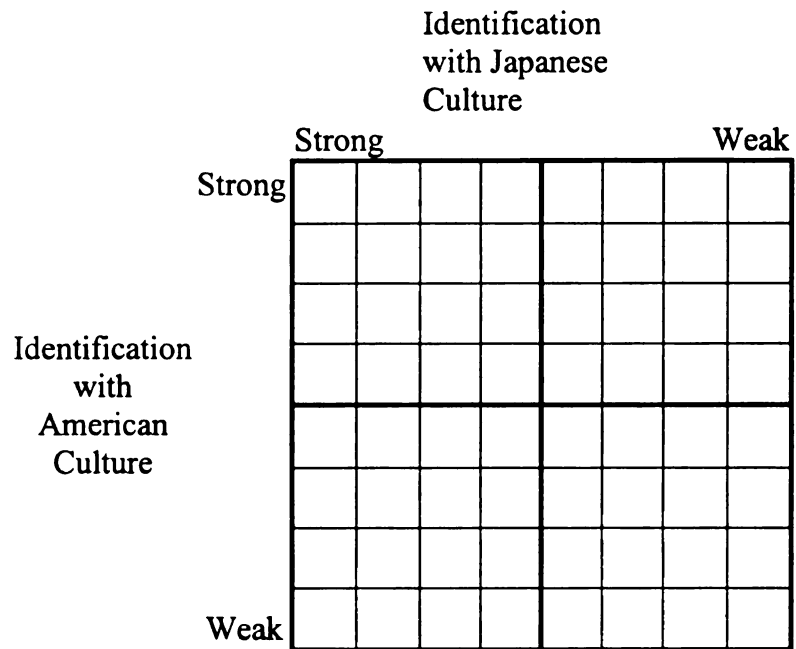
Acculturation Questions

1. Tell me about your family (and how you were brought up).
2. Is your family typical in Japan? If not, what is a typical family in Japan?
3. Do you consider yourself similar to most other Japanese? Why or why not?
4. What impressions do you have of American families?
5. What impressions did you have of the US before you came here?
6. What were your first impressions after you arrived in the US?
7. Are your impressions different now that you've been living here? If so, how & why?
8. Can you describe any ways in which you've changed since you've been here?
9. If you've changed, can you describe anything that has caused you to change?
10. What kind of music do you listen to?
11. What kind of books do you like to read?
12. What kind of movies do you like to see?
13. How would you describe education in Japan? In the U.S.?

14. How would you describe college in Japan compared to college in the U.S.?
15. What impressions do you have of American professors? University administrators?
16. Tell me about your best friend.
17. Can you tell me about your friendships with Japanese? With Americans? With people who are neither Japanese nor American?
18. Has it been easy or difficult for you to meet Americans and other international students?
19. How would you say other Japanese see you in Japan?
20. How do other Japanese see you in this country or at this university?
21. How would you say Americans see you?
22. How do you spend your free time? (What kinds of things to you do?)
23. Who do you spend it with? (Japanese, Americans, other international students?)
24. Do you feel that you behave the same way with Japanese as you do with Americans? If not, can you give examples (in class, doing group projects, socially)?
25. If you behave differently with Americans than you do with Japanese, can you give examples of situations? Can you explain why you act differently?
26. What do you think about changing your behavior with different groups?
27. How would you characterize Japanese companies compared to American companies?
28. Are there differences between Japanese and American women? Men?
29. Are there differences in the way men and women treat each other in Japan and the U.S.?

Where would you place yourself on the following diagram? Place your dot within one of the quadrants; do not place your dot on any of the bold lines.

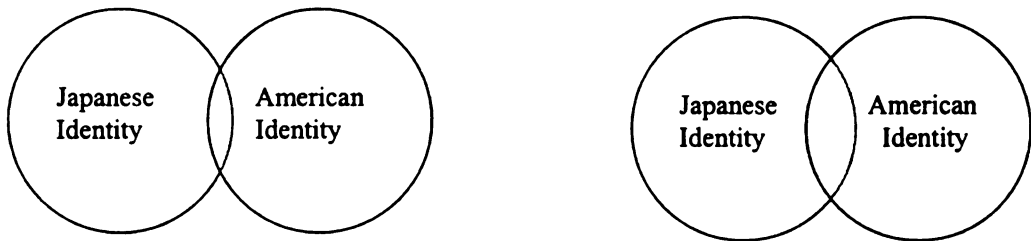
Figure 20: Berry's acculturation quadrant



How would you draw a Venn diagram to most accurately reflect the integration of your Japanese and American identities?

(Examples)

Figure 21: Venn diagram examples



Is there anything else you would like to add?
Would you like to change any of your answers?

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