PROJECTING SELF AND OTHER THROUGH *AKOGARE* [DESIRE]

AMONG JAPANESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS:

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF

HIGHER EDUCATION IN A CHANGING JAPAN

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ABSTRACT

Akogare [desire] is a Japanese word laden with cultural and emotive values. In the recent TESOL [Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages] studies, *akogare* has been conceptualized to emphasize the Japanese specific desire for English or "the West" in general. This study not only leverages such a conceptualization of *akogare*, but also reframes it to highlight the complex and liberating space created by *akogare* where, I argue, individuals can negotiate or even transcend their ethnic, national, racial, gender, or linguistic identities.

Using *akogare* as both an analytical lens and focus of investigation, this narrative study examines the field of Japanese higher education (JHE hereafter) in which, over the past few decades, the government has rolled out several large-scale *kokusaika* [internationalization] policies. While billions of yen (=millions in USD) are expended annually for such policies, few studies have yet to determine the actual effects. Moreover, these policies advocate English education (as both a subject and as the medium of instruction) with little reservation, postulating that English is the remedy for all international and global matters.

To better understand the current *kokusaika* state of JHE and to reimagine what *kokusaika* should/can look like for Japan in the coming years, I examine the narratives of Japanese university students and faculty members. Specifically, this study focuses on how my study participants (over 200 students, faculty, staff, and other informants from JHE institutions) may perceive "Japaneseness" or "non-Japaneseness" at a given time and space, which has helped render a complex picture of the *kokusaika* landscape and of Japan at large. Methodologically, online questionnaires, follow-up interviews, and field observations are utilized to weave together threads of stories between and across different types of data.

Through the bricolage of narratives, this study presents three major findings. First, it demonstrates how "Japan" or "Japaneseness/non-Japaneseness" is collectively yet divisively imagined/practiced by my study participants. This not only helps raise awareness of the complex "-scapes" of Japan, but also addresses the urgency to create a space for alternatives voices.

Second, *kokusaika* funds are often being allocated to a select few universities while other universities without the necessary means are left out of the *kokusaika* campaign. By extension, there seem to be *have* and *have-not* universities within the *kokusaika* landscape of Japan and their students are likewise affected.

Third, the idea of English in Japan reigns across different academic contexts where it can both foster and obscure one's *akogare*, even amongst the most well-established scholars in Japan. In this sense, English may be causing *turbulence* in the traditionally hierarchical system of JHE because one's years of experience or academic integrity and rigor may become less important when his/her English skills are put to the test.

Overall, what seems largely absent yet progressively important in today's Japan, particularly in the *kokusaika* campaign, is a sense of *multiplicity*. I conclude, therefore, that the ongoing *kokusaika* campaign should be utilized as a potential and appropriate venue to foster a sense of multiplicity.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter first introduces research questions, objectives, and contributions of my study. It then illustrates what *akogare* is in the context of Japan through personal, etymological, media, and other observations. It is intended to better nuance the word *akogare* for this study without solely relying on the definitions found in Japanese-English dictionaries. I also define *akogare* as a concept of this study which will be revisited in later sections. I will then discuss how *akogare* has been conceptualized in academic literature (particularly in TESOL) and how it intersects with internationalization, English, and identity which are the foci of this study. Subsequently, I will pose initial questions to be addressed in this study that are then refined into two major research questions. By further clarifying the field where internationalization, English, identity, and *akogare* converge, I deploy the discussion on the theoretical framework and its relevant theoretical underpinnings of this study. I conclude this chapter with the two research questions and the visualization of *akogare* as a framework. Lastly, a recap of Chapter 1 and the overview of chapters are presented.

Research Questions.

Using *akogare* as both an analytical lens and focus of investigation, this study explores the complex and changing landscape of Japan, specifically of its higher education (e.g. Breaden, 2013; Breaden et al., 2014; Burgess et al., 2010; McVeigh, 2002; Toh, 2013a; Tsuruta, 2013) where desires may be constructed, consumed, and transformed within and beyond the persisting theme of Japan's racialized, gendered, and idealized internationalization practices (e.g. Appleby, 2014a; Goodman et al., 2003; Graburn et al., 2008; Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Lie, 2001; Maher, 2005; Rivers & Houghton, 2013; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008). Specifically, I examine

akogare not simply as an articulation of one's insatiable desire for "the West" (e.g. in the form of a Western man) or English independently, but as a space of negotiations in which an individual positions/repositions the self: who the individual is, in relation to the other: who/what the individual wants to be/be with. As such, I ask:

1. *How do Japanese university students project the self and the other (e.g. the Japanese self and the non- Japanese other) through akogare?*

2. *What implications do the students' self-other perspectives (via akogare) have for the internationalization of Japanese higher education and beyond?*

These questions correspond to two major aims of my study, which are to better understand the current *kokusaika* [internationalization] state of Japanese higher education and to reimagine what *kokusaika* should look like for Japan in the coming years.

Objectives and Contributions of This Study.

In addition to the two major aims, the objectives as well as the contributions of my dissertation study are as follows:

- It aims to fill the gap in the existing literature on *akogare* in TESOL that has largely discussed the Japanese romanticism towards "the West" or persons from/of "the West" (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007; Gibson, 2014; Ieda, 1991, 1995, Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b; Minou, 2015; Kimie Takahashi, 2013).

- I will also reconceptualize *akogare* to highlight the complex and liberating space where, I argue, individuals can negotiate or even transcend their ethnic, national, racial, gender, or linguistic identities.

- Embracing a poststructuralist stance (not simply out of political naiveté or defiance to structuralism and other traditional modes of thinking), I will engage flexibly with binaries and categorization such as the Japanese v. the non-Japanese through social identity theories. In doing so, I will show how *akogare* may challenge, transgress, or undermine such traditionally-dichotomic boundaries. Ultimately, this aims to make a theoretical contribution to major social identity theories whereby it is traditionally assumed that "the self" constructed based on the perceived similarities and differences often leads to a negative evaluation of the so-called "others."
- Acknowledging my positionality as a researcher and a participant in *akogare* discourses to which I am consciously and subconsciously contributing, resisting, and conforming:
  - I attempt to capture narratives of students and faculty members that are otherwise absent in the existing literature and
  - By rendering a complex picture of Japanese higher education's internationalization experience from the perspectives of students and faculty members, this study aims to contribute to the knowledge and practice of the current *kokusaika* campaign in Japanese higher education and Japan at large.

With these research questions, objectives, and contributions in mind, I would like to lay the groundwork for my study, first by exploring what *akogare* is in the context of Japan.

Prelude: What Is *Akogare*?

Akogare, as discursive and idiosyncratic as it may be, is a Japanese word laden with cultural and emotive values. It is probably the best word to describe my first love when I was

seven years old and had a crush[1] on a boy from piano school. To my lovesick self, he was

perfect in every sense imaginable. I spent hours daydreaming[1] about becoming his friend. Fast-

forward five years, I developed a bittersweet[1] girl-crush[1] on the captain of the girls softball team

at my junior high school. Not only was she tall, pretty, and athletically gifted, but also she had a

great sense of humor. I often fantasized[1] about blossoming into a perfect girl like her. Finally,

in retrospect, my airyfairy[1] *akogare* [desire] for "the West" was what drew me to English in the

first place and is remotely why I am still (in my early 30s) leading a life as a doctoral student in

Hawai'i.

So, what really is *akogare*? Let me begin with its etymology. According to the experts,

akogare has a long history with the Japanese language. Dating back to the *Kamakura* period

(1185-1333) when the culture of composing, exchanging, and indulging oneself in poems was in

full bloom, a famous poet read:

> *Hana no ka no/ kasumeru tsuki ni/ akugarete/ yume mo sadakani/ mienu koro kana*

(Fujiwara no Teika, 1326)

[Longing for the moon/ covered with the fragrance/ of the cherry blossoms/ I cannot even

see/ my dreams clearly now]   (Kurahashi, 1998, p. 67)

As seen in the above poem, *akogare* derives from *akugare*, which consists of "aku" [place/being]

and "gare/kare" [leave]. According to etymology dictionaries (Shinmura, 2008; "憧れる

[Akogareru]," 2007), the word originally meant a person physically or psychologically leaving

from a place where he/she once belonged. Over time, it evolved to emphasize the psychological

state of a person who was (physically or psychologically) leaving and in the present day, it

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[1] Different expressions of *akogare*

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highlights a person's infatuation with something or someone. A number of literary works[2] have

since dealt with variations of *akogare* and today you can find it everywhere: from songs to TV

dramas to comic books to personal diaries to motivational speeches to conversations on the street.

Due to its lyrical and romantic undertones, however, a sentiment of *akogare* is often

deemed a too ambiguous or naïve reason for a person's important life decisions such as choosing

which university to attend or what career to pursue. At the same time, *akogare* remains a

commonly used word among Japanese speakers to powerfully (=emotionally) declare their

dream[1] job or their idol.[1]

Aimed to better nuance the word *akogare* for this study, let me introduce the following

akogare anecdote of a television producer from Japan. I hope to color the word in a way that

helps "bridge" (Mizumura, 2015, p. 165) the distance between Japanese (*akogare* = 憧れ or あ

こがれ) and English (the medium of communication for this study), rather than to rely on the

definitions found in Japanese-English dictionaries:

憧れるとは何か。2012-09-10	What does it mean to *akogareru*?[3] 2012-09-10
[The original Japanese text removed to comply with the copyright laws.]	If asked what my special skills are, the only one I have may be; let's say I went to a restaurant with a group of people. After each person orders an item off the menu in that awkward atmosphere and the ordered items are delivered to the table, people ask me "was there such an item in the menu?" gazing at my food. My order makes people say "I should've ordered that too" and that's the only special skill I

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[2] The most well-known of all is the famous poetry book あこがれ [*akogare*] (1905) by the prolific poet, Ishikawa Takuboku (1886-1912).

[3] Conjugations of *akogare*:

akogare 憧れ (noun), *akogare no* 憧れの (adjective), *akogareru* 憧れる (verb)

have, I would say.

That's a skill of selecting the unexpected item out of the same few pages of menu given to everyone at the table, within the same time limit, hence operating under the same set of rules. It's understandable if I was looking at a completely different menu and finding this amazing dish. But since everyone was given the same menu, the surprise is even more intensified. The only difference between myself and others was noticing this item in the menu or not. It's such a small difference but this transpires *akogare*, the moment you witness the other person's scrumptious-looking dish delivered to the table, although you must have browsed through the same exact menu earlier. What I'm trying to say here is that *akogare* is not about money or price but about sensitivity. It's a case in point that gaudy houses don't usually incur any *akogare* feelings among us. The house stylized and furnished by designers, varnished parties, or trips prearranged by coordinators don't ignite *akogare* either. *Akogare* is relative to sensibility. To me, *akogare* is an anchor in life.

(Ochi, 2012)

[English translations are my own.]

Although Ochi situates this experience in a specific context, it reaches out to the wider audience through the mundaneness of his story. Ochi contends that *akogare* occurs under a specific circumstance wherein all the players operate by the same set of rules yet one individual somehow manages to achieve a more desirable outcome than do others.

In *akogare*, the unique positioning of the self (as "the unaccomplished") in relation to the other (as "the accomplished") seems crucial in that Ochi's tablemates had probably been

satisfied with their own choice of dish (considering themselves as "the accomplished") until the moment they saw Ochi's choice arriving at the table hence repositioning themselves now as "the unaccomplished." It must have been a very frustrating experience for those who for one reason or another *overlooked* the most desirable dish on the menu, particularly when it was not listed on a hidden menu but on a *regular* menu. This results in the dish being *tantalizingly out of reach*, which I will later elaborate as the very essence of *akogare*.

More importantly, Ochi's dish itself might not be able to take all the credit for spurring *akogare* [desire] among the tablemates. What made Ochi's dish even more desirable, I would posit, is who Ochi is – an all-around television producer who is a food connoisseur by avocation, a proud (now single) father of a six year-old daughter, and an owner of multiple homes (including one in Hawai'i). That said, if the dish had been ordered by someone less "accomplished" in the eyes of his tablemates, it may not have become such a center of attention (or desire) as it did in Ochi's story.

Nevertheless, the seemingly simple act of nailing down the "right" dish of quality and flare may help one to enjoy a relatively ephemeral satisfaction both from the scrumptious dish itself as well as from the desiring stare of other tablemates. It is these social relation-based dynamics of *akogare* that I am intrigued by and I intend to highlight in my study.

In addition to my own and Ochi's anecdotes, the following image collage helps offer some visualization of the word *akogare*. I ran a Google image search on "*akogare*" (= あこがれ, アコガレ, and 憧れ) and created a collage of eight images gathered from the top search results. The collage includes (clockwise from top left) pictures of dreamy vacation (beach resort), the 1993 album by a Japanese singer-songwriter, a *purikura* machine [Japanese photo booth], the

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American pianist George Winston's piano number titled "Longing/Love," a training ship named "*Akogare*," the 1957 French short film of the same name, a *manga* comic titled "*Akogare* adventure," and a girl's imaginary date with her prince charming:

Figure 1. Images of akogare found online.

[Images washed out to comply with the copyright laws.]

To recap the above narratives, imageries, and discussions, *akogare* seems to allude to one's desire—whether of instinctive, platonic, romantic, or performative nature, all of which are to be explored—towards someone or something. Synthesizing what I have discussed so far, *akogare* can be defined as **a sentiment in which an individual desires to pursue his/her**

dreams whether they be a person or an object (tangible or intangible) that is *tantalizingly out of reach* from him/her. With this definition in mind, in the following section, I will outline what I intend to do with this study.

The Inception of This Study

As shown above, *akogare* is a widely used word/concept in Japan that has a multitude of meanings and nuances depending on time and space. However, the concept of *akogare* [desire] has increasingly been used, for some reason, in a specific manner in academia, particularly in TESOL (see next section). Although such use may be different from the more common use in Japan or among Japanese speakers, the concept of *akogare* in the said field seems to have profound implications for the current internationalization [*kokusaika*] landscape of the nation. For starters, as a psyche that envelopes the nation in one way or another, *akogare* [desire] appears to have long been guiding Japan and its people (for example, desiring blackness: Cornyetz, 1994; Condry, 2006, 2007; desiring to reestablish Japaneseness after the economic stagnation: Hashimoto, 2007; Japan's desire for English since the 1600s: Ike, 1995).

With this study, I intend to use *akogare* as an analytical lens and focus of investigation as to not only address the abovementioned scholarly gap in the existing literature, but also to reconceptualize it altogether. In the following sections, I will show how *akogare* has been discussed in academic literature (particularly in TESOL) and how it intersects with internationalization, English, and identity, to ultimately justify why I have chosen Japanese higher education as a research site for this study.

Akogare **[Desire[4]] in Academic Literature**

Before introducing how *akogare* has been discussed in the existing TESOL studies, I provide below a short summary of what I mean by TESOL in general and in Japan.

TESOL in general and in Japan.

Summarized as "a worldwide enterprise, involving many groups of people who are often perceived as racially and culturally distinct" (Kubota & Lin, 2006, p. 472), the field of TESOL involves teaching, learning, and studies that engage with both. Although traditional works in TESOL have tended to focus on topics of language acquisition and pedagogical theories and practices, more recent studies have shifted gears to embrace a wider range of topics. Some of the emerging topics in TESOL include identity development of teachers and students in and out of classroom (e.g. Amin, 1997; Appleby, 2014b; Phan, 2008) and language policies and their implementation (e.g. Ali, 2013; Hashimoto, 2007; Nunan, 2003). These newly-emerging arenas have successfully engaged with larger social, political, and cultural implications of the TESOL scholarship. For example, often focusing on issues of race, gender, ethnicity, and class, the recent TESOL studies have helped expand the scope of such domains by demonstrating the interconnectedness of these domains or even redefining the domains altogether (Pennycook, 1999).

In Japan, TESOL may be seen as a field of controversy. That is, while the lucrative market of English education (e.g. afterschool programs, commercialized learning materials,

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[4] Desire and *akogare* are interchangeably used in the existing body of literature in TESOL (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007, Ieda, 1991, 1995, Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b; Kimie Takahashi, 2013). While desire may not always be the context-appropriate translation of Japanese *akogare*, the word "desire" neatly captures the pith of *akogare*. Also, by using the English term "desire," this study intends to maintain a close association with the said body of literature.

online tutors) is bolstered by Japan's fixation on English as the "most important" foreign language,[5] there has been a heated debate over when and how English should be taught. The question of "how early should English be introduced as a school subject?" has long been agitated especially because the government prepares to implement a new policy in 2020 to move up the formal introduction of English to the third grade instead of the recently-administered fifth (Uematsu, 2015).

In academia, long debated topics such as: 1) the common challenge for Japanese speakers to produce the English consonants [l] and [r] and 2) the lack of communicative English skills of Japanese students, have driven the TESOL research of Japan. In the spirit of TESOL scholarship "in flux, always questioning, restively problematizing the given, being aware of the limits of their own knowing, and bringing into being new schemas of politicization" (Pennycook, 1999, p. 329), more and more scholars are producing their works to highlight the sociopolitical aspects of English in Japan (e.g. Houghton & Rivers, 2013; McKenzie, 2010; Seargeant, 2011). As detailed below, scholarly works that discuss *akogare* [desire] in TESOL contexts can be located in this line of inquiry as well.

Akogare in TESOL.

Interestingly, while Japanese language speakers use *akogare* in a versatile way (e.g. lyrical, platonic, sexual, motivational, etc.), scholarly works in TESOL (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007, Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b; Kimie Takahashi, 2013) have paid a particular

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[5] Most of Japan's "internationalization" policies have unquestionably incorporated English as *the* foreign language while neglecting to acknowledge other equally if not more deserving languages in Japan. In fact, there have been times when English nearly became the second official language of Japan (Hashimoto, 2002; Hatta, 2003).

attention to its romantic and/or sexual undertone. This struck me as "strange" at first, signaling a critical clue (Zizek, 1991, p. 53) into something worth exploring.

As a starter, I ran a quick keyword search using "*akogare*" and "憧れ" on Google, Bing, and Yahoo: the "Big Three" (Lewandowski, Wahlig, & Meyer-Bautor, 2006) Internet search engines. The three search engines generated a long list of results including various forms of *akogare* in movies, romantic novels, *manga* comics, and love songs. Some of the images presented earlier (in the collage) are of these search results as well.

When I ran subsequent searches using the three commonly-used *academic* search engines: Google Scholar, EBSCO HOST, and ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, the results differed for Japanese and English searches. In the Japanese language, Google Scholar presented a list of results similar to those found using the Big Three. No hits were found using EBSCO HOST and ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. I then searched on CiNii (one of the most comprehensive bibliographic databases of Japanese/English academic sources in Japan) to find many more works with the keyword "憧れ" or "あこがれ" (*akogare* in two different writing styles) in their titles. These works can be categorized into a wide range of disciplines including psychology, tourism, journalism, architecture, early childhood education, and so forth.

On the other hand, the English search results on Google Scholar, EBSCO HOST, and ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global concertedly alluded to "transnational" experiences of Japanese learners of English. Particularly in TESOL, *akogare* seems to be used to signal the Japanese specific sentiment towards "the West" or persons from "the West" (e.g. Bailey, 2007; Darling- Wolf, 2004; Kelsky, 2001b).

In these TESOL studies, English is treated as one of the key ingredients of *akogare* or "the desire for the West" (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007, Ieda, 1991, 1995, Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b; Kimie Takahashi, 2013). Moreover, Japan is often painted as a nation where the "allure and sparkling promise" of English (Motha & Lin, 2014, p. 332) so irresistible that even "the idea of English" (Seargeant, 2009) or more universally "the idea of the West" (Kelsky, 2008) spurs excitement. According to these TESOL studies on *akogare*, "English" and "the West" are often interchangeably imagined by Japanese learners of English as if all the people of the West speak English and likewise, all English speakers are of the West. Also, there is more focus on Japanese female learners of English and their *akogare* than that of Japanese male learners of English.

Based on the sociocultural background discussed in the existing literature, it can be argued that some Japanese women develop *akogare* feelings towards "Western" men because these men not only embody "the West" but are considered "masters" of the English language that they so long for (as seen in: Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007, Ieda, 1991, 1995, Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b; Kimie Takahashi, 2013). From this, it is then not too difficult to understand why some "young and attractive" Japanese women might willingly date some of the "dorky" Western men (in some cases derided as Loser Back Home = "LBH," 2014) or that Western professors working in Japanese universities might get "goo-goo eyes" from their much younger female students (Appleby, 2014b).

However, just as discussed in Ochi's anecdote, *akogare* does not simply derive from a single quality (represented as Ochi's dish) of that desirable something or someone. Other details such as: the fact that the dish was *tantalizingly out of reach* (listed on a regular menu yet none of

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Ochi's tablemates noticed it) and how Ochi's tablemates perceived Ochi as a person of established reputation seemed to have played important roles in how Ochi's tablemates casted *akogare* gazes at the dish.

From this point of view, I would like to argue that a Japanese woman developing *akogare* feelings towards a Western man for speaking English is indeed a complex manifestation of what English means in Japan *as well as* how the woman personally perceives English, "the West," men, and so forth. Espousing the logic in the Ochi's restaurant example, a Japanese woman's *akogare* towards a purported "English-speaking" Western man is not a simple demonstration of her desire for English or for the man independently. Rather, it is a result of how she positions herself in a particular distance from English, which she perceives as tantalizingly out of reach, and likewise from the "authentic" (Seargeant, 2005) Western man who embodies "the idea of English" (Seargeant, 2009) or "the idea of the West" (Kelsky, 2008), so to speak. Here, my intention is not to claim that such Japanese women wish to date Western men largely because these men are assumed to speak English, which the women desire for. Instead, I would like to highlight that the idea of English (or similarly, the idea of "the West") so powerful in Japan that some women are, whether knowingly or unknowingly, driven by it, resultantly manifested in the form of *akogare* towards Western men.

This, however, still does not justify why so much focus has been given to the romantic or sexual dynamics between Japanese women and Western men in the existing literature on *akogare*. As I have explained so far, *akogare* can be defined as a space in which an individual desires to pursue a person or an object (tangible or intangible) that is *tantalizingly out of reach* from the individual's point of view. Also, the original meanings of *akogare* are clearly not

limited to romantic or sexual pursuits only. That being said, while aligning itself within the existing studies in TESOL, my study will treat *akogare* as a romantic and sexual desire <u>and beyond</u>.

Moreover, redefined as more than a romantic or sexual desire, *akogare* can help generate a snapshot of how an individual positions the self in relation to one's desired person (or object) in a given context. For example, by asking a question to a student: "Who is your *akogare-no sensei* [teacher of your *akogare*] and why?," I will gain some insight into how this student sees him/herself in relation to the teacher who supposedly has qualities that are *tantalizingly out of reach* from the student. Since how an individual may find something(-one) desirable and *tantalizingly out of reach* is subjective as much as it may be private, it is crucial that I design my study to be feasible and realistic while ensuring to make meaningful contributions to the existing body of scholarship. This process of identifying a research problem to designing a feasible study is painstaking yet certainly what separates a good study from the rest (Creswell, 2012, pp. 58–72; Plano Clark & Creswell, 2014, pp. 79–91, 161–188).

I have so far discussed: what *akogare* is in the context of Japan; how *akogare* has been studied in the context of Japanese TESOL; and what *akogare* can be if treated differently. Maintaining a connection with the existing literature in TESOL, I began to examine different TESOL contexts as a potential research site for my study. After careful examination, I propose Japanese higher education as an ideal research site because it is considered as an important TESOL context where much "internationalization" is taking place yet currently facing the reality of the imminent reforms.

For example, in June 2015, the Japanese government formally requested the 86 national universities to tailor their academic programs to "better meet the needs of society," implicating the cuts to humanities and social sciences programs (Grove, 2015; N. Jenkins, 2015; Kakuchi, 2015). This is part of the ongoing University Reform Action Plan[6] (Higher Education Policy Planning Division, Higher Education Bureau, 2012) effective since April 2013 which has also transpired multi-billion yen programs/projects aimed to foster "global leaders of tomorrow."

Given the current landscape of Japanese higher education, in what follows, I explain: the transition Japan is undergoing; what I define as Japanese higher education; and ultimately why it is an ideal research site for this study. I also review how *akogare*, if adjusted into transnational contexts as a valuable conceptual framework to understand the individual's positioning of the (Japanese) self in relation to the desired (non-Japanese) other, may help render a complex picture of today's Japanese higher education.

Japanese Higher Education as a Proposed Research Site

First, I briefly go over a recent incident that helps highlight multiple and competing perspectives on Japan's *singularity/diversity* to provide a context against which Japanese higher education exists.

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[6] This action plan may be treated as a motion to revisit the earlier report "The future of higher education in Japan" (MEXT, 2005), which aimed to allocate a specific and unique function to each JHE institution in the given community.

Is Japan in transition?

On the ground of *nihonjinron* [theories of the Japanese],[7] scholars have painted a particular picture of Japan as being the hotbed of chauvinistic, sexist, racist, and overall exclusivist traditions (e.g. Degawa, 2001; Jeffrey Friedman, 2013; Russell, 1991). By contrary, others have argued that Japan's "ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, and ideoscapes" (Appadurai, 1991, 1996) are on the verge of a drastic transformation (Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008; cases in point: Goodman, Peach, Takenaka, & White, 2003; Graburn, Ertl, & Tierney, 2008; Lie, 2001; Maher, 2005). Mainly drawing on personal experiences of the assumed "minority" in Japan, the above works (albeit contrasting to each other) enlighten us on varying and changing identities of those who will likely become the new face of Japan.

A recent incident may be seen as an articulation of this Japan's (purportedly) changing face. Our newly crowned Miss Universe Japan 2015, Ariana Miyamoto is the first mixed heritage contestant to be awarded the crown since the beginning of the pageant in the 1950s (Ishida, 2015; Shim, 2015). Although controversies have centered on Miyamoto's biracial background with an African American father and a Japanese mother, the fact that she was crowned suggests the changing landscape of ostensibly "traditional" Japan.

On the one hand, many have since engaged in the (predominantly online) debate of whether Miyamoto is "pure" enough Japanese to represent the nation, provided her "unconventional" background. On the other hand, theoretically speaking, such debate has promoted the Japanese (or so they claim to be) to reconsider preexisting standards of beauty and

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[7] *Nihonjinron* [日本人論] is seen as the powerful force that drives nationalistic or ethnocentric projects in Japan. It is often referenced as an ideology that firmly supports the hegemony of Japan's perceived "homogeneity" (Befu, 2001).

the conventional understanding of what it means to be Japanese today. For the timely and relevant nature of this incident, I have included Miyamoto's case as part of my study (e.g. questionnaire/interview questions) to observe a range of reactions and responses from my study participants.

This is just one of the many occurrences today to show how Japan as a nation may be at a critical crossroads where the long-held assumptions about the singular "Japanese identity" no longer prevail. Given this picture of Japan, I will now introduce Japanese higher education as a site where on the one hand, multi-billion yen internationalization efforts are well under way, on the other hand, a critical engagement with the singular "Japanese identity" is often absent in the process.

Japanese higher education today.

Similar to the American education system, Japanese higher education (JHE[8] hereafter) begins upon the completion of 12 years of primary and secondary education. JHE institutions include universities (four years), graduate schools (two to five years), junior colleges (two to three years), colleges of technology (five years), and specialized schools (four years) (Higher Education Bureau, 2012, p. 4).

Over the past few decades, the Japanese government has annually spent billions of yen (= millions in USD) to transform JHE into the flagship of the nationwide *kokusaika* project (Office for International Planning, Higher Education Policy Planning Division, Higher Education Bureau, n.d.). Education policies focusing on the internationalization of JHE such as "Global 30" in

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[8] JHE institutions include universities (four years), graduate schools (two to five years), junior colleges (two to three years), colleges of technology (five years), and specialized schools (four years).

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2009, "Global Human Resource Development" in 2012, and "Top Global University Project[9]" in 2014 have burgeoned while few studies have confirmed the effectiveness of such policies and programs. Most importantly, despite the frequent appearance of terms such as internationalization [*kokusaika*] and globalization [*gurobaru-ka*] in the above policy documents, they are often haphazardly used and vaguely defined at best (Rappleye, 2013). Also, Japan's narrowly conceived ideals of *kokusaika* (examples in business, education, and politics: Mouer, 2015) may be partially hindering to devise a realistic and feasible plan for universities to implement.

The abovementioned policies are indeed driven by the equivocal Japanese desires to participate in the global competition and to become a "world-class" institution (M. Ishikawa, 2009; Kariya, 2014). Admittedly, the recently-reported Japanese universities' steep decline in the rankings of the world's top universities (Times Higher Education, 2015, 2016)[10] has evoked a sense of uncertainty about the ongoing educational overhauls under the banner of *kokusaika*. Although the legitimacy of such university rankings must be scrutinized for their economic, political, and methodological implications, the picture of the faltering Japanese universities highlighted by these rankings serves as a wake-up call to revisit Japan's *kokusaika* policies.

In fact, many scholars have been pointing to fundamental flaws and challenges in Japan's effort to internationalize its higher education (e.g. Breaden, 2013; Burgess, Gibson, Klaphake, &

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[9] Or enthusiastically called the "Supa Gurobaru [Super Global]" project in Japanese, which has been ridiculed and criticized for its amateurish naming (Kakuchi, 2014; Yanase, 2015).
[10] According to the Times Higher Education list of the world's top 800 universities for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017, the *once-invincible* University of Tokyo (Japan) is no longer Asia's #1 university (Kyodo, 2015, 2016). Other Japanese universities have also continuously slipped down the rankings over recent years.

Selzer, 2010; McVeigh, 2002; A. Ninomiya, Knight, & Watanabe, 2009; Phan, 2013a; Rivers, 2010; Toh, 2013a; Tsuruta, 2013; Whitsed & Volet, 2011; to name a few).

To begin with, in his famous work, McVeigh (2002) contends that the issues of economic and social disparities in Japan are deeply ingrained in the Japanese higher education system. Branded as part of the larger social mechanism to "sort students in the most rational, efficient, and 'egalitarian' (i.e., standardized) manner" (McVeigh, 2002, p. 41), Japanese higher education merely leverages English (perceived as *the foreign language*) as a means to simulate internationalization. For instance, English classes become a place for students to self-orientalize themselves and to experience their Japaneseness, instead of learning the language or its affiliated cultures (McVeigh, 1997).

Focusing on the organizational aspects of a Japanese university in the face of internationalization boom, Breaden (2013) provides descriptions of the day-to-day activities at the university where he was employed first as an interpreter/translator and later as a managerial staff member for a total of five years. According to the author, the nationwide *kokusaika* project can be seen as a response to Japan's national identity crisis and economic/social/demographic changes. Most importantly, *kokusaika* is often motivated by discourses about the need of internationalization, rather than by the practical significance itself (Breaden, 2013).

The above scholars and others emphasize that as an instant internationalization practice, English has conveniently been used (e.g. as a medium of instruction), particularly in the context of Japanese higher education. On this note, Toh (2013a) critically examines the superficiality and contradictions of such practices that are often compelled by nationalistic ideologies than anything else. This point is taken up by Tsuruta (2013) also that while the importance of

internationalization is widely recognized, the actual practices of internationalization for JHE are

indeed "controversial and context-sensitive" (2013, p. 151).

Unanimously agreed by these scholars, the flaws and challenges of the ongoing

kokusaika project are deeply rooted in Japan's nationalistic, political, and economic agenda

lurking in the name of *kokusaika* and *ibunka/tabunka kyosei* [coexisting with people of

different/multiple cultures] (Burgess, 2004). Since internationalization is often incited by the

idea of "globalization or the world in English" (Oda, 2007) and is discursively envisioned as the

perfect future of Japan (McVeigh, 2002, pp. 48–50), most of the *kokusaika* policies have

underwritten English education[5].

In fact, many of the studies that critically examine Japan's (often problematic) higher

education internationalization agenda put an emphasis on TESOL as the very site of struggle and

intervention (e.g. Breaden, 2013; Burgess et al., 2010; Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Kariya, 2014;

McVeigh, 2002; T. Takahashi, 2004; Whitsed & Volet, 2013). Among them, the theme of

racialized, gendered, and idealized TESOL practices in JHE (particularly, Appleby, 2014b;

Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Rivers & Houghton, 2013; Rivers & Ross, 2013) is recurring hence

instrumental in raising further questions. Falling under such a theme, the above-mentioned

works have raised important questions such as: *who* do Japanese students perceive as Japanese or

non-Japanese?; and *why* do Japanese students seem to prefer a particular type of English (e.g.

American or British) over others (e.g. Indian or Nigerian; Chinese or Brazilian: based on the

concentric circle model by Kachru, 1992)? These questions indeed provide critical insights into

how the internationalization of JHE may be re-envisioned from the perspectives of students.

While there is a body of literature that critically examines Japan's *kokusaika* efforts in the context of JHE, what seems to be absent are the personal and collective narratives of students (and teachers) at the height of such *kokusaika* campaign. As mentioned above, these narratives are valuable because they will help us to better understand the ongoing *kokusaika* campaign, but also they may be able to help reimagine what *kokusaika* should look like for Japan. Indeed, these are the two major aims of this study.

Further, in collecting, examining, and presenting the narratives, *akogare* is to be treated as a valuable lens of analysis and focus of investigation as it conceivably reveals how individuals may position the self in relation to the other (further discussion to follow in the subsequent section). Ultimately, this study aims to address questions including:

- Who (which students) develop *akogare* towards whom/what?

- How and why do these students develop *akogare*?

- What different types of *akogare* are there?

- What larger implications (e.g. social, political, cultural, etc.) do the students' *akogare* have for the nationwide *kokusaika* project?

These questions are a few of the many that have emerged in thinking about: how *akogare* may serve as a framework to understand students' positioning of the self in relation to their desired other and how that might help render a complex picture of today's Japanese higher education. These initial questions are to be refined into more focused research questions towards the end of the chapter.

Finally, as a proposed research site, JHE includes complex yet manageable venues, namely universities and junior colleges, where I can access the voices of its multiple actors (e.g.

students, professors, staff, etc.) given my personal and professional affiliations. Being a doctoral student originally from Japan who has worked both in and with JHE institutions over the last eight years and aspires to become a faculty member/researcher in one of the Japanese universities upon the completion of my studies, I find a dissertation study conducted within the context of JHE to be personally and professionally meaningful. Having introduced some of the relevant literature by category and discussed my choice of research site, I further clarify below the intersection between internationalization, English, Japanese identity, and *akogare* for my study.

A changing Japan where internationalization, English, identity, and *akogare* intersect.

As Kubota succinctly and powerfully claims, the positioning of English in Japan represents "both resistance and accommodation to the hegemony of the West" (Kubota, 1998, p. 304) in that the spread of English language in Japan can be understood as a threat as well as leverage to national development. On the one hand, English can be seen as a threat because it presumably interferes with the Japanese language or "the Japanese way" of thinking and life and ultimately, it may undermine the so-called Japanese identity (synonymous with "the Japanese self" as discussed earlier). On the other hand, as a response to today's globalizing world economy, Japan has also exerted internationalization efforts (*kokusaika*) to participate in the global competition which largely entail the promotion of English in education, business, and politics (Burgess, 2004; Seargeant, 2011). In these cases, English is treated as leverage and a promise to building a better and more "international" Japan while the nation unquestionably incorporates English as the foreign language of most significance.

Take education policies for example. Japan handles its love/hate (e.g. resistance and accommodation) relationship with English through the implementation of such policies. As extensively discussed by scholars (Hashimoto, 2013; Phan, 2013a; Rivers, 2010), the internationalization of Japanese education, especially of the higher education, has been operating on the basis of the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other as though such a distinction is not only definitive but also unanimously agreed upon. For instance, while the Global 30 project (FY 2009-2013) has allowed students to take courses in English and earn a bachelor's degree at Japanese universities, few Japanese students actually meet the requirements to enroll in such programs. As a result, the participating international students are practically confined in an English-speaking environment where it is challenging for them to interact with the local community or learn about Japan, both linguistically and opportunity-wise. In short, internationalization programs/projects such as Global 30 may be serving a dual and intended purpose: first, to protect the "Japanese identity" from the unnecessary influence from the "non-Japanese" by strategically placing the wall of English between the two; and second, to leverage English to the nation's economic and political benefits by offering degree programs in English to international students. This seems to be the perfect solution to "the hegemony of the West and English" (Kubota, 1998, p. 304) as Japan continues to negotiate and safeguard its national identity in the globalizing world.

To reiterate, internationalization in Japan is often synonymous with the promotion of English ("Internationalization or Englishization"? as Kirkpatrick (2011) questions the increasingly popular practice among the universities in Asia of offering English-medium courses and programs), especially in the context of Japanese higher education. In order for the nation to

maintain the "Japanese identity" while securing a place in the globalizing world, Japan exerts

internationalization efforts in their own way. Although these efforts have been widely criticized,

what is absent are the personal and collective narratives of students at the height of such

kokusaika efforts. For this reason, my study features students and teachers who are guinea pigs,

so to speak, of the nationwide *kokusaika* experiment.

Further, to contextualize these *kokusaika* efforts in today's "ethnoscapes, mediascapes,

technoscapes, finascapes, and ideoscapes" (Appadurai, 1991, 1996)[11] of Japan that are on the

verge of a drastic transformation (Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008), I have introduced

akogare as a valuable lens which helps expand our understanding of the individual and collective

narratives of my study participants who are in the midst of Japan's *kokusaika* efforts.

To be clear, I do not intend to make a grand claim that *akogare* is the sole concept that

underlies or fuels the internationalization of Japan (particularly the higher education sector) or

that it may dictate the so-called Japanese or non-Japanese identity. Instead, my study focuses on

demonstrating how *akogare* may intersect with the current internationalization efforts (e.g. the

promotion of English in Japan) by drawing on the personal and collective narratives of my study

participants (i.e. university students and faculty members). To this day, there have been a

number of studies (such as: Breaden, Steele, & Stevens, 2014; Miyazaki, 2014; A. Ninomiya et

al., 2009) that examine the macro aspects of the English language education fervor or Japanese

higher education's *kokusaika* efforts whereby much attention is given to the existing policies,

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[11] Appadurai's "-scapes" refer to the dimension where people, information, technology, business, economy, or ideologies are constantly in flux and continuously shaping the society and vice versa (1991, 1996). Ethnoscapes, for example, bear an idea that the migration of people takes place across the cultural, national, or political borders which continues to shape the local as well as the global landscape.

organizational reforms, and their overall impact. In such research, the individual experiences of students and teachers are generally studied to highlight the problems of the current practices.

While addressing this discourse of the faltering *kokusaika* efforts that dominates the Japanese media (Kyodo, 2015), published studies (Oda, 2007; Whitsed & Volet, 2011), and anecdotes (collected during my work as a project coordinator in a G30 sponsored Japanese University and during my graduate studies, over a total of eight years), I propose to rethink *kokusaika* through the lens of *akogare*. Specifically, referring back to the changing "-scapes" of Japan, I would like to draw connections between *akogare* and these changing "-scapes," ultimately aiming to re-envision the nation's *kokusaika* practices.

First, let me illuminate the changing "ethnoscapes" of Japan through the recent trends. To clarify, I understand that other "-scapes" are as important as (if not more than) ethnoscapes and are often intricately linked to one another as seen below. However, for the scope of my study, I will not be focusing on each and every detail of such links.

Over the recent years, Japan has undergone several major natural disasters. Focusing on such disasters and community recovery, Takezawa (2008) explains how disasters like the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 1995 have helped raise public awareness of the experiences of the assumed "minority" in Japan including the "poor and foreign…and that gave rise to the now common phrase *tabunka kyosei* [coexisting with people of multiple cultures]" (Graburn et al., 2008, p. 12). Traditionally, Japan has positioned itself as the legitimate counterpart of the white West whereby the Japanese self is often proudly juxtaposed against the non-Japanese other (= white Westerners; non-Western "others" precluded). However, in the process of relief and recovery from the disaster, the existence of non-Western "foreigners" such as people of Korean,

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Chinese, Vietnamese, or South American heritage (some of whom had lived in Japan most of their life, if not all) not only became known, but also many of them played a major role in rebuilding the community. In this organic way, a different sense of community has emerged to help people to realize the necessity and importance of *tabunka kyosei* [coexisting with people of multiple cultures].

In terms of gender, nation, and power-scapes, Yamashita (2008) introduces three recent transnational migration trends of women. Driven by the "ero-power" logic in which "men of a more powerful group will have relations with and marry women of complementary and lower status groups" (Graburn, 1983; Kelsky, 2001b; in Graburn et al., 2008, p. 14), Yamashita examines Japanese brides in Bali, Japanese female workers moving to California for study abroad, and Filipina workers living in Japan. Yamashita highlights the "in-betweenness" of these women within the gender, nationality, and power conventions that the women are in fact challenging the prevalent inequalities that exist in society (2008, pp. 109–112). In particular, Japanese women marrying the local Balinese men conflict with the abovementioned "ero-power" logic in that these women from a supposedly a powerful nation are willingly and readily finding a life partner in a less powerful nation.

Finally, let me examine the media and popular culture. Japan is currently experiencing a mass generation of *hafu-* [half], *kuota-* [quarter], part-, and non-Japanese models, singers, actors, comedians, and other public figures (e.g. multi-ethnic, racial, and national family in advertisement: Griner, 2013; white comedian "Atsugiri Jason": Samuels, 2015; "*hafu*" talents: Shima, 2012; African American singer "Chris Hart": Uchikura, 2013). While the number of international marriages and births has been on the decline in the recent years (Ministry of Health,

Labour and Welfare, 2016), people of mixed or of non-Japanese heritage have been increasingly recognized as "cool" and desirable in Japan (Maher, 2005). Particularly, "*hafu*"s [people of half-Japanese heritage] are gaining popularity in the media (Shima, 2012; S. Yoshida, 2014) to the extent that some Japanese women strive to find a non-Japanese husband to bear *hafu* babies (Minou, 2015).

In a similar vein, Ashikari (2005) details the longstanding boom of whitening cosmetics among Japanese women who are most likely driven by the perception of the "gaijin [foreign] beauty" (Darling-Wolf, 2000). On another front, there is a significant rise in popularity of hip-hop culture in Japan that "b-boying" [breakdancing] and its associated fashion are quite commonly seen on the street (Condry, 2006, 2007). At the other extreme, Onishi (2004) and Takeda (2011) examine the phenomenon of Japanese middle-aged women and their obsession with South Korean popular culture (or the male actors, to be more specific). According to both authors, these women sincerely believe that their favorite Korean male actors are the most ideal men on earth. These women continue to idealize Korean men by both taking a gloomy view on Japanese men and projecting fantasy on the Korean actors (Onishi, 2004; Takeda, 2011).

Perhaps benefitting from this multi-ethnic, -racial, and -national boom over the past 1.5 decades in Japan, one of the major mobile network operators in Japan *Softbank* has been running the longest and most successful commercial series among its competitors, featuring the "Shirato Family" (translated as 'the Whites' in English). Peculiar to say the least, the family consists of the father in a dog's body, a human race mother, an African American son, a Japanese daughter, Tommy Lee Jones as the maid, and an *exchange student* from Hawai (an area known for hot spring in central Japan, intended to be confused with the U.S. state) (Griner, 2013). As

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unrealistic as the family is, I would argue that the fact that this new concept of family has not only been accepted but also cherished by the viewers in Japan for a period of nearly a decade is an important phenomenon in and of itself.

To draw connections from this phenomenon to what I have discussed so far, through natural disasters and community building; transmigrations of women in and out of Japan; and the media and popular culture representations, Japan appears to be undergoing a period of transition or "identity crisis," so to speak. In other words, what used to be "the norm" of Japan perhaps requires verification and validation. For one, the conventional understanding of "the Japanese identity" is on shaky ground as there are conflicting ideals and social interests that the supposed "minority" (in terms of ethnicity, race, gender, class, and other power-related categories) may be the new "majority" in many instances today.

To highlight this point further, I would like to examine some of the above examples via the lens of *akogare* and discuss how *akogare* may contribute to changing the outlook of Japan. As discussed in Chapter 1, *akogare* can be treated as a complex yet liberating space in which individuals can negotiate and transcend their ethnic, national, racial, gender, or linguistic identities. For example, through *akogare*, many Japanese girls today aspire to look like their favorite *hafu* models by wearing doll eye contact lenses, false eyelashes, and lightening hair (Big Sun, 2016; Satsuki, 2015; Shima, 2012). While the term *hafu* has traditionally been referred to those of Caucasian background in Japan (Okamura, 2014), the recent surge in "*hafu tarento*" [half-Japanese celebrities] include those of Southeast Asian background and African background (Big Sun, 2016; futoshi111, 2005). In my view, this signals a major change because it helps redefine the term *hafu* as a more diverse group of people who were otherwise overlooked.

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Meanwhile, some argue that the term *hafu*, which is interchangeably addressed as *daburu* [double] or *bai* [bi-] under the "politically-correct" efforts, can itself be degrading to those of multiethnic (-racial) background because it defines people of particular mixed heritage as "them" and never "us" (Lie, 2001; Murphy-Shigematsu, 2000). Also, in response to the general public's rosy outlook on *hafu*, Haefelin (2012), a *hafu* German and Japanese herself, reveals the poignant reality for *hafu*s in Japan. Through self-deprecating humor in her book titled *It's a fantasy that all hafus are beautiful!!: My days fighting with the troublesome "pure Japanese,"* the author introduces a matrix of attractiveness and linguistic abilities to outline four different types of *hafu* in Japan (Haefelin, 2012, p. 7). According to the author, *hafu*s in general can be grouped into 1) the ideal [attractive *and* multilingual]; 2) the good-looking [and unilingual]; 3) the multilingual [and unattractive]; or 4) the disappointing [unattractive and unilingual], of which Haefelin categorizes herself under 3) the multilingual. Similarly, a documentary has timely been created by two filmmakers (both with *hafu* background) to highlight the not-so-glam life of *hafu*s living in Japan (Shoji, 2013). In academia, TESOL scholars have also pointed out the identity issues among *hafu* children in Japan (Kanno, 2000, 2003; McMahill, 2000).

While the above realities should by no means be undermined, I argue that the ongoing popularity of *hafu tarento* does help confuse and unsettle the otherwise impeding "border" between the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other (or "us" and "them"[12]). By casting their *akogare* onto their favorite model of mixed heritage, the young girls in Japan are negotiating their race or ethnic identity through makeup and hair. Although their transformation may be temporary and "performative" (as in Japanese "high fashion": Kondo, 2014; or in "cosplay":

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[12] The "us (Japanese) – them (non-Japanese) distinction" as termed by Rivers (2010, p. 451).

Nagaike & Yoshida, 2011), their makeover at least originates from a moment of *akogare* [desire] to emulate the target person whose ethnic, racial, or national identities may differ from their own. Or perhaps, these girls may go beyond the simple definitions of ethnicity, race, or nationality and instead, they are purely aspiring to become the attractive someone whom they believe they are not, but are achievable[13] through the act of makeover.

Take Elaiza Ikeda[14] for example. She is one of the well-known *hafu* models of Filipino and Japanese heritage in Japan ("Filipinos in Japan," 2016; Nikkan Taishu, 2016). Worshipped as the goddess of selfies by her fans, Ikeda excels at flaunting versatile looks while embracing her Japanese and Filipino facial and physical features (Fashionsnap.com, 2015). According to a blogger (Nagoshi, 2015), the ability to powerfully and alluringly present her multiple selves is indeed what makes Ikeda the target of *akogare* for many of her fans. In one way, the perceived Japaneseness in Ikeda may be helping her fans to feel personable and reachable about her. In another, the exoticism (i.e. non-Japaneseness) in Ikeda seems to draw the attention of fans and keep them enchanted. As such, while the Japanese girls who emulate Ikeda may have at one point consumed the idea of the non-Japaneseness in Ikeda, the "non-Japanese" in the traditional sense no longer coheres because the girls continue to push the boundaries of Japanese v. non-Japanese in their transformation. In other words, at the moment those "Japanese" girls aspire to be like Ikeda and willingly participate in transforming themselves, they begin to muddle the otherwise divisive Japanese v. non-Japanese border, perhaps no longer fixating on what "Japanese" means or should look like. This confusion and unsettlement between the so-called

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[13] Also, *tantalizingly out of reach* from him/her.
[14] CanCam. (n.d.). Ikeda Elaiza: Senzoku moderu [Elaiza Ikeda: Contracted model]. Retrieved July 31, 2016, from http://cancam.tv/model/elaiza.html

Japanese and non-Japanese, in my opinion, are what constitute the changing "-scapes" of Japan (particularly the ethnoscapes) and why I am interested in further examining the concept of *akogare* as an important element that may serve as a force of change to the current state.

To sum up, as the media and popular culture demonstrate, Japan appears to be experiencing major changes in its "-scapes" (especially ethnoscapes). While Japan as a nation strives to internationalize itself, for example through the *kokusaika* (≈ Englishization) policies in the higher education sector, the individual and collective narratives of those who are placed in the middle of such efforts have generally been overlooked. That being said, it is my intention with this study to revisit and re-envision *kokusaika* through the narratives of students and faculty members. In particular, using *akogare* as a major lens, I will examine the border-crossing experiences (figurative and literal) of my study participants who may be challenging the "us (Japanese) – them (non-Japanese) distinction" (Rivers, 2010, p. 451) and who may in fact be able to help reimagine what *kokusaika* should look like for Japan.

Theoretical Framework to Research Questions

Having discussed the intersection of internationalization, English, Japanese identity, and *akogare*, I open this section with theoretical implications of desire (most importantly, *akogare*) for the TESOL scholarship. Subsequently, I transition to my theoretical framework and research questions.

Theoretical implications of desire in TESOL.

Although desire such as *akogare* has rarely been treated as a valid theoretical construct in research, scholars have attempted to identify its legitimacy and power, particularly in TESOL contexts (Motha & Lin, 2014; Ros i Sole, 2016). For example, desire as an emotive product

plays an important role in English teaching and learning (e.g. Benesch, 2012; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). Historically speaking, desire has been understood as an emotion thus relatively of intrinsic nature (Buss, 1994). However, the desire to belong to an imagined community (Anderson, 1982) for instance may be interpreted as both intra- and interpersonal attachment to a larger society rather than simply attributing it to basic human needs (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). In addition, not only are desires multilayered hence requiring intersubjective understandings, but also ways in which one's desire is forged, performed, or suppressed may vary from person to person across different contexts. This supports the later discussion (in **Chapter 2**) where I emphasize that desire may be articulated differently by those who perceive English learning as an activity of leisure or consumption; or by those who engage in English learning as an investment in earning cultural capital, based on Kubota's (2011a) work.

In fact, Motha and Lin (2014) highlight the importance of desire in English teaching and learning as follows:

> At the center of every English language learning moment lies desire: desire for the language; for the identities represented by particular accents and varieties of English; for capital, power, and images that are associated with English; for what is believed to lie beyond the doors that English unlocks. (Motha & Lin, 2014, p. 332)

Further, desire can be crafted as part of the collective social imaginary whereby we naturally identify certain objects as happy or desirable, oftentimes assuming other people's happiness as conducive to our own (Ahmed, 2010). These discussions led Motha and Lin (2014) to examine Lacan's (1966) notion of the *objet petit a*, the object cause of desire, in which we desire something we believe is missing. On these grounds, we may arrive at the understanding that

one's desire emerges as the individual interacts with others who own something that the individual does not.

Additionally, a series of such experiences may contribute to creating a collective imaginary wherein certain objects become uniformly desired by all members of the community as well. A familiar example would be the idea of owning a smartphone among teenagers. If some or many of your peers own one, you begin to develop a strong desire for one as well. In such a case, your desire is not only for the smartphone itself, but also to belong to the community of peers by owning what others own.

Building upon this, desire (or *akogare* in my study) may be viewed as a site of negotiation where the individual's sense of the self, of the other, and of the community come into play. Put differently, *akogare* or "desires are not solely [one's] own but are intersubjectively constituted and shaped by [own] social, historical, political, and economic histories and contexts" (Motha & Lin, 2014, p. 333).

In the spirit of Motha and Lin's (2014) article, which has extensively discussed the interconnectedness of English, desire, and identity by drawing on theoretical works as well as empirical studies (for example, Kubota, 2011a; Kimie Takahashi, 2013), I would like to first lay a theoretical background incorporating English, desire, and identity and next solidify *akogare* as a lens of analysis and focus of investigation for this study.

Theoretical framework.

In this section, I first discuss the recent theoretical trends in TESOL studies, then move on to introducing two theoretical underpinnings of my study: post-structuralism and social

identity theories. Finally, based on these theoretical discussions, I return to the concept of *akogare* and solidify it as a valid lens of analysis for this study.

Theoretical developments in TESOL studies.

As discussed earlier, the recent TESOL scholarship has increasingly engaged with issues of race, gender, ethnicity, and class; all of which are important constructs in understanding the identity(ies) of students and teachers in TESOL contexts. In fact, the topic of identity within TESOL has been explored widely in the company of power/ownership (Norton, 1997), morality (Phan, 2008), motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), passion and desire (Piller & Takahashi, 2006), or leisure and consumption (Kubota, 2008, 2011a). Focusing exclusively on Japanese TESOL, a number of scholarly works have investigated the existing, changing, and newly-emerging identities of students and teachers alike, particularly in response to the current landscape of a transitional Japan (Nakane, Otsuji, & Armour, 2015).

Contributing to this body of literature, my study aims to pay particular attention to identities of students (and teachers supplementally) situated within the complex and changing landscape of Japan, specifically of its higher education (e.g. Breaden, 2013; Breaden et al., 2014; Burgess et al., 2010; McVeigh, 2002; Toh, 2013a; Tsuruta, 2013). As far as the JHE's *kokusaika* efforts are concerned, the existing studies tend to focus on the macro aspects of the output (e.g. policies, organizational reforms, etc.) while the individual experiences (of students and teachers in particular) are studied to highlight the problems of the current practices. With my study, I propose to rethink *kokusaika* through the lens of *akogare*. Specifically, I will draw connections between *akogare* and the complex and changing landscape of Japan, ultimately aiming to re-

envision the nation's *kokusaika* practices. To further solidify *akogare* as a lens of analysis and focus of investigation for this study, I discuss my theoretical underpinnings as follows.

Theoretical underpinnings of my study: Identity.

Following in the wake of the recent developments in TESOL studies, my study emphasizes the social dimension of identity while grounding the concept of identity in a poststructuralist fashion (i.e. identity as multiple, hybrid, changing, evolving, being negotiated, and a site of struggle as extensively documented in the existing TESOL studies such as: Kubota & Lin, 2009; Norton, 2000, 2013; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007; to name a few). In preparation to discuss *social identity* as a core theoretical construct of my study, I explain my engagement with post-structuralism as follows.

For its chaotic and deconstructive nature, post-structuralism has been the target of criticism (for instance, in international relations: Campbell, 2007; in feminist theories: S. S. Friedman, 1991; in art history: Moxey, 1994). Allowing no single truth but multiple (often competing to one another) to exist may result in confusion and reduced validity of each truth. Further, by merely buying into this moment of post-structuralism, one may contribute to the increasing hegemony of post-structuralism today, ultimately causing the rigidity and unwanted pain to which post-structuralism emerged initially as an intellectual response (Angermuller, 2015; S. S. Friedman, 1991).

In fact, unlike the politically-minded poststructuralists who are also advocates of multiplicity, diversity, and human rights in a broad sense (as discussed in the case studies: Murdoch, 2006), my alignment with post-structuralism is not out of defiance to structuralism or more traditional modes of thinking where a single truth and binaries may prosper. Instead, my

study aims to accommodate variations of what my potential study participants may bring forth

yet it is completely plausible that there might be one single truth shared by the participants in

some cases. In this sense, I too "refuse…to remain locked in the poststructuralist 'plane'" (S. S.

Friedman, 1991, p. 486), as Friedman proclaimed. This personal stance persists as I move on to

the discussion of social identity hereafter.

Beginning with the collaborative work by Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, and Flament (1971),

numerous studies have since contributed to theorizing the concept of "social identity" (Tajfel,

1978). Coined as "a person's definition of self in terms of some social group membership with

the associated value connotations and emotional significance" (Turner, 1999, p. 7), social

identity is concerned with the way in which individuals may identify themselves with a particular

group over other ones in a given context. In their seminal work, Tajfel and Turner (1979) also

put forward the idea of the between- and in-group dynamics where, for example, some members

of a particular group may perceive their group to be higher/lower in social status than other

groups because group boundaries are constantly being defined/redefined over time and space.

There has been a common assumption that an overemphasis on one's *social* identity may

undermine the *individuality* of each person belonging to a given group. For example, differences

among individuals may potentially be subsumed by the common identity of a group if focusing

too much on the group membership. In light of this assumption, Postmes, Spears, Lee, and

Novak (2005) studied the aspect of such depersonalization processes using two different models:

one group with an obvious common identity among its members (forming a *deductive* group

identity) and the other group with a less obvious common identity among its members (forming

an *inductive* group identity). While the concept of deductive and inductive group identity

formation comes in handy when analyzing the dynamics of individuals within a group, the authors argue that "it is unlikely that in any group encountered in real life will social identity be entirely induced or deduced" (Postmes et al., 2005, p. 761). This confirms the complexity of social identity, which embraces the individuality in some way while also dismissing it in other ways. Nevertheless, I posit that such dynamics are the very essences of what makes social identity invaluable.

Other critics of social identity have argued that it glosses over the importance of sociocultural/historical/political moments that may influence identity construction. For instance, Huddy (2001) has identified four key issues: identity choice, the subjective meaning of identities, gradations in identity strength, and the considerable stability of many social and political identities that may impede the application of social identity in a real world. Similarly, Brown (2000) has challenged the validity and applicability of social identity noting that "research within the SIT [social identity theory] tradition has concentrated exclusively on controlled processes, relying almost invariably on various explicit measures of intergroup attitudes and behaviour" (2000, p. 767).

In fact, due to the complex ideas centering around social identity, its criticisms often originate in misunderstanding than in theoretical incongruences or other flaws. On this note, John C. Turner has brilliantly articulated that social identity and its relevant theories do not claim to be "finished" or "perfect" (1999, p. 7); rather, they remain in the process of changing, evolving, and being challenged/negotiated (as discussed in: Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; R. Jenkins, 2014).

Building upon these arguments, while I subscribe to social identity as an important construct in my study, I do not fixate on a single understanding of social identity. Instead, following R. Jenkins' (2014) careful framing of social identity (e.g. group boundaries are neither impermeable nor static), for my study, I weight the *process* in which one may identify/be identified with a particular group in a given sociocultural/historical/political context (Jonathan Friedman, 1992; R. Jenkins, 2014) as discussed hereupon.

In response to Turner and his colleagues' classic discussions of social identity (and in many ways defying the general criticisms reviewed above), Stets and Burke (2000) elaborate on the very process through which such identification (labeled as "social comparison") occurs. By marrying the seemingly estranged *identity theory* with *social identity theory*, the authors have aimed to direct our focus on the multifaceted social processes (i.e. at macro-, meso-, and micro-levels) through which the self is defined and voluntarily defines itself (Stets & Burke, 2000). Not only does an individual, based on his/her perception of similarities and differences between the self and others, identify oneself with a particular group over others, but also the individual's identity is further complicated as he/she belongs to multiple and occasionally overlapping groups. Different meanings and expectations are attached to each member of a group within which multiple subgroups may exist (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 228). By constantly negotiating within and between group identities, the individual categorizes the self and specific others as "the in-group" while leaving out the rest as "the out-group" (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 225).

Such a categorization, albeit subjective it may be, is significant for it "partitions the world into comprehensible units by accentuating ingroup similarities and outgroup differences" (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Korte, 2007, p. 172). Put differently, through this process of

categorization, the individual attempts to understand his/her positioning as "a member of a unique combination of social categories" (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 225) in the otherwise incomprehensible world.

It is also important to beware that even when the world seems less incomprehensible thanks to this process of categorization (i.e. establishing one's social identity), the world is never singular or objective. As Weedon (1987) famously stated, it is "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself, and her ways of understanding her relation to the world" (1987, p. 32) that continuously help position and reposition the individual in her version of the world. Situated within the multiple and shifting boundaries of groups in given sociocultural/historical/political contexts, the individual struggles, negotiates, and occasionally counters the perceived self in an attempt to understand the world as a whole (Jonathan Friedman, 1992; R. Jenkins, 2014). This point will be explored further in the subsequent section.

The last strand I would like to inweave here before moving on to the next section is how social identity in the context of Japan has been documented. Specifically, the uniqueness (or the peculiarity) of the alleged "Japanese self" has been widely studied across different social science disciplines. By and large, this Japanese self is assumed to be "relational" (Araki, 1973), "ambivalent" (Ohnuki-Tierney, 1990), and both idiosyncratic and perhaps universal (Bachnik, 1998). Of these studies, the urge to mitigate the distance between the currently-perceived self and "the ideal self" (in language learning: Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; in the workplace: Kondo, 1987) resonates with how I have defined *akogare* for this study.

Following Kondo's theorization of the "ethically ideal self" (1987) and Dörnyei's "Ideal L2 Self" (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), Japanese individuals purportedly craft "the self" by constantly negotiating between their personal and societal expectations and desires (this also corroborates the discussions made by Stets and Burke (2000) above). In other words, one's "ideal self" is to be achieved by approximating what the current self is (or so one perceives) to what one believes society expects him/her to become. What is noteworthy here is the entire process of recognizing the current self to achieving the state of "the ideal self" relies largely on his/her own perception of what the world is. In short, social identity theories and the concepts of "ethically ideal self" (Kondo, 1987) and "Ideal L2 Self" (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009) have helped me to postulate how *akogare* may also be constructed and circumscribed within one's perception of the world.

Theoretical implications of akogare.

Based on the theoretical discussions so far, *akogare* can be understood as being contingent on one's perception of the world. In other words, an individual is not able to develop *akogare* towards something or someone beyond what he/she perceives as his/her world at a given time and space. To put it the other way around, one's perception of the world not only orients and grounds "the self," but also it likely delimits his/her *akogare*.

Likewise important is when an individual categorizes the self and certain others as "the in-group" while leaving out the rest as "the out-group," those who are in-group tend to be evaluated positively whereas the out-group is *othered* in a less favorable manner (Stets & Burke, 2000). However, what is most significant about *akogare* is that, with *akogare*, the other (perhaps

can be labeled as "the out-group" in Stets & Burke's terms) is often perceived with passion, as demonstrated in the following case.

The frequent appearance of the Japanese discursive *akogare* towards Hawai'i in the media today (Tezuka & Yano, 2015) is a good example of "positive othering," so to speak. In the book titled *Akogare no Hawai: Nihonjin no Hawai-kan [Dreamy Hawai'i; The Japanese Perspective on Hawai'i]*, Yaguchi (2011) paints a complex picture of how the Japanese collectively desire, consume, and manipulate the abstract Hawai'i by falling into the clutches of the tourism industry. The Japanese *akogare* towards Hawai'i, according to Yaguchi (2011), is indeed a product of multiple factors such as: 1) what international travel once meant and means today in Japan; 2) how Hawai'i has existed in relation to Japan and other places (e.g. geopolitically, historically, economically, culturally, etc.); and 3) the ongoing healing/relaxation boom in Japan.

Hawai'i seems to be desired as a place that is not Japan (hence recognized as "the other") yet, it is *the* place where many travel to consume the Japanized concepts of "loco," "hula," and "eco" in their most "authentic" forms (Yaguchi, 2011). In that sense, Hawai'i is not only desired but *positively othered*. Most importantly, Yaguchi (2011) presents historical accounts on how Hawai'i has become the target of *akogare* among the Japanese and such sentiment has since evolved to take different shapes and forms as have the so-called Japanese values and needs over the recent years.

Following this example, while social identity theorists have argued that "the self" constructed based on the perceived similarities and differences often leads to a negative evaluation of the so-called "others," I suggest that *akogare* may challenge, transgress, or undermine such traditionally-dichotomic boundaries. That is, *akogare* may function as a bridge

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between the otherwise well-defined dichotomy of the in-group and out-group, potentially blurring the line or challenging the normative understanding of certain groups to be more powerful, prestigious, or dominant.

Research questions and the *akogare* framework.

Informed by the above theoretical discussions, my study investigates *akogare* situated within the complex and changing landscape of Japan, specifically of its higher education (e.g. Breaden, 2013; Breaden et al., 2014; Burgess et al., 2010; McVeigh, 2002; Toh, 2013a; Tsuruta, 2013) where such desires may be constructed, consumed, and transformed within and beyond the persisting theme of Japan's racialized, gendered, and idealized internationalization practices (e.g. Appleby, 2014a; Goodman et al., 2003; Graburn et al., 2008; Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Lie, 2001; Maher, 2005; Rivers & Houghton, 2013; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008). As stated earlier, I aim to explore *akogare* not simply as an articulation of one's insatiable desire for "the West" (e.g. in the form of a Western man) or English independently, but as a space of negotiations in which an individual positions/repositions the self: who the individual is, in relation to the other: who/what the individual wants to be/be with (positive othering). Using *akogare* as the overall framework to understand how an individual positions the Japanese self in relation to the (desired) non-Japanese other, this study aims to showcase different examples in which the students may be engaging with Japan's *kokusaika* project in the context of JHE.

In practice, by drawing on Miyamoto's case (as discussed in **Is Japan in Transition?**), I would ask probing questions such as: how do you relate yourself to Miyamoto?; do you have any *akogare* feelings towards her?-why/why not?; what is your opinion about Miyamoto representing Japan?; etc. By asking such questions, I will highlight, for example, the students' preconceived

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notion of the alleged "Japanese identity" and what implications it may have for JHE's *kokusaika* campaign today and possibly to reimagine what *kokusaika* should look like for Japan.

To that end, the following are the two research questions this study engages in:

1. *How do Japanese university students project the self and the other (e.g. the Japanese self and the non- Japanese other) through akogare?*

2. *What implications do the students' self-other perspectives (via akogare) have for the internationalization of Japanese higher education and beyond?*

To clarify how I locate the self-other within the concept of *akogare*, I have developed the following diagram:

Figure 2. The akogare distance between the self (who desires) and the other (who/what is desired).

In this framework, synthesizing the theorization of ideal selves (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Kondo, 1987), I postulate that *akogare* in transnational contexts likely occurs at a contingent distance between an individual who desires (= the Japanese self) and the other who/what is desired (= the non-Japanese other). To reiterate, *akogare* is not simply an articulation of one's desire, but rather a space of negotiations in which an individual positions the self: who the individual is, in relation to the other: who/what the individual wants to be/be with (positive othering) against a backdrop of one's perceived world at a given time and space. In other words, not only must the self and the desired other be envisioned within one's perception of the world, but also the distance (rather psychic than physical[15]) between the self and the other ought to be just right for *akogare* to work (examples of akogare emerging, developing, or dissapearing found in: Appleby, 2014a; Leupp, 2003; Ma, 1996). From this point of view, it confirms the necessity to pay attention to how my study participants begin to develop *akogare* as well as how it may escape them.

Akogare as an emic cultural construct.

While the sentiment of *akogare* itself may not necessarily be idiosyncratic to Japan or Japanese people, its embodiment and experience may be. That is, although desires [*akogare*], whether sexual, platonic, or else are at the center of our being (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Buss, 1994), I understand that the ways in which desire or *akogare* is embodied or experienced may be specific to people of different time and space (e.g. "culture").

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[15] I am referring to Bullough's (1912) "psychic distance" to indicate the distance between the self and the other. Similarly, the concept of "psychological distance" (Trope & Liberman, 2010) captures the essence.

For the scope of my study, I have defined *akogare* as a sentiment in which an individual desires to pursue his/her dreams whether they be a person or an object (tangible or intangible) that is *tantalizingly out of reach* from him/her. Defined as such, *akogare* (as a Japanese word) alludes to a specific type of desire and its associated state of mind (or perhaps how one is *supposed* to feel) which in turn makes it difficult for non-Japanese speakers to understand the particularities and nuances of the concept. I am by no means suggesting that such feelings and emotion or the concept itself are unrecognizable or incomprehensible by non-Japanese speakers or those outside of the so-called Japanese culture, rather, the linguistic barriers inhibit a more mutual and comprehensive understanding.

Let me clarify what I mean by the linguistic barriers. As the Swiss linguist Saussure (1916) argues, language is fundamental to our understanding of the world and how we lead our lives. That said, even among speakers of the same language, it is impossible to fully determine whether or not they have arrived at the exact understanding of a concept because language can only do so much as to "signify" a concept but can never define it completely or unequivocally. As such, it is imaginably more complex for Japanese and non-Japanese speakers to compare and contrast their understanding of *akogare* as not only do they need to cross the language barriers (i.e. Japanese and non-Japanese) but also the worldviews (undergirded by their own native tongue) themselves.

In this sense, while acknowledging that the word *akogare* may never be understood fully or uniformly even by the native Japanese speakers, there may be a shared understanding of *akogare* that comes easier and more naturally to the Japanese speakers. This is based on Saussure's (1916) notion that languages function as the faculty of emotion, communication, and

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(intra/interpersonal) relationships and further, Stuart Hall (1997) also posits that people of the same culture (e.g. language) share a similar conceptual map. Below are some examples to explain this further in light of *akogare*.

As discussed earlier, while *akogare* in TESOL studies is often framed as a romanticism associated with a combination of particular ethnicity, race, gender, and linguistic background, *akogare* in the original language and its use does not always have such connotations. Indeed, *akogare* generally transcends the hetero-romantic or sexual realms as a sense of adoration and respect is also often highlighted.

Take Japanese popular culture for example. In *manga* comics, *akogare* is often embodied by a heroine who has an "idealized yearning" towards a *senpai* [older student] of the same sex (Heiderscheidt, n.d.) or of the opposite sex (e.g. T. Ninomiya, 2002). As such, the readers of these comics may resonate with the characters and develop *akogare* towards some of the characters as well. More recently, there has been an increasing interest in *BL* manga (or *Boy's Love* which entertains male-homosexual themes) whereby its mostly female readers employ a strong sense of *akogare* towards the homosexual male characters (Nagaike & Yoshida, 2011). All these manifestations of *akogare* through such comics continue to emerge and form particular meanings over time and space. While these *manga* comics and how *akogare* is depicted in them are merely the "representation" (Hall, 1997) of the so-called Japanese culture, they are indeed what help shape the society (or nation) and its people because, for one, the readers of the *manga* comics may negotiate, act on, and renew the meanings of *akogare* through their readership and in real life.

In the popular *manga* series *Nodame Cantabile* (T. Ninomiya, 2002), a heroine develops a sense of *akogare* towards the male protagonist not simply because he is handsome and mysterious, but also because he is a talented classical musician whose skills and expertise the heroine sincerely yearns for. In the name of *akogare*, the heroine explores, shapes, and performs her feelings towards the male character (for who he is personally, professionally, and spiritually) to which many of the readers can individually relate (Honda, Fraser, & Aoyama, 2010). As such, a particular embodiment of *akogare* is disseminated, consumed, and reinforced among the Japanese speaking audience. The same process can take place in other forms of popular culture such as literature, TV dramas, music, and movies. Through such processes, a shared understanding of *akogare* emerges and reinforces itself while new meanings are constantly added and negotiated by individuals as well.

In summary, although the concept of *akogare* may be translated into other languages and cultures and its sentiment may be experienced, understood, and evaluated by non-Japanese speakers or those outside of the so-called Japanese culture, it is challenging to determine if *akogare* universally exists or is a concept specific to Japan. However, I would point out that the embodiment and experience of *akogare* in some way may be specific to Japanese people (hence possibly an emic cultural construct) partly because the native tongue functions as the faculty of emotion, communication, and relationship building for them. For example, a Japanese-speaking person from Japan may perceive and experience *akogare* in a particular way as do most of "the Japanese" for they may be subscribing to a shared conceptual map which includes meanings, representations, history, and so forth that has and continues to shape the society (and nation at large).

This by no means concludes that such experience or embodiment of *akogare* is exclusive to Japanese people. Rather, it is to suggest how powerfully the language influences its speakers in shaping their emotion, experience, and overall worldviews. On this note, with a particular focus on the language, I acknowledge that *akogare* may be understood as an emic cultural construct of Japan.

Summary of Chapter 1

Initially out of mere curiosity, I began my project to investigate how *akogare* has been discussed in TESOL notwithstanding its original meanings. Although the treatment of *akogare* in TESOL may be more specific than its standard use in Japan or among Japanese speakers, the concept of *akogare* in TESOL seems to have profound implications for Japan, particularly given the current *kokusaika* state of the nation. With this study, I intend not only to address the scholarly gap in the existing literature by adding more nuance to the concept of *akogare*, but also to re-theorize it so the concept can be used more heuristically as well as empirically.

Defining *akogare*.

By incorporating different definitions found in etymology, the media, scholarly works, anecdotes etc., I have defined *akogare* as a sentiment in which an individual desires to pursue his/her dreams whether they be a person or an object (tangible or intangible) that is *tantalizingly out of reach* from him/her. Further discussion on *akogare* followed in the section on theoretical framework and underpinnings.

The intersection of internationalization, English, identity, and *akogare*.

I have also illuminated the current *kokusaika* state of Japan, particularly in JHE as where internationalization, English, identity, and *akogare* converge and intersect. Simply put,

internationalization in Japan is often synonymous with the promotion of English and *akogare* is one of the factors that seemingly fuel the internationalization of Japan (e.g. English education). Since *akogare* is grounded, for this study, as creating a complex and liberating space where individuals can negotiate or even transcend their ethnic, national, racial, gender, or linguistic identities, Japanese higher education is indeed an ideal research site where internationalization, English, and identity (via the concept of *akogare*) can be methodically and effectively examined.

Theoretical framework and its relevant theoretical underpinnings.

I reviewed the recent theoretical developments in TESOL studies and selected a focus on *social identity* as a core theoretical construct of my study. Based on the theoretical discussions of the existing literature on social identity, I addressed some of the theoretical implications of *akogare* to establish an overall framework for this study.

Specifically, for this study, I have established *akogare* as a space of negotiations through which an individual positions the self: who the individual is, in relation to the other: who/what the individual wants to be/be with. Following the theorization of ideal selves (Dörnyei, 2005; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Kondo, 1987), I have postulated that *akogare* in transnational contexts likely occurs at a particular distance between an individual who desires (= the Japanese self) and the other who/what is desired (= the non-Japanese other).

Research questions.

Guided by the initial questions such as: **who** (which students) develop *akogare* towards whom/what?; **how and why** do these students develop *akogare*?; **what different types** of *akogare* are there?; and **what larger implications** do the students' *akogare* have for the nationwide *kokusaika* project?, two main research questions are generated:

1. *How do Japanese university students project the self and the other (e.g. the Japanese self and the non- Japanese other) through akogare?*

2. *What implications do the students' self-other perspectives (via akogare) have for the internationalization of Japanese higher education and beyond?*

These questions correspond to the two major aims of my study, which are to better understand the current *kokusaika* state of JHE and to reimagine what *kokusaika* should look like for Japan in the coming years.

Other objectives and contributions.

In addition to the two major aims reiterated above, the objectives as well as the contributions of my dissertation study are as follows:

- To fill the gap in the existing literature on *akogare* in TESOL that has largely discussed the Japanese romanticism towards "the West" or persons from/of "the West" (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007; Gibson, 2014; Ieda, 1991, 1995, Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b; Minou, 2015; Kimie Takahashi, 2013).

- To reconceptualize *akogare* to highlight the complex and liberating space where, I argue, individuals can negotiate or even transcend their ethnic, national, racial, gender, or linguistic identities.

- To engage flexibly with binaries and categorization such as the Japanese v. the non-Japanese through social identity theories. In doing so, I will show how *akogare* may challenge, transgress, or undermine such traditionally-dichotomic boundaries.

- Acknowledging my positionality as a researcher and a participant in *akogare* discourses to which I am consciously and subconsciously contributing, resisting, and conforming:[16]
  - I attempt to capture narratives of students and faculty members that are otherwise absent in the existing literature and
  - By rendering a complex picture of JHE' internationalization experience from the perspectives of students and faculty members, this study aims to contribute to the knowledge and practice of the current *kokusaika* campaign in JHE and Japan at large.

Chapter Overview.

This chapter (1) has discussed extensively on *akogare* from different angles in order to establish it as a framework for this study. By presenting theoretical underpinnings and later a framework based on them, two major research questions were generated to examine the field of Japanese higher education (JHE) where internationalization, English, identity, and *akogare* intersect.

Chapter 2 focuses on the concepts of "the self" and "the other" to help clarify them for my study where constructs such as "the Japanese self," "the non-Japanese other," "Japaneseness," and "non-Japaneseness" are imperative. I will review seminal works on the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other as well as some of the TESOL studies on *akogare*, bringing together these constructs in the field of my focus, JHE. I also highlight what roles English has played in the context of JHE. Consequently, I advocate the *akogare* framework (see **Figure 1**) as it helps

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[16] I have employed a constructivist view as a major lens to collect, interpret, analyze, and report data which will be discussed in detail in the **Methodology** chapter.

unpack the underlying social, cultural, theoretical implications of the current *kokusaika* [internationalization] campaign in JHE.

Chapter 3 illustrates the methodology of this study. As my study is mainly informed by data collected and analyzed through qualitative inquiry methods (e.g. online questionnaires, follow-up interviews, and field observations), I explain how and why these methods have been selected and utilized. Particularly, the concept of "narrative realities" (Chase, 2008, 2011) is highlighted because it complements and strengthens this study with its focus on *akogare*. Caveats for the use of my researcher/participant positionalities (grounded in the constructivist paradigm) are also carefully outlined. Based on the results of a pilot study, the details of my methodology are fine-tuned.

For the findings chapters (4 & 5), to purposively present the data while addressing my research questions, I arrange my discussion under three main themes. They are set as: 1) *akogare* and gender; 2) *akogare* and precarious "Japan"; and 3) *akogare* and JHE today. Under such themes, Chapter 4 largely responds to the first research question (RQ1) while Chapter 5 addresses the second research question (RQ2) and wraps up the discussion.

Finally, the concluding chapter (6) provides the overview of this study and examines the profound implications of the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5. As three major strands of findings are reiterated here, the keyword *multiplicity* is highlighted, particularly in the context of today's JHE. As food for thought, I conclude the study with an excerpt of an interview I held with a professor at a Japanese university.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter investigates the concepts of "the self" and "the other" to help lay the groundwork for my study where constructs such as "the Japanese self," "the non-Japanese other," "Japaneseness," and "non-Japaneseness" are extensively discussed. I will review seminal works on the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other as well as some of the TESOL studies on *akogare* in order to bring together these constructs in the field of my focus, Japanese higher education (JHE). I also highlight what roles English plays in the context of JHE. By doing so, I advocate the *akogare* framework (see **Figure 1**) as it helps unpack the underlying social, cultural, theoretical implications of the current *kokusaika* [internationalization] campaign in JHE.

Imagining the Japanese Self and the Non-Japanese Other Today

Literature on the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other has proliferated in recent years as the world continues to connect and people are perhaps trying to "partition…the world into comprehensible units by accentuating ingroup similarities and outgroup differences" (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Korte, 2007, p. 172) as discussed earlier. The more established Japan becomes whether in the world industry, economy, or technology market, the more the nation seems to fixate on the alleged "Japanese identity" and turn a blind eye to the diversity within the nation (Lie, 2001).

Before surveying some of the existing studies in the fields of sociology, psychology, cultural studies, and education such as TESOL that deal with "the Japanese self" and "the non-Japanese other" within the current *kokusaika* landscape (as extensively discussed in **Japanese Higher Education as a Proposed Research Site**), I will first define the self and the other to align with the objectives of my study.

Defining the self and the other for my study.

Historically, the distinction between the self and the other—or "I and you" as I may interchangeably refer to[17]—has stimulated philosophical inquiries. For instance, my recognizing self as I (not you) and the other as you (not I) helps define who I am in relation to (or in contrast to) who you are. This process of knowing the self occurs when and only when the other is in the picture. Further, not only does this process of "self-knowledge" (Hegel, 1807) help define the self vis-a-vis the other, but also it highlights one's "genuine reality—of what is essentially and ultimately true and real—of mind as the true and essential being" (1807, p. 3). In other words, "know thyself" (Hegel, 1807) is not simply a matter of self-awareness but is indeed an important step in perceiving the world as a whole in which the self exists in relation to the other (as discussed in **Theoretical Framework**).

Imaginably, understanding the self through the existence of the other becomes complex once we reflect on ourselves as social beings (e.g. Stets & Burke, 2000). For instance, when one "see[s] one's self in another's image, or when one behaves differently than one would typically act, causing the self to appear as other to the self" (Schalk, 2011, pp. 197–198), the definitions of the self and the other are no longer simply "I and You [Thou]." Similarly, some of the *other(s)* may be emotionally, physically, or spiritually closer to the self than other *other(s)*. This depicts the "spectrum of relatedness between self and other" (Schalk, 2011, p. 200) in which an individual constantly negotiates the self in relation to the other while the other supposedly does the same. In this sense, one's "reality is highly individualized, not a matter of consensus and therefore more an issue of experience-based perception than fact of inherent truth" (Schalk, 2011,

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[17] Not to be confused with the conventional use of "I and Thou" in theological terms (e.g. Buber, 2000).

p. 208). In other words, an individual's reality may be informed by the interrelation between: 1) one's upbringing/background (e.g. race, gender, and linguistic backgrounds) and 2) how the individual perceives or imagines the self, the other, and the reality (which collectively renders one's perception of the world).

Based on the above, for the scope of my study, I circumscribe the self as the interlocutor with a particular understanding of who he/she is in relation to the likewise perceived other at a given time and space. By uncovering how an individual positions the self in relation to the desired other (via *akogare*), I intend to gain a glimpse into the interlocutor's version of reality or collectively the world.

The Japanese self discussed in literature.

As briefly discussed in the previous chapter, the Japanese self has been explored mainly as being "relational" (Araki, 1973), "ambivalent" (Ohnuki-Tierney, 1990), and seemingly idiosyncratic yet applicable to other cultures and societies (Bachnik, 1998). By contrary, the recent works have documented the fluidity and multiplicity of the Japanese self transcending different generations, occupations, languages, and other domains (e.g. Igarashi & Yasumoto, 2014; Kondo, 2009; Lebra, 2004; Maynard, 2007; Nagaike & Yoshida, 2011; Sabatini, 2013).

Of seminal works on the Japanese self and its construction, an article by Markus and Kitayama (1991) deserves a particular attention for their work is unique as well as controversial. Through the bricolage of previous studies juxtaposing Western cultures (e.g. American) against non-Western ones (e.g. Japanese), the authors (1991) conclude that the two construals of the self: *independent* and *interdependent*, greatly influence one's cognition, emotion, and motivation therefore shape individuals' experiences. Specifically, the self stands as a separate construct in

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the *independent* construal model while the self is defined based on its relationship(s) with the other in the *interdependent* construal model (see figures in Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226). This, in turn, suggests that the other is viewed differently from the *independent* model to the *interdependent* model. For example, the other is a free-standing figure for the former while the other is "included within the boundaries of the self" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 245) for the latter. Consequently, these separate views lead to creating different realities for those in Western cultures (allegedly using the independent model) from others in non-Western cultures (theoretically using the interdependent model).

Admittedly, the overgeneralized nature of the analysis and conclusion by the authors (1991) has stirred up a controversy. While acknowledging their significant contributions to academia, Spiro (1993) expresses frustrations with inadequate contextualization of the keywords such as *construal* or the self in Markus and Kitayama's (1991) article, arguing that "because of this lack of conceptual clarity, it is difficult to assess the[ir] claim for the peculiarity of the Western conception of the 'self' because, often, it is apples and oranges that are being compared" (Spiro, 1993, p. 143). In light of Sprio's argument, I note that Markus and Kitayama (1991) might have benefitted if situated themselves as scholars with particular backgrounds in their work. Put differently, their positionality(ies) may have provided better explanations as to how and why the authors interpreted/presented data and defined their frequently-used terms including "independent" and "interdependent."

Elaborating on Spiro's (1993) argument, Lindholm (1997) pinpoints Markus and Kitayama's (1991) "logical errors, methodological flaws, and ethnographic misconceptions" (Lindholm, 1997, p. 405) and contends that the data presented by Markus and Kitayama (1991)

would have drawn opposite conclusions if carefully analyzed and presented. Further, Lindholm

maintains:

Differences in Asian and American selves (or, more properly, in self-representations) are

more complex than a simple "independent/interdependent" distinction allows and that these

differences possibly have less to do with "self-systems" and "construals" and more to do with

social structure and cultural values, particularly the values inculcated by indigenous patterns of

authority and subordination. (Lindholm, 1997, p. 415)

To reinforce his argument, Lindholm (1997) demonstrates how individual experiences

and emotion can transcend cultures, locations, centuries, and languages, through the introduction

of relevant Japanese classical literature.

Despite the logical incongruence and other flaws pointed out, Markus and Kitayama

(1991) have effectively portrayed "the self" as a powerful theoretical construct, advising us to

further grapple with its meanings and formation. Their concluding remarks about future research

have also urged me to engage with some methodological questions such as: how do we establish

a universal point of reference to understand a particular behavior in research (for instance, how

do I negotiate with varying subjectivities)?, or how do we identify the possibility that one may

have internalized alleged norms as part of one's reality (for example, how do I know if one is

being truthful or conforming to what he/she thinks is expected when being surveyed/interviewed,

or can I even draw such a line between authentic or norm-conforming)? These are indeed

relevant and important questions as I proceed to think about the methodology of my study in

Chapter 3.

The Japanese self and the non-Japanese other in current Japan.

Using the concept of the self and the other in the context of Japan, a number of studies (particularly in TESOL) have contributed to defining the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other (e.g. Askew, 2002; Burgess, 2004; Graburn et al., 2008; Ishiwata, 2011; Kawai, 2009; Klien, 2002; McVeigh, 1998; Morris, 2010; Prieler, 2010; Refsing, 2003; Rivers, 2011; Russell, 1991; Tajima, 2006; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008; K. Yoshida, 2008). In light of the "rapidly globalizing Japan," Burgess (2004) contends that Japan attempts to maintain the purity of the Japanese self by instilling their own versions of *kokusaika* [internationalization] and *ibunka/tabunka kyosei* [coexisting with people of different/multiple cultures] through different policies and guidelines.

According to Burgess (2004), Japan's willingness to internationalize herself or coexist with others should not simply be accepted at face value, but seen as a strategic response to the changing social reality of Japan and of the world where international migration is on the rise. It is indeed problematic in the way Japan repeatedly articulates the need to establish "Japanese identity" (Ishiwata, 2011) and continues to define culture in essentialist, exclusivist, and oversimplified terms, tirelessly inculcating the "perceptions of the migrants as *Other*" (Burgess, 2004) in the Japanese mind. To Japan, "*kokusaika* is less about transcending cultural barriers and more about protecting them," as Burgess (2004, p. 9) forcefully argues.

In this regard, the popular practice among Japanese politicians, businessmen, or the general public to "talk international" using words like *kokusaika*, *ibunka/tabunka kyosei*, and

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daburu[18] hints at Japan's hypocrisy. By merely engaging in conversations infused with these "progressive" (or mere buzz-) words, people may erroneously assume that they are making contributions to the "new multicultural Japan" (Burgess, 2004) all the while clearly delineating between themselves as Japanese and others as non-Japanese. The use of *daburu* instead of *hafu* (Kamada, 2011) is a case in point. The conscious act of using *daburu* to address a specific individual may not necessarily be more socially-just than labeling the individual as *hafu* because both words similarly identify people of particular mixed heritage as "them" and never "us" (Lie, 2001; Murphy-Shigematsu, 2000).

Nonetheless, such distinctions between the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other do not always paint a grim picture. Both conscious and subconscious attempts to distinguish the Japanese self from the non-Japanese other may be leveraged as a powerful tool in achieving personal goals and desired outcomes. For example, in TESOL classrooms where by default a non-native English speaker is imagined as the Japanese self and a native English speaker is imagined as the non-Japanese other, such mental imaginary has the potential to "challenge established intergroup dynamics and stereotypes" (Rivers, 2011, p. 850) if properly handled. It can maximize learner motivation and interest while addressing "communication anxiety and negative stereotypes" (Rivers, 2011, p. 850) if and when elements of the learner's imagined self-other are tapped into to create a safe and fun learning environment.

To sum up the discussions so far, the Japanese self has long been studied to theorize the unique ways in which Japanese people relate themselves to one another and more recently (particularly in the TESOL context), it has been used to juxtapose against the non-Japanese other.

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[18] A person of Japanese and non-Japanese "double" heritage, often used as a better alternative for the more commonly used word: *hafu* or half

While this binary (i.e. the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other) certainly provides an entry into understanding the complexity of social identities in "a transitional Japan" (Nakane et al., 2015), my study flexibly engages with the binary, guided by the principle of the "multiple and shifting boundaries" of groups in society where the individual struggles, negotiates, and occasionally counters the self (as discussed in **Theoretical Framework**). On this note, I will next elaborate on how English in particular has served as a separator between the self and the other in Japan. I will then discuss how *akogare* may function as a bridge between the otherwise well-defined dichotomy of the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other.

English "defines" the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other in Japan.

Broadly, literature in language education, applied linguistics, and development studies has documented the status of English as the global language (Crystal, 2003; Murata & Jenkins, 2009; Pennycook, 1994, 1998; Phillipson, 1992; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Widin, 2010). The language raises "profound economic and political questions" but also challenges us with "questions of right and wrong, morality, and character," particularly given its overpowering sentiment of "empire, colonialism, slavery, racism, and linguicism" (Motha, 2014, p. 144). While English was once cherished as "*bunmeigo* [the language of civilization]" (Hatta, 2003, p. 107) in Japan, the trajectory of English, particularly as a school subject, has never been without complications due to the competing nature of Japan's cultural, sociopolitical, and economic ideologies (Hashimoto, 2007; Hino, 1988; Ike, 1995; Imura, 2003; Kubota, 1998; Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, 1980; Omura, Takanashi, & Deki, 1980; Y. Saito, 2011).

Admittedly, English speakers enjoy the benefit of the language's social and cultural capital in Japan where English has indubitably established its place (Kubota, 1998; McKenzie,

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2010; A. Saito & Hatoss, 2011; Seargeant, 2005, 2008, 2009, 2011; Toh, 2013b; Tsuda, 2008; Yamagami & Tollefson, 2011). On the one hand, Japan is known as "one of the few non-Western countries to achieve remarkable economic success without sacrificing its traditional culture and language" (Kubota, 1998, p. 295). On the other hand, a multitude of ideologies attached to English may be leveraged as an apparatus for solidifying a larger nationalistic ideology of Japan (Hashimoto, 2007; Kubota, 1998). In addition to the complex positioning of English in respect to national identities and politics at large, there are other ideologies that continuously endorse the status of English among the Japanese as a token of "original[ity], desir[e], standard, relevan[cy], and rank" (Phan, 2013b). In the meanwhile, the highly market-oriented education trends continue to exasperate the English fervor all over the world (Chowdhury & Phan, 2014).

For Japan, the unique positioning of English in the nation representing "both resistance and accommodation to the hegemony of the West" (Kubota, 1998, p. 304) paints a complex picture. Arguably, the government may promote larger political agendas by tapping into the general public's equivocal desire for the "globalizing" (often synonymous with "English dominant") world. Examples include the series of government-funded initiatives to "internationalize" Japanese universities and their students (as detailed in **Japanese Higher Education Today**). Rivers (2010) posits that these initiatives merely serve the economic interests of Japan while intensifying the "us (Japanese) – them (non-Japanese) distinction" (2010, p. 451) and condoning the sustainability of the imagined internationalization. Further, he denounces Japan's parochial views of the English-speaking world as follows:

Most of Japan's internationalisation to date has imagined the other as being a Caucasian

English speaking Westerner. Serious questions remain as to whether the Japanese people

will be able to effectively cope with a wider variety of cultural, physical and linguistic

difference within their immediate society. (Rivers, 2010, p. 451)

On a similar note, Phan (2013a) contends that these internationalization initiatives are likely

triggered by the "fear of Japan being Westernised through English language education" (2013a, p.

170) that the government is perhaps taking precautions against the possible invasion (both

figuratively and literally) of foreign powers by controlling to run its own show.

Indeed, there has been a "prolonged obsession with maintaining the assumed

unproblematic purity of Japanese identity" (Phan, 2013a, p. 170) while such a unified identity

among the Japanese is often collectively imagined. In this regard, a number of scholars have

warned about the continued practice of overlooking the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity

within Japanese society (e.g. Burgess, 2004; Burgess et al., 2010; Hashimoto, 2007; Phan,

2013a; Rivers, 2010; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008). At least in the eyes of the

government (e.g. policies and reforms), English functions perfectly as a separator between the

self and the other in Japan, ultimately to safeguard the "Japaneseness, or Japanese identity,

which insist[s] on the class, cultural, and ethnic homogeneity of Japan" (Lie, 2001, pp. 4–5).

Imagining ネイティブ [native English speakers] as the non-Japanese other.

Just as the assumed Japanese identity (or "the Japanese self") has been increasingly

problematized in TESOL contexts, so has been the collective imagining of "the other as being a

Caucasian English speaking Westerner" (Rivers, 2010, p. 451) in Japan. In this light, Appleby

(2013) unearths how *eikaiwa* [English conversation] schools in Japan purposefully commodify

"native" English-speaking white male teachers to quench Japanese female customers' thirst for "the imagined West" (Anderson, 1982. as cited in Pavlenko & Norton, 2007). "Charisma Man" (Rodney & Garscadden, 2002, 2010), a popular comic strip depicting a white Canadian geek successfully reclaiming his masculinity in Japan, is referenced by Appleby (2013) to highlight the penetrated Western presence in Japan. In this comic strip, the main character is sarcastically portrayed as "both loser and hero: on the one hand, an unqualified poseur and victim of Western female scorn; but in Japan, an attractive agent, an Adonis in sexual pursuit of (willing) Japanese women" (Appleby, 2013, p. 129). While derogatory terms such as LBH (loser back home) exist to deride white males who fail to attract women back home yet enjoy a never-ending supply of women in Japan ("LBH," 2014), foreignness often represented in the form of white male body continues to sell in Japan.

In addition to what (or who) populates TV shows and advertisements in Japan today, those who "appear(s) authentic" (Seargeant, 2005, p. 330) to claim a native English speaker identity are often preferred candidates as English language teachers (Hambleton, 2011; Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Mizuta, 2003; Rivers, 2015; Ruecker & Ives, 2015). Indeed, the "appearance" plays an important role in defining someone as an "authentic" native English speaker or not for "authenticity need not necessarily equate with reality itself but with a quality that allows one to believe that something has the authority to truthfully represent reality" (Seargeant, 2005, p. 330) especially in Japanese TESOL. This idea was taken up further by Lowe and Pinner (2016) who have carefully reviewed the practical and theoretical links between "authenticity" and the similarly used concept of "native-speakerism" in the field of English language teaching (ELT).

Elucidated by Holliday (2005, 2006), the concept of native-speakerism indeed helps us to examine the complex working of Japanese desiring "native" English speakers not only as English language teachers but also as an embodiment of foreignness. This concept sheds light on the inescapable reality where "non-native speakers of English are confined by an ideology of deficiency through which the vested interest of native speakers…are promoted, while non-native speakers and their respective groups are systematically stripped of cultural value as inferior out-group members" (Houghton & Rivers, 2013, p. 1). In this view, the devalued non-native speakers may be perceived as the victim. However, according to Houghton and Rivers (2013), the dichotomy between native and non-native speakers itself undermines the very notion of native-speakerism. For instance, identifying a person as either a native or non-native speaker of English undervalues the autonomy of the individual who may or may not wish to be categorized as such. Furthermore, such labeling with its current political undertones merely confines individuals into either category that overlooks the significance of the interaction between individuals where multiple identities are being negotiated (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Stets & Burke, 2000). For this reason, Houghton and Rivers (2013) encourage the reader to revisit the concept of native-speakerism in order to understand "the multitude of intricate ways that native-speakerism…is reflected through daily pedagogical practice, institutional and national policy, as well as legal frameworks" (2013, p. 7) and a number of responses have since followed (Swan, Aboshiha, & Holliday, 2015).

In another study within the scope of native-speakerism, 80 non-English-language major students in a Japanese university were surveyed in hopes to understand how and who they envision their ideal English language teachers to be (Rivers & Ross, 2013). According to the

prestudy survey results, a teacher who is male (Gender), white (Race), 30 to 35 years old (Age), originally from America (Country of Origin), speaks English as his first language (English Language Ability), possesses conversational Japanese abilities (Japanese Language Ability) and has taught for 5 to 10 years (Teaching Experience), was identified as the most ideal English teacher (Rivers & Ross, 2013). However, contrary to the authors' hypotheses, when some of the teachers' attributes were purposefully altered (by the authors) to simulate one teacher more favorable than others, the race attribute was seemingly annulled in the students' preference of teachers:

> For example, within the Black-favored group condition the Black race teacher was rated as most desirable, within the Asian-favored group condition the Asian race teacher was rated as most desirable, and within the White-favored group condition the White race teacher was rated as most desirable….These results…suggest that the idealized attributes identified on the prestudy survey were more influential in impacting student ratings of teacher desirability than the implicit role of race. (Rivers & Ross, 2013, pp. 334–335)

This is indeed an interesting study that tacitly challenges the otherwise pervasive discourse of "racialized native (English) speakers [in Japan]" (Kubota & Fujimoto, 2013). It is especially intriguing if juxtaposed against the general discussions in TESOL today. In specific, a number of studies have emphasized the importance of race, gender, and linguistic backgrounds for these three constructs are alleged to significantly influence Japanese students' perception of their "native" English-speaking teachers in Japan (e.g. Appleby, 2013, 2014b, Bailey, 2002, 2007; Y. G. Butler, 2007; Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Kubota & Fujimoto, 2013; Piller, Takahashi, & Watanabe, 2010; Rivers & Ross, 2013; Kimie Takahashi, 2013). Building upon these studies,

my study utilizes *akogare* as the main framework to understand how one positions the Japanese self in relation to the (desired) non-Japanese other within and beyond the persisting theme of Japan's racialized, gendered, and idealized internationalization practices, particularly of English teaching (cf. Appleby, 2014a; Goodman et al., 2003; Graburn et al., 2008; Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Lie, 2001; Maher, 2005; Rivers & Houghton, 2013; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008).

Akogare May Help "Bridge" the Japanese Self and the Non-Japanese Other: Shedding New Light on the Current Internationalization Experiences

In the face of Japan's internationalization efforts, much focus is given to the macro aspects (e.g. education policies, organizational reforms, etc.) while the individual experiences (of students and teachers, for example) are oftentimes underweighted (e.g. Burgess et al., 2010; A. Ninomiya et al., 2009; Tsuruta, 2013). Further, when the individual experiences are brought to the fore, they are to collectively challenge the current internationalization practices (e.g. Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Rivers & Houghton, 2013; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008), rather than to help identify which part may be on the right track or require a fine-tuning (although it is not unlikely that *nothing* is on the right track).

Espousing *akogare* as a space of negotiations through which an individual positions the self: who the individual is, in relation to the other: who/what the individual wants to be/be with (positive othering) (see **Figure 1**), my study engages with the nationwide *kokusaika* project from a different angle. For example, I aim to examine the potential of the English language as what minimizes the distance between the self and the other, particularly when English is perceived as the medium of communication between the purported self and the other (e.g. "imagined intercultural contact" in Rivers, 2011). On this note, I put forward the idea that English, as being

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one of the most common ingredients of *akogare*, has the potential to mediate the binary of the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other. With this in mind, I will next review some of the works that have focused on *akogare* in TESOL contexts.

   ***Akogare* in *kaigai kinmu* 海外勤務 [working abroad].**

As thus far discussed, *akogare*, although originally encompassing a wide range of desires and beyond, has been colored in TESOL as a largely romantic or sexual desire. In particular, Japanese female learners of English are known to recognize the language as leverage to mobilize their otherwise underprivileged womanhood in Japan especially when pursing education, career, and white men (Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b, 2008).

As Kelsky (2008) argues, what some of these Japanese women may be desiring is not "the West, but…an idea of the West" (2008, p. 87) in which English plays a major role. On the one hand, they appear to fantasize "the West" as providing a space for career-oriented women and female agency. On the other hand, they are either consciously or subconsciously contributing to "the imposition of new regimes of compulsory consumption and political appropriation" (Kelsky, 2008, p. 104) by actively resorting to the imagined freedom and female agency in America. On this point, Kelsky (2008) contends that:

   All the while expatriate Japanese women work/study in the United States, the American

   companies/universities that employ/educate them gain not only bilingual, bicultural

   workers/students, but also the opportunity to celebrate and sell their "diversity" to

   shareholders/alumni and the consuming public hungry for nonthreatening multicultural

   images….While [Japanese] internationalist women are not simply "buying" the West in

   the form of conspicuous designer shopping (and this is by no means unknown in Japan),

they are actually "buying into" it, and substituting individual trajectories of upward

mobility for a collective confrontation of the social arrangements in Japan that have led to

their unhappiness. (Kelsky, 2008, p. 104)

It is ironic in a sense that some of the Japanese women who desire liberation as an integral part

of their imagined West continue to define "female agency and achievement" (Kelsky, 2008, p.

104) within their own purview. Put differently, these women seem to fixate on a particular

version of an agency and achievement as something that is *not* in Japan. Following the previous

discussions (in **Theoretical Framework** of **Chapter 1**), these women likely develop their

akogare by positively othering America for its imagined qualities (e.g. "female agency") while

the women themselves are positioned as the desiring self (figuratively representing Japan). It

then comes as no surprise that these women adhere to specific versions of "female agency and

achievement" (Kelsky, 2008, p. 104) for these definitions make perfect and complete sense

within their perceived world.

   Akogare **in** *eikaiwa* 英会話 **[English conversation] schools.**

   Being the target of *akogare* himself, Bailey (2007) reflects on his own experiences as a

"native" English-speaking white male in an English conversation school in Japan. The author

argues:

   Akogare is instantiated and intensified inside *eikaiwa* [English conversation school] by

   the performative aspects of staff, students and instructor practices in addition to *eikaiwa*

   texts and advertising and popular media discourses while *seken* [the general public],

   especially gender-normative *seken*, directed at women is minimized. (Bailey, 2007, p.

   585)

In fact, *eikaiwa* [English conversation] schools are a relatively popular research site to observe Japanese women's *akogare* towards "West White masculinity" as termed by Appleby (2013). A number of studies have painted sexualized profiles of Japanese female learners of English in *eikaiwa* schools (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007; Kubota, 2011a).

Situated within the *eikaiwa* landscape, Kubota's (2011a) study engages with the leisure and consumption aspects of language learning rather than with its more commonly emphasized *investment* aspect (e.g. for upward mobility, cultural capital, etc. as originally discussed in Norton, 2000). While recognizing the trend of *eikaiwa* being a place where "white native speakers are constructed as an exotic icon to be consumed" (Kubota, 2011a, p. 486), the author offers the following insights:

> Positioned next to this icon [of white native speakers] are bilingual Japanese people as a target of *akogare*. Yet, consumers [of English language learning] are not influenced by this social imaginary in a homogeneous way – they have diverse subjectivities and participate in *eikaiwa* in different ways (Kubota & Mckay, 2009). In other words, the interplay between racial, cultural, and linguistic ideologies in language learning and individual subjectivities are not monolithic. (Kubota, 2011a, pp. 486–487)

While *akogare* was directed mostly towards white native English-speaking teachers and occasionally towards Japanese teachers of English (bilingual), little or negative attention was paid to native English-speaking African American teachers (Kubota, 2011a) or other non-native English-speaking teachers. In fact, the often-credited binaries of native (English-speaking) v. non-native (English-speaking); white v. non-white; and Japanese v. non-Japanese (as found in "native-speakerism": Holliday, 2005, 2006) fail to provide a full accounting of why some

learners (or the parents of the learners) in Kubota's (2011a) study would likely find a Japanese teacher of English ("non-native" English-speaking) more desirable than a "native" English-speaking African American teacher. This again points back to my decision to carefully and flexibly engage with binaries.

Building upon Kubota's argument (in excerpt), not only does the learner's racial, cultural, and linguistic ideologies influence his/her engagement with English learning, but also the same interplay seems to impact where (or to whom) the learner's *akogare* may be directed. This then endorses the potential of *akogare* not only as a construct which bridges the otherwise estranged self and other, but also as a framework to understand how an individual may position the self in relation to the desired other within and beyond the conventional discourse of Japan's racialized, gendered, and idealized internationalization practices, particularly in English teaching (cf. Appleby, 2014a; Goodman et al., 2003; Graburn et al., 2008; Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Lie, 2001; Maher, 2005; Rivers & Houghton, 2013; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008) as discussed earlier.

Akogare in *ryugaku* 留学 [study abroad] and thereafter.

Another popular outlet of post-secondary English learning where *akogare* may be observed is *ryugaku* or study abroad. While Kelsky's works (e.g. 2001b, 2008) focus on relatively career-oriented Japanese women in America, Kimie Takahashi (2013) has conducted an extensive ethnographic study of Japanese female learners of English in Sydney, Australia, with a substantial emphasis on *akogare*. In the pursuit of a better lifestyle, the study participants homogenously desired to speak English fluently, find a "native" English-speaking white

boyfriend or husband, and linger around the English-speaking world, whether it be Japan or overseas, for the rest of their lives (Kimie Takahashi, 2013).

Although their life in New York was not simply driven by the purpose of acquiring the English language, the women in Ieda's (1991, 1995) reportage demonstrate similar desires to those found in Takahashi's (2013) work. In one way or another, these women expressed *akogare* towards the New York lifestyle including music, drugs, and sex and most importantly towards becoming a "true" New Yorker. In fact, most of them consciously or subconsciously disassociated themselves from the people or society of Japan altogether to claim their New Yorker identity. To these women, New York or America perhaps symbolizes transformation, prosperity, and success all of which they believe would draw envious stares (=*akogare*) from others, specifically the friends and family back home in Japan.

While most women had no future plan to return home to Japan, the author often sensed their deeply buried emotional attachment to the motherland, Japan (Ieda, 1991, pp. 224–227). From this point of view, some women's expressed belief that they "no longer fit in Japanese society" was not simply of their positive disassociation from Japan, but can also be seen as their frustration with their displaced identity as a Japanese national. It was as if some of these women were striving to redeem their displaced identity by someday becoming the target of *akogare* to their Japanese friends, family, and others who otherwise had little to no faith in these women (or so they narrated).

Akogare in Japanese higher education contexts.

Similarly discursive and complex *akogare* towards the idea of "the West" is discussed in Appleby's (2013, 2014a, 2014b) works. Specific to the context of JHE (Japanese higher

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education), Appleby (2014b) presents a unique example of white Western male teacher and Japanese female student relationship dynamics. Unlike the *eikaiwa* environment where "female students [are] rarely seen as victims…and [are] often represented as agentive, sexually desiring adults" (Appleby, 2014b, p. 8), students in Japanese universities are often portrayed as serious learners of English. In particular, female students were depicted by their white Western male teachers as "naïve, innocent, and child-like" (Appleby, 2014b, p. 9) thereby having a romantic relationship with them was not only unlikely but also deemed unethical in the professional sense.

However, some male teachers did admit to gossiping about the attractiveness of their female students or to the fact that some of them "were…potentially displaying misplaced erotic desire for Western male teachers" (Appleby, 2014b, p. 14). This anecdote speaks to the complexity of JHE as a research site where multiplex desires may be constructed, consumed, and transformed within and beyond the persisting theme of Japan's racialized, gendered, and idealized internationalization practices (cf. Appleby, 2014a; Goodman et al., 2003; Graburn et al., 2008; Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Lie, 2001; Maher, 2005; Rivers & Houghton, 2013; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008).

Summary of Chapter 2

I began this chapter by defining the self and the other for my study and reviewed seminal works on the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other to help clarify these concepts for my study. Following the previous discussions about my poststructuralist understanding of social identity (see **Theoretical underpinnings of my study: Identity**), my study flexibly engages with binaries and categorizations such as the Japanese self v. the non-Japanese other. That is, I carefully unpack the contextual meanings of such categorizations without fixating on a singular

understanding of these binaries, categorizations, and other relevant concepts and pay more attention to the process itself through which some may identify or be identified with a specific category over others.

By reviewing literature, I brought forward the idea that English has the potential to mediate the binary of the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other. Put differently, analogous to how Kubota (1998) describes English as representing "both resistance and accommodation to the hegemony of the West" (1998, p. 304), I have suggested that English may be seen as both a separator and a mediator between the Japanese self and the non-Japanese other in Japan. For example, when *akogare* comes into the picture where English is serving as the medium of communication between the alleged self and the other, the language functions not merely as a mediator between the two but potentially as leverage for the (Japanese) self to move a step closer to "being" or "being with" the desired (non-Japanese) other.

Although *akogare* has been studied and defined within specific contexts and meanings (e.g. Appleby, 2013, 2014b, Bailey, 2002, 2007, Ieda, 1991, 1995; Kelsky, 2008; Kubota, 2011a; Kimie Takahashi, 2013), I maintain that *akogare* can and ought to be understood in a more nuanced way than has it largely been. Taking this stance, I emphasize *akogare* as more than an articulation of romantic or sexual desires, a fraudulent motive to learn English, or implicating the Japanese women's passion for "West White masculinity" (Appleby, 2013). Using the *akogare* framework (see **Figure 1**) where I postulated that *akogare* in transnational contexts likely occurs at a particular distance between the individual who desires (= the Japanese self) and who/what is desired (= the non-Japanese other), I intend to uncover how my study participants may construct, consume, and transform the self-other perspectives via *akogare* within and beyond the persisting

theme of Japan's racialized, gendered, and idealized internationalization practices (cf. Appleby, 2014a; Goodman et al., 2003; Graburn et al., 2008; Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Lie, 2001; Maher, 2005; Rivers & Houghton, 2013; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008). Having covered the backbone of my study, the next chapter will finally detail the methodology.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter illuminates the methodology of this study. For my study is largely informed by data collected and analyzed through qualitative inquiry methods (e.g. online questionnaires, follow-up interviews, and field observations), I explain how and why these methods have been selected and utilized. Particularly, the concept of "narrative realities" (Chase, 2008, 2011) is highlighted because it complements and strengthens this study with its focus on *akogare*. Caveats for the use of my researcher/participant positionalities (grounded in the constructivist paradigm) are also thoroughly considered. Based on the results of a pilot study, the details of my methodology have been fine-tuned.

Backdrop of This Study

Context.

I have so far illuminated the significance of *akogare* in my study as a valuable lens through which we may better understand the individual's positioning of the Japanese self in relation to the (desired) non-Japanese other (also see **Figure 1**). I have also shown extensively how *akogare* may be seen as a valid social, cultural, and theoretical construct.

Despite its potentials, *akogare* has largely been addressed within particular contexts and defined in a relatively specific manner in academia. Some of the examples include the *akogare*-related experiences of mostly Japanese female learners towards rather objectified white Western males (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007, Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b, 2008; Kubota, 2011a; Kimie Takahashi, 2013). Among these studies, JHE stands out as a complex and unique site wherein romantic desires of Japanese female students are often being tapered by the heightened sense of professionalism among the teachers (Appleby, 2014b).

As I have probed deeper into the magnitude and complexity of JHE as an ideal locale to investigate *akogare* narratives, I have also argued for the need to understand *akogare* in a more nuanced way than has it largely been. To be specific, for this study, I would like to treat *akogare* as more than an articulation of romantic or sexual desires, a fraudulent motive to learn English, or implicating the Japanese women's passion for "West White masculinity" (Appleby, 2013).

Manifested in education policies focusing on the internationalization of JHE, a discursive *akogare* seems to exist not only at the individual level but also collectively at the institutional or national level. Such policies may be propelled by the Japanese desire to participate and compete in the "global" world (Kariya, 2014) while its subtext remains largely demystified and unchallenged. Confined within such a global imaginary, these policies in the name of internationalization or globalization merely treat English language education and English-speaking population as a default and a goal in itself to envisage the perfect future of Japan.

Additionally, this global imaginary has asserted issues concerning native-speakerism (Holliday, 2005, 2006) and, at the same time, the "obsession with maintaining the assumed unproblematic purity of Japanese identity" (Phan, 2013a, p. 170) which prevents the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity from becoming recognized as a fact of life in Japan. While many studies have echoed the pervasive discourse of Japan's racialized, gendered, and idealized internationalization practices, particularly of English teaching (e.g. Appleby, 2014a; Goodman et al., 2003; Graburn et al., 2008; Houghton & Rivers, 2013; Lie, 2001; Maher, 2005; Rivers & Houghton, 2013; Willis & Murphy-Shigematsu, 2008), there has also been a body of literature hinting at the possibility of space in which such a discourse may be challenged. One example is the study by Rivers and Ross (2013) which concludes that students' preference of teachers may

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not always be influenced by the implicit role of race. Defying such pervasive discourses, I aim

to explore how students may be projecting the Japanese self and the (desired) non-Japanese other

in their *akogare* narratives. Put differently, my study focuses on Japanese university students

situated within the complex and changing landscape of JHE (e.g. Breaden, 2013; Breaden et al.,

2014; Burgess et al., 2010; McVeigh, 2002; Toh, 2013a; Tsuruta, 2013) where the students may

perhaps be pushing the conventional boundaries of Japanese v. non-Japanese.

Types of Japanese higher education institutions.

In hopes to shed new light on the complexity of the "internationalizing" JHE (Office for

International Planning, Higher Education Policy Planning Division, Higher Education Bureau,

n.d.), I invited students from multiple universities located throughout Japan. To ensure the

sample that aligned with the objectives of my study ("purposeful sampling": Chapelle & Duff,

2003, p. 165), the following criteria of Japanese universities were taken into account:

- National, public (locally governed), or private

- Small (less than 2,000 students) to large (more than 5,000 students) student body[19]

- Junior college, four-year university, and graduate schools

- Specialized or general

- Coed or women's college

Recruitment channels.

Considering the above criteria to ensure *purposeful sampling* (Chapelle & Duff, 2003, p.

165), I explored the possibility of taking advantage of my varied connections for recruitment as

follows:

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[19] Approximately 3.2 million students are enrolled in over 1,200 universities and junior colleges
nationwide (Higher Education Bureau, 2012; Mitsubishi Research Institute, 2011).

- Reached out to several of my former colleagues who work at universities or at international student service organizations from which prospective study participants may be identified and recruited. I designed and forwarded a recruitment flyer with details of my study to my former colleagues who could help me to distribute the flyer to larger pools of prospective study participants at different institutions and organizations.

- Contacted some of the participants from the *Native-Speakerism* symposium held in Saga, Japan, from September 28th to 30th, 2014 where I was able to acquaint myself with a number of university instructors who teach English as a subject or teach other subjects using English as a medium of instruction. These instructors helped me to recruit their students to participate in my study.

- Contacted several dozens of Japanese university students and professors I have encountered in the several few years through international collaborations wherein I served as an interpreter, a course assistant, and a coordinator (Balinbin, Levine, Nonaka, & Galmiche, 2014; Levine, Balinbin, & Nonaka, 2015; Levine & Nonaka, 2016).

- Asked my colleagues and professors at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM hereafter) as well as other academic and personal acquaintances to see if they knew of any prospective participants for my study.

Research Paradigm

In view of the subjective and potentially private nature of *akogare*, collecting and analyzing the *akogare*-focused narratives of Japanese university students was potentially a

challenging task. For this reason, I found the constructivist paradigm to be relevant and useful in examining how my study participants *and I* generate meaning and knowledge while negotiating between ideas and experiences of our own. Further, the constructivist paradigm allows the researcher to explore how multiple realities are being constructed for the target population while the researcher herself participates in the construction of these realities (Hatch, 2002, pp. 11–20).

In consonance with the constructivist ontology, I have defined the self as the interlocutor with a particular understanding of who he/she is in relation to the likewise perceived other at a given time and space (see **Defining the Self and the Other for My Study**). Further, I position myself as a researcher/participant who consciously and subconsciously contributes, resists, and conforms to *akogare* discourses and "join[s] together in the process of [knowledge] construction" (Hatch, 2002, p. 15) which epistemologically speaking aligns comfortably with the constructivist paradigm as well. Informed by the select theoretical underpinnings (as discussed in **Theoretical Framework**), the *akogare* framework (see **Figure 1**) embraces the constructivist principles as it is designed to make sense of how university students position the self in relation to the other (via positive othering).

Although the constructivist paradigm has greatly helped articulate my ideas for this study, its emphasis on metaphysical implications suggest the elusiveness as well as the complexity of the paradigm. While my researcher/participant reality(ies) stands strong as a significant part of the constructivist paradigm, it might also obfuscate what may otherwise be elicited or presented as data in my study. More details are discussed later where I touch upon the ideas of "narrative reality" (Chase, 2008, 2011) [20] or "tellable" stories (Pavlenko, 2002).[21]

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[20] In my study, I define the term as "a version of one's reality that is constructed via narration."

Design and Methods

My study is informed mainly by data collected and analyzed through qualitative inquiry methods such as online questionnaires, follow-up interviews, and field observations.

Qualitative orientation.

Merriam (2009) articulates the value of qualitative inquiry as it assists in studying "how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (2009, p. 14). Qualitative inquiry is appropriate when the researcher needs to responsively and adaptively collect, communicate, and process data (Merriam, 2009, p. 15). In addition, qualitative research generally embarks on an inductive path, which not only allows the researcher to critically engage with the existing ideas, but also enables a new body of knowledge to emerge (Merriam, 2009, pp. 15–16).

Focusing specifically on research in the field of TESOL, Chapelle and Duff (2003) examine both quantitative and qualitative approaches and offer new guidelines for both. The authors posit that "the complexity of today's research [calls] for a rethinking of the guidelines rather than the simple addition of a methodology" (2003, p. 157), implying that researchers need to take more responsibility in designing a study and ensuring that its purpose, context, theoretical framework, and overall methodology align and complement one another.

Since I envision my study to capture *multiple* realities of JHE today, rather than identifying a generalizable characteristic of the target population or testing a hypothesis, qualitative inquiry appears more appropriate than does quantitative one. However, as advised by education research experts (i.e. Chapelle & Duff, 2003; Creswell, 2012; Plano Clark & Creswell,

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[21] In my study, I define the term as "a version of one's reality that is constructed via narration, chosen specifically for the particular listener at the time."

2014), I do not want my selection of qualitative approach over quantitative to limit my overall methodology. In other words, while qualitative inquiry does help guide and complement my study in terms of its purpose, context, theoretical framework, and methodology, I will resort to quantitative approach when and where appropriate and necessary to make a better sense of my data.

Also, it is important to note that there has been a series of discussions around what is "qualitative" or "quantitative" research in the first place and which approach is more legitimate (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Appreciating the expressions such as "the qualitative researcher as bricoleur and quilt maker" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 4) and "qualitative research as a site of multiple interpretive practices" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 6), I strive to remain as a responsible and flexible researcher who stays attuned to the environment and vigilant of any possible indicators that may influence the course of my study so I can make adjustments and alterations as necessary. In that sense, I perceive my study as a dynamic and ever-evolving project that is not only aimed at generating a new body of knowledge hence contributing the academic conversation, but also helps me to grow as a researcher who is capable of multiple and diverse approaches to education research. As such, I consider qualitative orientation as the approach that helps meet these personal aims also.

Finally, stated as the major objective of this study in Chapter 1, I am canvassing how JHE students in the thick of *kokusaika* experience may project the self and the other through *akogare*. In so doing, I recognize myself as an active participant also in *akogare* discourses to which I am consciously and subconsciously contributing, resisting, and conforming. Given such objectives of this study and my acknowledged positionality (briefly described above), taking a qualitative

path seems not only organic but also necessary in inviting, engaging with, and weaving together different versions of reality(ies) into one study. Subsequently, I explain how and why, out of all prospective methodologies with qualitative orientation, I have chosen narrative inquiry for this study.

Narrative inquiry with case study orientation.

For my study, I have selected narrative inquiry as an overall methodology. The following is how I have come to make this decision.

Case study in TESOL.

My study aims to canvass the Japanese university students' multiple and shifting boundaries between the self and the other "by examining in depth, and in a holistic manner,…particular instances of the phenomenon" (Chapelle & Duff, 2003, pp. 163–164) as recommended for TESOL case studies. Though my study does not exclusively focus on the English language learning or teaching environment (which TESOL has traditionally grappled with), an association with TESOL seems appropriate for TESOL currently stands as the major field where the existing body of literature on *akogare* flourishes. Also important to note is that TESOL studies have recently been shifting their focus from language acquisition to learner/teacher identities, professionalism, and policy studies (see **Akogare Desire in Academic Literature** and Chapelle & Duff, 2003), all of which my study engages with.

Narrative inquiry: Strengths.

Ultimately, designing my study as a narrative inquiry with case study orientation emerged as the most feasible and practical option. To begin with, I have already discussed that in the current *kokusaika* [internationalization] state of Japanese higher education, students'

narratives are often absent but valuable when attempting to better understand (and possibly to reimagine) Japan's *kokusaika* campaign (or crudely put, "experiment"). Generally speaking in research methodology, narrative refers to the stories told by the study participants (Pavlenko, 2002). In my study on *akogare*, a narrative may be a story told by a study participant about his/her experience taking a particular course from his/her favorite teacher. While such a story may be told in response to a questionnaire or during an interview, each story can be treated as a thread of a larger narrative. Threads of stories may be weaved together and collectively presented as findings of the study.

In fact, the significance of narrative lies beyond the stories themselves because how the narratives are collected, examined, and presented by the researcher is itself a powerful narrative (Pavlenko, 2002) that helps reveal the personal, professional, and emotional positionalities of the researcher (Bell, 2002). In this light, as a methodology, narrative may be slippery and "still in the making" (Chase, 2011) yet offers great potential for innovative and complex studies.

Put differently, narrative inquiry enables the researcher to "collect and tell stories about…individuals' lives" (Creswell, 2012, p. 22) in a constructive manner. While I need to tread carefully with the data collection and analysis process, which is potentially affected by "narrative reality" (Chase, 2008, 2011)[20] or "tellable" stories (Pavlenko, 2002)[21], I still found narrative inquiries valuable for my study aims to gain a glimpse into a version of someone's reality whether it be falsified, embellished, (most ideally) well-represented, or the like. And even when a study participant shares with me a seemingly insincere version of his/her reality, it is meaningful to my study because it potentially informs the way in which the participant has made a decision on which and how stories are told based on his/her understanding of the self (the

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participant) and the other (the researcher, not necessarily a target of *akogare* in this case) in the given context.

Particularly with in-depth interviews, narrative inquiry methods oblige the researcher with ethical awareness, emotional maturity, mutual trust with the interviewee, flexibility, patience, and honesty as much as positive disguise (Chase, 2011, pp. 1179–1180). I find such responsibilities and professionalism to be both intriguing and challenging at the same time, hence integral to the development of myself as a scholar. Indeed, many have noted the benefit of narrative inquiry methods, especially in-depth interviews, as the processes themselves help evolve the relationship between the researcher and interviewee, transform the researcher's beliefs and behaviors, and strategize and manage emotional investment of all parties involved (Chase, 2011, pp. 1102–1106; Seidman, 2013, pp. 97–114). Fascinated by the strengths of narrative inquiry approaches, I envisioned my study to be both personally and professionally meaningful.

Narrative inquiry: Weaknesses.

Now it is time to distance myself from the cherry-picked descriptions of narrative inquiry design and methods. Though a sense making process occupies a large part in narrative inquiry approaches, there is no magic formula that one can easily apply when conducting a narrative inquiry-based study. Take interviews for example. Aimed at producing a snapshot of multiple and competing "narrative realities" (Chase, 2008, 2011) using the voices of the participants, interviews provide powerful venues in which the "researcher can hear the influence of narrative environments on narrative practice" (Chase, 2011, p. 1182). However, the actual task of collecting, interpreting, analyzing, and reporting interview data can be tedious and overwhelming at times.

Particularly, I am speaking of the elephant in the room for narrative inquiry: *my* reality(ies) casts strong influence on the ways in which data is collected, interpreted, analyzed, and reported (Chase, 2008, 2011; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011, pp. 552–554; Tedder, 2012). Some of the potential factors that generate this "narrative reality" (Chase, 2008, 2011) include: my upbringing/background (e.g. race, gender, and linguistic backgrounds as general foci of my study); how I perceive or imagine the self, the other, and the world; the relationship between the participant and myself; and the specific context in which studies (e.g. interviews) are being conducted or reviewed. For I have little to no control over: how participants may choose to represent themselves; how my relationship with them stands or evolves; and other potential variables, the data presented in this study can be seen as a product of at least three different "interpretations constructed as part of the research process" (Hatch, 2002, p. 16).
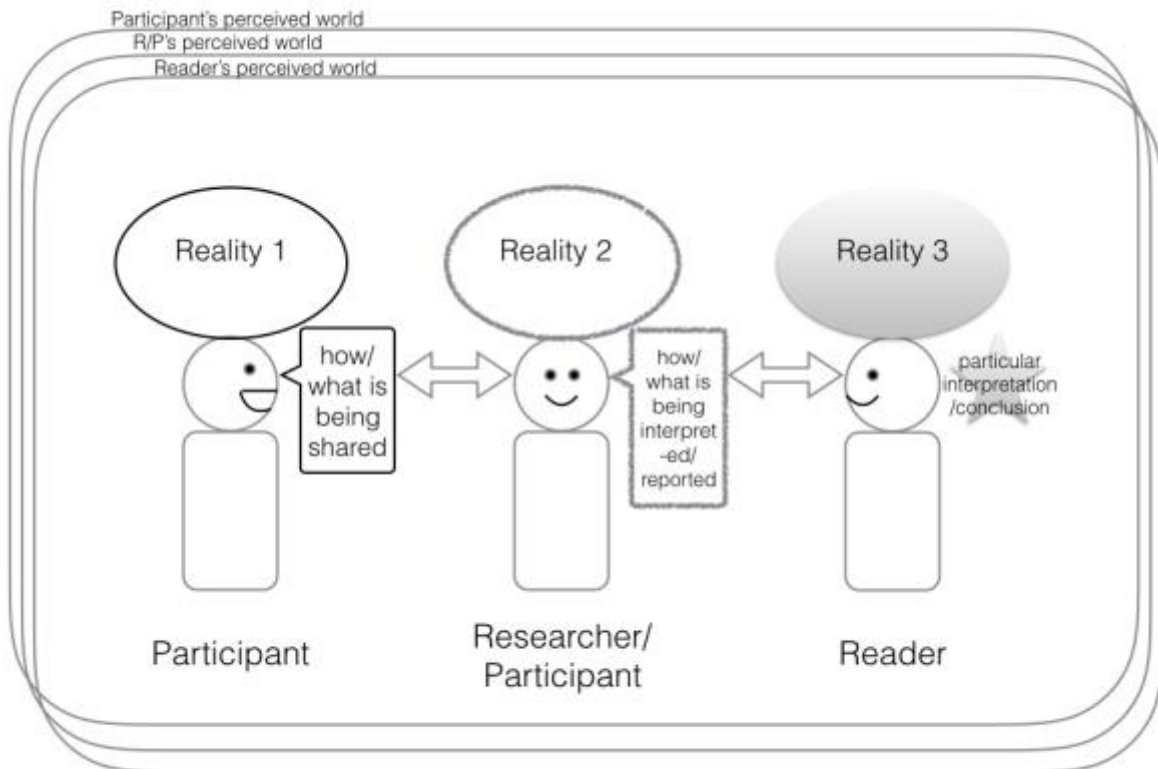
Figure 3. Multiple perceptions of the world, "narrative realities," and the process of interpretation (generated based on the preceding discussion).

That is, as shown in Figure 2, the participant's selected and/or performed "narrative reality" (also, each of the figure comes with their own perception of the world) is first filtered through my researcher/participant lens, then the reader makes a particular interpretation and conclusion of what I consciously or subconsciously select to present as data in this study.

Narrative inquiry and akogare.

As discussed earlier (in **Theoretical underpinnings of my study**; **Theoretical implications of *akogare***; and **The *akogare* distance between the self and the other**), *akogare* is contingent on how one understands the self (including his/her ethnicity, race, gender, linguistic backgrounds) in relation to the other (including all and beyond the aforementioned factors). That is, while *akogare* helps explain a phenomenon in which, for example, a Japanese female learner of English (JFLE) may be obsessed with her Western male teacher (as increasingly researched in TESOL studies), it is important to note that there are many other JFLEs who may not develop *akogare* feelings towards their Western male teacher, or may develop *akogare* feelings but not necessarily in a romantic or sexual manner as many TESOL studies have highlighted.

Put differently, as *akogare* emerges depending on how the individual understands the self in relation to his/her desired other, some JFLEs may desire their teacher either respectfully, platonically, romantically, sexually, or a combination of the fore. Conceivably, unfolding the *akogare*-related narratives of my study participants will help us to gain a better sense of how and why they may desire someone as such. This attempt can be further supported by social identity theories (discussed earlier in **Theoretical underpinnings of my study: Identity**) as social identity theorists have established that one's understanding of the self in relation to others in society helps define who he/she is and in turn dictates how the individual perceives the world in a specific time and space.

Taking into account the complexity of *akogare* as explained above, I find narrative inquiry to be most useful and effective because it provides opportunities for the study participants to tell their own stories in their own words. It helps me as a researcher to collect and

understand multiple realities from the study participants' perspectives for I also participate in the sense making process (=the constructivist paradigm) as a researcher and as an individual (who has some insight about *akogare* herself and may be able to negotiate her emic/etic positionalities[22] effectively and appropriately).

Specifically, if a study participant shares a story about his/her *akogare* towards a professor at the university, I am able to tap into my own background as a Japanese individual who grew up in Japan and may have experienced *akogare* in similar settings. This emic positionality is important as it has the potential to help the study participants to share their private stories without having to worry about whether or not the researcher understands them or what the researcher may think of them. The etic positionality, on the other hand, can help secure a necessary distance between the study participant and the researcher because if it is an intimate story that the participant is sharing, he or she understandably wants to keep some of the details private and ambiguous. Under such circumstances, the researcher needs to remain properly distant from and respectful to the participant as not to overstep the boundaries and withdraw when necessary and appropriate (Seidman, 2013, p. 92). That said, even if I felt the urge to resonate personally with what the participant was sharing, I may have decidedly taken an etic positionality as to maximize the validity and reliability of data.

Further, although I planned on negotiating my positionalities for the validity and reliability of what was being shared by my study participants as narratives, I also acknowledge that some narratives needed to be received and analyzed with a grain of salt. That is, I also paid

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[22] I use the terms *emic* and *etic* positionalities for the descriptive purposes here. Although I distinguish emic from etic views, I acknowledge that such notions are often subjective, transient, and also built on each other (no clear line between the two).

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attention to *how* (in what tone of voice, etc.) a narrative was being shared and under what circumstance because the positionalities I believe I was taking may not have been perceived as such by my interlocutors (i.e. study participants). On this note, I have addressed the three main layers involved in the narrative process (see **Figure 2. Multiple perceptions of the world, "narrative realities," and the process of interpretation**) which are those of the study participant, of researcher (myself), and of the reader of my study. Having discussed the pros and cons as well as how some of the potential issues may be overcome, I consider narrative inquiry to be a powerful and dynamic methodology that has continuously guided my study on *akogare*.

Narrative inquiry methods.

For my study, I explored different narrative inquiry methods. Below are how and why some of the methods were chosen for this study. I highlight the methodological aspects of these methods in this section and will later discuss how they have been actually delivered (in **Pilot Study** and **Post-Pilot Study and Forward**).

Online questionnaires as the preliminary phase of interviews.

Although interviews can render powerful data in narrative inquiry for they most often grant the researcher a firsthand experience to observe "*how* people narrate their experiences" (Chase, 2011, p. 1174), I also used online questionnaires to substitute for what may be scarce or absent in interviews.

First, my study participants are geographically dispersed in Japan and I do not currently reside there, scheduling and conducting multiple interviews, particularly synchronous ones, turned out to be complicated. The time difference between Hawai'i and Japan (19 hours) also made it challenging when coordinating Skype interviews, for example.

Second, since I already had plans to visit different Japanese universities as part of my job in 2015, I took advantage of the opportunity to run a pilot study. Specifically, I administered online questionnaires in March 2015, kickstarting the interviewing process, so I would be prepared for the possible "one-shot meeting[s]" (Seidman, 2013, p. 14) during my field trip to Japan. Further, it was deemed efficient to schedule in-person interviews with some of the willing questionnaire respondents while also allowing space for on-the-spot interviews to organically emerge as I traveled around Japan. Overall, getting acquainted beforehand with potential interviewees via online communication (e.g. questionnaires, email, and text messaging) ensured the efficient use of time when I actually had the chance, as limited as it was, to meet and interview the participants in person in 2015 as part of my pilot study.

Third, my online questionnaires are intended to also accommodate those who may not be willing to be interviewed. Specifically, I envisioned that the flexibility of time and place, privacy and anonymity, and the usability of web-based questionnaires would encourage and diversify participation (Denscombe, 2006; Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004; Sills & Song, 2002). Aimed for both breadth and depth in providing an overall picture of the target population(s), I purposefully designed my online questionnaires to be comprehensive therefore somewhat lengthy while at the same time optimizing the usability (i.e. computer/tablet/mobile phone compatible and intuitive interface). In this way, I intended to elicit in-depth responses from a wide range of participants including those who may prefer to anonymously participate from the comfort of their mobile phone at a time and place of their choosing yet may opt out for further involvement in my study.

As for the content, the first part of the questionnaire mainly includes multiple-choice and closed-ended questions (such as age, gender, and racial/ethnic background), followed by the second part where I ask open-ended questions (such as *what is your opinion about the status of English as the global language?*). More details are provided later in the **Pilot Study** section.

Follow-up interviews.

For some researchers posit "narration is the practice of constructing meaningful selves, identities, and realities" (Chase, 2011, p. 1174), interviews are invaluable means for the researcher to observe and participate in the "storytelling" (Chase, 2008, 2011; Pavlenko, 2002) portion of narrative inquiry. With my online questionnaires treated as the preliminary phase of interviews, follow-up interviews are expected to provide further opportunities for the researcher (myself) not only to better understand the questionnaire respondents, but also to individually confirm or disconfirm specific themes and patterns across a collection of responses.

While I have reiterated the significance and values of interviewing as an organic process of "narrative reality" or "storytelling" (Chase, 2008, 2011; Hatch, 2002, pp. 91–115; Seidman, 2013), I would like to justify the types of interviews I conducted as part of the pilot study and continued with for the rest of my study.

As a novice researcher with limited experience as an interviewer, or an interviewee for that matter, conversation style interviews (most ideally in person) have been conducive to providing an environment in which I felt less nervous about the interview process and naturally paid more attention to the interviewee. By conversation style interviews, I do not mean that I "verge on a 'We' relationship" (as warned by Seidman, 2013, p. 92), but I strived to maintain space between myself and the interviewee. As Seidman (2013) advises, the secret is to "strike a

balance, saying enough about myself to be alive and responsive but little enough to preserve the autonomy of the participant's words" (Seidman, 2013, p. 92) which allowed me to focus on their narration, not to overlay my experiences onto, but to absorb and ask probing questions if necessary and deemed appropriate.

Lastly, to ensure the environment to be most comfortable for each willing participant, I continued to offer different modes of interviewing, that is, a means of or a combination of email, Skype, text messaging (mobile phone or computer), and in person. These choices were contingent on the availability of necessary tools, timing, and the degree of my study participants' commitment as well.

Although the questions prepared for the follow-up interview vary from one interview to another, the standard format is I begin the interview with questions about their questionnaire responses to better understand where the study participant may be situated. Additionally, in order to observe spontaneous reactions and ask on-the-spot questions, I formulated questions in regards to the Miss Universe Japan 2015 and the concept of Japaneseness/non-Japaneseness (e.g. *Have you heard about the controversies surrounding the new Miss Universe Japan 2015?*, *What is your take on the controversies?*, and *In your opinion, what makes someone "Japanese"?*). These questions have not only functioned as a topical and provocative anchor during the interview, but also asking these questions in person has helped to provide a context to the questionnaire responses and other data collected. More details (e.g. format and length) are provided later in the **Pilot Study** section.

Field observations.

Aimed at taking full advantage of my time spent at the universities that I was visiting as part of my job in 2015, I conducted and continued with field observations of my study participants and their surroundings in order to yield "enough contextual detail and sufficient representation of the voices of the participants that readers can place themselves in the shoes of the participants at some level" (Hatch, 2002, p. 16). Field observations in theory consist of processes in which the researcher studies and understands individuals in their supposed natural environment by establishing access to information and subtexts which may otherwise be unavailable or unobservable in questionnaires or interviews (Angrosino & Rosenberg, 2011; Creswell, 2012, pp. 213–214).

Just as ethically complex and often confusing as it can be with conducting questionnaires and interviews, I acknowledge that my researcher/participant positionality may have obfuscated the entire process of field observations (Angrosino & Rosenberg, 2011, pp. 1308–1311) in which I may have paid too close or too little attention to different phenomena just as likely as my "observations [may] come to be translated into the different voices suitable for multiple audiences" (Angrosino & Rosenberg, 2011, pp. 1308–1309). Provided it is impossible for me in the first place to "fully understand" my research participants unless supernaturally "entering into their streams of consciousness," the best I can do to counter the above vulnerabilities is to offer details of the setting in which the study participants are situated and engaging in certain activities so that their behaviors may possibly be placed in the audience or the reader's "objective context of meaning" (Schutz, 1972). In other words, coupled with data collected via online questionnaires and follow-up interviews, notes from the field observations aim to help animate

the narratives shared by my study participants for the audience (or the reader). Examples of how field observations have been conducted are provided later in the **Pilot Study** section.

Informal conversations.

To better capture intricacies and nuances of the word *akogare*, I have collected as many different definitions of *akogare* as possible from Japanese language users and learners alike throughout my study. The collection of this data may be a casual conversation in person, by email, or text messaging. I expect this collection of data to be minimal risk therefore not requiring a formal written consent. Specifically, I have struck a conversation with Japanese speakers or learners I came across to ask how they define the word *akogare*. As such, I have aggregated and organized over 200 responses along with my observation notes of each respondent when the response was received in person. A visualization of these responses is presented later in **What Is "*Akogare*" to You? (Collective Definition)** as a word cloud in Chapter 4.

Notes on data analysis.

While my study largely takes a qualitative path, I also collected and analyzed quantitative data (e.g. age) to identify recurring themes or patterns to supplement my qualitative inquiry process. Specifically, I generated graphs and diagrams using quantitative data to help analyze my qualitative data. As an example, I noticed a possible correlation between the length of study/travel/work abroad and the type of *akogare* the study participants experience based on the reviewed literature (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2007; Kelsky, 2001b; Kimie Takahashi, 2013) that the Japanese female learners of English (JFLE) who have spent an extensive period of time outside of Japan may have a clearer life plan using English (which no longer passes as *akogare*)

than other JFLEs who have less experience being abroad (who are perhaps still in the *akogare* phase with English and have not acted on their dreams yet). This is a critical piece of analysis as it helps verify the workings of *akogare* and one's perception on the self and other[23] as discussed in Chapter 1.

As such, utilizing different types of data better articulates my findings though at the same time I admit to the "limitations of all knowledge; each partial account complements the others, providing pieces of the meaning puzzle but never completing it" (Ellingson, 2011, p. 1682). With such limitations (or rather, the beauty) of knowledge in mind, I aim to "connect" as many pieces as possible so that the reader may make sense of a larger picture of the puzzle.

Visualizing the workings of my research design and process.

Figure 3 is a visualization of what I have so far discussed. As seen in the diagram, the three circles represent the "narrative realities" (Chase, 2008, 2011) of the researcher/participant (myself), study participants, and other informants[24] who are of particular backgrounds (e.g. race, gender, language) and have their own perception of the world (also shown in **Figure 2**). Influencing each other directly or indirectly (for example, what I gather from an informant may directly influence the way in which I position myself in this study or indirectly influence the way in which I describe a particular participant in this study), all parties participate in constructing the narrative(s) of this study, corroborating with or dismissing each other's version of "narrative reality" (Chase, 2008, 2011) and constantly adding new reality(es) into the mix.

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[23] How an individual positions the self in relation to the desired other (i.e. the target of *akogare*) depends on how he/she perceives the world in a given time and space, and vice versa. Further, one's worldview is in constant negotiation with experiences, people, and places.
[24] Such as those from informal conversations, meetings, and observations, or other non-participants whose assistance I solicited in validating English-Japanese translations.
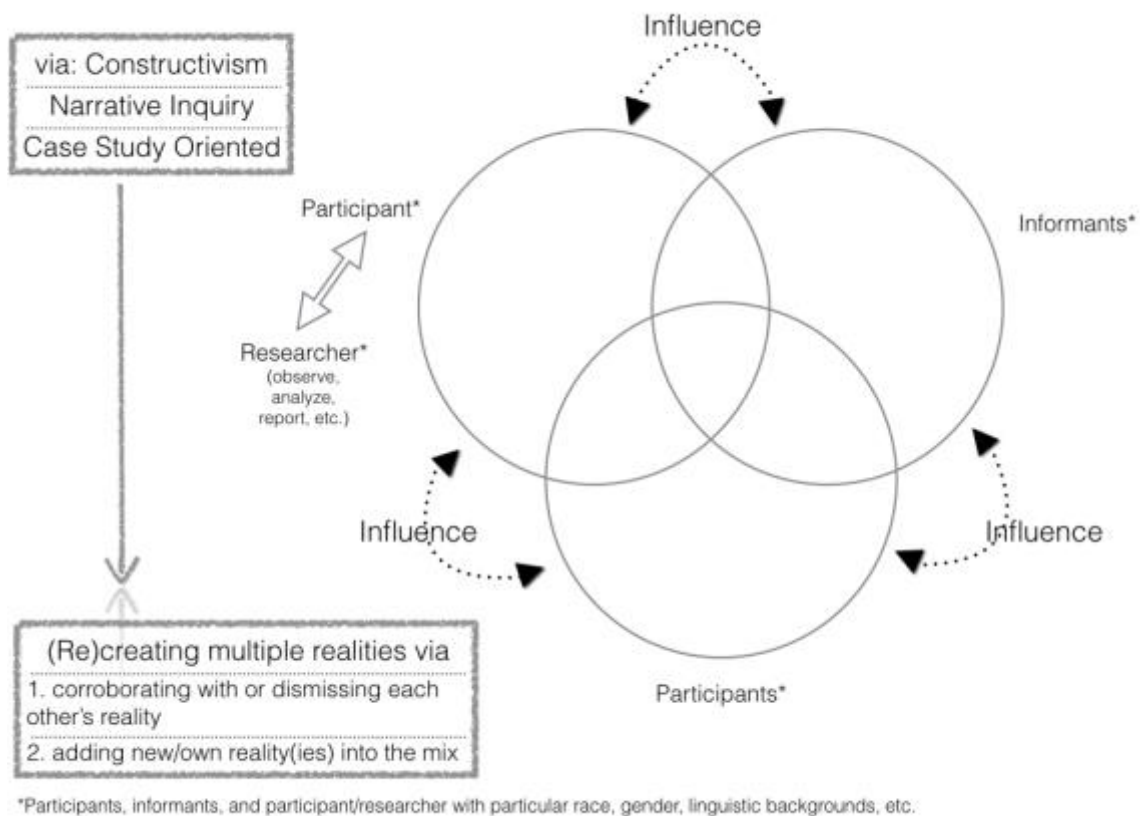
Figure 4. Dynamics among the parties involved in my study.

Pilot Study

Purpose.

To test out the methodology outlined above and to proactively address ethical and moral concerns that may arise during the study (Christians, 2011), I ran a pilot study from Spring to Summer 2015. The timing has worked out perfectly for the pilot study as my business trip in 2015 required me to visit multiple universities in Japan where potential field observations and interviews with questionnaire respondents could take place. By conducting the pilot study, I was

able to: 1) test and revise recruitment criteria; 2) test out the data collection methods; and 3) make preliminary findings, as detailed later.

Recruitment criteria.

Intended to receive a range of *akogare* narratives while maintaining my focus on understanding the multiple and shifting boundaries between the self and other (as discussed in **Chapter 2**), I drafted the following criteria to recruit students and faculty members.

Student sample.

For my pilot study, I targeted approximately 30 Japanese university students who:

- are currently enrolled in a Japanese university pursuing an associate, bachelor's, or graduate degree or have recently graduated with one;

- either are currently taking or have recently taken English (as a subject and/or as a medium of instruction) courses at their university;

- were born, raised, and schooled in Japan;

- are Japanese nationals (self-identified);

- may or may not be a Japanese citizen (as citizenship is generally confined within legal trammels);

- are over 18 years old;

- speak Japanese as their first language; and

- are English language learners (self-identified or identifiable from their major).

Faculty member sample.

For my pilot study, I targeted approximately 10 university faculty members who:

- currently work in a JHE institution;

- currently teach English as a subject or teach other subject(s) using English as a medium of instruction;

- may or may not be a Japanese national (self-identified);

- may or may not be a Japanese citizen (as citizenship is generally confined within legal trammels);

- speak Japanese as their first language or as an international language; and

- speak English as their first language or as an international language.

Recruitment criteria tested and revised.

Initial recruitment.

Unexpectedly, my questionnaires received broad attention. Although I quickly achieved my recruiting goals (i.e. 30 students and 10 faculty members), which had been set tentatively to kickstart the study, I began to notice the quality of questionnaire responses being divergent. For instance, some appeared enthusiastic while other responses were relatively short and blunt. Whether by accident or not, many of those who provided short responses chose to remain anonymous and opted out of follow-up communication (e.g. interviews). These may also reflect the engagement and interest level of the study participants with my questionnaires (Groves, Presser, & Dipko, 2004) because some responses read hastily done, providing no real content. While I do acknowledge the relative significance of "what's been said" and "what's *not* been said" as both tell stories in their own valid ways (Pavlenko, 2002), this experience of receiving responses from those who may have halfheartedly participated in my study provided an opportunity for me to rethink *who* and *how* to recruit my study participants thereafter.

At the beginning, I took lightly the faculty members' participation as my study's focus is on the *akogare* narratives of Japanese university *students*. However, I began to notice from some of the faculty members' responses that their insights profoundly help me to make sense of the students' narratives as well as of Japan as an overall context. Also, my rigid criteria to target the students, who are Japanese by a rather skewed definition and are "learning" English, proved to be defeating the purpose of capturing the multiplicity and complexity of *akogare* narratives. In fact, when I had the chance to personally speak with some of those who are "not interested in English at all, but *required* to take English classes ((sigh))," I gained new insights into their visions of *akogare* that certainly helped enrich my study. For these reasons, I updated the recruitment criteria as follows:

Student sample (revamped).

This study includes Japanese university students who:

- are currently enrolled in a Japanese university pursuing an associate, bachelor's, or graduate degree or have recently graduated with one and

- are over 18 years old.

Faculty member sample (revamped).

This study includes university faculty members who:

- currently work in a JHE institution.

Data saturation: How many participants are enough?

While I found some of the narratives collected for the pilot study to be in line with the existing literature on romantic and sexual *akogare* (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007, Ieda, 1991, 1995, Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b; Kimie Takahashi, 2013), others continually unfolded new,

multiple, and oftentimes competing stories. For this reason, I disregarded the initially proposed cap (i.e. 30 Japanese university students and 10 faculty members) and continued to collect responses until a sign of data saturation was observed (Coe, 2012, p. 45). Sample saturation is a popular method used in grounded theory (Waring, 2012) or biographical research (Tedder, 2012) that helps the researcher to "actively seek potential counter-examples or negative cases, and regard the continuing generation of significant new categories, themes or theoretical explanations as an indication that the breadth of the evidence-base still needs to be extended" (Coe, 2012, p. 45). While determining the point of saturation is both a crucial and challenging task (Abma & Widdershoven, 2011, p. 1821), I carefully attended to the multiplicity of my study participants' narratives as I also negotiated the scope of my study.

Adjusted recruitment and refinement of my study.

Accordingly, I continued to recruit study participants largely through the faculty members and students I met in person in Japan in 2015. While my initial contacts via the four different channels (listed earlier) helped me to reach out to the wider community with which I perhaps had no direct access to otherwise, some of the questionnaire responses revealed a challenging nature of anonymous snowballing methods as discussed above. I have utilized face-to-face meeting opportunities with faculty members and students during my visits to nine Japanese universities in 2015, to brief my intentions for this study, to attend to potential study participants' concerns and questions, and to solicit their further patronage in my study. In this way, not only did I gain a better sense of who and how I was recruiting, but also I was able to receive immediate feedback from potential study participants who helped identify specific areas for improvement.

Data collection methods tested.

Pursuing the original design proposed earlier in this chapter, the pilot study was planned as a narrative inquiry with case study orientation as follows.

Online questionnaires.

Since Spring 2015, I have designed and conducted two types of online questionnaires in English with Japanese translations (one for Japanese university students and the other for faculty members) using Google Forms (http://www.google.com/forms/about/). The first part of the questionnaires were mainly multiple-choice and closed-ended questions to collect basic background information of the study participants, such as age, affiliation(s), overseas experience, and linguistic background. The second part of the questionnaires included open-ended questions to invite narratives of their *akogare*-related experiences in the university settings and beyond.

To be specific, the questionnaire for Japanese university students included 8 multiple-choice or closed-ended and 22 open-ended questions while the questionnaire for faculty members consisted of 9 multiple-choice or closed-ended and 20 open-ended questions (see **Appendices A and B**). As *akogare* may be an unfamiliar term/concept to some of the study participants, I also provided visual and textual aids (see **Appendix C**).

All data collected in the questionnaires were auto-saved in Google Docs Spreadsheet which I subsequently consulted to formulate and tailor interview questions for later use. One section of the online questionnaires asked the respondents to provide their email address if they were willing to be contacted for follow-up interviews. Afterwards, I communicated and planned interviews with the willing respondents.

Follow-up interviews.

Subsequent to the questionnaires, I began my follow-up interview processes via a means of or a combination of email, Skype, text messaging (mobile phone or computer), and eventually in person. Once I arrived in Japan, I began conducting in-person interviews, each lasting approximately 45 minutes. Each interview session was audio recorded when the option was available. I continued to take notes and a photo of items that were willingly shared by the interviewee.

I actively communicated, mainly by email and/or text messaging, with all study participants with reachable contacts:[25] before, during, and after the interview sessions. I remained available for any concerns or requests my study participants may have.

Field observations.

When I was in Japan visiting the nine universities (in 2015), I made field observations at universities where some of the interview sessions took place. I sought opportunities to observe class sessions (to which my willing study participants granted access) as well as outside the classroom interactions at a cafeteria, student lounge, and elsewhere on and off campus. In addition, whenever possible, I struck a conversation with students, faculty members, or staff members of the university I was visiting to maximize my opportunity to collect relevant information. Note taking was the only form of data collection during such field observations.

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[25] Some provided their social media username without any other information (with a message like "Hey, this is me. I'm willing to help you further. I think you know my contact already ☺") or their username was set private which hindered me from figuring out who they were.

Preliminary findings.

Online questionnaire responses.

As of September 1, 2015, I had collected questionnaire responses from 66 university

students and 42 faculty members. Among the total of 108 respondents, 37 university students

and 30 faculty members have agreed to be contacted further. However, due to the unintentional

unreachability,[25] I was only able to contact 62 prospective interviewees who make up

approximately 57% of the 108 respondents as a whole.

Table 1. Questionnaire respondents (As of September 1, 2015).

Category	Frequency (%)	Anonymous (%)	Follow-Up Error (%)	Follow-Up Made (%)
Students	66 (61.1)	29 (70.7)	3 (60)	34 (54.8)
Faculty	42 (38.9)	12 (29.3)	2 (40)	28 (45.2)
Total	108	41	5	62

After browsing through the questionnaire responses, certain keywords emerged not

merely as frequently used terms, but perhaps as an indication of a particular type of sense-

making pattern common among the respondents. I do acknowledge both obvert and covert

influences I may have imparted through the way in which I worded my recruitment flyers, email,

and alike might have attracted certain people over others; or I designed my questionnaires that

may have prompted the participants to phrase their responses in a particular fashion. Yet, a close

reading of text with overriding keywords is intended to help deconstruct how the respondents

deliberately, accidentally, or otherwise performed their self, at the particular moment of their

responding to my questionnaire, towards their most likely audience, me.

Leveraging the keyword searches in the questionnaire responses with both Japanese and English, I generated a word frequency list which contained strikingly familiar terms that have shaped the existing literature on *akogare* (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007, Ieda, 1991, 1995, Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b; Kimie Takahashi, 2013). Keywords such as "English," "America," and "Britain" seem to occupy the students' *akogare* narratives. More interestingly, tendencies to dichotomize U.S./U.K. v. Japan (in some cases, U.S./U.K. v Asia) and to use U.S./U.K. as referent appeared more common among the non-native English speakers (both students and faculty members) than the native English speakers (faculty members only). This is subject to further scrutiny as to what factors are contributing to such a phenomenon and how this relates to the ways in which one's *akogare* may emerge towards his/her desired other.

Follow-up interviews.

I transcribed the audio recording of one-on-one and focus-group interviews conducted in Japan in 2015. Using MAXQDA, I organized data from other follow-up interviews (via email and text messaging).

Field observations.

While visiting a total of nine universities in Japan in 2015, I participated in six class sessions at three different universities. One was an English language communication class, two were social studies classes, two were international communication classes, and another was a Japanese language class for international students. Besides observing these classes, I spoke with a number of professors, students, and staff members at the nine universities, not for formal interviews, but to collect contextual information. I aggregated field notes in MAXQDA.

Experienced difficulties.

Encouraging the study participants to share their personal and imaginably sensitive narratives proved to be a major challenge. Even when they *appeared* to confide in me via email, text messaging, or in person, I had to ask myself: are they sharing the "tellable" stories or "untellable" ones (Pavlenko, 2002)?

Further, even though my study is intended to paint a more nuanced picture of *akogare* narratives distancing itself from the overrated romantic or sexual *akogare* discourse, I have witnessed time after time the dreamy gaze of female university students in Japan towards one (who "looks like Justin Bieber!" to quote a googly-eyed Japanese female student's words) of the American students I accompanied on the visit to Japanese universities in 2015 and 2016. Although there was a lot of giggling and whispering around the Justin Bieber look-alike, when I finally had the chance to approach some of the female students and directly ask what was happening, they shrugged noncommittally and remained silent.

I was unsure if they were in denial of their dreamy gaze towards the American student or the gaze itself was performed as I only observed such a gaze and giggling collectively being formed amongst a group of female students but not necessarily originating from one particular student. Further, does the recurrence of such a gaze given to the American student in multiple universities support that *akogare* is deeply rooted in the nature of romantic or sexual desires? I was left with more questions than I initially had.

Post-Pilot Study and Forward

   Researcher role and positionality.

   As shown above, due to the nature of *akogare* occasionally existing in a relatively romantic, sexual hence private and possibly performative sphere, it proved necessary for me to engage deeply with multiple and external sources in addition to the narratives provided by the students themselves. Further, for I am aware that what is *not* being said may be equally if not more valuable than what is being said, I reminded myself to pay more attention to the "silence" (Chase, 2011, p. 1185; Seidman, 2013, p. 95) as well. To this end, my main responsibility as a researcher became clearer: to make sense of data collected via online questionnaires, follow-up interviews, field observations, and other supplementary sources (e.g. personal letters and other artifacts of the study participants, photographs, etc.) in order to (re)construct their *akogare* narratives.

   Although I likely share similar background with some of the study participants in terms of age (being in my early 30s, I can often identify myself with and be identified with both the university student and faculty populations) and research interests (since a participation is on a voluntary basis, can be anonymous, and is not compensated, it is more than likely that those who decide to participate in my study took at least a small interest in the topic), I need to be careful not to overly empathize with them or project my own feelings and experiences onto theirs (Chase, 2011, pp. 1177–1181; Seidman, 2013, pp. 97–114). For interviews, however, I strategically adopted a technique to deliberately weave my own experiences and insights into the interview process, in order to gauge the validity of what is being shared by the interviewee and to provide a sharable environment (Seidman, 2013, pp. 91–92).

While I generally have the inclination to be on everyone's good side (out of my fear of conflict), I reminded myself to carefully negotiate within the boundaries so that the data collection process was kept efficient, effective, and professional. Ideally, however, my study has provided some space for the study participants to reflect on own experiences and insights that may usually be overlooked or neglected.

Data analysis considerations.

All responses to the questionnaires were accumulatively auto-saved in Google Docs Spreadsheet which I consulted to formulate follow-up interview questions. I analyzed both Japanese and English responses as they are, to maintain and honor the originally spoken words (Seidman, 2013, pp. 106–107) and translated only when included in my dissertation writing (i.e. Japanese original to English translation). All translations between Japanese and English languages are my own though I occasionally sought non-participants' assistance to validate my translations while ensuring the anonymity of data.

After each interview session via Skype or in person is completed, I transcribed the audio recording. If the interview was conducted in Japanese, as in most cases with the students and some faculty members, the transcription was done in Japanese. Each transcript was shared with the study participant to ensure the overall accuracy. If it is not an audio-recorded interview (either the option was unavailable or in the case of email or text messaging interviews), interview notes, email, or text messages were the main source of data. Follow-up communication via email, Skype, text messaging, and/or in person continued as necessary. Throughout the analysis phase, I continued to communicate with the study participants to keep the analysis process as interactive and open as possible.

Since the launch of my pilot study, I began aggregating different types of data and my organization skills were put to the test. To avoid overwhelming myself with the rapidly-accumulating data, I decided to employ the help of a Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) program. Specifically, I chose MAXQDA as the main platform where I store and organize data such as questionnaire responses, audio recordings, interview transcripts, interview notes, email, text messages, and field observation notes. I purchased the software after careful consideration on different CAQDAS programs including ATLAS.ti, Dedoose, NVivo, QDA Miner, TAMS Analyzer, and a few other open source software. My decision to purchase MAXQDA was made based on multiple reports on the usability, cost, functionality, and expandability. Though I need more training and experience to master the software, I find MAXQDA to be extremely helpful in allowing me to travel between different types of data at ease, to code for themes across data, and to run sophisticated keyword searches.

However, I do not fully rely on the software as I am aware of potential pitfalls (Gibbs, 2012) where my study may become ontologically, epistemologically, or methodologically restricted by the software, rather than plainly benefitting from what it uniquely offers. For example, ontologically speaking, by using the software, a reality can exist only within the boundaries of how the software is designed or how it helps process my data. The same can be applied when thinking methodologically about my research that the software may cause my data analysis process to be limited by its available functions and options, which may prevent new bodies of knowledge to transpire in the most organic manner (epistemology). For these reasons, I utilize as many traditional and modern tools as possible—including but not limited to—MAXQDA, index cards, sticky notes, highlighters, a mobile phone, apps, etc.

Lastly, multiple study participants and data sources (e.g. questionnaire data, interview transcripts, narratives, artifacts, and field notes, etc.) have helped triangulate data for this study. As a member check method, I solicited feedback and confirmation from each study participant on the interview transcript. As noted in the case with Japanese-English translations, I also consulted with non-participants for validation and assistance while ensuring the anonymity of data.

Notes on Japanese terms and their translatability.

While the concept of *akogare* may be translated into other languages and cultures, it would be challenging (if not impossible) to provide a perfect translation of such a concept in a different language. There are two examples below to show why it is a challenging task to translate a concept like *akogare* into another language (and/or culture).

First, although *akogare* is often translated as "longing" by the studies published in English, the word longing itself has conceptually and linguistically different tones and colors that it is not and will never be the same as what *akogare* entails. Specifically, there are certain expectations, protocols, and images attached to the word longing in a given time and space that it will not be used in the exact manner by its (English-speaking) users as *akogare* would by its (Japanese-speaking) users. For example, people may *long for* spring during the cold of winter. However, in the use of *akogare*, people do not usually develop a sense of *akogare* towards spring unless they are obsessed with the idea of spring in a whimsical and poetic fashion.

Second, although I have chosen "desire" as a working definition of *akogare* in my study, the word desire is principally different from *akogare* because desire often insinuates passion (Piller & Takahashi, 2006) or sexuality (Welker, 2011) which necessarily is not the case with

akogare. However, the word desire is on-target with the discussion of English language

education and internationalization. Desire undergirds the complex workings of both intrinsic and

extrinsic motivation of English learners which helps shape the local as well as the global market

of English education, as demonstrated by a number of TESOL scholars (e.g. Appleby, 2013;

Chowdhury & Phan, 2014; Collins, Sidhu, Lewis, & Yeoh, 2014; Kubota, 2011a; Motha & Lin,

2014; Ros i Sole, 2016; Kimie Takahashi, 2013).

Given the above examples in regards to the concept of *akogare*, I acknowledge that

translating my study participants' narratives into English requires careful and thorough attention

to details and nuances. In addition to the interactive analysis process whereby I maintained

communication with the participants (which was discussed in response to Q1), I have sought and

received help from non-participants in validating my Japanese-English translations (as indicated

in the previous section).

Furthermore, the potential translation issues extend beyond the cross-linguistic or cultural

barriers. In speaking of *kokusaika*, the term itself is ambiguously used and defined even among

Japanese speakers (e.g. policymakers) that its definitions vary across time and space (Oliver,

2009).

For instance, when *kokusaika* first appeared as a keyword in political discussions during

the Nakasone cabinet in the 1980s, it was used as a mantra to modernize and transform Japan

into an economically competitive nation (Burgess, 2004; Seargeant, 2011, p. 5). During the late

1980s to early 2000s, *kokusaika*-laden policies and programs grew in volume, particularly in the

education sector. Some of the major education programs from this era include the Japan

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Exchange and Teaching Programme[26] (since 1987), "Japanese with English Abilities" (FY 2003-2008), and the Project for Establishing University Network for Internationalization (in 2008, the archetype of the Global 30 project: FY 2009-2013). More recently, the term *kokusaika* has widely and conveniently been used as a label to market educational products or services, rather than as a genuine reflection of the core principles of such products or services (Nakane et al., 2015).

As demonstrated by the abovementioned educational programs and many others in the recent decade, most of the *kokusaika* policies have unquestionably incorporated English as the foreign language while neglecting to acknowledge other equally (if not more) deserving languages in Japan. And even within such English language-focused policies, *kokusaika* may be understood varyingly and often confused with *globalization* for both are discursively and interchangeably used in these policy documents.

Hashimoto (2000, 2013), for example, claims that Japan's *kokusaika* [internationalization] policies lead to "Japanization" of English language education where the focus is on maintaining the so-called Japanese identity rather than on promoting English language education. Similarly, Rivers (2010) discusses how the *kokusaika* policies are serving the economic interests of Japan while intensifying the "us (Japanese) – them (non-Japanese) distinction" (p. 451). Phan (2013a) also contends that these *kokusaika* policies may be triggered by the "fear of Japan being Westernised through English language education" (p. 170) that the government is perhaps taking precautions against the possible invasion—both figuratively and literally—of foreign powers by controlling how the *kokusaika* process occurs.

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[26] cf. JET Programme. (n.d.). Retrieved November 18, 2016, from http://jetprogramme.org/en

In this sense, the term *kokusaika* is value-laden and multilayered that the English-translated "internationalization" may differ in nature. However, in my study, "internationalization" and *kokusaika* will be interchangeably used as deemed necessary and appropriately (as have been by the existing studies including: Burgess, 2004; Burgess et al., 2010; Kubota, 1998; Rivers, 2010). By so doing, my study not only maintains a close association with the above studies but also attempts to minimize the distance between the two languages.

To sum up, while I acknowledge the (un-)translatability of Japanese terms and concepts into English, I am excited by the prospect of working with and across the two languages. By paying careful and thorough attention to the details and nuances of the original language, I aim to minimize the distance between the two languages (i.e. Japanese and English) and to provide a fuller description of a concept or a phenomenon which may otherwise be challenging to do so with just one language.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) considerations.

Mainly to address ethical and moral issues that could arise during the study (Christians, 2011), I ran a pilot study as discussed so far. First off, I listed provisional questions for the questionnaires on the recruitment flyers (see **Appendices D and E**) to help prospective study participants to determine their *voluntary* involvement in my study. The flyer also provided a brief summary of what roles a study participant may play in my study. When a prospective study participant contacted me, I sent an email with further details of my study and encouraged him/her to contact again for any questions, concerns, or requests if unsure about participating in the study.

Also, as previously mentioned, I continued to actively communicate, mainly by email and/or text messaging, with all study participants, before, during, and after their participation.

Prior to conducting my pilot study, my overall study plan was approved by the UHM Human Studies Program (the UHM HSP) as an exempt study in February 2015. Since then (= post-pilot study), I made a few modifications to the study design which were respectively approved by the UHM HRP. As standard practice, I employed pseudonyms for all the study participants and anonymize information that may be private or sensitive, to minimize the potential risk of individuals being identified, exposed, or confronted.

Continued data collection (post-pilot study).

As discussed so far, I made necessary adjustments to my original plan (as having tested out during the pilot study phase) and carried on with my study. Specifically, I continued to collect data through field observations, interviews, and informal conversations from Summer 2015 until Spring 2016. The overall data collection, analysis, and reporting process remains largely the same as I have already discussed above. Below is an overview of cumulative data collected during the pilot to post-pilot period.

Online questionnaire responses.

As of December 2016, I have collected questionnaire responses from 67 university students and 49 faculty members. Among the total of 116 respondents, 37 university students and 34 faculty members have agreed to be contacted for a follow-up. However, due to the unreachability (discussed earlier in the pilot study findings), I was only able to contact 66 prospective interviewees, approximately 57% of the 116 respondents as a whole.

Follow-up interviews.

I contacted and communicated with 66 respondents who have indicated that they were willing to be part of the follow-up interviews. I mainly used email and text messaging as the means of communication. As explained earlier, I have treated online questionnaires as the preliminary phase of interviews and follow-up interviews are to provide further opportunities for me to: 1) better understand the questionnaire responses and 2) individually confirm or disconfirm specific themes and patters that have emerged between and across the data collected hitherto.

Field observations.

Over the last five years, taking the role of an interpreter/translator, I have tended to numerous Japanese university delegations (students and faculty members) visiting a local university in Hawai'i. For this study, I examine my field observation notes taken during the visits of three private universities and two public universities from Japan. Additionally, I include field observation notes from 2013 to 2016 when I served as an assistant instructor and coordinator for a field study course in which American and Japanese university students interact with one another online as well as in person. These field observations took place in classrooms, cafeterias, student lounges, virtually (e.g. group messaging), or any other places where I was able to study (often discretely) students, faculty members, staff members, artifacts, and other objects that have helped inform my study.

Informal conversations.

As discussed earlier, I continued to collect different definitions of *akogare* from Japanese language users and learners alike throughout my study. The collection of this data may be a casual conversation in person, by email, or text messaging. Additionally, as part of field

observations and beyond, I often sought help from other informants in order for me to verify, validate, clarify, or make better sense of the data in the form of informal conversations. For the translation purposes, I also held conversations with English/Japanese speakers to ensure the quality and accuracy of the language(s) used in my study.

Summary of Chapter 3

My study is informed mainly by data collected and analyzed through qualitative inquiry methods including online questionnaires, follow-up interviews, and field observations. Considering the nature of my study where I as a researcher explore how multiple "narrative realities" (Chase, 2008, 2011) around *akogare* are being constructed for the target population while I also participate in the construction of these realities (Hatch, 2002, pp. 11–20), I have employed a constructivist view as a major lens to collect, interpret, analyze, and report data. Ultimately, designing my study as a narrative inquiry with case study orientation emerged as the most feasible and practical option.

To ensure purposeful sampling, I have explored multiple recruitment channels as well as different criteria for prospective study participants. Keeping in mind my multiple positionalities (e.g. emic and etic) and their implications for my study, I continued to carefully negotiate within the boundaries so that the data collection process can be kept efficient, effective, and professional. Further, by continually communicating with my study participants, I aimed to maintain the analysis process as interactive and open as possible. Most ideally, my study has provided some space for the study participants to reflect on own experiences and insights that may otherwise be overlooked or neglected. On this note, I strive to critically engage with what

may or may not be collected as data (i.e. the said, unsaid, tellable, untellable, and alike) and to

have deep and meaningful conversations with the data as demonstrated in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION PART 1

This chapter first offers an overview of my questionnaire/interview participants. A word cloud is then presented to visualize the diverse yet recurring definitions of *akogare* collected from approximately 200 Japanese language users and learners (including 70+ informal participants). Having introduced the study participants and collectively defined *akogare* through their choice of words, I organized the findings under the three themes. For this chapter, the first two themes: "*akogare* and gender" and "*akogare* and precarious 'Japan' " will help address the first research question: *How do Japanese university students project the self and the other (e.g. the Japanese self and the non- Japanese other) through akogare?*

Process of Data Analysis

The data I collected and analyzed for this study include: over 60,000 words of data from online questionnaires; 50,000+ words of transcribed face-to-face interviews; approximately 525,000 words of email/text message conversations; and 20,000+ words of interview/observation notes. As I closely examined such data, certain perspectives and narratives have recurrently emerged. I have then revisited the data with sets of perspectives and narratives in mind to further identify specific themes and patterns within the scope of this study. Finally, under three major themes that concertedly help answer my research questions, I weaved together threads of stories between and across different types of data to collectively present the findings of this study. The three themes are: 1) *akogare* and gender; 2) *akogare* and precarious "Japan"; and 3) *akogare* and Japanese higher education (JHE) today.

Introducing My Study Participants

As tabled below, there are a total of 132 questionnaire/interview participants consisting of: 57 faculty members of Japanese universities (35 male and 22 female) and 75 Japanese university students (30 male and 45 female). I have assigned an identifier to each individual: F or FF for faculty member, S or SS for students, followed by a sequential number. F and S indicate that they participated in the online questionnaire and some follow-up interviews. FF and SS indicate that they participated in interviews only. In order words, some participated in both the online questionnaire and interview sessions while others supposedly participated in one of the two. However, it is also important to note that some interview participants may have *anonymously* filled out the questionnaire to share some of their thoughts that they may not have felt comfortable articulating during the interviews. I intentionally designed the online questionnaires to ensure the flexibility of time and place, privacy and anonymity, and the web-based usability so that those who want to share thoughts but want to remain personally unidentifiable can choose to do so.

Additionally, there are more than 70 participants (e.g. students, instructors, staff, and parents) whom I made observations of and followed up with informal conversations after the observation. The following tables will include information of the official participants (categorized as faculty or students) to comply with the IRB approval of this study.

Note: In order to maintain the anonymity of participants, some data are converted into brackets.

*Table 2. Overview of questionnaire/interview participants (**Faculty: m=35, f=22**).*

Citizenship(s) \\ Age	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	unanswered	Grand Total
[in Africa]		3					3
[in Europe]			2				2
Brazil			1				1
Canada		2					2
Canada/U.S.			1				1
Germany				2			2
Japan	1	9	11	6	1		28
Singapore						1	1
Spain		1					1
U.K.			1		1		2
U.S.	1	2	3	2	4	1	13
U.S./[in Europe]			1				1
Grand Total	2	17	20	10	6	2	57

See **Appendix F** for more details of each participant.

*Table 3. Overview of questionnaire/interview participants (**Students: m=30, f=45**).*

Academic year Major	U	U1	U2	U3	U4	M1	M2	M/D	D2	D3	Graduated	unanswered	Grand Total
Agriculture	1				7	4	2	1		1			16
Asian/African Area Studies							1		1	1			3
British Literature	1												1
Clinical Psychology			1	6	3								10
Economics				1								1	2
Education	3	4	3	7	13								30
English			1										1
English Literature					1								1
Foreign Languages	2				2								4
International Studies					2								2
Second Language Studies								1					1
unanswered					3						1		4
Grand Total	7	4	5	14	31	4	3	2	1	2	1	1	75

See **Appendix G** for more details of each participant.

What Is "*Akogare*" to You? (Collective Definition)

Before I present the findings under the three themes, I generated below the word cloud to visualize the diverse yet recurring definitions of *akogare* collected from approximately 200 Japanese language users and learners (including 70+ informal participants). The data were collected via questionnaires, follow-up interviews, informal conversations, email, and text messaging. To maximize the benefit of using two languages in this study, the word cloud purposefully weaves together both Japanese and English as chosen by the respondents:

Figure 5. Word cloud of akogare [desire].

Note: Japanese words in the cloud read (from upper-left): speak, far, admire, ideal, abstract, goal, headed (to), come to mind, person, uphold, listen, can, have, being, life, young, (un)attainable, (un)reachable, continue, feel, say, *senpai* [older student], live, and cool.

It is important to acknowledge that the definition I have established earlier for this study (=**a sentiment in which an individual desires to pursue his/her dreams whether they be a person or an object (tangible or intangible) that is *tantalizingly out of reach* from him/her**) aligns with this collective definition also. Having introduced the study participants and collectively defined *akogare* through their choice of words, I finally discuss below the findings under the three themes. The first two themes: "*akogare* and gender" and "*akogare* and precarious 'Japan' " will help address the first research question: *How do Japanese university students project the self and the other (e.g. the Japanese self and the non- Japanese other) through akogare?* while the third theme ("*akogare* and JHE today") is to address the second research question: *What implications do the students' self-other perspectives (via akogare) have for the internationalization of Japanese higher education and beyond?*

Akogare and Gender

Is *akogare* a gender-bound concept? This was a quandary that has challenged my study from the beginning to completion. Initially, the sexualized, romanticized, and gendered depictions of *akogare* between Japanese female learners of English and their objectified white males in TESOL studies struck me as "strange" (as in signaling a critical clue into something worth investigating: Zizek, 1991, p. 53) because such use of the word is quite selective and restrictive when compared to the more standard use in Japan. However, the deeper I engaged

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with the academic literature discussing *akogare* in specific contexts, the more convinced I

became that the use of *akogare* in such literature definitely has larger sociocultural and political

implications for Japan and particularly for its future directions in *kokusaika* [internationalization].

To start off, at least since the 1600s, Japan has held a type of *akogare* [desire] towards

something/someone foreign, particularly the English language and America (Ike, 1995). In light

of this discourse of desire, English, and America, with a specific focus on gender, there are

historical accounts of the promiscuous relationships in postwar Japan between: American

soldiers who embodied victory, wealth, and ultimately power; and Japanese women who were in

juxtaposition highly sexualized (Dower, 1999; Sakamoto, 2010). Some argue that such public

memory may have contributed to shaping the "submissive" stereotype of Japanese women (Ma,

1996) and it may also account for how there are inexplicable mutual attractions between

Japanese women and Western men even today (McLelland, 2010). More recently, some

Japanese women began to perceive English as leverage to mobilize their otherwise

underprivileged womanhood in Japan (Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b, 2008) and understandably they

yearn for (i.e. develop *akogare*) the ideal West. What this may suggest is that Japanese men

might not develop a sense of *akogare* towards English or the ideal West in similar manners as do

their female counterparts because generally speaking, Japanese society is male-dominated (e.g.

in business, academia, politics) so the men might not see the need for "leverage" in the first place.

Based on these accounts, *akogare* appears to be gender-bound precisely because certain

gender roles and expectations are deeply rooted in Japanese history and society that continue to

help guide both the individual and collective perspectives and experiences of people in Japan.

However, as I proposed in the framework (**Figure 1**) based on the concept of *akogare* where an

individual positions the self in relation to the desired other, what boils down to whether someone develops *akogare* or not is: how he/she perceives the self and the world around him/her at a given time and space. In other words, gender is merely a single quality when it comes to developing (or not developing) *akogare* and what is more important instead is how gender is perceived, negotiated, or performed by the individual him/herself. For some people in a given time and place, gender may not be as significant of an identifier as it can be for others who consciously or subconsciously craft "the self" around one's sense or perception of gender (e.g. by "performing" gender: J. Butler, 1990).

Having clarified how gender may (or may not) help shape one's *akogare*, I will begin discussing the findings under the large umbrella of "*akogare* and gender."

Table 4. Transcription conventions for interview transcripts and field observation notes.

((text))	non-verbal communication and gestures
TEXT	emphasized by speaker
"text"	quotes used by speaker
text	emphasis added by researcher (or Japanese terms)
[…]	original text omitted
[text]	inserted by researcher for clarity

Note: All conversations with Japanese-speaking (as a mother tongue) study participants were conducted in Japanese and were subsequently translated into English by me when necessary and appropriate.

The Bieber (look-alike) fever in Japan.

As extensively discussed by the existing TESOL studies and also highlighted earlier in my pilot study results, some Japanese female learners of English do seem to develop *akogare* towards certain types of "Western" men. During my data collection, I have repeatedly witnessed the dreamy gaze of female university students in Japan towards an American male student with "stereotypical Western features. [27]" Specifically, while traveling around Japan with a group of American university students in 2015 and 2016, it became obvious that many Japanese students from elementary school to university were drawn to one particular American student. This student, Ryan (pseudonym) who has light-colored hair, blue eyes, and a "boy band look[27]" was puzzled by the unexpected popularity in Japan as he "had never experienced anything like this my entire life here [in the U.S.]" This instant fame also came as a surprise to other American students and instructors who were traveling with him at that time.

What may be different about the ways in which male and female Japanese students reacted to/interacted with Ryan (who "looks like Justin Bieber!" as one Japanese student exclaimed) is that male students tended to direct a curious look at him while female students had heart-shaped eyes for him. One such female student was particularly forthcoming as she appointed me as a matchmaker on the spot:

> **Observation Notes:** **/**/2015, *:**am. In an "International Understanding" class at a women's junior college in Japan. The instructor introduces the American university group (including myself) to the class and asks us to split into eight different groups so we can converse with the students in class. I'm assigned to a group of eight female students and as soon as I join them, they begin asking questions about Ryan.

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[27] This phrase was used repeatedly by my study participants (mainly faculty members) to describe Ryan.

Student 1: Who's that boy? ((pointing at Ryan))

Chisato: You mean…Ryan?

Student 1: Yeah, that boy with blue eyes.

Student 2: How old is he? ((other students giggling))

Student 3: His eye color is so beautiful! ((still giggling))

Student 4: I wanna be friends with him. I wanna be more than friends with him!
((everyone laughs))

Student 3: Me too! ((laughs))

Chisato: I'm sure he'd love to be friends with you girls.

(I find it interesting that all eight girls seem unanimously starstruck by Ryan and, despite knowing nothing about him, at least two girls want to be "more than friends" with him.)

Chisato: You know, I think he's into Japanese stuff. I remember him talking about video games.

Student 4: I don't mind *otaku* [video game and anime enthusiasts] at all. Do you know if he has a girlfriend?

Chisato: Not sure, maybe. I know he also likes music though.

Student 4: Really? We'd make a perfect couple! I love music, you know. I dance hip-hop ((pulling out her phone to show me pictures of her with her dance crew)).

Chisato: Nice.

Student 4: Can you fix me up with him? Here's my contact. ((scrolling through her phone))

[reconstructed from field observation notes, translated.]

Although this student seemed almost overly passionate about pursuing Ryan, this was by no means an unusual instance. Out of at least 40 different locations I observed in 2015 and 2016 when Ryan traveled with our group, Japanese students, particularly female, repeatedly and passionately commented on his "*kakkoii* [cool]" looks. In several occasions, Japanese professors

(both male and female) acknowledged the "*ikemen-do* [handsomeness]" of Ryan and often joked about it with their students. For example, while forming groups for activities, one professor made a comment: "I know all of you want Ryan-*san* to be in your group, but there's only one of him." All of these comments were made in Japanese which made it difficult for the American students and instructors to understand what was happening at that time, yet there were some moments of awkwardness when certain Japanese students were giggling about Ryan.

In 2015 and 2016, Ryan was the only "visibly Western" male among the American students who traveled to Japan with me. Most other students were of non-white or mixed heritage (e.g. Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Portuguese, etc.) To be accurate, however, there was another "visibly Western" male in our group for both years who in fact was a professor in his late 40s named Ethan (pseudonym). Although Ethan may no longer have a "boy band look," some Japanese students appeared drawn to him as well:

> **Observation Notes:** **/**/2016, *:**pm. During a reception at a private university in Japan. Japanese and American students seem to be enjoying conversations over food and drinks. Some are sitting down, some leaning against the wall, and most are standing in small groups. A Japanese female student walks over to me and Ethan. She says hi to both of us but appears interested in talking to Ethan, so I step back a little to observe what happens next.
>
> Female Student: You're so handsome! ((staring at Ethan's face))
> Ethan: Oh…thank you!
> Female Student: You're so tall and you look like a Hollywood star. Don't you think?
> ((looks over to me for confirmation))
> Ethan: That's so kind of you.
>
> <div align="right">[reconstructed from field observation notes.]</div>

After she left, I asked Ethan to verify what I had heard. He seemed flattered but also found it odd that a young student in her early 20s would compliment him on his looks. He asked if it was perhaps cultural in that she actually made those comments "out of courtesy."

Again, this was not an isolated incident because Ethan did receive curious or amorous glances from other male and female students in other locations as well. There were also similar narratives collected from "white" male faculty members who currently teach at Japanese universities. For example, the following faculty member in his 40s described some of the playful female students from the university he had previously taught at:

> Chisato: Have you met any students who had *akogare* towards you just because you're from a different country?
>
> F28 (m): Actually, at the last university where…I used to teach at [a university of foreign studies], they were all forei...you get a lot of that. ((laughs)) And, one of my students...well, I get 95% were female too and a lot of them, A LOT OF THEM would always ask me about my wife. And they always go "Ah [name]-*sensei*! [name]-*sensei* and your wife, *love-love* [in love]?" [and I'd answer] "Yeah, well of course we're *love-love*." They always giggle and laugh and think that's great coz Japanese husband and wife aren't *love-love*. ((laughs))
>
> [audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

Another faculty member in his 30s shared his experiences from when he was teaching at an *eikaiwa* school, aiming to differentiate the two types of *akogare* in his understanding:

> F38 (m): Well, I worked in *eikaiwa* and I'm not blind to the fact that, at that time, a lot of the *eikaiwa*s, they have this certain image. And their clients are in the afternoon and then, they're female. It's…I'm not blind to that fact. Having said that, that's to me, almost sexist and say, "Well, the women that come here…that's the only reason they come here…" And I'm like, "Well, that's not

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why they're coming here." And I've had, you know, when I was in the *eikaiwa*, yeah, I've had, you know, weird awkward… ((laughs)) I was like, "What? What are you doing?" ((laughs)) feeling of "Are you really here to learn English? or what are you here for?"

[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

Indeed, this narrative resonates strongly with how *akogare* has been described by some TESOL studies as a specific phenomenon between Japanese female learners of English and their (often) objectified white males. However, F38 adds a layer to the otherwise romanticized discourse of *akogare* as follows:

> F38 (m): Then, there's other people that are genuinely there to learn English. And because there is a foreign element [in me], they're more, I don't know, MOTIVATED almost? […] to excel or achieve, which I think might go and tie in more to the other *akogare*, in which…the female version, that, you know, is in the media of…and it's kind of a bit sexist, by the way, is more of the unattainable dream, more the living the alternate lifestyle for a moment.
>
> [audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

Demonstrating a more nuanced understanding of the concept of *akogare*, F38 defined *akogare* as "the unattainable dream or the achievable goal." Also, while flirtatious and suggestive behaviors of Japanese female learners of English were observed in certain contexts, F38 emphasized that there are also "other people" who may not have been romantically attracted to him but perhaps interested in his "foreign element."

Synthesizing my observations and some of the narratives provided by my study participants above, a type of *akogare* seems often directed towards someone's "foreignness" (or "the idea of the West" in general). Also in such cases, Japanese students largely identify

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someone as "foreign" by the appearance of the person (e.g. Ryan having the "stereotypical Western features" as described earlier) than by other less visible qualities (e.g. country of origin). Further, what appears to commonly exist among the Japanese female students that I was able to observe firsthand (some of whom also participated in my questionnaires and interviews) is *how* they perceived these men as "beautiful" or "handsome" to the extent that these men became their love interests. In those cases, the students' sense of beauty (e.g. attractiveness) seemed to be influenced mainly by their perceived "Western" standards.

The standards of beauty (e.g. attractiveness) in Japan.

To explore the students' perception of the "Western" standards, I revisited the data collected for this study with a specific focus on their perception of attractiveness and/or beauty. Also, this section is intended to seek how such perceptions may then intersect with the students' understanding of Japaneseness and non-Japaneseness which will be closely examined later. In the following segment, I review one of the questionnaire questions that helps enlighten this pervasive notion of the "Western" standards of beauty among the university students:

If any, which country do you wish was your mother country and why?

S7 (f): I wish I was born Russian or some kind of European because they are gorgeous people.

S42 (m): Italy because the country has a reputation of having stylish people and cityscape.

S52 (f): America, Canada, New Zealand, or Europe overall because the people and their cityscapes are stylish, cool, and easy-going.

S62 (f): U.K. because I somehow have *akogare* towards the appearance of white people.

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Coincidentally, though it is a small sample size, three of the four students who expressed their *akogare* towards people's appearance (of the "West," coincidentally again) were *female*. While most students responded that Japan is their ideal mother country, others wanted to be born in English-speaking countries because of the language or some others wanted to be born in particular countries where nature, social welfare, and education are perceived as of highest quality:

Table 5. "Which country do you wish was your mother country and why?" (**Students: m=27, f=40**).

Country	Frequency	Reasons
Japan	46	good food; proud to be Japanese (can't imagine to be non-Japanese); comfortable; safe; satisfied but wish Japan was more multi-national; good public services; anime and manga; good *sake*; highly-respected national character in the world; culture; best country (among all visited); don't know much about other countries; Japan's graciousness is highly regarded by people overseas; has a unique presence in the world; peace-loving
U.S.	9	English (language) native; liberating and adventurous; free-spirited in both good and bad ways; fluent in both English and Spanish if born into a Hispanic family; stylish, cool, easy-going; accommodating to other cultures
U.K.	4	English (language) native; love U.K., *akogare* towards white
Canada	3	abundant nature; stylish, cool, easy-going; less stressful and pantopragmatic than Japan; good weather; lots of immigrants; English-speaking; gun society but not as bad as the U.S.
Australia	2	multicultural, free-spirited, and fun; comfortable weather
English speaking country	2	Japan feels left behind in today's globalization; if born there, no need to make any effort to speak English
Europe	2	people are gorgeous; stylish, cool, easy-going
Northern Europe	2	beautiful landscapes and good education; high tax but better social welfare system
Sweden	2	well-developed welfare system
Any	1	okay with any but I don't know how it may feel like to be born overseas.

Country	Frequency	Reasons
Finland	1	well-developed welfare system
France	1	French language
French-speaking country	1	wanna work abroad in the future using French or English
Germany	1	love soccer!
Hawai'i	1	the teacher education system is better than Japan.
Italy	1	stylish
Korea	1	comfortable
New Zealand	1	stylish, cool, easy-going
None	1	never thought about it.
Palm Desert, CA	1	lived with a host family there and loved it (safe and beautiful).
Russia	1	people are gorgeous.
Spain	1	multilingual
Switzerland	1	freedom; abundant nature
The Netherlands	1	close to other European countries; multilingual/cultural; good education; lifestyles

[responses translated from Japanese.]

While some students listed more than one "ideal mother country" (hence the total number of countries > 67 respondents), many were happy to have been born "Japanese" because of good food, comfort, safety, and how highly (allegedly) Japan is regarded by the world. South Korea is the only non-Japanese and non-Western country listed here and when I examined closer, I learned that the student who listed South Korea was in fact born in South Korea and is currently a university student in Japan. For those who listed a Western country(ies), the weather, nature, climates, and other ecological factors appear to be the common reasons why they may find one country more ideal than others. Also, social welfare and education systems seem to have influenced several students to choose Northern European countries. Finally, English-speaking was the standard response as to why some students wanted to be born "American," "British," or

"Canadian." These responses will be taken into account as I begin examining data henceforth (cf.

Narrative 2: Christian colleges = *international*?).

Akogare and Precarious "Japan"

To harness the previous discussion on the students' perceived standards of beauty/attractiveness, this section largely draws on a recent case about a Miss Universe Japan. I will present varying responses and reactions to the Miss Universe Japan case in order to examine how Japaneseness (or non-Japaneseness) may be understood or imagined by my study participants. By doing so, this chapter in its entirety aims to address the first research question: *How do Japanese university students project the self and the other (e.g. the Japanese self and the non- Japanese other) through akogare?*

Beautiful…but *not* Japanese?

Following the previous discussion on the standards of beauty, some of the above Japanese students' fixation with the "Western look" might be a crucial piece of today's complex Japan where multiple standards of beauty may exist. To demonstrate the complexity, I will use the case of Ariana Miyamoto who is the first mixed heritage contestant to be awarded the Miss Universe Japan crown in 2015 (Ishida, 2015; Shim, 2015). According to many of my study participants (both students and non-students), the "Western" standards are often imposed in Japan (e.g. at beauty pageants), yet it becomes problematic when someone who does not have "the Japanese look" is appointed to represent the nation in an international context.

The Miss Universe Japan 2015:

Ariana Miyamoto was born in Nagasaki, Japan to an African American father and a Japanese

mother in 1994. She is the first contestant to be awarded the Miss Universe Japan crown since the beginning of the pageant in the 1950s. When she was originally invited to compete in the pageant, she first declined the offer because she knew that "such pageants had never elected a person of mixed heritage as the winner." However, when her best friend who was also *hafu* (of Japanese and Caucasian) ended his own life in the spring of 2014, Miyamoto decides to compete in the pageant to help "eradicate racial bias" in Japan and hopefully in the world. Miyamoto says she and many of her friends who are of mixed heritage have always felt being "displaced" in their mother country, Japan.

- A Huffington Post article (Kosuke Takahashi, 2015), originally in Japanese, summarized and translated by me.

Methodology

After Miyamoto became the Miss Universe Japan 2015, a flurry of criticism erupted in the nation (Ishida, 2015; Shim, 2015). Many questioned Miyamoto's "Japaneseness" because of her "African American features." For its timeliness, relevance, and conciseness, I have used her case as a springboard for delving further into how my study participants may identify someone as "Japanese" or "non-Japanese." I will focus closely on the 25 *individual* face-to-face interview sessions (14 Japanese university students, of whom 11 Japanese and 3 foreign-born; and 11 faculty members, of whom 3 Japanese and 8 foreign-born) because I was able to observe their spontaneous reactions and ask on-the-spot questions as deemed appropriate and necessary. For each interview session, I had prepared newspaper clippings from both Japanese and English

papers so the interviewees were able to read the article(s) and see photos of Miyamoto when needed.

Results and analysis

Interestingly, none of the 14 Japan-born interviewees (11 students and 3 faculty members) or the 3 foreign-born students knew who Miyamoto was before their interview session. On the other hand, all of the 8 foreign-born faculty members (originally from North/West Africa, Eastern/Central Europe, or North America, currently working in Japan) were well aware of, not only the news that Miyamoto had become The Miss Universe Japan 2015, but also of the controversies surrounding Miyamoto. This may be due to multiple factors (e.g. less coverage of the news in the Japanese media than that of English,[28] personal/professional[29] interest in the news itself, etc.).

Students' reactions to the Miyamoto case.

The following Japanese students' responses during the face-to-face interview sessions are noteworthy, particularly when I showed the picture of Ariana Miyamoto:

SS2 (f): I don't think she should represent Japan. When I was in the U.S., I had dyed my hair blonde, so lots of Americans asked me "Aren't you Japanese? Why is your hair blonde?"

[reconstructed from interview notes, translated.]

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[28] As confirmed by a number of foreign-born faculty members I interviewed, English-medium newspapers in Japan such as *The Japan Times* provide a wide range of "information that we normally wouldn't get through the Japanese media," as explained by F36 (f).

[29] Of the eight foreign-born faculty members, two are in Science, five in Language Studies, and one in Art.

At the time of this interview, SS2 had dark hair so I asked why she darkened her hair and she said because she is looking for a job and she cannot be "fooling around anymore." She continued:

> SS2 (f): Japanese girls are pale and have slanted eyes and that's all [Americans] knew….as long as Miyamoto is to represent the nation, she should respect the tradition of "the Japanese look."
>
> > [reconstructed from interview notes, translated.]

In a frustrating tone, SS2 disapproved Miyamoto's "untraditional look" as though Miyamoto had any control over her face features or physique. Another student hesitantly opened his mouth after staring hard at the photo of Miyamoto:

> S3 (m): I never thought I had a bias against people's ethnicity or race, but when I look at the picture of Ms. Miyamoto, I feel a sense of *discomfort*. To be honest, I feel she doesn't look typical Japanese. Yet, I do feel it's wrong to assume people's identity (e.g. ethnicity and nationality) by their look.
>
> > [reconstructed from interview notes, translated.]

He realized that he was contradicting himself as he had difficulty perceiving Miyamoto as "Japanese" even after noting that it was "wrong" to assume who someone is simply by their look. A dissonance between what he *wants to believe* (as an ideology) and what he *can believe* (as reality) appears to be the issue here. On a similar note, the following student exhorted that "we must change our perspectives in this day and age," yet failed to notice that in her own verbiage, she continued to distinguish the "pure" Japanese from the rest. Also, she treated Miyamoto as "non-Japanese" which consequently negated her aforesaid call for a change:

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SS1 (f): There have been famous *hafu* entertainers and they have something different from other PURE Japanese. They are setting new and positive standards. Foreign and *hafu* people make up the new Japan. I do believe that being at least part foreign is an advantage while having Japanese blood too. *If born and raised in Japan, you're Japanese.* [As for the Miyamoto case], we may need to clarify if Miss Universe Japan is a contest to compete for the beauty IN Japan or OF the Japanese.

[reconstructed from interview notes, translated.]

Another student candidly admitted that after seeing how Miyamoto looks, he could not wrap his head around the fact that she was to represent Japan in Miss Universe:

S9 (m): Until I saw her picture, I thought it's okay [that Miyamoto won the pageant], but after seeing her, I'm not sure. But she's a Japanese national and speaks Japanese as her first language, so it might be *acceptable*. I do feel *uneasy* though, in seeing her as the representative of Japan.

[reconstructed from interview notes, translated.]

A sense of "discomfort" or "uneasiness" seems to be commonly experienced by the Japanese students when I showed the photo of Miyamoto. Also based on the comment by S9, Miyamoto's unconventional look is perceived as something that needs to be "accepted." Similar to S9's view, there are two other male students who seemed reluctant to "accept" Miyamoto's Japaneseness:

SS4 (m): ((Staring at the photo of Miyamoto)) She doesn't have the archetypal Japanese look. But if she wants to compete as a Japanese, I think we need to respect her decision.

SS5 (m): She doesn't have the look of *nadeshiko* [the traditional beauty of Japanese women]. Her beauty is not of the Japanese standards, perhaps of the Western standards.

[reconstructed from interview notes, translated.]

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While they voiced their support for Miyamoto, both SS4 and SS5 knowingly or unknowingly distinguished between "the conventional Japanese" and the rest. By contrast, the following five female students presented a more nuanced understanding of the situation surrounding Miyamoto in Japan:

> S2 (f): I don't think one's heritage should determine who they are nationality-wise or ethnicity-wise. It's contradictory that some Japanese people argue that the Miss Universe Japan should look like Japanese to represent the nation because how the contestants are judged is based on the standards of "Western" physique such as having long legs, wide eyes, being tall, etc. Aren't Japanese women traditionally short and having less distinctive eyes, etc.? ((laughs))

> SS3 (f): I understand both sides (i.e. *for* and *against* Miyamoto as The Miss Universe Japan). But I don't agree with those who say Ms. Miyamoto *isn't* Japanese just because her look doesn't sit well with the tradition or with the image of Japan.

> S11 (f): Even though she's *hafu*, she grew up in Japan so she understands the culture and can make a good advocate for our culture. What's important is the inner identity, not the outer one.

> S12 (f): It's a positive phenomenon that this *hafu* lady won the contest. Because I believe Japan is more and more diversified and the traditional Japanese culture is no longer just a culture of its own, but a mixture of European and American cultures, this incident symbolizes the current Japan. Ms. Miyamoto may lose her identity or is unable to find her own place if we fixate on the purity of the so-called Japanese.

> S14 (f): I don't think being *hafu* makes [Miyamoto] non-Japanese. When I was student teaching [at a local elementary school], there were some *hafu* children and they weren't that different from the rest or were treated any differently by their peers. For example, a *hafu* child with a Russian mom and a Japanese dad had a mobile phone and the [Russian] mom was constantly checking on the child to make sure

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she was going to *juku* [a cram school] as soon as regular school was dismissed. In that sense, the Russian mom was no different from other Japanese ["helicopter"] moms. ((laughs))

[reconstructed from interview notes, translated.]

Based on all the responses so far, although many of the students seem aware of the change in Japan's "ethnoscapes" and ideologically understand that people must not be "judged by its cover," Miyamoto's appearance continues to trouble some of these students. Put differently, on the one hand, how "the Western" standards of beauty is perceived in Japan may have given Miyamoto "an edge" over other contestants. Yet, the same edge that helped Miyamoto to win the pageant seems to be, on the contrary, undermining her Japaneseness because "the Japanese beauty" and "the Western beauty" are perceived as two separate constructs, as shown in the students' responses.

By extension, these responses help substantiate my earlier argument on what "Japanese" means or looks like among the youth in Japan may be at the crossroads today (cf. **A changing Japan where internationalization, English, identity, and *akogare* intersect**).

Faculty's reactions to the Miyamoto case.

To better understand the crossroads from a larger perspective, I also examined some of the faculty members' responses from the face-to-face interview sessions. Interestingly, some of them (including faculty members who are "Japanese" by ethnicity) shared similar insights into why Miyamoto may have difficulty being accepted as "Japanese" in Japanese society:

FF4 (f): I think one's phenotype as well as being born/raised/living in Japan would determine if she "fits in" or not. For example, myself as a Japanese American, even if I marry a Japanese man, I believe I'll always be "that Japanese American

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woman who married a Japanese man" and that I would never be considered to be fully "Japanese." Being able to understand written language is also another important aspect of what helps someone to be more Japanese.

[reconstructed from interview notes.]

There seems to be a range of being "Japanese," as in "full," "half," "part," and so on. This scale of Japaneseness was often utilized by my study participants, yet it may be alluding to different factors to be "full" or "half." For example, some study participants may use "half" to describe a person with an ethnically Japanese father and an ethnically Chinese mother while others such as FF4 may use the term "full" to describe a person with a Japanese ethnic background plus alpha (e.g. place of birth, nationality, citizenship, etc.). The next two faculty members' experience may stand in contrast as they are by ethnicity non-Japanese:

> F22 (m): Ariana [Miyamoto] case is interesting to see in Japan. If she says "I'm American," no one would question her. If she says "I'm French" or "I'm British," people probably wouldn't question that either. Only when she says she's Japanese, then Japanese people would turn and ask "really?" This tells us that there must be something special about being Japanese or claiming "Japaneseness." *Hafu* and other mixed race people have been struggling in Japan as well as in their countries of "origin," because they get treated as foreign in all places and they feel their identity doesn't exist anywhere. Interestingly, however, even though I'm from a different country [in West Africa], I may maintain the similar attitude [to that of the Japanese] because I now know [how] Japan [operates]. I'd question someone who doesn't look "Japanese" but says he is Japanese. ((laughs))
>
> F3 (m): I agree with those who support [Miyamoto]. Japan is a closed nation unlike the U.S. and historically a *shimaguni* [island nation]. Yet, the world is more open than before, look at the president of the U.S. [Obama]! In [a North African

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country where F3 is from] today, there are traditionally-underrepresented populations in power, like a minister, and that's the reality. It's not like 100 years ago anymore. There are many "*hafu*" and foreign populations who contribute to Japan's economy, business, education, and politics. There's a force to become a country with multicultural/linguistic qualities, people with different faces, and that can be the beauty of the country. Like my daughter, she speaks French, Arabic, and Japanese. That's not rare anymore. Plus, Japan experiencing "*shoshi-korei ka*" [low birthrate and aging population], internationalization is inevitable. Japaneseness is not only about blood but also about paying taxes, doing good jobs, bringing money to the country, like business. […] There should be no boundaries between Japanese and non-Japanese, globalization can't stop.

[reconstructed from interview notes.]

Through their own experiences, these foreign-born faculty members seemed to have come to understand the ways in which a person's Japaneseness may be perceived and treated by people in Japan. The Japanese American faculty member (FF4) expressed that one's Japaneseness has a lot to do with the "phenotype" as well as "being born/raised/living in Japan" and other qualities such as Japanese literacy. The literacy was also highlighted by others including a Japanese faculty member (FF5) who shared, "When I was a child, I was taking piano lessons from a Canadian nun at a convent in the neighborhood. She wasn't a foreigner to me, she was just a piano teacher because she spoke Japanese."

In addition to developing fluency in Japanese, F22 (from West Africa) admitted that he has adopted "the Japanese way" to the extent that he would question one's Japaneseness if the person does not "look like" one. Also sharing similar insights, F3 (from North Africa) strongly advocated for a change in people's perspectives, particularly given the societal transitions Japan is experiencing, both nationally and internationally.

Almost contrasting the abovementioned views on Japan, the following faculty member shared his take on the Miss Universe Japan case as follows:

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F28 (m): In my opinion, I've never heard anyone say, "Ohh, have you seen that there's a black...[Miss Universe Japan]?," I never heard that from anyone [here in Japan]. And I hang around the community, a very diverse community of people […] and no one goes ((mimicking an angry voice)) "Oh, have you heard about..[Miss Universe Japan]?" […] I think this is a big sensationalism thing in the media where they look for these type of stories. […] I mean, she's a beautiful girl and I can understand, you know, she actually—all of the Miss Americas or Miss Universes in Japan, all kind of look the same ((laughs)), they have the same build, you know, tall, thin, big smiles and stuff, so she looks similar to any of them.

[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

He continued on to describing other mixed heritage celebrities in Japan and also shared his son's experiences being *hafu* and living in Japan:

F28 (m): And actually, the truth is, if you look at, you know *Exile* [a Japanese boy band]? What's his name [from *Exile*]? he has a curly hair, he looks like he could be [Miyamoto's]...brother, and he's so popular, everyone loves him, you know […] my son's mixed and I've heard all these stories about how terrible mixed people—kids are treated and stuff, and my son had a wonderful life, he's never once had a bad experience, NEVER ONCE [….] People treated him more as a celebrity and a lot of it is personality too. […] What I find [in Japan] is that most people love mixed kids, like all the kids at school, they wanna be friends with [my son], you know, so if people wanna be your friend then, why not?

[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

Based on F28's response, there may be diverse experiences being *hafu* in Japan. Fortunately, his son was able to "play it [being *hafu*] up," yet that may not have been the case for some other mixed children, as acknowledged by F28 himself. Also, Miyamoto (and her friends who were of

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mixed heritage) had experienced a tough childhood being singled out by peers who, for example, teased Miyamoto for her dark complexion (Kosuke Takahashi, 2015), which stands in sharp contrast to F28's narratives of his son's life in Japan.

By extension, even within the small pool of my interviewees, there is a range of perspectives and experiences pertaining how people understand or treat concepts such as "the Japanese," "the non-Japanese," "*hafu*," and so on.

Utilizing the Miyamoto case as a topical "identity" issue in Japan: The potential for rethinking kokusaika.

As the Miyamoto case is timely, critical, thought-provoking, and perhaps relatable to some students, several faculty members mentioned that they had incorporated the case into their classes at their university. For example, the following faculty member leveraged the *identity* aspect of the Miss Universe Japan story:

> F38 (m): I used [the Miyamoto case] in the current issues class for identity. […] So with this [Miyamoto case], [I focused on] "Who is she?" you know. And in my identity class, I often stress—trying not to be too heavy-handed but—identity is *not* something that should be told, to someone, "You are this" or "You are not this." […] Now you got Caitlyn Jenner, that's one of them, and you've got…there's some stars, some memes that has "White people think I'm Asian, Asian people think I'm white," and...*hafu*s, you know [….] I often tell [my] students, "I've been in Japan for a third of my life, I would feel that third Japanese" [….] And [my] students were like, "But you don't look Japanese," I was like, "I don't care, it's not about the look, it's about a feeling, it's about who you think [you are], and how you identify," you know.
>
> [audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

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Through his own transnational experiences in Canada, Japan, and so forth, F38 emphasized that he "feels 1/3 Japanese" and that is something nobody can take away from him. This mentality seemed to strongly guide his classes at the university (especially of those focusing on identity issues).

While noting that she used the Miyamoto case as a topic for an essay assignment for her class, another faculty member personally reflected on the discrepancies between the beauty pageant, the standards of beauty, and the accepted Japaneseness as follows:

> F35 (f): I think it just starts with the whole question of even having a Miss Japan and a Miss Universe, I mean, […] they're anachronism of older age and ah, really is not, should not be too relevant in today's society and I think that is also reflected by […] a majority [of Japanese population] not really caring one way or another because it doesn't impact your life in any way. And the issue of whether, you know, a person of mixed heritage could be representative of a country, um...if we DO accept these contests ((laughs)), I think [it] just represents the changing demographics of the country and of the world, and there should be no, you know, disqualifying factor for [Miyamoto] to represent Japan.
>
> [audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

Her perspective on beauty contests brought a breath of fresh air to my study as, up until this point, I had yet to entertain the meaning and legitimacy of beauty contests themselves. I then followed up with a question to draw a connection with the concepts of Japaneseness and non-Japaneseness:

> Chisato: Many students I spoke with seemed to hold on to this image of the Japanese being a certain way or having a particular look. What is your opinion on this [as a professor at a Japanese university]?

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F35 (f): I think it's very difficult to essentialize [Japaneseness], you know, […] um, it has been, I think, established by research [that] there's more INTRA-cultural or INTRA-ethnic diversity than, you know, INTER-cultural, INTER-ethnic [diversity], so maybe some Japanese person may have more in common, with...I don't know, a Korean person or a Chinese person or a person from Hawaii or from the U.S. than with another Japanese person from a different part of Japan, from a different socioeconomic background et cetera et cetera. So I think it's very hard to define Japaneseness, and also through the generations, I think, you know Japanese of my age and Japanese of […] my students' age are very different, and even within the same age group […] they are very different, in the way they […] hold themselves or dress, or you know, body language, […] I think it kind of feeds into itself, you know, it's like uh, yes, there is that kind of image and people who come, they "adapt" over time to the image and contribute to changing the image and re-creating and constituting the image.

[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

As her own research interests include TESOL and other related fields, F35's overall response provokes one to think about a complex set of issues today that deal with identity, nationality, citizenship, and so forth. She also made a comparison between her students from University A and other students from University B, noting that they dress or behave differently from each other to the extent that one can perhaps observe a student and tell which university she/he belongs to (though both Universities A and B share similar qualities in terms of academic standing, location, and the socioeconomic background of students). Further, she elaborated on her own experience in thinking about the multiplicity of Japaneseness:

F35 (f): I think maybe especially as a foreigner living in Japan, again, you do not necessarily interact so much with the *stereotypical* Japanese because as foreigners, many of our Japanese friends have lived abroad, you know. They're

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quite different from the typical Japanese I would think, because again still the typical Japanese does not have, you know, long-term experience abroad et cetera et cetera, so would probably be different from, the Japanese that we interact with as foreign residents […] or even, you know, small social cultural groups like I practice yoga, so I belong to the yoga group and I feel much closer to my yoga friends here or my yoga friends in [country of origin] and my yoga friends in the U.S. than to...I don't know…my coworkers? ((laughs))

[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

While demonstrating a complex understanding of Japaneseness, F35 interestingly differentiated "the stereotypical Japanese" from the atypical ones who have "long-term experience abroad." This narrative evoked in me the widespread Japanese proverb that reads: *The nail that sticks out gets hammered down* [出る杭は打たれる], which captures people's tendencies to conform to what is perceived (or imagined) as mainstream, normal, and acceptable in Japan. At the same time, her observation of Japanese people helps highlight the precarious juncture (that Japan may be facing today) of: what Japaneseness is *supposed* to be; what Japaneseness may *actually* be; and what Japaneseness may be *transforming into*.

Another faculty member also acknowledged that she is planning to use the Miyamoto case as part of her class at the university. She then shared an emotional account of what Japaneseness means to her personally after moving to Japan as an adult with her child who was born outside of Japan:

Chisato: Have you heard about the new Miss Universe Japan?
F39 (f): Yes, Ariana Miyamoto? of course! […] I will have my class introduce this case, um, when we are studying about immigration [because] the book talk is just boring […] well, the fact that she was chosen shows that actually people who chose her do not think that's a problem that she's not a typical Japanese –

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although she is Japanese by nationality and I personally think that that's all that matters.

<div align="right">[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]</div>

It seemed that F39 is well-versed in the Miyamoto case not just because she was intending to use it as a venue for class discussion, but she appeared emotionally invested in the case itself. In fact, she continued on to discussing the anti-Miyamoto (as the Miss Universe Japan) population as follows:

> F39 (f): But, um yeah, of course I was SAD when somebody said she shouldn't represent Japan […] there was, um, a very young person [who expressed that] [Miyamoto] shouldn't represent Japan and I was thinking [that] he's just about 20 [years old] and he doesn't probably have a day of work in his life and I've been paying tax for how many years here [in Japan], and he would say that my child or [I] cannot represent Japan, oh WTF, ((laughs)) really. Well, say that to my face! so that made me angry, but I try to think like WHY do they say that? WHY? […] she was born here and even if not, is that a problem? In my opinion, what if she came here, like my daughter, my daughter was [little when they moved to Japan], and the only language she's so comfortable with is Japanese [….] But, um...yeah it made me sad, like [it's] 21st century, I was surprised how many young people commented [negatively on the Miyamoto case], oh well, I mean there's no way to prove who said what online but, I saw some comments and I thought "wow" "why so much [hate]..." but then it's online right? People easily say bad things, so should I really be taking this so seriously, or you know?

<div align="right">[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]</div>

Similar to the points made by F3 earlier, F39 (and a few other foreign-born faculty members) seemed to recognize "paying taxes" as a form of being part of the society which therefore should

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help legitimize their "Japaneseness," particularly in consideration of many Japanese youth who are yet to pay their dues to Japanese society. As listening to F39's frustration towards some Japanese youth who made provocative comments about Miyamoto online, I began to wonder if F39 was also aware of the fact that most university students in Japan may not even know who Miyamoto Ariana is. In fact, many students I had previously spoken to were not even following the news on who won/lost those beauty contests in general:

> Chisato: Another thing that I was surprised about was how unaware people were, like the university students I got to interview with, nobody knew about Miyamoto...
>
> F39 (f): Neither did my students!
>
> Chisato: So there's a gap between, you know, how these [newspaper] articles talk about some Japanese people are "upset" by the fact that [Miyamoto was chosen]…but, who are these "Japanese people"?
>
> F39 (f): Yeah, how did they find out, it's very interesting that…that's another thing I thought. This is so not important in Japan, Miss Universe Japan, but if nobody knows about it, it doesn't matter who's chosen. But if it was something more important, she may not have been chosen…?
>
> [audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

While some media claims that Japanese people are "upset" that a biracial woman was chosen as the Miss Universe Japan, another reality is that a majority of people seem unaware or even indifferent to the news itself. As F39 indicated, if the Miss Universe Japan pageant was more appealing to a larger audience, it is plausible that more people may have been following the news and possibly have caused a larger controversy.

Interestingly, F39 had earlier indicated that "paying taxes" should be one of the major contributions to society (and "economy" as highlighted by F3) hence it should technically help

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legitimize one's Japaneseness or at least help the individual to earn a place in Japan. That being said, when I subsequently asked "what makes someone more Japanese?," F39's response was surprisingly simple:

> Chisato: So, in your opinion, what makes a person Japanese?
> F39 (f): NATIONALITY!...passport.
>
> [audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

I asked her to elaborate on how and why she came to this conclusion, she continued:

> F39 (f): Legally, I mean, like before I met you today, I sent a [text] message in Japanese but I wasn't sure if you could read it or not because when I talk to you and I read your messages, your English is fluent, compared to...well […] I don't know [if your mother tongue is English] so maybe you can't read Japanese, or…I knew you were born in Japan so, I mean, right, even if you don't speak Japanese, you can be Japanese. And then on the other hand, you could be culturally Japanese like my kid, but to not have any citizenship, any so-called Japanese blood…
>
> [audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

Synthesizing this response with others, it helps tease out the complex nature of one's Japaneseness in light of citizenship, nationality, languages/literacy, and ancestry ("Japanese blood" or often "the Japanese look"). For all of these components seem to help corroborate one's Japaneseness in one way or another, F39's daughter being "culturally Japanese" may, in some cases, substantiate her Japaneseness, yet in other cases, may not.

In the case of Miyamoto, her citizenship, nationality, and language/literacy purportedly make her "Japanese" while her "non-Japanese look" seems to distract people. It is possibly the "beauty pageant" element—which obviously brings much attention to the appearance of the contestant rather than her other less noticeable qualities—that may be troubling to some of the

Japanese students I interviewed. In other words, if the focus was not on the appearance (e.g. competing in the Mathlympics), she may easily be considered as a legitimate candidate to represent the nation on the international stage.

Although not necessarily planning to introduce the Miyamoto case to her own class, another faculty member (F36) leveraged this case as a venue in thinking about her own identity development in Japan. During an interview with F36, she referenced a similar case in the U.S. to draw connections to the Miyamoto case:

> Chisato: What do you think about the whole controversy [surrounding Miyamoto] or how do you find this case overall?
>
> F36 (f): I'm reminded of a similar controversy and it's not within Japan but […it was about] some kind of Queen from the Japanese-American community. And when young women who are so-called *hafu* were being chosen that, that became an issue for some people, okay, and either [it] was [that] the last name wasn't a Japanese last name or again was it about her appearance? or, you know, whether their family members were active members within the community or what, there seemed to be different levels of reasons for questioning…so I think at that point, that issue particularly caught my attention [….] so when I read about what happened in Japan [the "Miss Universe Japan"] I thought, "Well, I'm not quite sure [if] there's…[a solution]" you know. Within the last ten years I've attended people doing talks on...you must know the woman what's her name? Laurel Kamada? she wrote a book actually about *hafu*, so-called *hafu* Japanese girls, and the adolescence and I've been to her talk and, so I'm aware of...the fact […] that academics are picking this up...um, obviously because the whole issue of who is Japanese? or that is being problematized from a viewpoint of, from so-called race, and...yeah, I'm very curious [about] what kind of answers they're gonna come up with. I guess, I kind of feel like I'm not joining, I'm not jumping in this discussion, but, I'm a concerned bystander ((laughs)), so in a way, I'm sort

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of letting myself off the hook, and then I'm not putting myself out there saying "It should be this way or that way."

<div align="right">[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]</div>

For both professional and personal reasons, F36 seems well aware of today's ever-precarious state (particularly of Japan) in which the concepts of ethnicity, nationality, race, citizenship, etc. intersect and often conflict. Additionally, although she is attentive to the "who's Japanese and who's not?" dialogue in social as well as academic realms, F36 said she wants to remain as a "concerned bystander" by choice which piqued my interest. Therefore, I followed with a question: *In your opinion, what makes someone Japanese?*, to see if there are specific reasons why she is decidedly a concerned bystander:

> F36 (f): I think in this day and age, maybe to me, the most convincing answer to that [who's Japanese?] is those who would make the claim that they are Japanese that they should be allowed to do so ((laughs)) because I'm aware of the fact that there is a growing population of people living in Japan who have a variety of experiences of living within Japan, living outside of Japan, having parents from a variety of different backgrounds, but they claim they're—their central identity is being Japanese...so, the more I hear about this, the more it makes sense to me that it's not something...well, outsiders can say you know, it's something that...my work with identities issues, ideally, it boils down to how the individual wants to live their lives or claim, you know, their identities, so I don't think that's where things are in Japan yet. To me, ideally, that's what eventually I think is going to have to be recognized.

<div align="right">[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]</div>

Although F36 earlier indicated that she wanted to remain a concerned bystander, I felt a sense of emotional investment in her response. To confirm my hunch, I then asked if she could share

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some of her personal experiences living in Japan. Indeed, she provided a powerful account of

her identity journey throughout her life in Japan:

> F36 (f): I've lived in Japan for about, over...close to [20+] years now? So...I have this huge chip on my shoulder ((laughs)), it's gotten worn out a little bit […] I think I've gone through a wide range of just wanting to blend in and not have anybody ask me who I was, or I just wanna "get along" and not be hassled ((laughs)) about having to show or say or prove to anybody who I was. 'Kay, so in that sense, I embraced living in Japan and probably there was something very deep inside me saying "Don't try to single me out and make me different." […] I think the idea of *fragmentation* really fits maybe my own experience and that I can go the whole range, you know, I could be 100% [Japanese], not use any English, I can wear *monpe* [Japanese farmer pants], go out in my garden and look like a Japanese *Obasan* [older woman], and get away with it, you know, "pass" [as a Japanese] you know, talk about making *umeboshi* [pickled plums] or do that kind of stuff. And there are other times when I resent people staring when I'm trying to read a book in English or I'm talking with somebody in English in a public place on the train or something and then I could feel people staring. So...maybe, […] I want it to be my way all the time [but] it's not gonna happen. It took me a *loooooong* time to come to terms with that, but I think—I realize...what really helped me maybe understand, you know, this dilemma was one doing, you know, kind of academic work about it, like doing my dissertation, and also meeting people of similar backgrounds who have faced the same struggles in different levels in different circumstances, but I realized that this is a very common thing about our lives today in the world. […] We're at a point in most nation-states, I guess, throughout the world, that these really simple *labels* of connecting ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, all of that doesn't fit anymore and so, we need to talk and...uh what's the word?...VOICE! I think it's only through telling these personal stories that people start to realize it's not that simple.
>
> [audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

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In this snippet of her life story, F36 illuminated that she went through a whirl of emotion and realization across different times and spaces. Through these experiences, she seems to have come to understand that one's identity is not something that can easily be pinpointed because it is made of unstable and "fragmented" pieces that are in constant flux. Also noted by F36 was the importance of "voice" and the potential space (for F36, it was via the intellectual channel) where these voices can be shared, understood, and possibly negotiated. As this narrative hints at a new avenue for thinking about identities in the context of a changing Japan, it will be revisited for a closer analysis later (in ***Olivia-sensei's "floating" understanding of her identity(ies)***).

Japaneseness as being imagined, manifested, and challenged in today's Japan.

While acknowledging the complex nature of one's identity (e.g. evolving, diversifying, dispersing, or fragmenting Japaneseness of a person as shown in F36's narrative above), there also seems to be a collective imagination of what Japaneseness is supposed to be or look like, across my study participants regardless of their backgrounds (i.e. nationality, gender, age, etc.). For instance, the descriptions narrated by F36 of gardening in Japanese clothes and making pickled plums are in many ways "Japanese" to those who are familiar with such traditions and customs. During the face-to-face interview sessions, 2 faculty members (both foreign-born) and 13 students (10 Japanese, 3 foreign-born) spoke on Japaneseness or non-Japaneseness as follows:

*Table 6. On Japaneseness/non-Japaneseness (**Students and faculty**).*

Identifier	Responses
S2 (f)	It's up to how they perceive themselves, if they feel Japanese, they are Japanese. For example, there is this British scholar who has extensive knowledge of Japanese history and I think that makes him more Japanese than the other so-called "Japanese people."
S3 (m)	Being collective may be what makes people Japanese, but not their blood or their faces. That's more of a "trait" shared by many in Japan.
S9 (m)	Being respectful and polite.
S11 (f)	Blood shouldn't define Japaneseness, neither nationality nor ethnicity. What I think prevalent throughout Japan is that people in Japan have valued certain mannerism and customs. This can be seen both positively or negatively but I believe we need to have basic rules to value so the society runs smoother. It's not about forcing people to follow rules but people should want to value rules and care about each other. That's how it should be ideally. In that sense, comparing other societies and countries I had the chance to observe or visit, Japan is unique. Again, I'm not saying other societies don't follow basic rules or they don't share such values, but those qualities seem more visible in Japan.
S12 (f)	There's no right or wrong way to be Japanese (or non-Japanese). There is however a particular image of Japanese being studious, serious, and punctual, perhaps mostly believed by foreign populations. Also, I think these images are more to do with how the Japanese "should be" than how the Japanese "are."
S14 (f)	My image of "non-Japaneseness" is being lighthearted, for example, saying "Hi" to everyone on the street.
SS1 (f)	Being Japanese is to fit in with others and not to stand out. I have an image of foreign people being good at expressing themselves. Also, they appear open and have own opinions and believe in them.
SS3 (f)	What makes someone Japanese...when I see people *not* wasting food or keeping places clean, I find them very Japanese.
SS4 (m)	My perception of Japaneseness got lost after going to Hawai'i. I no longer have a good understanding of what makes Japanese people more Japanese.
SS5 (m)	It's something that we don't know until others point out. For example, when we had the 2011 *Tohoku* earthquake, foreign media praised Japan for being orderly and calm. I never saw Japan in that sense, but after hearing about how Japan was perceived, then I came to realize maybe those qualities are what make Japan more "Japanese."
SS6 (f)	The Japanese have a different sense of personal distance. That is, they seem to be extremely careful at "reading between the lines" in a given situation. It makes it that much harder for me to forge friendships with Japanese students because I don't have those skills.
SS7 (f)	The culture of *Kawaii* [cute], also the people's response to the fashion trend. It changes so fast and everyone looks the same. ((laughs))

Identifier	*Responses*
SS8 (m)	The culture of *nomikai* [drinking parties] where people can develop different relationships. Also, the politeness and professionalism here amaze me. Like, the bus driver uses a very polite language.
F3 (m)	Bloodline. It's not my opinion but it's the reality and mentality that exist in Japan. If Ariana [Miyamoto] marries a foreign person, her baby will be 25% Japanese, if she marries a Japanese person, her baby will be 75%. This mentality seems to be changing slowly though.
F22 (m)	So what makes people more Japanese than others? This brings up the question of "papers versus face." Or "how active they are in society" versus "what their faces say who they are."

[reconstructed from interview notes, students' responses translated from Japanese.]

Interestingly, many of the Japanese students who were hesitant to the idea of Miyamoto representing Japan with her "beautiful but not-so-Japanese look" (S9) did not mention or even dismissed that Japaneseness has anything to do with one's ancestry (e.g. "Japanese blood" or "the Japanese look"). On the other hand, the two foreign faculty members (F3 and F22) clearly stated that Japanese society tends to define someone's Japaneseness mainly through his/her look and each shared with me some awkward and upsetting experiences of their own living as a "*gaijin*" [foreigner] in Japan. Conversely, the three Chinese students (SS6, SS7, and SS8) mainly discussed cultural aspects of "Japaneseness." Although these students also expressed their struggle to "fit in" with people in Japan, their experiences seemed to differ in nature when compared to those who "look completely different from others and stand out like a sore thumb in this society of sameness" (F22).

Broadly speaking, however, the more extensive transnational/international experiences people had, the more nuanced their understanding of concepts such as Japaneseness and non-

Japaneseness *appeared* to be in their overall responses.[30] Yet, at the same time, some came to

realize and appreciate the uniqueness of their own country (e.g. Japan) precisely because they

had left their country to explore the world. For example, the following faculty member

(Japanese, female), after having studied in the U.S. and traveled abroad extensively, realized how

unique and different Japan is from the rest of the world:

> FF6 (f): I've always wanted to "help" developing countries that I often saw on TV and
> other media. I wanted to be the "bridge" between them and Japan but when I
> actually had the chance to visit those countries in Southeast Asia, I found it
> unlivable. I wanted to help but the reality hit me that their basic infrastructures
> were so different from those of Japan.
>
> [reconstructed from interview notes, translated.]

In her candid answer, the *uniqueness* of Japan is emphasized as having sufficient infrastructures

and FF6 made it clear about not wanting to live elsewhere. At the same time, she also talked

about the "indivisibility" of Japan from the rest of the world today that the uniqueness of Japan

may no longer be able to sustain itself in the near future. As an example, FF6 shared her

observations of the students at her university, noting that "popular TV dramas and music such as

24 [an American TV series] or *One Direction* [an English-Irish boy band] are universally shared

today, being consumed by the youth in Japan as well as those around the globe simultaneously."

This type of experience is indeed helping to connect people across time and space, resultantly

"blurring the clear borders that once existed" (FF6). In this sense, "the Japanese culture," for

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[30] I ran crosstab queries to see if there are any correlations between 1) the students' choice of
ideal mother country (and their reasoning) and their overall travel/study/living/working
experiences overseas; 2) the face-to-face interview participants' responses to the Miyamoto
case/Japaneseness ideals and their overall travel/study/living/working experiences overseas; and
3) study participants' definitions/understanding of *akogare* and their overseas experience (see
Appendices H, I, and J).

example, is no longer an entity of its own but of a more collective nature and is increasingly

being challenged, negotiated, and redefined. Highlighting this point further while drawing on the

Miyamoto case, the following faculty member (Japanese, female) articulated as follows:

> FF1 (f): I think it's like when we had the first foreign *Yokozuna* [*Sumo* champion]. It was
> the turning point for the *Sumo* world because we had to question what really was
> important in the tradition of *Sumo*. It is a combination of art and sports and the
> focus is on the beauty of the both. It wasn't a matter of who the wrestler was but
> it was about continuing the tradition. The Miss Universe Japan case is similar in
> that its focus is on beauty, and Ms. Miyamoto's beauty is a product of the
> particular mix of "Japanese" and "non-Japanese." I believe it is a sign that Japan
> is reframing its capacity for new beauty in this changing world. In my opinion,
> Japan is at the intersection of globalization and nationalization.
>
> [reconstructed from interview notes, translated.]

Often reified by their personal experiences, my study participants hold their own view on

Japaneseness or "non-Japaneseness," yet it is also evident that such views are constantly

evolving, juxtaposed against, or even challenged by the social, economic, and political climate of

Japan (e.g. immigration, the low birthrate and aging population, and *kokusaika* policies). For

this chapter, I used the Miyamoto case as a prompt to elicit spontaneous reactions and responses

from my study participants on their view of "Japan" and "Japaneseness." While one's

citizenship, nationality, languages/literacy, and ancestry ("Japanese blood" or "the Japanese look"

as described by my study participants) are commonly-mentioned factors that may help determine

one's "Japaneseness," they are often symbolic and conditional rather than substantive or

definitive. For example, in the case of Miyamoto, she may have passed as a fine representative

of Japan in the Mathlympics (hypothetically speaking) because she would most likely be

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considered to be "Japanese" by all means important and necessary within that particular

competitive field. Or, if Miyamoto had more of a "Japanese look" to the extent that it was

impossible for anyone to see through her "unconventional background," she may have been just

another Miss Universe Japan whom a majority of people could not care less about.

Summary of Chapter 4

In this chapter, I mainly framed and discussed the "Western" standards of beauty in a

broader sense. However, I am also aware of the varying degrees of "Westernness" or

"foreignness" in Japan and how those may play out in certain contexts over others (cf.

"whiteness" in Japan: Ashikari, 2005; "blackness" in Japan: Cornyetz, 1994; Fischer, 2007;

Russell, 1998; "Japanese Americanness" in Japan: Kubota & Fujimoto, 2013; Kusaka, 2014).

By extension, for example, the golden boy Ryan may have drawn the attention of a different

crowd if he was of non-European descent. Or, if Miyamoto (born to African American and

Japanese parents) was of European and Japanese heritage, the controversies may have looked

completely different.

Nevertheless, within the scope of my study, I paid more attention to how my study

participants narrated on what (who) is "Japanese" and what (who) is *not*. As pointed out by

many of my study participants, the presence of *hafu*, mixed heritage people, and other diverse

population is indeed what makes today's Japan "Japan." More importantly, the students who

explicitly resisted or hesitated about the idea of Miyamoto representing Japan also make up the

population of today's Japan. Acknowledging these otherwise-simple facts is necessary

especially because the government generally remains oblivious to them when planning and

executing the nationwide project of *kokusaika*.

In the following chapter, under the third theme: "*akogare* and JHE today," I will address the second research question: *What implications do the students' self-other perspectives (via akogare) have for the internationalization of Japanese higher education and beyond?* Ultimately, by incorporating what has been brought forth by my study participants so far, I will reimagine what *kokusaika* should look like for Japan in the coming years.

CHAPTER 5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION PART 2

This chapter will take on the third theme: "*akogare* and JHE today" by presenting some of the findings that are more specific to the practice of JHE. Put differently, a range of narratives and *counter* narratives are weaved together and collectively presented to address the second research question. Most importantly, I will elaborate on both direct and indirect ways in which the current *kokusaika* campaign may be impacting the life and practice of Japanese university students and faculty members which will help guide the discussion on Japan's future plan of *kokusaika* (to be highlighted in **Chapter 6**).

Akogare and Japanese Higher Education (JHE) Today

In what follows, I examine different realms of JHE and present a variety of narratives (individual, collective, and occasionally competing) to help render a complex and a more nuanced picture of JHE today. By so doing, I attempt to prepare for later discussions to directly address the second research question: *What implications do the students' self-other perspectives (via akogare) have for the internationalization of Japanese higher education and beyond?*

The tale of junior colleges.

While collecting *akogare* narratives in the university settings, I came across several narratives concerning *tandai* [junior colleges]. Similar to the American education system, junior colleges (the equivalent of community colleges in the U.S.) generally offer two-year programs. Some of the unique aspects of Japanese junior colleges, however, include their low admission rates, terminal education role (university transfer is less than 10%), and the age and gender homogeneity of the student body (M. Harada, 1993). According to the statistics reported by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology – Japan (MEXT), for the year

2016, 88.7% of the students attending junior colleges were female whereas 43.4 % for universities and graduate schools (MEXT, 2016). Many of the junior college students are enrolled in education, home economics, health education, or liberal arts programs while engineering or agriculture programs remain in the minority. Given these sociocultural background, I will examine the following strands of narratives that emerged during my data collection and analysis process.

Gender distribution and the public image of tandai.

As shown in the observation notes taken at a woman's junior college (see ***The Bieber (look-alike) fever in Japan***), specific types of *akogare* (e.g. romantic attraction towards white male) may be more observable at junior colleges than at universities in general because of the gender distribution. In addition, the questionnaire responses, interview transcripts, and observation notes showed recurring comments about junior college students as "[being] not as driven as university students," "just wanna get a degree, become an *OL,*[31] find a husband, and finish off with *kotobuki-taisha,*[32] [33]" "only care about their makeup and fashion." Some of these comments nearly postulate that there are *only* female students in *tandai*.

Although originally designed as an educational institution to "allow more students access to university educations and participation in a class mobility" (M. Harada, 1993, p. 8), Japanese junior colleges have long functioned as a "ladies' finishing school" (p. 21) for female students to help land on a pink-collared job just until their *kotobuki-taisha*. The situation surrounding junior

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[31] The abbreviation for 'office lady,' a clerical/secretarial female worker
[32] Quitting a job to marry someone and become a housewife.
[33] Junior colleges have often been referred to as the "brides' school" (M. Harada, 1993, p. 9). A more nuanced description of junior colleges in Japan may be found in the ethnographic work by McVeigh (1997).

colleges today, however, may be changing as the government moves forward with their University Reform Action Plan[34] (Higher Education Policy Planning Division, Higher Education Bureau, 2012), which partly aims to foster "global leaders of tomorrow" with their relatively meager allowance (Kakuchi, 2014, 2015; Rappleye, 2013).

Out of the kokusaika league?

Although junior colleges in Japan officially fall within the domain of higher education, hence supposedly taking part in the *kokusaika* campaign, they are often disadvantaged if not neglected. For instance, the university council report on "What is required for higher education in the era of globalization," published by MEXT in 2000 barely acknowledges junior colleges and colleges of technology while completely failing to mention specialized schools:

Table 7. Excerpt from the university council report on "what is required for higher education in the era of globalization."

[2] The direction of reform for higher education in the era of globalization
1. Develop programs to help improve the quality of human resources that thrive the era of globalization
2. Conduct sophisticated and diversified education research that aligns with innovative science technologies and social/economic changes
3. Take advantage of information communication technology
4. Improve the transnational mobility of students and faculty

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[34] This action plan may be treated as a motion to revisit the earlier report, "The future of higher education in Japan" (MEXT, 2005), which proposed to allocate a specific and unique function to each JHE institution in the given community.

5. Improve organization operational system and build financial platforms to ensure the

promotion of cutting-edge education research

…Likewise, these plans (designed for universities and graduate schools) *may be*

adjusted for junior colleges and colleges of technology by taking into account the

unique features of their own….

(MEXT, 2000, sec. 2)

[originally in Japanese, translated by me.]

This 25+page-long report enthusiastically discusses various strategic plans geared towards the

internationalization of higher education, however, most of the plans read specific to universities

and graduate schools. Considering the fact that junior colleges make up approximately one third

of higher education institutions in Japan (MEXT, 2016), the attention paid to junior colleges

seems inadequate. The reality is, while virtually all of the large-scale *kokusaika* funds are being

awarded to universities (Office for International Planning, Higher Education Policy Planning

Division, Higher Education Bureau, n.d.), many junior colleges cannot even be thinking about

kokusaika because of the financial constraints and their "diminishing" role in JHE today

(Hamanaka, 2014, p. 178).

    The two narratives.

    Particularly given the ongoing nationwide pressure to "restructure" higher education

(Grove, 2015; N. Jenkins, 2015; Kakuchi, 2015), many junior colleges may be faced with a

tough decision (such as an institutional absorption, costly-upgrade to a university, or closure:

Kida, 2012). In this light, I observed multiple cases that illustrated the urgency to respond to the

nationwide pressure to *restructure* (= downsizing) as well as to the ongoing campaign to "internationalize" higher education institutions. The following two narratives are reconstructed based on the observations at and informal conversation notes collected of junior colleges in Japan. They demonstrate how these two pressures (i.e. internationalization and restructure) are affecting the practices of and decisions made by institutions, instructors, and students:

Narrative 1: Institution (system)-wide effects caused by the *restructure* and *internationalization* pressures

Many junior colleges are affiliated with a four-year university and graduate school.[35] Since the 1990s, higher education deregulation policies have helped Japan "enter…an age of 'universal' access to higher education—meaning that everyone can go to college as long as they are not picky about the school or faculty" (K. Harada, 2015). Although the overall enrollment in higher education has consistently increased, many institutions still suffer from the inevitable social changes, most obviously the declining youth population in Japan (see "the 2018 problem[55]"). In fact, students who aspire to pursue higher education tend to go on to a university rather than a junior college, resulting in the chronic under-enrollment at junior colleges.[36]

To cover the shortfall caused by under-enrollment and to reduce operational costs within the system, junior colleges that are affiliated with a four-year university and graduate school, often *borrow* or *recycle* resources. For example, an instructor at a university may need to also teach courses at an affiliated junior college or vice versa. In some cases, a university and junior college share the same campus and its facilities including classrooms, libraries, student lounges, and so on.

Understandably, there is sometimes tension between the university unit and junior college unit about the system-wide fund allocation. The pressure to restructure the

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[35] According to the website of Japan Association of Public Junior Colleges (2016) and the latest report submitted by a vice-president of Japan Association of Private Junior Colleges (Aso, 2016), approximately two thirds of junior colleges in Japan are affiliated with a four-year university (and graduate school).

[36] See the basic school statistics (MEXT, 2016) for more details.

system also leads some departments to be absorbed, merged, remodeled, or in the worst-case scenario, to close down. A university faculty member (British) who has taught in Japanese higher education for over 30 years expressed his frustration with the ongoing overhaul of humanities departments noting that "I can no longer teach what I love." Several faculty members (Japanese and foreign-born) of different institutions also spoken of their dissatisfaction with the top-down approach to restructure departments, often disregarding the voices of faculty and staff members. Multiple faculty members lamented, "What they're asking me to teach is not even remotely close to my area of research."

Particularly in the case of English language related fields, there is a general movement to shift their focus from the literature-based (traditional academic) discipline to more interactive (communicative) learning.[37] This is perhaps accelerated by the new course of study guidelines (nationwide) to become effective in 2020 which includes: an early introduction of English as a subject (i.e. at the third grade); makeover of entrance exams; and a renewed focus on fostering communicative English skills. Further, the early introduction of English as a subject places a heavy responsibility on teacher education programs at junior colleges and universities alike to equip their graduates with more elaborate skills of English.

[To comply with the IRB approval, identifying information and details are removed.]

The above narrative demonstrates how the nationwide pressures to restructure as well as to internationalize higher education intersect with each other and are played out in the context of junior colleges in Japan. First, while the general enrollment in higher education continues to rise in recent years, junior colleges have suffered under-enrollment. To mediate the plunge in tuition

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[37] Since the introduction of the infamous policy of "Japanese with English abilities" (MEXT, 2003), communicative language teaching (CLT) has attracted attention of English language educators in Japan. Similar to how internationalization can be understood as *Englishization* of JHE, leading a successful career is often equated with being international—equipped with English skills (T. Yoshida, Yashiro, & Suzuki, 2013).

revenue, many junior colleges and their affiliated universities increasingly share resources within their system. While there may be benefits and other values to such practice, it also means added responsibilities and work on the shoulder of existing faculty and staff. Particularly in response to the pressure to "internationalize" their curricula, many institutions (i.e. university with affiliated junior college) are in the process of redesigning their English language related departments, either by, renaming them to sound more "progressive" (e.g. *Department of English -> Department of International Communication*), merging multiple departments, or sometimes shutting down "non-pragmatic" ones (as sarcastically remarked by several interviewees).

Narrative 2: Christian colleges = *international*?

"I chose [this college] because I love English and I wanna explore a career in international business!" This was one of the common responses collected at junior colleges with Christian affiliations when I asked the students why they chose that specific junior college out of other options. Generally speaking, Christian junior colleges in Japan[38] offer liberal arts education based on Christianity, have affiliations with a four-year university and/or primary and secondary education institutions, and importantly, emphasize foreign language (most often English) education. Most Christian schools in Japan (including junior colleges and universities) are perceived as "the garden of *akogare*" (Sato, 2006) where historically "modern and posh" activities and exchanges occurred and today the stereotypical image such as "3K" (**K**awaii [pretty], **K**anemochi [rich], and **K**irisuto-kyo [Christianity]) persists.

As noted by Watanabe (2008), many Christian junior colleges and universities in Japan today were originally "mission schools" founded by missionaries (e.g. Protestant, Anglican, and Catholic). Traditionally, their curricula have included English language education and other "progressive" and "sophisticated" academic subjects which

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[38] Among 341 junior colleges in Japan, at least 44* are recognized as those that embrace Christian values. *calculated based on the numbers reported by three major associations for Christian schools in Japan ("Association of Christian Schools in Japan," n.d., "Japan Federation of Catholic Schools," n.d., "NSKK School Network," 2014).

concertedly symbolized "the West" (Watanabe, 2008). On this note, one instructor at a junior college drew on an interesting formula of "Christian [universities/colleges] equals 'Western and white' equals English therefore *international*" when explaining why there is a large number of students (especially female) who aspire to master English and become *international* by choosing to attend a Christian junior college. Epitomizing this phenomenon, the following responses from a Christian junior college student (S52) majoring in English Communication expressed the intersected sentiment of passion, *akogare*, and future career:

Online Questionnaire:

What comes to your mind when you hear the word "English language"?

S52 (f): An image of myself speaking [English] fluently!

What is your opinion about the status of English as the global language?

S52 (f): I see on TV that people can almost always communicate in English [wherever they are], so I see why English is an *international* language.

What comes to your mind when you hear the word "akogare"?

S52 (f): An image of myself living a happy life abroad!

Doraemon! [a Japanese cartoon character]

Outer space!

What are your dreams or future plans?

S52 (f): First, I wanna save up money to go on working holidays[39] overseas. There, I'll make good friends, meet a nice person, and I'll eventually get married and become someone's wife. I'll occasionally go back to Japan and when I become a

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[39] Japan has Working Holiday Agreements with 16 countries that can issue a special visa for Japanese young adults (i.e. 18 to 30 years old) to study, work, or simply live in a selected country ("Japan Association for Working Holiday Makers," n.d., "The working holiday programmes in Japan," n.d.).

grandma, I'll enjoy chatting with my grandchildren. I'll be sitting in a chair, watching the scenery, drinking tea, and peacefully take my last breath.

Intriguingly, the earlier-mentioned formula of "Christian [universities/colleges] equals 'Western and white' equals English therefore *international*" seems to help explain the mindset of this student. In fact, based on their responses to my questionnaire/interview questions,[40] many of my study participants (i.e. students of both Christian and non-Christian affiliated higher education institutions) seem to envision English (speaking) as the most important and desirable skill if one is seeking to pursue an "international" career. The equation of *English = international*, therefore, is not simply driving Japan's language policies and their implementation (cf. **TESOL in General and in Japan**) but also it seems to be shaping students' behaviors and choices they make within the JHE system.

The tale of Christian universities.

Strikingly similar to the narratives surrounding junior colleges with Christian affiliations, there were a set of *clichés* and stereotypes emerged around Christian universities in Japan when examining data collected from my study participants (e.g. students, instructors, staff, and parents).

Founded by missionaries (often "white male"?)

It may not have been a mere coincidence that all of the six Christian universities and junior colleges I visited during my data collection happened to have been founded by

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[40] I took into account their responses to online questionnaire and interview questions such as:
What comes to your mind when you hear the word "English language"?;
What is your opinion about the status of English as the global language?;
Why are you studying English?;
What kind of English do you want to speak and why?;
What are your dreams or future plans? etc. (see **Appendices A and B**)

missionaries. In reality, many of the Christian-affiliated schools in Japan were originally established by Christian missionaries for the purpose of training more missionaries (Christian Scholastic Alliance, 1961). The "3K" stereotype (discussed earlier) seems to apply to Christian universities as several faculty members of Christian universities (mostly coed) confirmed the existence of such stereotypes. "The students are known for being *oshare* [fashionable] and many come from relatively wealthy backgrounds. They are the whole package: good-looking, wealthy, and smart." In addition, one faculty member (F44) elaborated as follows:

> F44 (m): Christianity is a strong *selling point* of this university [and affiliated schools]. Along with Christianity, we have liberalism and internationalism as our main pillars. Although the religious activities we do here are mere symbolic, people enjoy the feeling of doing something Western, I think.
>
> [reconstructed from field observation notes.]

Another faculty member (pseudonym: Professor Matsuo) shared that many of his students aspire to improve their English and pursue international careers. Once again, there is a strong sense of *English = international*. Based on the observations of Professor Matsuo and others, the following narrative about female students at Christian universities and their idea of "the West" emerged.

Female students flocking to the idea of "the West"?

Professor Matsuo, who has taught at multiple different JHE institutions, described an interesting phenomenon as follows:

> Professor Matsuo: I think many students in Japan, especially female students, choose a Christian university [or junior college] because it symbolizes the "white West." There are "white" ministers and professors on campus and you

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get to learn English from native speakers. That helps them to feel *international* and that's what they're paying for.

[reconstructed from field observation notes, translated.]

This narrative again fits in the gendered *akogare* picture that I discussed earlier. However, it must be noted that Professor Matsuo mainly teaches at a *women's* university with Christian affiliations, therefore, his observation of students may be limited as such. Unfortunately, as there is no men's junior college or university in Japan, I was unable to compare and contrast how *akogare* may exist across female-only, male-only, and coed environments.

At least as an antithesis to the generally female student specific *akogare* narratives, I present below a case of a male student and his attachment to white female professors. While this was a free-standing piece of data among others mainly involving Japanese female students, it may not have been as rare as they are expected. Put differently, the "rare" sighting of male students' *akogare* towards female Western teachers suggests a possibility that male students might not demonstrate, act on, or perform such feelings or emotion in public. After all, certain gender roles and expectations are deeply rooted in Japanese history and society that continue to help shape the behaviors of people (as discussed earlier in ***Akogare* and gender**).

A male student "latched onto" English-speaking female Western professors.

The following conversation was held during an interview with a female professor (pseudonym: Naomi-*sensei*) in Japan. It not only suggests that there may be a case of male *akogare* towards "the West," which has yet to be explored in the existing literature, but it also demonstrates how intricate *akogare* is, in terms of its birth, development, and possible dissolution:

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Chisato: Can you tell me more about the male student [who "latched onto" female Western professors]?

Naomi-*sensei*: In this particular student's case that, um, it has something to do about a mother who was absent a lot in his life, yeah...for professional reasons, so...

Chisato: But, why "white" female teachers? and not Japanese ones [whom the student fixated on]?

Naomi-*sensei*: Oh okay, that's a good point, again so maybe for this particular young man, and who's evidently good in English and chose to major in it that maybe those were the people who came into contact that were willing to engage with him?

Chisato: Oh I see.

Naomi-*sensei*: Yeah, I don't know…so he might not have gotten the same...maybe he could not have developed the same rapport with any white female teachers, maybe they were the motherly types or willing to engage with him because he would go to them for help about, you know, his work or ask more questions so but...yeah, being teachers, you know, we often are not necessarily just being asked questions about language or study but sometimes students have other needs ((laughs)) just to be able to talk with somebody or...

Chisato: And, do you know if the student was finding these teachers…attractive? Like romantically attractive? or just finding them as mother figures..?

Naomi-*sensei*: Yeah, from what I remember or from what I observed, it was sort of, it was kind of this motherly kind of thing, and um...needing attention, well that's the way I saw it...and each person who was involved chose to deal with this student in the way—in different ways, "Yeah okay, well, he needs some attention so..." and others didn't like to have that kind of—didn't want to deal with those other issues, beyond language [teaching].

[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

[identifying information and details have been removed or altered.]

To analyze this case through the framework of *akogare* (**Figure 1**), the student in question seems to be seeking attention of the English-speaking female Western professors, not necessarily because he idealizes or romanticizes "the West," but he believes he can develop rapport with those professors through the medium of English—the language he loves and is good in. Further, unlike the popular *akogare* narratives within the TESOL literature, this student may not have necessarily wanted to be like or romantically involved with his professors. Rather, he may have been projecting the mother-son relationship onto his relationship with those female professors because he felt able to overcome the otherwise "tantalizingly out of reach" distance between himself and his ideal mother through the medium of English. As such, his love for English and what he believes is possible via English seem to have been shaping his interest in *English-speaking* professors. Although it is within a speculative scope, he may not have been looking specifically for "Western[41]" female professors per se, but it just coincided with the fact that the majority of English-speaking professors in JHE are "white. [42]"

Similar to the one shared by Naomi-*sensei*, there may be other narratives that have yet to be brought to the fore for discussion. As demonstrated above, by engaging deeper with each case (e.g. taking into account the individual's background and contexts), the otherwise ostensibly gendered *akogare* can serve as a powerful framework to better understand how and why an individual may experience or perceive the self and the world around him/her accordingly.

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[41] Often synonymous with "white" in Japanese TESOL contexts (cf. Nagatomo, 2016).
[42] A detailed account of gender disparity and "Western masculinity" in JHE can be found in Appleby's work (e.g. 2014a, 2014b).

The educational "divide."

Following the discussion on junior colleges and Christian universities, the idea of *English = international* helps point to an important issue as I continue to examine data collected within the current *kokusaika* landscape of Japan. That is, internationalization is, and has been, a costly campaign for Japan. In what follows, I first pay attention to the institutional and structural challenges brought about by the nationwide *kokusaika* campaign. I will then focus on some of the *akogare*-related narratives to capture the complexity of the current *kokusaika* agenda at work, in preparation to discuss how *kokusaika* may be reimagined (in the concluding chapter).

Kokusaika for all? Or for a select few?

Admittedly, Japan has expended considerable energy and resources in the name of *kokusaika* since the 1980s. As discussed earlier, the ways in which Japan's *kokusaika* policies and programs have been designed and implemented are attracting scholarly attention for their overemphasis on English. Especially in the context of JHE, many programs that claim to be "international" often include English language teaching and learning or English-medium education. To operate such programs/projects, the government seeks extra manpower and resources needed, which by no means are affordable on Japan's limited education budget[43] (cf. OECD, 2016, pp. 230–232). While large-scale *kokusaika* funds have been awarded to select universities (Office for International Planning, Higher Education Policy Planning Division, Higher Education Bureau, n.d.), the government has also called for the necessity of the system-

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[43] cf. OECD. (2014). *Education at a glance 2014: OECD indicators*. OECD. Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag.htm
OECD. (2015). *Education at a glance 2015: OECD indicators*. OECD. Retrieved from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2015_eag-2015-en
OECD. (2016). *Education at a glance 2016: OECD indicators*. OECD. Retrieved from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance_19991487

wide *restructure* of JHE (i.e. absorption, merger, or closure of JHE institutions and departments alike) conceivably to make up for their financial constraints accelerated by the *kokusaika* projects in recent years.

For those students who can financially and intellectually afford the education at a prestigious or high-achieving JHE institution, there seem to be more opportunities to participate in what the government defines as "international activities," for example, research and student exchanges. On this note, a faculty member (pseudonym: Mai-*sensei*) of a small prefectural university in northern Japan expressed her concerns as follows:

> **Observation Notes:** **/**/2015, *:**pm on a university campus (Hawai'i). A group of Japanese university students visiting Hawai'i for a short study-away experience. Mai-*sensei*, a full-professor of a prefectural university in northern Japan is chauffeuring the group to Hawai'i and back. While in Hawai'i, she agrees to meet with me for an informal interview.

> Chisato: So, how common is it for Japanese university students to participate in a short-term study abroad program like this one?
> Mai-*sensei*: For our department [at the university], it is a *requirement* for the students to take part in at least one short-term program like this. Some students may participate more than once. We have partner universities all around the world, so the students can choose their destination depending on their interest or major.
> Chisato: I see. How are these study abroad programs funded?
> Mai-*sensei*: That's a headache for a university like ours because we are neither a private university that can charge a high tuition fee nor a national[44] university with

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[44] JHE institutions can be categorized into three different groups: national, public (regional), and private. Out of the 777 JHE institutions today, 86 are national, 91 public (regional) and 600 private (MEXT, 2016).

a brand name and a lot of public support (e.g. funding). We're a small-scale prefectural university where we cannot ask our students to pay a high tuition because they don't necessarily come from a wealthy family. We're too small to be strategic about receiving a large amount of public funding, so we try to arrange these study abroad programs to be affordable for our students and also we try to provide them with a small stipend out of our meager budget.

[reconstructed from interview/field observation notes, translated.]

To highlight a point from Mai-*sensei*'s concerns, for the highly-criticized "Super Global Project" which kicked off in 2014, mostly elite universities that applied for the call have successfully received the funding.[45] According to Kojima (2014), factors such as: high foreign faculty ratios; capability to procure *kakenhi*[46] (competitive research grants); and being a private institution, significantly increased the chance of being selected as the recipient of the funding. Also, it is frequently argued that most of the recipients (i.e. universities) not only have the capability, infrastructure, and resources already in place, but also they have experience and achievements with internationalization programs/projects (Ota, 2010).

To recapitulate, universities that are already known to be active participants in the nationwide internationalization efforts are likely to benefit further from the pool of the *kokusaika* funds in Japan. Under the "Super Global" scheme, for example, select universities have passionately promised to operate as a "universal campus," "transborder university," "global campus," "Asian hub university," "gateway [to the world]," "global university," "strategic hub,"

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[45] The total number of applications was 109 and 34 of them have been approved for funding ("Selection for the FY2014 Top Global University Project," 2014).
[46] Grants-in-aid for scientific research. (n.d.). Retrieved November 16, 2016, from http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-grants/index.html

and so forth.[47] For these plans sound strikingly similar to one another, it is as though all these

universities have passed a special training in naming their proposed project to sound

"international" (to the ears of MEXT, the application reviewer) so their proposals be accepted.

On this note, I am by no means undermining the rigor and effectiveness of the proposed plans

submitted by these universities. Rather, I intend to highlight that the ways in which such funds

are allocated may be placing certain universities at a further advantage, resultantly creating and

widening the gap between the *have* and *have-not* universities in Japan.

Narratives on private v. public.

While the financial situation seems dire for all JHE institutions today regardless of their

location, type, or academic standing,[48] private universities in general are deemed as fiscally

healthy if compared to their national/public counterparts. It is perhaps driven by the notion of

private institutions *being able to* collect higher tuition fees (OECD, 2016, p. 243) from their

financially capable customers (i.e. students and their parents). Since most JHE institutions

heavily rely on the income from tuition fees and other private entities (2016, p. 213), it is no

wonder why private institutions are perceived as financially better off than their public

counterparts.

Although such stereotypical images of national, public, and private JHE institutions are

widely shared and may even be corroborated by those who work or study in such institutions (for

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[47] See page 3 of the press release (MEXT, 2014).

[48] A joint request for the increase of public funding allocated to JHE institutions was made to the Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications in December 2015 (Satomi, Kiyohara, & Seike, 2015) by President Satomi, the Association of National Universities (also the President of Tohoku University); President Kiyohara, the Association of Public Universities (also the President of University of Hyogo); and the former President Seike, the Federation of Japanese Private Colleges and Universities Associations (also the President of Keio University).

example, see the above conversation with Mai-*sensei*), the reality is often more complex. For

this study aims to render a more nuanced picture of JHE today, I also present the following

counter narratives to demonstrate the complexity and to start reimagining what *kokusaika* can or

should look like for Japan.

Counter narrative on "private" universities: Ayano.

Observation Notes: Ayano (pseudonym) is a student at a private university in central

Japan. When she was in her junior year, she visited Hawai'i for a short study-away

experience. She was "so struck by the huge differences between the Japanese education

system and the American system" that she decided to write her senior thesis on the

education system, specifically that of Hawai'i. Ayano returns to Hawai'i in Fall 2013 to

collect data from different education institutions in Hawai'i and that is when she agrees to

meet with me for an interview.

Chisato: How's your data collection going?

Ayano: It's been great; people are so kind here, the professors, students, schoolteachers,
      everyone! I got to talk with university students to elementary school students,
      and their parents too. I'm not sure if I understood all of what they said, but it's
      a good experience anyways.

Chisato: I see. Well, I was wondering if you could share with me more about how you
      decided to come back to Hawai'i for data collection? I mean, you're in the
      middle of a semester in Japan, correct?

Ayano: Correct. But, as with many senior students in Japanese universities, I've already
      fulfilled all my course requirements so I don't really need to go to school during
      my fourth year. We just need to work on the senior thesis and occasionally
      attend seminars.

Chisato: Wow, that sounds good.

Ayano: Actually, even though we don't need to go to school, many of us have a busy
      schedule because of *baito* [part-time jobs], volunteering, job hunting, and so on.

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I took extra shifts at work to save up money so I could come back to Hawai'i. To tell the truth, I've always wanted to study abroad, not for a short term like this, but for a semester or a year. It's just *really expensive* to travel or study abroad, so not many students can afford it.

Chisato: But you go to a private university, which somehow lets me believe that you may not be struggling financially?

Ayano: Sure, my parents support me financially and my family is *not destitute*, but tuition fees are still high for average families in Japan, I think. I try to do my part by working part-time so I can contribute to the family finance.

Chisato: So, would you say that the cost was a major reason why you didn't study abroad for a semester or a year as you'd originally hoped?

Ayano: Yes, and also, with the future career I chose (i.e. teaching), there is no good time for students [pre-service teachers] to be away from Japan for so long.

Chisato: I see, with the student teaching and other requirements, it must be nearly impossible [for pre-service teachers to study abroad before graduation]. How about studying abroad after graduation?

Ayano: Most schools and companies in Japan, as you know, want to employ someone *shin-sotsu* [fresh-out-of-college]. If there's a gap between your graduation year and the time you apply for a job, people will wonder why and it just doesn't look good on your resume.

Chisato: Study abroad isn't perceived positively by the employer?

Natuski: It *sounds cool* to have a study abroad experience, but when it comes to employment, maybe not so much. Unless you speak English fluently or have some other special skills as a result of studying abroad, I don't think employers care.

[reconstructed from interview/field observation notes, translated.]

As the OECD data[43] show, JHE institutions collect relatively high tuition fees compared to those of other countries' tertiary education institutions. In Japan, the tuition fees collected at higher

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education institutions are mostly covered by individuals as household expenditure (OECD, 2016, p. 213). Also, for the financial aid system is less developed in Japan, students and their families continue to struggle with the payment of tuition fees, often even after graduation (2016, pp. 238–253). Although Ayano did not have to take out a loan to pay for her tuition fees, she sarcastically commented that "it's not as easy [for her to pay tuition fees] as people may think about private university students and their finances."

For Ayano, studying abroad has been a dream of hers for a long while. With her chosen future career (i.e. teaching), she is unable to study abroad for an extended period of time. However, she was *willing* to take extra shifts at her part-time job so she could cover for her "data collection trip" to Hawai'i, which perhaps partially fulfilled her dream. In her responses to my online questionnaire, Ayano expressed her long-held *akogare* towards overseas and studying abroad. Below are some of the questions and responses she provided, and I will subsequently examine her *akogare* narrative by taking into account these multiple sources of data:

> ***Online Questionnaire:***
> ***Which country do you wish was your mother country and why?***
> Ayano: I've always had *akogare* towards Finland. There, time passes slowly, people and the overall environment seem laid-back and they have a wonderful education system.
>
>
> ***What is your opinion about the status of English as the global language?***
> Ayano: I strongly agree, but I don't think Japanese people can dismiss the Japanese language even if they speak English fluently. Nor it's right for American people to dismiss other languages just because they speak English.

What kind of English do you want to speak and why?

Ayano: I wish I could speak English like yours, Chisato. It's fluent and soulful. The main reason why I want to speak English like yours is I want to participate in discussions in English.

What are your dreams or future plans?

Ayano: As a future elementary schoolteacher in Japan where compulsory English education is being introduced at earlier and earlier grade levels, I want my [future] students know that English is *fun* and *anyone can speak it*. I want to take advantage of conversational and ALT[49]-led class time so [the students] can practice speaking as often as possible.

Ayano appeared quite passionate about Finland in her written response, so I asked her in person if she had been there before. To which, she responded "no, but I would like to one day." At a first glance, it seems almost puzzling or naïve that Ayano has developed a strong *akogare* feeling towards somewhere she had never been before. However, a closer look at her responses and background will help us to understand why Ayano may be so passionate.

To analyze Ayano's narrative via the *akogare* framework, firstly, she admits that she likes children and enjoys interacting with them. That is partially why she decided to pursue a career of teaching. During the four years in the Teacher Education program at her university, she learned that many Nordic countries have high quality social welfare services. Out of those

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[49] Short for **A**ssistant **L**anguage **T**eacher. It is one of the most common English teaching positions available for foreign teachers. They are expected to "assist with classes taught by Japanese Teachers of English" ("JET Positions," n.d.), mainly to help improve students' listening and speaking skills than their reading or writing skills. There have been questions regarding whether ALTs in Japan are being treated as a perfunctory figure to generate *an image of internationalization* (cf. Bueno & Caesar, 2003; Hashimoto, 2011; Kubota, 2002; Rivers & Houghton, 2013).

countries, she became interested in Finland because of their worldwide reputation for the education system. She aspires to become a great teacher herself in the future, therefore, she yearns for a place where she believes teachers thrive and shine. In this sense, Ayano is not simply influenced by the idea of "the West" per se, but is driven by her understanding of a place that happens to be in the West. It is also clear that she perceives English as a language that enables her and her (future) students to express themselves in international contexts. In Ayano's view, English gives her an *edge* to be competitive and communicative in the globalizing world. Again, the interactive or communicative learning of English is emphasized here (just as in JHE contexts, see **Narrative 1**). Although Ayano too seems to buy into the idea of *English = international*, or even noted that "English is used *universally*," her intention to learn or master the language seems different in nature from those students who were starstruck by Ryan (see **The Bieber (look-alike) fever in Japan**) or even those who aim to pursue an international career (see **Narrative 2**).

Ayano's narrative not only counters the common myth about private university students in Japan (and their finances), but also it helped highlight the existing and potential challenges caused within the current *kokusaika* landscape of Japan. For one, the *Englishization* of JHE endorses students' understanding of English as "the international language" and it may even encourage them to pursue the language, often by "studying abroad" as if that is the ultimate option in mastering the language. However, for those students in a career-oriented path (e.g. teacher education), studying abroad for an extended period of time is nearly impossible unless the current employment system/culture of Japan is thoroughly reformed. This point will be

revisited in the later section where I summarize some of the implications for *kokusaika* which emerged out of these narratives.

> *Counter narrative on "public" universities (excluding more prestigious national ones): Mai-sensei.*

As discussed during the informal interview with Mai-*sensei* (see ***Kokusaika* for all? Or for a select few?**), public universities, particularly the non-national ones suffer from chronic budget deficits. The Japanese government, on the one hand had, numerously called for the restructure (often downsizing) of higher education to "meet the needs of today's society" (Grove, 2015; N. Jenkins, 2015; Kakuchi, 2015). On the other, the same government continues with their *kokusaika* campaign by showering select universities with large funding. A small-scale university like the one Mai-*sensei* works for is caught in between because they can neither collect high tuition fees from their students (like private universities do) nor can they strategically procure a *kokusaika* fund (like national universities do). I will return to more implications from this section later when I present the overall findings.

> *Counter narrative on the so-called "prestigious national" universities: Kumi-sensei.*

The following serves as a collective account of multiple national universities where I conducted interviews and observations. As I have so far developed the discussion around two specific narratives (Ayano and Mai-*sensei*), I will now introduce Kumi-*sensei*'s narrative to add yet another layer to the complexity of JHE:

> **Observation Notes:** Kumi-*sensei* (pseudonym) is a professor at a national university in Japan. She has an extensive experience overseas (more than half of her life spent outside of Japan) and has overseen international projects that promote student, faculty, and other academic exchanges. In fact, the university she works for has successfully received a

number of *kokusaika* funds from the government over the past decade, so at any given time, there are multiple internationalization projects being simultaneously operated at the university. In Summer 2015, she agrees to meet with me for an interview to discuss the general trend of these projects at the university.

Chisato: The current program you're in charge of offers all of its courses in English. Are there any Japanese students enrolled in those English-medium courses?

Kumi-*sensei*: My students are mostly international students who often have a better command of English than I do. ((laughs)) There are hardly any Japanese students in this program. Unfortunately, the average Japanese students at our university *cannot* meet the admission requirements for the program, namely the TOEFL or IELTS score.

Chisato: But they're students at [the name of the university, the top university in the region]! They are the best of the best in this side of the country.

Kumi-*sensei*: Right, but their English skills are…well, I'd imagine the situation to be almost the same anywhere in Japan, even at *Todai* [the University of Tokyo, often rated as the top university in Japan].

Chisato: Wow, that's very different from what I'd imagined these top-university students to be. So, in the eyes of the average Japanese students who struggle with English, you must be like a god [because of your fluency in English]! ((laughs))

Kumi-*sensei*: As for Japanese students at this university, I'd say about 5% of them have general *akogare* towards me because of English. They'd say "I wish I could communicate in English like you do," but the other 95% seem to have no interest in English or overseas whatsoever. When talking about Japanese students' interest in overseas, we're only talking about the 5%, "the cream in the coffee," so to speak. So, in a way, internationalization projects such as *Global Human Resource Development* are really trying hard to expand this "cream" population.

[reconstructed from interview/field observation notes, translated.]

What is striking here is that not only do the otherwise "prestigious national" university students (who are said to have a promising future[50]) struggle with English, but also most of them *fundamentally* lack interest in or do not feel the need to improve their English. This then suggests that such internationalization funds funneled into these prestigious universities are not necessarily benefitting the wide student body, but just a few (e.g. 5%) that have the skills or at least are interested in English.

On this note, while these projects are targeted at "expanding the cream population" (to borrow Kumi-*sensei*'s expression), their frequent emphasis on English and the prerequisite English skills is in fact widening the gap between those interested (or often "can") and those who are not (or "cannot"). Kumi-*sensei* actually improvised a phrase, "the wall of English" to describe the invisible wall separating such two populations. To elaborate, English may be acting as a divider that is continually reinforced by these *kokusaika* programs/projects to keep the *cans* (and interested) away from the *can-nots* (or disinterested).

Although I have earlier discussed that the widely-accepted equation of *English = international* in Japan is in many ways driving *kokusaika* and other language policies and their implementation (cf. **TESOL in General and in Japan**) as well as shaping the behaviors and choices of the students, there is still a range of student behaviors, choices, and reactions to such an equation. As the above narrative shows, even among those students who are often perceived as "elite," there is a *resistance* or *indifference* to participating in the nationally-defined *kokusaika*

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[50] As far as Japan's academic career-based society [*gakureki shakai*] goes, these students are considered to be on the "elite" track and graduates have better chances of "achieving high-level positions in government and business" (Backhaus, 2014; Cutts (1997) & Kerbo and McKinstry (1995) in Breaden, 2012, p. 26).

campaign. From another point of view, if the 95% can *afford to* remain resistant or indifferent, it also implies that English skills may not be as important as they are insisted to be by the government. Especially for those who are on the "elite" path, English may just be a "frill" to their already impressive academic accomplishments (e.g. entering/graduating a prestigious national university) when applying for a job, for instance. In this sense, aside from helping someone to *appear international*, English may just be a *bonus* skill in today's workplace of Japan despite the discourse[51] repeatedly used by the Japanese government.

On this note, I also asked Kumi-*sensei* for her opinion about the status of English in Japan. Signaling a sense of *akogare*, Kumi-*sensei* shared insightful views as follows:

> ***What is your opinion about the status of English as the global language?***
> Kumi-*sensei*: It's recognized as the universal language, particularly in today's academia. It can both develop and destroy *akogare*, I think. For example, when I witnessed a well-established Japanese professor presenting in English, I felt that his integrity and rigor as a scholar disappeared as his shockingly elementary use of English left a huge impact on the way in which he was received by the audience. When he presents in his native tongue [Japanese], he's amazingly articulate. I just wish his eloquence and rigor [in Japanese] could somehow transfer over to when he speaks English, so the English-speaking audience can also appreciate his work without the language barrier. […]
> Personally, I've always had *akogare* towards native English speakers. On the one hand, I'm frustrated with my incompetence in communicating as smoothly as do native English speakers, especially given that I've lived in [an English-speaking country] for 20 years. On the other hand, I feel that I

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[51] Many scholars have discussed the dissonance between what the government *claims* English can offer and what English actually offers in today's Japan (Hashimoto, 2009; Kubota, 2011b; Seargeant, 2008).

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should be more confident with myself because I've accomplished so much in my field and my English skills shouldn't devalue my success. It's a negotiation between these two feelings.

[reconstructed from interview/field observation notes, translated.]

It is remarkable that in some academic contexts in Japan, English speaking is so highly regarded that it can "both develop and destroy [someone's] *akogare*." As narrated by Kumi-*sensei*, it does so to the extent that it may even strip the world-renowned scholar of his academic "integrity and rigor" as soon as he opens his mouth and starts speaking in English. However, it is also important to remind us that it is Kumi-*sensei* (with her own perspectives and experiences) who felt the renowned scholar being stripped of the integrity and rigor. In other words, by those who are unequipped with even the minimal English skills to make a presentation in English, this well-established scholar's English presentation can be perceived as impressive hence may well be what they aspire to do themselves one day. Or, for others who are themselves fluent in English yet do not find this scholar's "elementary" English to be too much of a distraction in appreciating the content of his presentation, their respect (e.g. *akogare*) towards this scholar may stay untarnished.

To further exemplify this contingent aspect of *akogare*, Kumi-*sensei* spoke about some of her Japanese colleagues at the university admiring her English skills, which enabled Kumi-*sensei* to become the target of *akogare* to such colleagues.[52] These accounts suggest that while Kumi-*sensei* and her colleagues equally cast *akogare* towards someone (i.e. "native English speakers" or "Kumi-*sensei*") because of their *enviable* English skills, these *akogare* may well exist on a

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[52] Kumi-*sensei*'s colleagues or even her supervisors often comment on her (superb) English skills by using Japanese words such as: *urayamashii*; *ii desu ne*; *iina*, all of which indicate a sentiment of *akogare* towards someone who has "enviable" qualities.

wide spectrum.[53] Put differently, depending on who they perceive themselves to be now and

who they want to become, they may cast *akogare* in divergent and context-sensitive manners.

For example, if Kumi-*sensei* was completely satisfied and comfortable with her own

English skills, she may not hold *akogare* towards native English speakers because (as she said)

she feels "confident in [her]self and [her] accomplishments." However, as noted by her, it has

been a constant negotiation of feelings between her *akogare* towards native English speakers and

her satisfaction with own work. Likewise, her colleagues seem to hold *akogare* towards Kumi-

sensei because of her fluency in English compared to that of other Japanese faculty members.[52]

For those colleagues, Kumi-*sensei* may be *tantalizingly out of reach* from themselves than say

other English-speaking someone (e.g. a "native" English speaker) who may not be within their

purview when realistically thinking about improving their minimal English skills. Or, those who

do not care about English may not develop *akogare* towards Kumi-*sensei*'s English skills, but

perhaps towards her overseas experience or academic accomplishments, depending on how and

what they aspire (to do or become) at a given time and space. This case again confirms the value

of *akogare* as a framework to understand how an individual perceives the self and the world

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[53] A sample of spectrum of *akogare* towards English skills may look like the following:
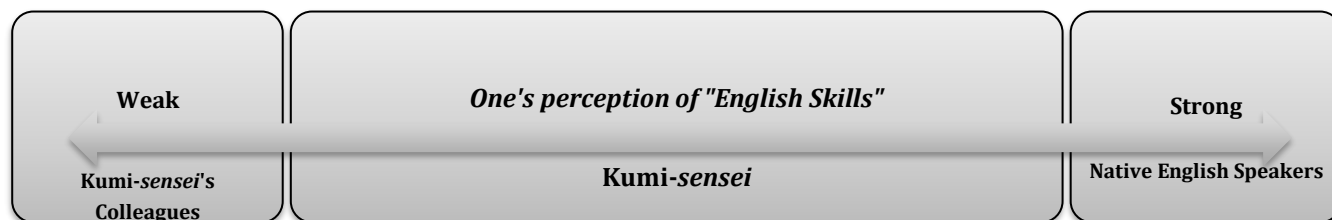
Weak	One's perception of "English Skills"	Strong
Kumi-*sensei*'s Colleagues	Kumi-*sensei*	Native English Speakers

Note: It is important to clarify that this is just a grossly simplified layer of *akogare*. In reality, there are other layers of the desiring self and the desired other at work to harness a particular *akogare* which may be ephemeral, intermittent, or consistent. Also, it may be articulated quite differently depending on the context and people involved.

around him/her. Additionally, it demonstrates how powerful *the idea of English* can be in generating or accelerating one's sense of *akogare* and also how English can interfere with one's self-confidence both positively and negatively.

This section was aimed to capture the outliers, the normative, and therefore the overall complexity of the so-called "prestigious national" universities where on the one hand, *kokusaika* funds are abundantly funneled into by the government. On the other, however, the students who can (or are interested in) benefit(ing) from such resources may be a select few while other students remain resistant or simply indifferent. Also, it shows that the idea of English is so powerful in certain academic contexts that it can both foster and obscure one's *akogare*, even amongst the most well-established scholars in Japan.

In this sense, English may be causing *turbulence* in the traditionally hierarchical system of JHE because one's years of experience or academic integrity and rigor may become less important when his/her English skills are put to the test. This tendency was also confirmed by a Vice-President of a top-ranked national university in Japan whom I had the opportunity to have an informal conversation with in Summer 2015. Professor Tanaka (pseudonym) jokingly admitted his "jealousy towards other Japanese scholars with higher English skills [than his]." He also shared his frustration with international conferences/conventions where academics from different countries are present. Professor Tanaka disclosed:

> It feels unfair to me when there are native English-speaking academics at the meeting because they can easily express their opinions and refute others if necessary. I prefer attending a meeting where all the participants come from non-English speaking countries so the field is leveled and I feel more comfortable speaking English with Japanese accents.

> [reconstructed from interview/field observation notes, translated.]

Renewed outlook on *kokusaika*.

In a summative manner, I would like to discuss some of the implications for *kokusaika* by drawing on the narratives presented so far in this chapter. This section aims not only to help answer the second research question: *What implications do the students' self-other perspectives (via akogare) have for the internationalization of Japanese higher education and beyond?*, but also to offer practical propositions in moving towards rethinking and reimagining the nationwide *kokusaika* campaign.

Implications from the narratives.

In this section, I first summarize three major challenges of *kokusaika* based on the narratives presented so far. Also, to reimagine *kokusaika* in a new light, I will conclude this section with two additional analyses of *akogare* narratives that presented unique insight into how *kokusaika* "can" move forward from here on. A summary will follow to wrap up the chapter and subsequently, concluding remarks (Chapter 6) aim to map out a new vision for *kokusaika*.

Financial aspects of kokusaika.

Although the financial situation is purportedly dire for all JHE institutions today (regardless of the location, type, or academic standing[48]), the Japanese government has been generously funding a select few universities for their proposed *kokusaika* projects. For a university to successfully secure such a funding, there are multiple hurdles in place. For example, high foreign faculty ratios, capability to procure *kakenhi* (competitive research grants), and being a private institution appear to significantly increase the chance for a university to receive a large *kokusaika* funding (Kojima, 2014). Also, as evident in the approved

proposals/applications of *kokusaika* projects, it seems necessary that the recipient is able to skillfully and artfully manipulate the language of *kokusaika* to sound "international." The frequent use of words in their proposals and reports such as: "universal," "trans-," "global," and "hub" suggest that there may be a specific vision of *kokusaika* that is being promoted, reproduced, and reified through the process of the initial call for application, submission, review, approval, implementation, and completion (e.g. final report).

Put differently, these *kokusaika* funds are being allocated largely to a select few universities while other universities without the necessary means (e.g. their competency in the "*kokusaika*" language) are left out of the *kokusaika* campaign. By extension, there seem to be *have* and *have-not* universities within the *kokusaika* landscape of Japan and their students are likewise affected. Those who can financially and often intellectually afford the education at a *have* university will automatically gain access to what the government calls "international activities," which may be problematically (narrowly) defined, yet, these are still *additional* opportunities that other *have-not* universities cannot afford to provide for their students.

The narrowly-defined *kokusaika* campaigned by the Japanese government most often focuses on English teaching and learning. Elaborate examples can be found in the nationwide education programs/projects such as the JET programme (since the 1980s), the "Japanese with English Abilities" strategic plan (FY 2003-2008), or the recent "Super Global" project (since 2014). These programs and policies work hand-in-hand with the current *eigo-netsu* [passion for

English] among students, parents, and businesses[54] which continues to feed into the fear of as well as the passion for *kokusaika*.

Embodied in the widely-accepted equation of *English = international*, *kokusaika* is taking a unique form in JHE. Specifically, in addition to how education programs/projects are being designed, promoted, and implemented, *kokusaika* and its government-endorsed vision are also shaping the student behaviors and choices (as discussed in **The two narratives**). As demonstrated in multiple cases covered so far, many students who aspire to pursue "international" careers seem to flock to English-focused departments and courses (often labeled as "international understanding" or "global communication") as that is likely perceived as *the royal road* to achieving such a career.

However, for those who seek an international career in a specific sense, their access to resources—thus their trajectory to achieving a career in a larger sense—may be greatly influenced by the academic standing and reputation of the university or college they attend, mainly owing to the *kokusaika* funding mechanism I discussed above. As such, while the Japanese government continues to campaign for a particular form of *kokusaika* which constantly feeds into the public passion for English education,[54] the same government is also unable to provide for all the consumers and supporters (e.g. students) of *kokusaika* because of their limited education budget.[43] In fact, smaller-scale public (regional) universities that cannot collect a high tuition nor can they receive public funding strategically, seem to suffer significantly from the current system of JHE because their students' desire to take part in "international activities" such

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[54] Kanatani (2008) deciphers Japan's *overheated* passion for English education today. He draws attention to the current practices and policies, national character, *akogare*, business aspects, etc. to dismiss some of the common misconceptions about English education.

as studying abroad is often interfered by the daunting financial reality (see the previous narrative by Mai-*sensei*).

Similarly, as demonstrated through the counter narratives by Ayano and Kumi-*sensei* respectively, the reality for today's JHE institutions is more complex than what one might imagine. Ayano, a student of a private university, which generally is perceived as more financially stable than the public counterparts, revealed her own financial challenges and career-related hurdles which hindered Ayano's long-held "*akogare* [dream] to study abroad for an extended period of time." Kumi-*sensei*, an experienced manager of *kokusaika* projects at a Japan's leading national university, contributed her input as a practitioner. She revealed that even at the "prestigious national" university where *kokusaika* funds are abundantly available (compared to other smaller-scale and less prestigious institutions), the funded-programs/projects are not easily accessible to the students because of their often-limited English skills. As emphasized by Kumi-*sensei*, there seem to be those who are interested = "the 5%" (and often have the ability to participate) in such programs and others who are indifferent = "the other 95%" (or perhaps are not qualified enough to participate).

Ironically, for the time being, the more the *Englishization* of JHE is endorsed by the Japanese government through their policies and practices, the more English serves as a wall to separate those interested (or *the cans*) and those who are not (or *the can-nots*). It then defeats the purpose of their *kokusaika* campaign which primarily aims to foster more "globally-minded" students with communicative English skills. That being said, the current *kokusaika* campaign does not only need to be extended into a wider comprehension (e.g. overcoming the *English = international* equation), but also it must call for innovative and more cost-effective alternatives

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to ensure participation if Japan sincerely believes in the power of *kokusaika* (as often articulated in their policy documents: cf. MEXT, 2008).

> *Kokusaika against the "restructure" grain.*

The nationwide pressure to restructure higher education in Japan (Grove, 2015; N. Jenkins, 2015; Kakuchi, 2015) presents a serious issue because, simultaneously, JHE institutions are also expected to participate in a pricey campaign of *kokusaika*. As discussed above, *kokusaika* has been costly for Japan whereby and therefore a select few universities have been awarded with the funding to "internationalize" their institutions. Such exclusivity seems to have widen the gap between the *have* and *have-not* universities as well as the *can* (and interested) and *can-not* (or indifferent) students. Therefore, if Japan continues to move in the current direction of *kokusaika*, in extreme cases, the universities with the necessary means and high reputation may survive and possibly thrive while other universities take a direct hit[55] from the restructure pressure which theoretically forces them to undergo bankruptcy.

To the JHE institutions that simply cannot afford the time, energy, money, or other essential resources to catch and ride the crest of a *kokusaika* wave, the nationwide campaign of JHE systematic restructure is particularly daunting. As discussed earlier (in **The tale of junior colleges**), many JHE institutions especially the junior colleges today are faced with a tough decision to be absorbed, scramble money to upgrade (to a university), or close down (Kida,

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[55] Several historical JHE institutions have recently been shut down as a result of the nationwide campaign of systematic restructure (K. Harada, 2015; Kida, 2012). Although this "bankruptcy" of JHE institutions had been more common among smaller-scale private universities (particularly located in rural areas, with the frightening "2018 problem"* in sight, most JHE institutions regardless of their location, type, or academic standing are facing financial difficulties today. *The 2018 problem = the year 2018 is expected to be the beginning of the era when the number of college-age Japanese drops hence many JHE institutions are expected to undergo bankruptcy.

2012). The chronic under-enrollment at their institutions and "the 2018 problem[55]" creeping up, the junior colleges in Japan are left with very few options.

Even among other JHE institutions which may often be assumed as being financially healthy or relatively safe from falling a prey to the imminent absorption or closure pressure exerted by the government, many institutions are experimenting with creative and preventive measures (K. Harada, 2015) so they will not get caught in the downdraft. For example, some of my study participants explained that sharing of resources (teaching staff, classrooms, materials, etc.) is common among universities that house a junior college. While such a practice may not have been unusual before the restructure pressure, this seems to be done more strategically today to reduce the system-wide operational costs.

Shared by multiple professors across different institutions, there is often tension arising between the university unit and junior college unit, or between departments within one JHE institution, in regards to the system-wide fund allocation. The under-enrollment accelerated by the decreased public funding in recent years (cf. OECD, 2016, pp. 230–232), more and more institutions are strategically restructuring their departments (K. Harada, 2015). As lamented by the experienced university professor (see **Narrative 1**), some instructors regrettably give up on teaching their specialized area and instead are asked to teach a different area, which is deemed more profitable or sustainable in the sense of "surviv[ing] the shakeout.[55]" Correspondingly, in the case of English language related fields, there has been a general trend to shift its focus from the literature-based (traditional academic) discipline to more interactive (communicative) learning.[37] In such cases, the instructors will need to adjust their specialty or relearn a new area entirely. And more often than not, the restructured (or mere repackaged?) department or

program has a "catchy" name to put the finishing touch on the overhaul. Surprisingly, almost all the JHE institutions I have visited had one or more departments which were recently renamed and the common reason given by the faculty and staff was "to catch up with the national trend [to rename departments]" or simply "to zhuzh it up."

These accounts heighten the urgency of rethinking the current *kokusaika* campaign in a different light, most importantly by revisiting the government-endorsed vision of *kokusaika*. Although the *kokusaika* campaign has been somewhat exclusive and has existed against the hostile wave of restructure (e.g. budgetary reform), *kokusaika* in the most ideal sense must be kept cost-effective and accessible to ensure a broader participation. Also, it should be carefully and realistically planned so it may be implemented in a more sustainable, effective, and meaningful manner than has it likely been. However, I also acknowledge that although my study participants did not necessarily point out any positive or successful accounts of the government-funded *kokusaika* practices, it does not conclusively prove their pointlessness or fruitlessness. On this note, further studies are necessary to examine a wider range of experiences (and perspectives) of those who participate in (or opt out of) such practices.

Discipline-specific constraints.

Another dimension which needs to be carefully integrated into the *kokusaika* scheme is the fact that the current JHE system in the academic career-based society [*gakureki shakai*[50]] hardly encourages students to try something different or adventurous. Specifically, for those students in a career-oriented path (e.g. teacher education), taking time off from their rigid schedule of study and part-time job to explore different options is extremely rare. In this sense,

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Ayano (see her narrative), formerly a senior in teacher education program at a private university, was an outlier.

Ayano held *akogare* towards overseas and studying abroad which eventually led her to participate in a short study-away experience in Hawai'i and later for another short visit to collect data for her senior thesis. According to Ayano, it was an "inspiring and eye-opening experience" to observe and participate in the local schools (preschool to university) of Hawai'i. As an elementary schoolteacher today, Ayano says she often transfers what she observed, learned, and reflected on during her stay in Hawai'i into her classroom practice. In addition, Ayano's visit to the schools in Hawai'i has also inspired some of the teachers and pre-service teachers at a local university and its affiliated schools, so it has been mutually beneficial, to say the least (Balinbin et al., 2014; Levine et al., 2015; Levine & Nonaka, 2016).

Despite the potential benefits of such transnational experiences and exchanges, Japan's current employment mechanism discourages students to make an "unnecessary" detour because it may not only delay their graduation or employment, but it will greatly decrease the chance of his/her employment because many "companies in Japan [prefer] someone fresh-out-of-college" as pointed out by Ayano. On a different note, even for those students who are *required* to study abroad for an extended period of time (like Mai-*sensei*'s university students are), there are other factors to be considered such as those concerning funding, logistics, and academic rigor.

This complex issue of funding, logistics, and academic rigor was emphasized during a conversation with a Japanese university faculty member (pseudonym: Chika-*sensei*) who coordinates academic exchanges and regularly accompanies a group of students and/or professors to overseas institutions for a period of time. Chika-*sensei* commented, "Compared to

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the American higher education system, JHE is extremely rigid and inflexible. It's hard, for us

to…for example, propose a joint degree program with an overseas university because we have so

many hoops to jump through, legally, administratively, culturally, and psychologically." As

such, in addition to the above-noted systematic challenges (e.g. *gakureki-shakai* and the

employment mechanism), the legal and administrative components of JHE need to be considered

when planning for transnational activities and exchanges.

Lastly but most importantly, academic rigor has yet to be seriously discussed when

kokusaika is on the table. Japan seems to be in many ways "still fascinated with the idea of

English that the rigor of English programs does not concern people as long as the program has an

English component," said Chika-*sensei*. This may also apply to the context where all the

returned students from English-speaking countries, myself included, are equally greeted with

open arms on a superficial level in Japan despite the imaginably varying academic rigor of one's

overseas study or experience. For those students who barely meet the minimum requirements of

English proficiency to enroll in an English-medium program overseas, it may just be a *fun* cross-

cultural experience to "study abroad" by taking time off from their regular curriculum at the

home institution. In reality, it most likely requires a lot more than a good command of English

for a Japanese university student to navigate an academic program at an overseas host institution.

This infers the necessity of purposefully planning transnational programs and activities or

kokusaika in a broader sense.

English phobia and akogare.

In this section, I will offer one of the two additional analyses of *akogare* narratives to tie

together all the discussions in the preceding two chapters. Specifically, I will introduce *akogare*

narratives, which potentially help mediate the seemingly-insurmountable binary of "the Japanese" and "the non-Japanese" while also keeping in mind the current challenges in JHE described so far. By so doing, I aim to demonstrate how *kokusaika* may and indeed can move forward from here on.

On the one hand, there is a population of university students in Japan who seem "fascinated with the idea of English." On the other, there is also a large student population that I came across throughout my study who has an "English phobia." The following narrative provided by Lucas-*sensei* particularly illuminates this phenomenon and has interestingly pointed me in an insightful direction to rethink *kokusaika* altogether:

> **Observation Notes:** Lucas-*sensei* works at the [blank] Institute of Technology (IOT hereafter) in Japan. He is originally from an English-speaking country and has over 20 years of teaching experience in multiple countries. Within Japan, he has taught at several different universities. Currently, he holds a permanent position at IOT, teaching English for academic purposes. IOT being a technical university, most graduates pursue a career in engineering, information technology, or other applied science fields.

> Chisato: Looking at your questionnaire answers […] you said something about your students having *akogare* feelings towards you because you're an expert in [a Japanese word for *craftsmanship*] and you have the passion to do so?

> Lucas-*sensei*: You know, sometimes with some students, […] you connect […], right? [O]ur university [has] all kinds of different majors in Engineering, but particularly we have the [craftsmanship] center and so some students like making things, you know [….] when the students know that I like—I'd come in class and tell, "I'm tired from surfing," [and the students go] "Really?" and laugh. And, some of the students, you talk afterwards and, some of them—like there's students who are in the sailing club and so I connect with them and then there's other kids, when they realize that you make your own

[surf]boards and stuff, you know, I show them pictures and then they start to go, "Wow, that's really amazing!" […] so they're really interested in [what I do] and actually, some of the kids, it's funny, I'd be in a hardware store, I'd be buying things I need, and I meet them, you know. And we start talking and they go "Really? What are you doing here?"[and I go] "Oh, I'm building..." and so, when you connect with those students and when they see you again [on campus], like I just ((big smile))...I teach a doctorate class and our students are giving this big poster…kind of a pseudo "conference" that we kind of built up, just to use our English skills, and some of my students I've taught years before, some, they came and saw me, "Oh, are you still making surfboards and stuff?" And, they've just gotten their jobs or they're in graduate schools now […] and they REMEMBER! […] even when you don't see them for two years. And, there was a lot of teachers, you know, they come and go and they fade away or whatever, but I mean, it's all the students too, I totally remember them, because we connected, right?

[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

The "mutual connection" he felt with some of the students brings a breath of fresh air as it seems to have very little to do with the fact that Lucas-*sensei* was originally from an English-speaking country or had the very "Western" look. Earlier (in ***Akogare* and gender**), I discussed how he described his experience working at a female-dominated university where some of his female students would ask about his wife and giggle which may be seen as a "flirtatious" behavior. Compared to those female students at the female-dominated university, the students he currently teaches may be more "bookish" since many of them come to IOT because "they couldn't get into [the best university in the region]," as explained by Lucas-*sensei*. According to him, the best university in the region has "very high English standards, [and] our students [at IOT] are very good at math and physics, all the sciences but […not] English." Many of the IOT students in

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fact "have no interest in English" to the extent that some of them "hate it" or are perhaps afraid of it.

While the context in which Lucas-*sensei* is situated is a standard TESOL environment, the commonly existing ingredient of *akogare*, English or English-speaking seems absent here. In fact, I was curious to see if Lucas-*sensei* being a person from "the West" had anything to do with some of his students at IOT developing *akogare* towards him, so I followed up with more questions:

> Chisato: I thought when you said that some students have, you know, *akogare* towards you for your [craftsman] passion and I thought, "Is it possible that maybe students see you as a person from [an English-speaking country in the West] that, you know, you have this—something that they don't have…?"
>
> Lucas-*sensei*: Not necessarily, given that these students don't have ((laughs)) that passion about English or you know, going abroad necessarily and…Yeah...I wonder if...I honestly think that if I was Japanese and I was doing the exact same thing, I would connect with the students in the same way. So in that respect, I don't think it's a nationality thing...um, coz you hear students talk about, you know, teachers that they connect with and, you can really tell what teachers they like and […] they really connect with, and you can see there's a reason there. You get a lot, you know, when they have their *sa-kuru* [circle, group activities] or *bukatsu* [club activities], there is *komon no sensei* [a special adviser]. Sometimes there would be a *sensei* there who likes cycling or something, it's a same thing when you connect with them. Nationality doesn't really come into it, but I think [the students]...maybe find it interesting. It's not like a stereotypical thing that, you know, someone just comes in who speaks English and is a clown or whatever, but someone comes in and they actually have a real interest in that Engineering side of

things, yeah...so I kind of wish I was in Engineering ((laughs)) coz I find it very interesting too, yeah.

[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

Aside from how Lucas-*sensei* jokingly described "stereotypical" English-speaking teachers as playing a role of clown, what is notable here is that some of his students seemed to have genuinely "clicked" with Lucas-*sensei* despite their disinterest in English or studying abroad. In that sense, his students might not necessarily fixate on Lucas-*sensei*'s Japaneseness or non-Japaneseness (see **Japaneseness as being imagined, manifested, and challenged in today's Japan**). Instead, while bypassing the usual "English" factor, the students seem to sincerely desire to be like Lucas-*sensei* because he is able to cast his passion for craftsmanship into shape (e.g. a surfboard). Lucas-*sensei* humbly continued:

> Lucas-*sensei*: I'm actually a very much amateur [craftsman] but I try, you know, and ah...I think [the students] can see it. It's almost...it's interesting because as if they see me "trying," [just] like [with] their English, I think that maybe they'll try harder, you know, coz I'm going out of my comfort zone you know, doing things, even though I love it, I'm not good at it—not particularly good at it, so...((laughs))

[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

Lucas-*sensei* openly shared with me his in-depth thoughts on craftsmanship, teaching, and *akogare* during the face-to-face interview. While IOT is not one of the "select" universities that receive a large amount of *kokusaika* funds from the government, it was evident from the interview and campus observation that the students are encouraged to improve their English

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skills because English is increasingly recognized as "the language of science[56]" even in Japan. However, despite the earlier discussion on Japanese university students' perception of Japaneseness or non-Japaneseness (see *Akogare* **and precarious "Japan"**), for the students Lucas-*sensei* clicks with, his citizenship, nationality, languages/literacy, and ancestry do not seem to influence too much on how the students hold *akogare* towards Lucas-*sensei*. Using the *akogare* framework, it may be understood that the students may have a specific drive and vision for the future that aligns with who Lucas-*sensei* is and what he does. In this sense, the students' *akogare* is indeed creating a new space where they transcend the otherwise divisive ethnic, national, racial, or linguistic boundaries (such as a sense of the "Japanese" and "non-Japanese").

Also, while Japan's *kokusaika* should not solely focus on English education, it is certainly one of the relatively-accessible and expandable approaches to *kokusaika*, particularly given the amount of effort expended for English education so far. If the government is seriously concerned about the large population of university students with an "English phobia[57]" and consequently aims to expand the "cream" population (borrowing Kumi-*sensei*'s expression) through their *kokusaika* programs/projects, Lucas-*sensei*'s narrative makes an inspiring and compelling case. Although it has largely been that *akogare* is instantiated or mediated by English, with those who have an "English phobia" or are indifferent to English (which seems to be a large percentage of student population in many JHE institutions I observed), *akogare* may

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[56] Extensive discussions on the effects of English as a dominant language of *science* can be found in the edited book by Ammon (2001).

[57] The survey results in the recent five years have indicated that the average high school students' English proficiency is extremely low despite the years of compulsory English education in Japan (e.g. MEXT, 2011). While the proficiency test used in such surveys may only reveal one aspect of the students' English proficiency, many of the students also expressed their disinterest and phobia about English. This phobia is often carried over to the higher education sector (also evident in the narratives by Kumi-*sensei* and Lucas-*sensei*).

function differently. In Lucas-*sensei*'s case, for example, his students' *akogare* towards him and his craftsman-like nature might be able to help remedy their English phobia. It is because, for one, English is the language that Lucas-*sensei* speaks and teaches and therefore, it may be perceived as a booster that potentially helps minimize the distance between the students themselves and their desired other (i.e. Lucas-*sensei*). As such, although *akogare* can be elusive and context-sensitive, it definitely has the potential not only to secure a space where traditional binaries (such as the "Japanese" and "non-Japanese") may be overcome, but also *akogare* may be tapped into for reaching out to and motivating the large population of university students who are indifferent or resistant to English or are too complacent with their "here and now" life in Japan.[58]

Olivia-sensei's "floating" understanding of her identity(ies).

Moving on to the next case, I will present an analysis of the extensive narrative shared by Olivia-*sensei* earlier (previously labeled as F36). Her narrative is a powerful account of her "fragmented" identities. Also, the ways in which she finally came to terms with her own understanding of her "self" helps us to think further about how JHE may be able to help their students transit through the changing times of Japan. To analyze Olivia-*sensei*'s personal quest, I will use the framework of *akogare* and demonstrate how a "floating" understanding of identities may be precisely what we need to harness Japan's *kokusaika* scheme.

As presented earlier (in **Beautiful…but *not* Japanese?**), Olivia-*sensei* narrated a complex case of her identity (such as Japaneseness) as being constantly evolving, diversifying,

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[58] Scholars have increasingly examined the new generation of "herbivore," "lax," and "enlightened" youth in Japan (Morioka, 2013). Such youth are identified as being so complacent with their life to the degree that they believe they are living in "paradise" (Kaifu, 2008).

and fragmenting. She firmly stated that "those who…claim that they are Japanese…should be allowed to do so" when asked *what do you believe makes someone Japanese?* As the population of Japan continues to diversify in terms of their ethnic, national, racial, gender, socioeconomic, and other social aspects, it is crucial that people's awareness of such diversities keeps abreast of the change. Or, as articulated by Olivia-*sensei,* "ideally, it boils down to how the individual wants to live their lives or claim…their identities" even when "outsiders" intervene (both positively and negatively) in the process of his/her identity construction.

Previously demonstrated in some of the students' responses and reactions to the Ariana Miyamoto case, these university students seem to be genuinely unaware of, or even feel uneasy about, something outside of what they perceive as *normal.* In the "monocultural" nation (or so believed by many, as noted by F38 earlier) where *the nail that sticks out gets hammered down,* thinking outside the box or being "openly different" from other people may require more than just an alternative sense of voice, but a paradigm shift on a larger scale. Most ideally, if everyone is recognized as being different in one way or another *comfortably,* the default can be altered as such. Here, I also admit the limitation that there are diverse perceptions and perspectives *to begin with* (in identifying something/someone as being the same or different) that just because these students and others including myself *appear* to feel more comfortable with the idea of sameness, does not mean that everyone understands something/someone as "the same" or "different" in the exact manner. However, at the least, if the students can be exposed to a wider range of experiences and perspectives, they may become more aware of the complex realities at work in shaping their own experiences and perspectives of what they believe as "Japan" or "Japaneseness." And, on this very note, I propose that the ongoing *kokusaika* campaign may be

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a potential and appropriate venue to cast these ideas into shape, or preferably into action. In taking a next step forward to reimagining *kokusaika*, a close examination of Olivia-*sensei*'s personal breakthrough (see F36 in **Beautiful…but *not* Japanese?** to refresh memory) will be most relevant and beneficial.

For Olivia-*sensei*, it was the intellectual channel that helped her through the dilemma she faced while living in Japan. Specifically, when she perceived herself as being a certain individual (e.g. <u>Japanese</u> American) but others around her did not recognize her as such (e.g. Japanese <u>American</u>, more emphasis on "American"), it was most frustrating to her and affected her well-being. Particularly in Japan where Japaneseness is often inflexibly imagined or practiced (see **Japaneseness as being imagined, manifested, and challenged in today's Japan**), being a *Japanese* American, instead of a Chinese American for example, seems to present its own complex challenges. However, "meeting people of similar backgrounds who have faced the same struggles in different levels in different circumstances" and conducting research around the issues of identity led Olivia-*sensei* to finally "come to terms" with her frustration.

Also, through the lens of *akogare*, Olivia-*sensei*'s identity journey can be examined in a different light. For example, she responded to one of my online questionnaire questions in the following manner:

> ***Do you have anyone you have "akogare" towards? Please briefly describe the person (e.g. age, sex, other characteristics). What makes him/her your "akogare"?***
> Olivia-*sensei*: Currently, women scholars in applied linguistics, younger than me, who are courageous, powerful, give great academic presentations that question the status quo. [They speak] with confidence and humor [and they are] risk-taking in the type of research they do.

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Based on this response combined with the data from the face-to-face interview session, it is evident that her becoming aware of and more informed about a variety of experiences through her own dissertation work as well as through the work of other "courageous and powerful" female scholars have helped contour what and how she perceives herself today in a given time and space. Put differently, inspired by some of the admirable (=*akogare*) female scholars and by *intellectually* engaging with her personal dilemma, Olivia-*sensei* appears to have gained a "more comfortable" understanding of her own identity, which she used to have viewed in a less nuanced manner when she first moved to Japan.

To redirect our attention to *kokusaika*, there are two major takeaways from Olivia-*sensei*'s narrative above. First, it helped highlight the emotional and personal impacts of how Japaneseness is being imagined or practiced in Japan. In a broader sense, it speaks to the rigidity of Japan as a nation of "sameness," imposing its *own* definition of "Japan" or "Japaneseness." It is long-overdue for the nation to take a serious consideration of the ever-diversifying population in Japan and similarly diversifying understanding of Japan or Japaneseness. Second, it also demonstrated the potential of *akogare* as a powerful and useful channel where the norm may be challenged in a less aggressive and more productive manner.[59] In other words, it was the inspirational voices of her fellow scholars as well as her conversations with others ("of similar backgrounds who have faced the same struggles") that drove Olivia-*sensei* to willingly and effectively engage with her own hardship, resultantly leading to a paradigm shift of her own.

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[59] The significance of "desire" as an alternative framework to the otherwise prevalent "deficit model" in the current research trend is elaborated by Eve Tuck (2009).

Learning from the two major points raised above, I would like to advocate for the importance of *flexibility* in recognizing, understanding, and perhaps supporting *different* and *multiple* identities of people (including those of our own)—which I would like to call a "floating" understanding of identities. Put differently, what may be lacking yet progressively important in the ever-diversifying Japan is a sense of *multiplicity*. Here, I am not promoting a specific notion of multiplicity or multiplicity as a default state. Or, as discussed in **Theoretical underpinnings of my study** of the Introduction chapter, I am not advocating for multiplicity out of defiance to the idea of a single truth. Rather, I am urging that we remain *open*. If the *kokusaika* campaign may be redesigned around a sense of multiplicity, for example, by recognizing that "Japan" or "Japaneseness" can be collectively yet divisively imagined/practiced (via accessible examples including the *akogare*-related narratives and cases covered in my study), it can at least help level the field for the students to decide what their realities are or can transform into (e.g. through the lens of *akogare*). Overall, if Japan sincerely believes that engaging with *kokusaika* is among the few options left for the nation to survive today, it is time to get serious and leave the superficiality out of it.

Summary of Chapter 5

In this chapter, I examined a variety of JHE institutions and related narratives in order to help render a complex picture of JHE at large. I first presented two main narratives surrounding *tandai* [junior colleges] to highlight: 1) institution (system)-wide effects caused by the restructure and internationalization pressures and 2) the "Christian colleges = *international*?" myth. Then, I examined additional narratives on Christian universities (generally four-year) to offer a more nuanced picture of the intersection between *akogare* and gender. Based on the

preceding discussions, I moved on to addressing the second research question: *What implications do the students' self-other perspectives (via akogare) have for the internationalization of Japanese higher education and beyond?* In doing so, I reviewed some of the institutional and structural challenges brought about by the current *kokusaika* campaign. Overall, there are three major challenges including: 1) finances; 2) the nationwide "restructure" pressure; and 3) discipline-specific constraints. It is important to note that while they are organized into three separate challenges, they often intersect with one another.

Focusing specifically on the current *kokusaika* trend, I elaborated on the ways in which *kokusaika* funds are allocated and how they may be placing a few universities at an advantage, resultantly creating and furthering the gap between the *have* and *have-not* universities in Japan. Yet, at the same time, I also presented a number of counterexamples as to help render a more complex whole of JHE. Additionally, I discussed English as potentially causing *turbulence* in the traditionally hierarchical system of JHE because one's years of experience or academic integrity and rigor may become less important when his/her English skills are put to the test. While this may be seen in both a positive and a negative light, it comes as a fresh reminder that English needs to be carefully integrated into the *kokusaika* practice.

Lastly, I offered additional analyses of *akogare*-related narratives that aim to help guide the Japan's future plan of *kokusaika*. Most importantly, I have discussed the *akogare*'s extended potential as not only securing a space where traditional binaries may be overcome, but also reaching out to and motivating the large population of Japanese university students who may have an English phobia or are too complacent with their "here and now" life in Japan.[58] Likewise, I signaled the importance of openness to the concept of multiplicity. As emphasized

earlier, it is not to promote a specific notion of multiplicity or multiplicity as a default state. Rather, I urge that the *kokusaika* campaign be redesigned around a sense of multiplicity so that the students may develop a "floating" understanding of different identities which helps enable the students to engage more freely with *outside the box* thoughts.

In the final chapter, I will first provide a brief overview of the background, problem statement, significance, theoretical foundations, research questions, and methodology of my study. Subsequently, I will present a summary of collected data and major findings in response to my research questions and extend the preceding discussions to offer concluding remarks.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

This chapter will first provide a brief overview of the background, problem statement, significance, theoretical foundations, research questions, and methodology of this study. Subsequently, a summary of collected data and major findings addressing my research questions are presented. Finally, I extend the preceding discussions to offer concluding remarks.

Overview of My Study

This study has been developed out of a combination of my personal and academic interest in the concept of *akogare*. In TESOL studies, *akogare* has increasingly been sexualized, romanticized, and gendered while its original and standard use by Japanese speakers is less selective or restrictive. However, the deeper I engaged with the academic literature discussing *akogare* in specific contexts, the more convinced I became that the use of *akogare* in these contexts indeed has larger sociocultural and political implications for Japan and particularly for its future directions for the current *kokusaika* [internationalization] campaign.

Specifically, over the past few decades, the Japanese government has annually spent billions of yen (=millions in USD) to transform Japanese higher education (JHE) into the flagship of the nationwide *kokusaika* project. Education policies focusing on the internationalization of JHE have burgeoned although studies have yet to confirm the effectiveness of these policies. One of the major issues often highlighted by the skeptics of such *kokusaika* policies is Japan's overemphasis on English education. In fact, the equation of *English = international* seems ubiquitously accepted across the nation in Japanese politics,

business, education, and other social arenas, alongside the also popularly used mantra of "engage

with *kokusaika* or perish.[60]"

Given this background, I designed this study to integrate the concept of *akogare* in

rendering a complex picture of today's JHE through the otherwise-absent voices of students,

faculty, and other staff. In doing so, I aimed not only to better understand the current *kokusaika*

state of JHE, but also to reimagine what *kokusaika* can look like for Japan in the future.

Embracing a poststructuralist stance (not simply out of political naiveté or defiance to

structuralism and other traditional modes of thinking), I have engaged flexibly with binaries and

categorization such as the Japanese v. the non-Japanese through social identity theories. That is,

I carefully unpacked the contextual meanings of such categorizations without fixating on a

singular understanding of these binaries, categorization, and other relevant concepts. Also, I

paid more attention to the process itself through which some may identify or be identified with a

specific category over others. These theoretical underpinnings are best visualized as the

framework of *akogare* (**Figure 1**) where an individual presumably positions the self in relation to

the desired other who is (by the individual) perceived as *tantalizingly out of reach* from him/her.

Once the *akogare* framework became ready to be deployed, my research questions were

also set as follows: RQ1 *How do Japanese university students project the self and the other (e.g.*

the Japanese self and the non- Japanese other) through akogare? and RQ2 *What implications do*

the students' self-other perspectives (via akogare) have for the internationalization of Japanese

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[60] This discourse of "engage with *kokusaika* or perish" is widely used in Japanese politics,
business, and other social arenas. It is partly because the word *kokusaika* was originally "highly
charged [with] political-economic" (Oliver, 2009, p. 52) motivation.

higher education and beyond? To effectively and efficiently address these research questions, I continually improved my research design.

Among different poststructuralist research orientations, I found the constructivist paradigm to be most useful and appropriate because it helps the researcher to collect and understand multiple realities from the study participants' perspectives, by participating in the sense making process as both a researcher and an individual. A careful consideration of different research paradigms was important to my study especially because I positioned myself as an individual who herself has some insight about *akogare* and may be able to negotiate her emic/etic positionalities[22] when deemed possible and appropriate.

Considering the nature of my study where multiple "narrative realities" (Chase, 2008, 2011) around *akogare* are being constructed for the target population while I also participate in the construction of these realities (Hatch, 2002, pp. 11–20), I designed my study as a narrative inquiry with case study orientation. This overall methodology also aligns comfortably with the constructivist paradigm for its epistemological undertones. I proceeded to collect and analyze data largely through qualitative inquiry methods such as online questionnaires, follow-up interviews (face-to-face, Skype, email, text messages), field observations, and informal conversations.

I first conducted a pilot study to address potential ethical and moral concerns (especially for the IRB purposes). Based on the pilot study results, I made necessary adjustments and modifications to my original research design while continually collecting data. As of December 2016, there were a total of 132 questionnaire/interview participants consisting of: 57 faculty members of Japanese universities (35 male and 22 female) and 75 Japanese university students

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(30 male and 45 female). Some have participated in both the online questionnaire and interview

sessions while others have selectively participated in one of the two. It is also important to

acknowledge that the questionnaires were designed to ensure the flexibility of time and place,

privacy and anonymity, and the web-based usability that some interview participants may have

anonymously filled out the questionnaire to share some of their thoughts that they may not have

(wanted to/been able to) articulated during the face-to-face interviews (where anonymity was

annulled). The next section details some of the major findings of this study.

Major Findings in Response to the Research Questions

For the findings chapters (4 & 5), to purposively present the data while addressing my

research questions, I arranged my discussion under three main themes. The three themes were

set as: 1) *akogare* and gender; 2) *akogare* and precarious "Japan"; and 3) *akogare* and Japanese

higher education (JHE) today. Under such themes, Chapter 4 largely responds to the first

research question (RQ1) while Chapter 5 addresses the second research question (RQ2) and

wraps up the discussion.

Akogare **and gender.**

Corroborating the recent TESOL studies that have established the romanticized notion of

akogare between Japanese female learners of English and "Western" males, this study included a

number of instances where Japanese female students demonstrated flirtatious or suggestive

behaviors towards "Western" males. At the same time, I also prepared to seek a larger

implication of such behaviors including the perceived "Western" standards of beauty or varied

perceptions towards the "Westernness" or "foreignness" in Japan.

In order to explore the students' perception of the "Western" standards, I reviewed the data collected for this study with a specific focus on their perception of attractiveness and/or beauty. Particularly, I examined how such perceptions may intersect with the students' understanding of Japaneseness and non-Japaneseness by taking a close look at one of the questionnaire questions: **If any, which country do you wish was your mother country and why?**

The initial analysis of the students' responses revealed that a majority of students find Japan as their ideal mother country yet there were others who listed countries in "the West" as their ideal mother country. In a broad sense, this can be considered as a manifestation of the TESOL defined *akogare* because many of the students who listed a Western country exhibit a strong sense of attachment to their select country simply based on what they *imagine* the country is like, without having been there before. While the weather, nature, climates, and other ecological factors appear to be the common reasons why they may find one country more ideal than others, some students seemed impressed with the social welfare and education systems of "Western" countries.

Although these students' responses seem largely motivated by the imagination than their real-life experience in the chosen country, it demonstrates the strong potential of *akogare* as a construct that may possibly bring their imagination into shape. Additionally, a close examination of the students' choice of countries alongside their personal background helps shed a new light on how and why a particular student may find a specific country so ideal that he/she wanted to be born and raised there instead of Japan. This again confirms the potential of *akogare* as providing a useful lens of analysis in which we may better understand how an

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individual positions the self in relation to his/her desired other. Expanding on this point, the next

section offers more narratives, which help explain the complexity of how "Japan" or

"Japaneseness" is perceived by the study participants.

Akogare **and precarious "Japan."**

As evident through the Miss Universe Japan 2015 (Ariana Miyamoto) case, there were a

variety of reactions and responses that were both complementing yet contradicting to each other.

Within the scope of this study, I paid more attention to *how* my study participants narrated on

what (who) is "Japanese" or what (who) is *not*. Interestingly, many acknowledged that the

presence of *hafu*, mixed heritage people, and other diverse population is what makes today's

Japan "Japan." Yet, at the same time, some students persistently resisted or hesitated about the

idea of Miyamoto (who has an African American father and a Japanese mother) representing

Japan. This is indeed one of the realities of Japan that we must recognize and respond to.

Also, the Miyamoto case exemplified the contradictory nature of beauty and

Japaneseness today. In particular, what is perceived as beautiful or attractive in Japan often

derives from the standards of so-called "the West" (e.g. "having long legs, wide eyes, being tall,

etc." as noted by S2) while too much of the "Westernness" may undermine one's "Japaneseness."

Put differently, how "the Western" standards of beauty is perceived in Japan may have given

Miyamoto "an edge" over other contestants. Yet, the same edge that helped Miyamoto to win

the pageant seems to be, on the contrary, challenging her Japaneseness in this specific context

because the general public has trouble seeing her as "Japanese" in the traditional sense. Again, if

the contest's focus was not on the appearance (e.g. competing in the Mathlympics), Miyamoto

may be considered as a legitimate candidate to represent the nation on a global stage. In fact,

there is an increasing number of mixed heritage athletes (e.g. half-Japanese) who compete

internationally as a representative of Japan and many of them have successfully solidified their

fan base in Japan just as do other "traditionally Japanese" athletes.

Given these accounts, it is important to emphasize that many of my study participants

(both students and non-students) seem more than aware of the change in Japan's "ethnoscapes"

and ideologically understand that people must not be "judged by its cover." In rethinking

kokusaika, this crossroads (e.g. the change in the "ethnoscapes") that Japan is facing can and

should be taken into account because the current policies are concentrated mainly on English

education and little else.

Akogare and Japanese higher education today.

In Chapter 5, I moved on to the second research question: *What implications do the*

students' self-other perspectives (via akogare) have for the internationalization of Japanese

higher education and beyond? Ultimately, by encompassing what had been brought forth by my

study participants in Chapter 4, I explored what *kokusaika* should look like for Japan in the

coming years.

First, I examined different realms of JHE and presented a variety of narratives (individual,

collective, and occasionally contradictory) to help render a complex and a more nuanced picture

of JHE today. The first two JHE sectors discussed in Chapter 5 were *tandai* [junior colleges] and

Christian universities.

In the *tandai* sector where the nationwide pressure to *restructure* (often insinuating

"downsizing") seems to be taking a direct hit, the chronic under-enrollment is commonly

experienced. To mediate the plunge in tuition revenue, many junior colleges strategically share

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resources within a larger system under which affiliated universities and schools operate. Accelerated by the extra pressure to *internationalize*, many institutions are in the process of a major overhaul, which has caused tension and dissatisfaction among the faculty. Another point emerged from the collective narrative of *tandai* is that junior colleges with Christian affiliations are more popular among the students who envision English (speaking) as the most important and desirable skill, especially if one seeks to pursue an "international" career.

An interesting formula of "Christian [universities/colleges] equals 'Western and white' equals English therefore *international*" or a more commonly-used *English = international* is strikingly ubiquitous in Japan. The latter equation is not simply driving Japan's language policies and their implementation (cf. **TESOL in General and in Japan**) but also seems to be shaping students' behaviors and choices they make within the JHE system.

In the context of Christian universities, similar narratives exist around the equation of *English = international*. In fact, this equation seems to often bolster the status of some Christian universities as securing a space where *akogare* towards "the West" may be accepted or legitimized and this can even be manipulated as "a strong selling point" (F44). Further, within these narratives, there is a gender imbalance that "especially female students choose a Christian university [or junior college] because it symbolizes the 'white West'," as explained by Professor Matsuo earlier. However, I also presented an antithesis (i.e. a male student "latched onto" English-speaking female Western professors) to the generally female student populated *akogare* narratives. I posited that the "rare" sighting of male students' *akogare* towards female Western teachers simply suggests that male students might not demonstrate, act on, or perform such feelings or emotion in public. Also, as repeatedly exhibited through the close examinations of

akogare narratives in my study, it is often more than just English, "the West," or other perfunctory elements that are involved in the workings of one's *akogare*.

Following the discussion on junior colleges and Christian universities, I presented a variety of narratives and *counter* narratives to highlight multiple realities of *kokusaika*. Embodied in the widely-accepted equation of *English = international*, *kokusaika* is taking a unique form in JHE. Specifically, in addition to how education programs/projects are being designed, promoted, and implemented, *kokusaika* and its government-endorsed vision are also shaping the student behaviors and choices.

In general, *kokusaika* funds are often being allocated to a select few universities while other universities without the necessary means (e.g. their competency in the "*kokusaika*" language) are left out of the *kokusaika* campaign. By extension, there seem to be *have* and *have-not* universities within the *kokusaika* landscape of Japan and their students are likewise affected. In other words, those who can financially and often intellectually afford the education at a *have* university will automatically gain access to what the government calls "international activities," which may be problematically (e.g. narrowly) defined, yet, they are still additional opportunities that other *have-not* universities cannot afford to provide for their students.

Further, I revealed the overall complexity of the so-called "prestigious national" universities where on the one hand, *kokusaika* funds are supposedly abundantly funneled into by the government. On the other, however, the students who *can* (or are *interested* in) benefit from such resources might be a select few while other students remain resistant or simply indifferent. Also, I included examples to show that the idea of English is so powerful across different academic contexts that it can both foster and obscure one's *akogare*, even amongst the most

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well-established scholars in Japan. In this sense, I argue that English may be causing *turbulence* in the traditionally hierarchical system of JHE because one's years of experience or academic integrity and rigor may become less important when his/her English skills are put to the test.

Ironically, for the time being, the more the *Englishization* of JHE is endorsed by the Japanese government through their policies and practices, the more English serves as a wall to separate those interested (or *the cans*) and those who are not (or *the can-nots*). This then defeats the purpose of their *kokusaika* campaign which primarily aims to foster more "globally-minded" students with communicative English skills.

To the JHE institutions that simply cannot afford the time, energy, money, or other essential resources to catch and ride the crest of a *kokusaika* wave, the nationwide campaign of JHE's systematic *restructure* (=downsizing) is particularly daunting. Even among other JHE institutions which may often be assumed as being financially healthy or relatively safe from falling a prey to the imminent absorption or closure pressure exerted by the government, many institutions are experimenting with creative and preventive measures (K. Harada, 2015) so they will not get caught in the downdraft. These accounts heighten the urgency of rethinking the current *kokusaika* campaign in a different light, most importantly by revisiting the government-endorsed vision of *kokusaika*. Although the *kokusaika* campaign has been somewhat exclusive and has existed against the competing wave of restructure (e.g. budgetary reform), *kokusaika* in the most ideal sense must be kept cost-effective and accessible to ensure a broader participation.

Finally, through two additional analyses of *akogare* narratives, I discussed practical visions of what *kokusaika* can look like for Japan. With Lucas-*sensei*'s narrative, I further examined the potential of *akogare*, as not only securing a space where traditional binaries (such

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as the "Japanese" and "non-Japanese") may be overcome, but also to be tapped into for reaching out to and motivating the large population of university students who are indifferent or resistant to English or are too complacent with their "here and now" life in Japan,[58] so to speak. While Japan's *kokusaika* should not solely focus on English education, it is certainly one of the relatively-accessible and expandable approaches to *kokusaika*, especially considering the amount of effort expended for English education so far. At the same time, the large population of university students with an "English phobia[57]" seems often neglected just as are the JHE institutions without necessary means, as discussed earlier (cf. **Financial aspects of *kokusaika***). If the Japanese government continually targets to expand the "cream" population (see the narrative by Kumi-*sensei*) through their *kokusaika* programs/projects, it is necessary to first ask *how* the current English education may be creating the large population with "English phobia" in the first place.

The second case with Olivia-*sensei* epitomizes how one's "floating" understanding of identity is essential to his/her being. Particularly, in the changing times of Japan, Olivia-*sensei*'s narrative helps us to think further about how JHE may proceed through its *kokusaika* scheme. As the population of Japan continues to diversify in terms of their ethnic, national, racial, gender, socioeconomic, and other social aspects, it is crucial that people's awareness of such diversities keeps abreast of the change. Or, as articulated by Olivia-*sensei*, "ideally, it boils down to how the individual wants to live their lives or claim…their identities" even when "outsiders" intervene (both positively and negatively) in the process of someone else's identity construction.

Nevertheless, in the "monocultural" nation where *the nail that sticks out gets hammered down*, thinking outside the box or being "openly different" from other people may require more

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than just an alternative sense of voice, but a paradigm shift on a larger scale. Most ideally, if everyone is recognized as being different in one way or another *comfortably*, the default can be altered as such. All the technicalities aside, if the students can be exposed to a wider range of experiences and perspectives, they may become more aware of the complex realities at work in shaping their own experiences and perspectives of what they believe as "Japan" or "Japaneseness." That being said, the ongoing *kokusaika* campaign should be redesigned as a suitable venue to cast these ideas into shape, or preferably into action.

On this note, I would like to advocate for the importance of our flexibility in recognizing, understanding, and perhaps supporting *different* and *multiple* identities of people (including those of our own). What may be lacking yet progressively important in the ever-diversifying Japan is a sense of *multiplicity*. Here, I am not promoting a specific notion of multiplicity or multiplicity as a default state. Or, as discussed in **Theoretical underpinnings of my study** of the **Introduction** chapter, I am not advocating for multiplicity out of defiance to the idea of a single truth. Rather, I am urging that we remain *open*. In practice, the *kokusaika* campaign ought to be redesigned around a sense of multiplicity, for instance, by recognizing that "Japan" or "Japaneseness" can be collectively yet divisively imagined/practiced (via accessible examples including the *akogare*-related narratives and cases covered in this study). This will likely help the students to decide what their realities are or can transform into (e.g. through the lens of *akogare*) in a powerful yet most gentle and constructive manner.[59]

Are we creating the new "normal"?: Rethinking what "Japan" means today.

The deeper I delved into this study, the more confused I became about what "Japanese" or "Japan" essentially is. On the other side of the coin, my confusion (or *frustration* to be exact)

also exemplifies how strong our natural urge to know what something *really* is as part of the process to "partition…the [otherwise-incomprehensible] world into comprehensible units" (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Korte, 2007, p. 172). Although a language (or more simply, a word) even in its full capacity may only serve as a point of reference among people for communicating with one another, it is indeed one of the most emotionally-bound means of communication (Saussure, 1916) that shapes not just the user's perspectives or experiences, but also his/her overall worldviews. That said, the capability to feel *okay* about being unable to put our finger on what "Japanese" or "Japan" means may just be what we need in these rapidly changing and confusing "-scapes[11]" of Japan. Ideally speaking, fostering such a capability (what I had earlier called a *floating* understanding of identities) can and should be the main target of the future *kokusaika* campaign in Japan.

In a broad view, this study has repeatedly highlighted the emotional and personal impacts of how Japaneseness is being imagined or practiced in Japan. Through the personal and collective narratives, the rigidity of Japan as a nation of "sameness" was continually exposed. Accordingly, it is long-overdue for the nation to take a serious consideration of the ever-diversifying population in Japan and similarly diversifying understanding of Japan or Japaneseness. On that note, staying *open* to multiple realities in Japan should come as a matter of first priority even before taking on the *kokusaika* project. Again, my intention here is not to promote a specific notion of multiplicity or multiplicity as a default state. Rather, I urge that the *kokusaika* campaign be redesigned around a sense of multiplicity so that the students may develop a *floating* understanding of different identities which helps enable the students to engage more freely with *outside the box* thoughts. On this note, I sum up below some of the

contributions of this study to the present and the future of *kokusaika* which also propose pedagogical and strategical approaches.

Theoretical, pedagogical, and other larger implications of this study for the present and the future of *kokusaika*.

While addressing the two research questions, this study has made the following contributions to identity studies, TESOL, and other relevant fields at large.

Reconceptualization of akogare and theoretical contributions to social identity theories.

With this study, I have reconceptualized *akogare* to highlight the complex and liberating space where individuals may negotiate or even transcend their ethnic, national, racial, gender, or linguistic identities. By engaging flexibly with binaries and categorization such as the Japanese v. the non-Japanese through social identity theories, I have shown how *akogare* may challenge, transgress, or undermine such traditionally-dichotomic boundaries. This study has also made a theoretical contribution to major social identity theories whereby it is traditionally assumed that "the self" constructed based on the perceived similarities and differences often leads to a negative evaluation of the so-called "others." Put differently, through *akogare*, some study participants have expressed an urge or desire to be like the person whom they perceive as "the other." In such cases, they long to be like "the other" precisely because they perceive the desirable individual to be someone who is different and *tantalizingly out of reach* and who may not necessarily be "us" in the traditional sense but just has the right amount of "us" and "them." This understanding of *akogare* indeed helps shed a new light on the identity studies in TESOL and other wider social science disciplines.

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Pedagogical approach to teaching English in JHE.

I have argued that the idea of English is so powerful in JHE that it may indeed be causing *turbulence* in the traditionally hierarchical system of JHE which may be both a positive and a negative phenomenon. However, overall, there seems to be a rift between those students who are fascinated with English (and what English may bring to them) and others who are simply indifferent or have an "English phobia.[57]" While the *kokusaika* campaign should ideally involve more than just English teaching and learning, if the government intends to redesign their *kokusaika* campaign by leveraging the current model (with a heavy focus on English education), the first step may be to focus on helping remedy the English phobia of university students.

Utilizing the concept of *akogare*, I have examined the case of Lucas-*sensei* who, through his own interest in engineering and organically developing personal connections with his students, was able to capture the minds of those students who may have otherwise felt distant or indifferent to English or the teacher (Lucas-*sensei*) who taught the subject. While this was a specific case involving a native English-speaking teacher teaching English in JHE, it capitalizes on the potential of *akogare* to create a new space where, beyond the conventional ethnic, national, racial, or linguistic boundaries, students and their teacher may be able to develop a different type of relationship which may resultantly help support the learning of the students. Needless to say, this also has a larger implication for teaching in general.

New approaches to kokusaika: Identity.

While this study has evolved under the umbrella of "identity," it should not simply be treated as a concept or theory but it is indeed a reflection of today's Japan. Not only is identity (such as one's Japaneseness) imagined, fragmented, diversified, or constantly evolving (as has

been shown through examples in this study), I argue that it is also the key to approaching today's *kokusaika* practices in JHE.

As discussed by some of the faculty members who used the Miss Universe Japan 2015 case in their class, the reality is that Japaneseness is no longer a singular or simplifiable construct but rather a multiple and complex one. Therefore, it is increasingly necessary that students are provided with an opportunity to think further into their own as well as others' (such as Miyamoto Ariana's) identity(ies) within and beyond the Japanese/non-Japanese paradigm. It should also be emphasized that it is not a matter of distant history or future, but it is a reality of today.

Certainly, it is most powerful if faculty members themselves (like Olivia-*sensei*) have gone through their own identity journey and are willing to share their thoughts and experience with their students, but utilizing a case like the Miss Universe Japan 2015 is also possible as this type of news is becoming more frequent and widely-shared.

Prompted by such narratives and news, students may be able to engage more deeply with the topic of identity and perhaps develop a flexibility in recognizing, understanding, and ideally supporting *different* and *multiple* identities of people. This, I believe, can and should be the ultimate vision of *kokusaika* and what continues to help improve, guide, and inspire the ongoing *kokusaika* campaign in Japan.

Concluding Remarks: Reimagining Japan and *Kokusaika*

This study has demonstrated that Japaneseness is imagined, manifested, conformed, and reified not only by the so-called "Japanese" but also by the "non-Japanese" today. Japaneseness is often used as a frame of reference or as an anchor in conversations especially when Japan/the Japanese is juxtaposed against something/someone "foreign." However, my study participants'

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narratives have also revealed that this frame of reference is increasingly being challenged by the social realities of today and in turn, it is stimulating a new kind of dialogue on what it *really* means to be "Japanese."

Taking advantage of the current development, the *kokusaika* campaign must be reimagined as a potential and appropriate venue where we may not only be able to raise awareness of the complex and multiple realities of Japan, but also to create a space for alternative voices (such as the bricolage of narratives included in this study). In lieu of reminiscing about *furuki yoki nihon* [the good old Japan], which is coincidentally a favorite phrase of the incumbent Prime Minister of Japan (Abe), I call for opening our eyes to *takusan no atarashii nihon* [many new Japan*s*]. To keep our inspiration alive and fresh, I end this study with the following powerful statement made by one of my study participants:

> [T]hose who would make the claim that they are Japanese…should be allowed to do so because […] there is a growing population of people living in Japan who have a variety of experiences of living within Japan, living outside of Japan, having parents from a variety of different backgrounds, but they claim they're— their central identity is being Japanese...so, the more I hear about this, the more it makes sense to me that it's not something […] outsiders can say. […] [I]deally, it boils down to how the individual wants to live their lives or claim, you know, their identities, so I don't think that's where things are in Japan yet. To me, ideally, that's what eventually I think is going to have to be recognized. […] We're at a point in most nation-states, I guess, throughout the world, that these really simple *labels* of connecting ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, all of that doesn't fit anymore and so, we need to talk and...uh what's the word?...VOICE! I think it's

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only through telling these personal stories that people start to realize it's not that simple.

[audio-recorded interview, transcribed.]

APPENDIX A. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR JAPANESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Background Qs　バックグラウンド

1. Age (or age group)
2. Gender
    Female, male, other
3. Your citizenship(s)
4. Racial (ethnic) background
5. Academic year and your current occupation
6. Department and major
7. In which area is your university located?
    i.e. Hokkaido/Tohoku, Kanto, Chubu, Kinki, Chugoku/Shikoku, Kyushu/Okinawa, other
8. Your university characteristics
    i.e. National/public/private, junior college/four-year university/graduate school, liberal arts/sciences/mixed/other, women's/coed/other, 5000+students/2000-5000 students/2000 students or less/I don't know
9. Your relationship status
    i.e. Commitment-free, dating, married, married with child(ren), single parent, wish to remain unanswered, other
10. What is your first language(s)?
    i.e. Japanese, English, other (indicate)
11. Your religious orientation
    i.e. None, Buddhist, Shintoist, Christian, Muslim, other
12. Have you <u>traveled</u> to a foreign country for leisure? If so, where and how long?
13. Have you <u>lived</u> in a foreign country? If so, where and how long?
14. Have you <u>studied</u> in a foreign country? If so, where and how long?
15. Have you <u>worked</u> in a foreign country? If so, where and how long?
16. If any, which country do you wish was your mother country and why?

1. 年齢（または年齢層）
2. 性別を教えてください。
    女性、男性、その他
3. 国籍
4. 人種（民族）を教えてください。
5. 学年および現在の職業
6. 所属学部と専攻（卒業された方は所属していた学部と専攻）
7. あなたの大学のロケーション（北海道・東北、関東、中部、近畿、中国・四国、九州・沖縄、その他）
8. 大学の特色（国立・公立・私立、短大・四年制・大学院・他、文系・理系・総合・他、女子大・共学・他、5000人以上・2000－5000人・2000人以下・分からない）
9. 配偶者の有無などを教えてください。
    フリー、交際中、既婚、既婚（子どもがいる）、ひとり親、無回答希望、その他
10. 母語（第一言語）は何語ですか？
    日本語、英語、その他
11. 信仰している宗教があれば教えてください。
    なし、仏教、神道、キリスト教、イスラム教、その他
12. 海外<u>旅行</u>の経験はありますか？　（よろしければ）国名と期間を教えて下さい。
13. 海外<u>生活</u>の経験はありますか？　（よろしければ）国名と期間を教えて下さい。
14. 海外<u>留学</u>の経験はありますか？　（よろしければ）国名と期間を教えて下さい。
15. 海外<u>就業</u>の経験はありますか？　（よろしければ）国名と期間を教えて下さい。
16. どの国に生まれたかったですか？それはなぜですか？

Questions regarding English　英語に関する質問

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word "English language"?
2. What is your opinion about the status of English as the global language?
3. How would you describe your English skills?
    i.e. First language (mother tongue), fluent, excellent, good, okay, poor, none, other
4. Why (i.e. purposes) are (were) you studying English?
5. In percentage (%) terms, how often is (was) English used in the classes you attend(ed) at your university? (Note: as a subject or a medium of instruction)
6. What kind of (or whose) English do you want to speak and why?

1. 「英語」と聞くと何を思い浮かべますか？
2. 英語は国際語だと言われていますが、どう思いますか？（理由も教えてください）
3. あなたの英語力は？
    第一言語（母語）、流暢、優、良、可、不得意、不可、その他
4. 英語を勉強している（していた）理由を教えてください。
5. 大学で受講している（していた）クラスの約何割で英語が使われていますか（いましたか）？（注：英文法など科目としての英語の授業や、英語を使って他科目を学ぶ場合などを含む）
6. どんな（または誰が話すような）英語を話したいですか？それはなぜですか？

Questions regarding *akogare* ("admiration")　憧れに関する質問

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word "*akogare*"?
2. Do you have anyone you *akogare-ru(or akogare-ta)*? Please briefly describe the person (e.g. age, sex, other characteristics). What makes him/her your *akogare*?
3. Have you ever had *akogare* towards someone's race, language, or gender? Please describe the person and the reason.
4. Why do you think some people have *akogare* towards others?
5. What makes someone more *akogare* than others?
6. For those of you who have (had) *akogare* towards someone, have you acted upon your feelings? Please briefly describe your experience.
7. Any other *akogare*-related anecdotes (of yours or other people's) you can share with me?

1. 「憧れ」と聞くと何を思い浮かべますか？
2. 憧れの人はいますか（過去でも可）？その方の年齢や性別、その他特徴などを簡単に教えてください。その方のどんなところに憧れますか？
3. 誰かの人種、言葉、性別などに憧れたことはありますか？どんな人でしたか？
4. どうして人間は他人に憧れの気持ちをもつと思いますか？
5. 一般的に、憧れられる人の特徴は何だと思いますか？
6. 憧れの人がいる（いた）方にお聞きします。その憧れの気持ちを行動に移したことはありますか？よろしければ、その時の経験を簡単に教えてください。
7. その他、憧れに関する逸話（自身または身の回りで）があれば教えてください。

Supplemental Q　その他

1. What are your dreams or future plans?
2. Please provide your contact information (e.g. your name and email address and/or social media username) if you agree to be contacted for email, text messaging, Skype, or in-person interviews.

1. 将来の夢やプランを教えてください。
2. お忙しいところ恐縮ですが、今後、email、ショートメッセージ、Skype、対面インタビューのいずれかにご協力いただける方は、連絡先（お名前とメールアドレスや Facebook、LINE など）を入力してください。どうぞよろしくお願いします！

APPENDIX B. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR JAPANESE UNIVERSITY FACULTY

Background Qs　バックグラウンド

1. Email address
2. Age
   20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s, unanswered, other
3. Gender
   Female, male, other
4. Citizenship(s)
5. Racial (ethnic) background
6. Where (which country/ies) were you mostly schooled?
7. Which country do you consider your mother country and why?
8. Your religious orientation
   i.e. None, Buddhist, Shintoist, Christian, Muslim, other
9. What is your first language(s)?
   Japanese, English, other (indicate)
10. Your relationship status
    Commitment-free, dating, married, married with child(ren), single parent, wish to remain unanswered, other
11. What is your current occupation (title)?
12. In which area do you work?
    i.e. Hokkaido/Tohoku, Kanto, Chubu, Kinki, Chugoku/Shikoku, Kyushu/Okinawa, other
13. Characteristics of the university you currently work at
    i.e. National/public/private, junior college/four-year university/graduate school, arts/sciences/mixed/other, women's/coed/other, 5000+students/2000-5000 students/2000 students or less/I don't know
14. What is your specialization (research area, etc.)?
15. Have you received any teacher training or teaching certificate? If so, please provide details.
16. How long have you taught:
    a. any subjects at any educational level <u>in Japan or elsewhere</u>?
    b. English as a subject or in English as a medium of instruction, <u>in Japan</u>?
    c. English as a subject or in English as a medium of instruction, <u>in Japanese higher education</u>?

1. メールアドレスを入力してください。
2. 年齢を教えてください。
   20～70 代、無回答希望、その他
3. 性別を教えてください。
   女性、男性、その他
4. 国籍を教えてください。
5. 人種（民族）を教えてください。
6. 主にどの国で学校教育を受けましたか？
7. 母国はどの国ですか？なぜそう思いますか？
8. 信仰している宗教があれば教えてください。
   なし、仏教、神道、キリスト教、イスラム教、その他
9. 母語（第一言語）は何語ですか？
   日本語、英語、その他
10. 配偶者の有無などを教えてください。
    フリー、交際中、既婚、既婚（子どもがいる）、ひとり親、無回答希望、その他
11. あなたの現在の職名を教えてください。
12. 職場のロケーション（北海道・東北、関東、中部、近畿、中国・四国、九州・沖縄、その他）
13. 大学の特色（国立・公立・私立、短大・四年制・大学院・他、文系・理系・総合・他、女子大・共学・他、5000 人以上・2000－5000 人・2000 人以下・分からない）
14. あなたの専門（研究分野など）は？
15. 教員養成講習の受講経験や教員免許等をお持ちの方は講習や免許のタイプを教えてください。
16. 以下の条件での教師経験は何年ですか？
    a. <u>日本国内外</u>での教師の経験（教科問わず）は何年ですか？
    b. 英語を/で（教科としてまたは教授媒介として）<u>日本</u>で教えた経験は何年ですか？
    c. 英語を/で（教科としてまたは教授媒介として）<u>日本の高等教育機関</u>で教えた経験は何年ですか？

17. Have you <u>traveled</u> to a foreign country for leisure? If so, where and how long?
18. Have you <u>lived</u> in a foreign country? If so, where and how long?
19. Have you <u>studied</u> in a foreign country? If so, where and how long?
20. Have you <u>worked</u> in a foreign country? If so, where and how long?

17. 海外旅行の経験はありますか？　（よろしければ）国名と期間を教えて下さい。
18. 海外生活の経験はありますか？　（よろしければ）国名と期間を教えて下さい。
19. 海外留学の経験はありますか？　（よろしければ）国名と期間を教えて下さい。
20. 海外就業の経験はありますか？　（よろしければ）国名と期間を教えて下さい。

Questions regarding English　英語に関する質問

1. How would you describe your English skills?
        i.e. First language (mother tongue), fluent, excellent, good, okay, poor, none, other
2. What is your opinion about the status of English as the global language?
3. What kind of (or whose) English do you want your students to speak and why?
4. What is your policy when teaching (in) English?

1. あなたの英語力は？
        第一言語（母語）、流暢、優、良、可、不得意、不可、その他
2. 英語は国際語だと言われていますが、どう思いますか？（理由も）
3. 自分の生徒にはどんな（または、誰が話すような）英語を話せるようになって欲しいですか？それはなぜですか？
4. 英語を/で（教科としてまたは教授媒介として）教える際あなたが心がけていることは何ですか？

Questions regarding *akogare* ("admiration/desire")　憧れに関する質問

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word "*akogare*"?
2. Is there anyone you admire or wish you had a relationship with? Please briefly describe the person (e.g. age, sex, other characteristics). What makes (made) him/her admirable/desirable (*akogare*)?
3. Have you ever had *akogare* towards someone's race, language, or gender? Please describe the person and the reason.
4. Why do you think some people have *akogare* towards others?
5. What makes someone more *akogare* than others?
6. Have you been admired/desired (*akogare*) by Japanese university students because of who you are racially, linguistically, gender-wise, professionally, etc.? Please describe your experience.
7. Any other *akogare*-related anecdotes (of yours or other people's) you can share with me?

1. 「憧れ」と聞くと何を思い浮かべますか？
2. 憧れの人はいますか？その方の年齢や性別、その他特徴などを簡単に教えてください。その方のどんなところに憧れますか？
3. 誰かの人種、言葉、性別などに憧れたことはありますか？どんな人でしたか？
4. どうして人間は他人に憧れの気持ちをもつと思いますか？
5. 一般的に、憧れられる人の特徴は何だと思いますか？
6. あなたの人種、言語、性別や職業などを理由に、学生から憧れられたことはありますか？その時の経験を教えてください。
7. 　その他、あなたの職場などで、憧れに関する逸話（自身または身の回りで）があれば教えてください。

Supplemental Q　その他

1. What are your dreams or future plans?　　将来の夢やプランを教えてください。

APPENDIX C. VISUAL AND TEXTUAL AIDS FOR *AKOGARE*

Examples of objects of *akogare* feelings:　憧れる気持ちの対象になるものの例

① **Person of the same or opposite sex　人（同性・異性問わず）**
e.g. My idol　私の憧れの人

(Explanation) The word *akogare* often appears in Japanese literature from classic poems to modern comic books. It is used to describe a person that someone admires and wishes to be like or as a target of one's romantic desires.
　　　　　　　　[Right: Image washed out to comply with the copyright laws.]

(Hosokawa, 1986)

② **Place　場所**
e.g. "Akogare no Hawai'i koro" [A voyage to dreamy Hawai'i]*　　　　　　憧れのハワイ航路
　　　　　　*Title of a 1948 Japanese pop song (Oka, 1948) and a 1950 black-and-white Japanese film directed by Torajiro Saito (T. Saito, 1950).

　　　　　　(Explanation) *Akogare* is also used to identify a place where one wishes to visit or live in.

　　　　　　[Left: Image washed out to comply with the copyright laws.]
(Oka, 1948)

③ **Other tangible/intangible object　その他（有形または無形）**
e.g. Dream job 憧れの職業

(Explanation) *Akogare* can be used in many other different contexts. For instance, one can refer to one's dream job by adding the word *akogare*.

Conjugations 活用形

Akogare 憧れ　(noun 名詞)

Akogare no 憧れの　(adjective 形容詞)

Akogareru 憧れる　(verb 動詞)

Research on *Akogare*-related Experiences
Within Japanese Higher Education

日本の高等教育における憧れについての調査

Are/Were you...

1. A student at <u>or</u> a recent graduate of a Japanese junior college or university?
   現在 日本の短大、大学、または大学院に通われていますか？
   または、最近 いずれかの高等教育機関を卒業されましたか？

2. Born, raised, and schooled in Japan?
   生まれ育ちは日本で、日本の義務教育を受けられましたか？

3. Over 18 years old?
   １８歳以上ですか？

4. A speaker of Japanese language (first language/mother tongue)?
   あなたの第一言語（または母語）は日本語ですか？

5. A learner of English language (on your own, as a major, etc.)?
   英語を勉強中ですか？（自主的に学習されている場合や、専攻として勉強されている場合なども含みます）

If you answered YES to all, please consider participating in my study!
すべて YES の方、調査にご協力いただけませんか？

The main objective of this study is to collect narratives of *akogare*-related experiences of Japanese university students and their faculties. Through this study, I hope to canvass multiple realities within the complex and changing landscape of Japanese higher education today.

現在、日本の高等教育における憧れの影響について調査しています。みなさんの経験についてお話を伺うことで、日本の高等教育の現状をよりよく理解することが可能となり、教育内容や方法の改善につながります。ぜひご協力くださいますよう よろしくお願い申し上げます。

1) Online questionnaire (approx.20 minutes to complete, anonymous answers are welcome!)
   https://docs.google.com/forms/d/15PEa63Xbq1XNC1Q9bOo9Ce2lCwRRsR9LNvd3T6jJJMU/viewform?usp=send_form （リンク）

   ① オンラインアンケート(所要時間・約 20 分、匿名の回答も歓迎いたします！)

2) Follow-up communication via email, Skype, text messaging, and/or in person
   ②（同意いただける方は引き続き）email, Skype, ショートメッセージまたは対面で、
   上記アンケートに回答いただいた内容について詳しくお話をお聞かせください。

☆ To learn more about the study, please email Chisato at nonakach@hawaii.edu ☆
ご質問のある方は研究者・野中ちさと（nonakach@hawaii.edu）までご連絡ください。
どうぞよろしくお願いいたします！

UH IRB Approval Date 2-26-15

Research on *Akogare*-related Experiences
Within Japanese Higher Education
日本の高等教育における憧れについての調査

Are you...

1. **Currently working at a junior college or university in Japan?**
現在 日本の短大、大学、または大学院でお仕事をされていますか？
2. **Teaching English or other subject(s) in English?**
or working in an environment where English is used?
英語の講義（教科として、または教授媒介として）を担当されていますか？
または、職場で英語を使用することがありますか？

If you answered **YES to both**, please consider participating in my study!
両方が YES の方、調査にご協力いただけませんか？

The main objective of this study is to collect narratives of *akogare*-related experiences of Japanese university students and their faculties. Through this study, I hope to canvass multiple realities within the complex and changing landscape of Japanese higher education today.

現在、日本の高等教育における憧れの影響について調査しています。みなさんの経験についてお話を伺うことで、日本の高等教育の現状をよりよく理解することが可能となり、教育内容や方法の改善につながります。ぜひご協力くださいますよう よろしくお願い申し上げます。

1) **Online questionnaire (approx.20 minutes to complete, anonymous answers are welcome!)**
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1noCIMkii83g1L69GPQBvKbBl8yGdeHvNNl1MRl2l1s4/viewform?usp=send_form （リンク）
① オンラインアンケート(所要時間・約 20 分、匿名の回答も歓迎いたします！)

2) **(If agreed) Follow-up communication via email, Skype, text messaging, and/or in person**
②(同意いただける方は引き続き) email, Skype, ショートメッセージまたは対面で、
上記アンケートに回答いただいた内容について詳しくお話をお聞かせください。

☆ To learn more about the study, please email Chisato at nonakach@hawaii.edu ☆
ご質問のある方は研究者・野中ちさと（nonakach@hawaii.edu）までご連絡ください。
どうぞよろしくお願いいたします！

UH IRB Approval Date 2-26-15

APPENDIX F. QUESTIONNAIRE/INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS (FACULTY: M=35, F=22)

Identifier	Age	Gender	Citizenship(s)	I am…	First language(s)
F1	unanswered	m	Singapore	Chinese	English, Chinese, Chinese dialects
F2	30s	m	Japan	Mongolian	Japanese
F3	30s	m	[in Africa]	Caucasian	[an Afro-asiatic language]
F4	40s	m	U.S.	Caucasian	English
F5	50s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F6	40s	m	U.K.	Caucasian	English
F7	30s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F8	40s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F9	40s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F10	50s	m	Germany	Caucasian	German
F11	40s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F12	50s	m	Germany	Caucasian	German
F13	40s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F14	30s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F15	40s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F16	30s	m	U.S.	Caucasian	English
F17	40s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F18	50s	m	U.S.	Caucasian	English
F19	40s	m	U.S./ [in Europe]	Caucasian	English
F20	60s	m	U.S.	Caucasian	English
F21	40s	m	U.S.	Caucasian	English
F22	30s	m	[in Africa]	African	French
F23	30s	f	Spain	Caucasian	Spanish
F24	unanswered	f	U.S.	Caucasian	English
F25	60s	m	U.S.	Caucasian	English
F26	50s	m	U.S.	Caucasian	English
F27	60s	f	U.S.	Caucasian	English
F28	40s	m	Canada/U.S.	Caucasian	English
F29	30s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F30	40s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F31	40s	f	Brazil	Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	Portuguese
F32	60s	m	U.K.	Caucasian	English
F33	40s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese

Identifier	Age	Gender	Citizenship(s)	I am…	First language(s)
F34	30s	f	U.S.	Japanese, Caucasian	English
F35	40s	f	[in Europe]	Caucasian	German-English bilingual
F36	60s	f	U.S.	Japanese	English
F37	50s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F38	30s	m	Canada	Caucasian	English
F39	40s	f	[in Europe]	Caucasian	[an Eastern European language]
F40 (=S34)	30s	m	[in Africa]	African	English, [a Niger-Congo language]
F41	40s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F42	30s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F43	60s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F44	40s	m	U.S.	Caucasian	English
F45	40s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F46	50s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F47	50s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F48	30s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
F49	20s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
FF1	30s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
FF2	30s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
FF3	50s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
FF4	20s	f	U.S.	Japanese	English
FF5	40s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
FF6	30s	f	Japan	Japanese	Japanese
FF7	30s	m	Canada	Caucasian	French
FF8	50s	m	Japan	Japanese	Japanese

APPENDIX G. QUESTIONNAIRE/INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS (STUDENTS: M=30, F=45)

Identifier	Age	Gender	Citizenship(s)	I am...	Academic year	Major	First language(s)
S1	22	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S2	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Clinical Psychology	Japanese
S3	20	m	Japan	Japanese	U3	Clinical Psychology	Japanese
S4	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S5	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Education	Japanese
S6	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Education	Japanese
S7	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Education	Japanese
S8	21	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S9	22	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S10	22	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S11	22	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S12	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Clinical Psychology	Japanese
S13	22	f	Japan	Japanese	U	Education	Japanese
S14	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Education	Japanese
S15	20	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Clinical Psychology	Japanese
S16	21	f	Japan	Japanese, Korean	U3	Education	Japanese
S17	22	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Clinical Psychology	Japanese
S18	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Clinical Psychology	Japanese
S19	23	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S20	20	m	Japan	Japanese	U2	Clinical Psychology	Japanese
S21	23	m	Japan	Japanese	M/D	Agriculture	Japanese
S22	23	m	Japan	Japanese	M1	Agriculture	Japanese
S23	23	m	Japan	Japanese	M1	Agriculture	Japanese
S24	22	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Agriculture	Japanese
S25	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U	British Literature	Japanese
S26	23	f	Japan	Japanese	U	Agriculture	Japanese
S27	23	f	Japan	Japanese	unanswered	Economics	Japanese
S28	22	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Agriculture	Japanese
S29	20	m	Japan	Japanese	U2	Education	Japanese
S30	20	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Economics	Japanese

Identifier	Age	Gender	Citizenship(s)	I am…	Academic year	Major	First language(s)
S31	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	English Literature	Japanese
S32	22	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Agriculture	Japanese
S33	21	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Agriculture	Japanese
S34=>F40							
S35	30	m	Japan	Japanese	D3	Asian/ African Area Studies	Japanese
S36	26	m	Japan	Japanese	D2	Asian/ African Area Studies	Japanese
S37	31	f	Japan	Japanese	M2	Asian/ African Area Studies	Japanese
S38	28	f	Japan	Japanese	M/D	Second Language Studies	Japanese
S39	24	f	Japan	Chinese, Japanese, Korean	M2	Agriculture	Japanese
S40	22	m	Japan	Japanese, Vietnamese	M1	Agriculture	Japanese
S41	32	m	Korea	Korean	D3	Agriculture	English
S42	27	m	Japan	Japanese	M2	Agriculture	Japanese
S43	21	m	Japan	African, Asian Indian, Caucasian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese	U4	Agriculture	Japanese
S44	22	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Agriculture	Japanese
S45	22	m	Japan	Japanese	M1	Agriculture	Japanese
S46	22	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Agriculture	Japanese
S47	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Foreign Languages	Japanese
S48	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Foreign Languages	Japanese
S49	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U	Foreign Languages	Japanese
S50	22	m	Japan	Japanese	U	Foreign Languages	Japanese

Identifier	Age	Gender	Citizenship(s)	I am…	Academic year	Major	First language(s)
S51	22	f	Japan	Asian Indian, Japanese	U4	International Studies	Japanese
S52	19	f	Japan	Japanese	U2	English	Japanese
S53	21	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	International Studies	Japanese
S54	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S55	18	f	Japan	Japanese	U1	Education	Japanese
S56	19	f	Japan	Japanese	U2	Education	Japanese
S57	20	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Education	Japanese
S58	22	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S59	21	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S60	18	m	Japan	Japanese	U1	Education	Japanese
S61	21	m	Japan	Japanese	U2	Education	Japanese
S62	19	f	Japan	Japanese	U1	Education	Japanese
S63	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U3	Education	Japanese
S64	21	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S65	18	m	Japan	Japanese	U1	Education	Japanese
S66	23	f	Japan	Japanese	U	Education	Japanese
S67	22	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
S68	19	f	Japan	Japanese	U	Education	Japanese
SS1	20s	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Clinical Psychology	Japanese
SS2	20s	f	Japan	Japanese	U4	Education	Japanese
SS3	20s	f	Japan	Japanese	Graduated	unanswered	Japanese
SS4	20s	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Clinical Psychology	Japanese
SS5	20s	m	Japan	Japanese	U4	Clinical Psychology	Japanese
SS6	20s	f	China	Chinese	U4	unanswered	Chinese
SS7	20s	f	Taiwan	Chinese	U4	unanswered	Chinese
SS8	20s	m	Taiwan	Chinese	U4	unanswered	Chinese

APPENDIX H. THE STUDENTS' CHOICE OF IDEAL MOTHER COUNTRY (AND THEIR REASONING) AND OVERSEAS EXPERIENCES

Ideal mother country - reason \ Overseas experience	none (N=10)	<1 mon.(travel/short study) (N=25)	<3 mon.(travel/short study) (N=18)	<6 mon.(travel/short study) (N=4)	studied/worked (N=10)
Any	0	1 (4.0)	1 (5.6)	0	1 (10.0)
Australia - been there	0	0	1 (5.6)	0	0
Australia - nature	0	1 (4.0)	0	0	0
Canada - less stressful	0	0	0	1 (25.0)	0
Canada - nature	0	0	1 (5.6)	0	0
English - speaking countries	1 (10.0)	3 (12.0)	0	0	0
Germany - soccer	1 (10.0)	0	0	0	0
Italy - fashionable	0	1 (4.0)	0	0	0
Japan - culture/food	1 (10.0)	2 (8.0)	2 (11.1)	1 (25.0)	1 (10.0)
Japan - n/a	4 (40.0)	1 (4.0)	2 (11.1)	0	1 (10.0)
Japan - proud	0	0	0	2 (50.0)	1 (10.0)
Japan - safe/peaceful	1 (10.0)	3 (12.0)	2 (11.1)	0	1 (10.0)
Japan - satisfied	0	5 (20.0)	1 (5.6)	0	0
Korea - comfortable	0	0	0	0	1 (10.0)
Netherlands - diversity/education/lifestyle	0	0	0	0	1 (10.0)
Nordic countries - nature/education/social welfare	0	1 (4.0)	1 (5.6)	0	0
Russia/Europe - handsome/beautiful	0	1 (4.0)	0	0	0
Spain - multilingual	0	0	0	0	1 (10.0)
Sweden - social welfare	1 (10.0)	0	0	0	0
Switzerland - nature	0	1 (4.0)	0	0	0
U.K. - been there	0	0	0	0	1 (10.0)
U.K. - Caucasian	0	1 (4.0)	0	0	0
U.S.A. - English	0	1 (4.0)	0	0	1 (10.0)
U.S.A. - been there	0	0	1 (5.6)	0	0

Ideal mother country - reason \ Overseas experience	none (N=10)	<1 mon.(travel/short study) (N=25)	<3 mon.(travel/short study) (N=18)	<6 mon.(travel/short study) (N=4)	studied/worked (N=10)
U.S.A. - free/bold/friendly	1 (10.0)	0	2 (11.1)	0	0
the West - fashionable/attractive	0	1 (4.0)	0	0	0
undefined	0	2 (8.0)	4 (22.2)	0	0
Total (%)	**10 (14.9%)**	**25 (37.3%)**	**18 (26.9%)**	**4 (6.0%)**	**10 (14.9%)**

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APPENDIX I. THE FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS' (STUDENTS) RESPONSES TO

THE MIYAMOTO CASE/ JAPANESENESS IDEALS AND OVERSEAS EXPERIENCES

Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon. (travel/short study)	studied/worked
On Ariana Miyamoto		I never thought I have a bias against people's ethnicity or race but when I saw the picture of Ms. Miyamoto [provided by Chisato], I felt a sense of discomfort. To be honest, I felt she doesn't look typical Japanese. Yet, I do feel it's wrong to prejudge people's identity [ethnicity, nationality, etc.] by their look. Until I saw her picture, I thought it's okay, but after seeing her, I'm not sure. But she's Japanese national and speaks Japanese as her first language, so it might be acceptable. I do have discomfort though seeing her as the representative of Japan though. I don't think being hafu makes her non-Japanese. When I was student teaching, there were some hafu children and they weren't treated any differently by their peers. For example, a hafu student with a Russian mother and a Japanese father would have a mobile phone and the mom was constantly checking on her making sure she's going to the cram school right after the regular school etc. In that sense, the Russian mom was no different from other Japanese moms. There have been famous "hafu" entertainers and they have something different from other "pure" Japanese. They (Hafu ppl) are setting new and positive standards. Foreign and half (and others) make up the new Japan. I do believe that being at least part foreign is an advantage while having Japanese blood too. If born and raised in Japan, you're Japanese. We may need to clarify if Miss Universe Japan is a contest to compete for beauty in Japan or of the Japanese. I understand different sides (for and against). But I don't agree with those who say Ms. Miyamoto isn't Japanese just because her look doesn't sit well with the tradition or with the image of Japan.	I don't think one's heritage should determine who they are nationality or ethnicity-wise. It's contradictory that some Japanese people argue that the Miss Universe Japan should look like Japanese because she'll be representing the nation because how the contestants are judged is based on the standards of "Western" physique such as having long legs, wide eyes, being tall, etc. Aren't Japanese women traditionally short and having less distinctive eyes, etc.? Even though she's hafu, she grew up in Japan so she understands the culture and can make a good advocate for our culture. What's important is the inner identity than the outside. It's a positive phenomenon that this hafu lady won the contest. Because I believe Japan is more and more		I don't think she should represent Japan. When I studied in the U.S., I had blonde hair so lots of Americans asked me "aren't you Japanese? Why don't you have dark hair?" (At the time of interview, she had dark hair so I asked why and she said because she's looking for a job so she can't be fooling around.) Japanese girls are pale and have slanted eyes and that's all they knew. What I learned the most during my year-long stay in the U.S. mainland was about my own country, how it's perceived by others. I got to like Japan better while I grew disappointed with the U.S. (laugh) Anyways, as long as Miss Universe Japan represents Japan, she should respect the tradition although I do believe being a hafu and representing the nation may be acceptable now.

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Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon. (travel/short study)	studied/worked
		(Looking at the photo of Ms. Miyamoto), she doesn't have the imagined Japanese look. But if she wants to compete as a Japanese, I think we need to respect her decision. (Looking at the photo), she doesn't have the look of nadeshiko. Her beauty is not of the Japanese standards, perhaps of the Western standards.	diversified and the traditional Japanese culture is no longer just a culture of its own, but a mix of European or American cultures, this incident symbolizes the current Japan. Miss Miyamoto may have lost her identity or unable to find her own place if we persist in the purity of the so-called Japanese.		

Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon. (travel/short study)	studied/worked
Other comments		If I had a hafu child and she/he wanted to run for Miss/Mister Universe Japan, I'd support her/him. I'm not sure what to do if I had a hafu child and she/he wanted to run for Miss/Mister Universe Japan. If I had a hafu child, I want to teach him/her to respect and appreciate both Japaneseness and foreignness. If I had a hafu child and she/he wanted to run for Miss/Mister Universe Japan, I'd more or less support her/him. Japan is an island nation and we used to have only Japanese faces but we shouldn't be saying that any longer. For example, when I visited Hawaii, I met black people, white people, and Asian people but they all were people of Hawaii in a broad sense. That's how Japan should think now. Yet, in terms of granting suffrage to foreign nationals (as it's been in discussion for a while now) we need to be careful. There are a lot of deeply-seated ideas we hold but those only surface when interacting with others, particularly those who are different from us.	After I traveled to Hawai'i, I began to think what Japaneseness really is. It seems to me that Japan has a strong sense of sameness and how people should behave etc., but in Hawai'i, I felt being different is what makes the people of Hawai'i, "Hawaiian" [not by blood necessarily]. It's natural for the people of Hawaii to be different from each other. Diversity defines Hawaii while sameness defines Japan, I felt. Schools in Japan for example also run by a certain set of rules and want to function as a school, not necessarily as each classroom. It's somewhat wholistic and promotes equality rather than individualism or competitiveness. There was a prevalent concept called Kingdom of Classroom" in the past which meant a competition between different classrooms and they solely focused on being better than others. But, as this idea is outdated (as taught in teacher education programs in Japan today), we need to focus on providing equal opportunities		If I had a hafu child and she/he wanted to run for Miss/Mister Universe Japan, I'd tell her/him to give up. She/he is just different and that's the reality. Japanese girls are like brand items in foreign countries. I think we're more popular than other Asian girls. Having a Japanese girlfriend or wife is a status. In Saudi Arabia, Japan is the most respected foreign country and they think the Japanese is intelligent etc. (Asked why then Japanese boys are less popular among foreign ladies), it may be because Japanese girls look young and petite so they are cute. But when the guys are small, it's just childish. Interestingly, the obsession with the West isn't so universal in Taiwan or China, I think it's a Japanese specific tendency. Somehow, Japan like the image of the West, its culture and food.

Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon. (travel/short study)	studied/worked
			for everyone rather than on promoting competition. If I had a hafu child, I'd respect and foster my child's preferred identity. If she says she's Japanese, I'd respect that. If others treat her differently and say she's not Japanese, I think it's partially true because they're mostly concerned with the blood. There are different ways of defining someone as Japanese: one is by blood the other is by the origin (born/raised). Different generations have different understanding of who is/isn't Japanese. Perhaps older generations are more concerned about blood, but younger one may be more aware of other aspects such as origin as part of what makes someone Japanese or not.		Of course, Taiwanese or Chinese students study English too but they don't hold strong akogare towards the West as do Japanese people.

Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon. (travel/short study)	studied/worked
What makes someone more Japanese/non-Japanese?	Being collective may be what makes people Japanese, but not their blood or their faces. It's more of a trait that's shared by many in Japan. Being respectful and polite. I was surprised to see Asian Americans because that's not who Japanese media illustrate as Americans. I have an image of American being black or white. Specifically, a tall white person with blonde and blue eyes may be the typical American image. Even if someone is of Hafu+Hafu, what makes someone Japanese/non-Japanese is ultimately the Environment+Nationality, I think. My image of foreigners is being light-hearted, saying "Hi" to everyone. Being Japanese is to fit in with others and not to stand out. I have an image of foreign people being good at expressing themselves. Also, they appear open and have own opinions and believe in them. (When asked who are those foreign population), those who are on dramas and movies, most of which are of American. I have akogare towards elder students and teachers because they accept everything they hear from others without being judgmental. It's the core of clinical psychology I think. What makes someone Japanese...when I see people not wasting food or maintaining clean places, I find them very Japanese. For example, when I traveled to Korea, although they have similar faces to ours, their towns looked dirty. Also, when I traveled to the U.S., I witnessed people wasting food. (When asked about the image of foreign countries), I think of the U.S. or the West as foreign countries. My [elementary school] students also name the U.S. as the foreign country. They begin learning English at elementary school so they may feel familiar with the country. I think the U.S. has taken care of us historically and it's natural for us to have akogare feelings towards them. Even though China, for example, is a neighboring country, the image of China is rather negative. That perspective is shared by my students too. They're very impressionable but not old enough to read newspapers or understand news on their own, so they tend to be influenced by their parents' opinions. That's why I'm very careful about the way I present and teach sensitive issues such as territorial issues or comfort women issues in my class.	It's up to how they perceive themselves, if they feel Japanese, they are Japanese. For example, there is this British scholar who has extensive knowledge of Japanese history and that makes him more Japanese than the so-called "Japanese" themselves. Blood shouldn't define Japaneseness, neither nationality nor ethnicity. What I found somewhat prevalent about Japan is that people in Japan have valued certain mannerism and customs. This can be seen as both positively or negatively but I believe we need to have basic rules to value so the society runs smoother. It's not about forcing people follow the rules or breaking/defying the rules but people want to value the rules and want to have care about each other. That's how it should be ideally. In that sense, comparing other societies and countries I had the chance to observe or visit, Japan is unique. Again, I'm not saying other societies don't follow basic rules or they don't share such values, but		The Japanese has a different sense of personal distance. That is, they seem to be extremely careful at "reading between the lines" in a given situation. It makes it that much harder for me to forge friendships with Japanese students because I don't have those skills. In China, I'd be able to hold casual conversations with anyone random like with a cafeteria lady on campus, but that doesn't seem to happen as often here. (I'd think you'd be somewhat popular here given that you're from a different country yet speak the language fluently and pull off the cute look very well!) No, I'm not popular. It's hard to make friends. It seems that Japanese students want to be friends with those who speak English. (Pointing at two girls from Europe) like them, who may not necessarily from English-speaking countries but look like they speak English. Japanese

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Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon. (travel/short study)	studied/worked
		Blood line, paying taxes, understanding customs, etc. make someone more Japanese. Those who understand the "when in Rome.." can perhaps claim the nationality or citizenship. My perception of Japaneseness got lost after going to Hawai'i. I no longer have a good understanding of what makes Japanese people more Japanese. It's something that we don't know until others point out. For example, when we had the 2011 Tohoku earthquake, foreign media praised Japan for being orderly and calm. I never saw Japan in that sense, but after hearing about how Japan was perceived, then I came to realize maybe those qualities are what make Japan more "Japanese."	those qualities seem more visible in Japan. There's no right or wrong in being Japanese or non-Japanese. There are however a particular image of Japanese being studious, serious, and punctual, perhaps mostly believed by foreign populations. Also, I think these images are more to do with how the Japanese "should be" than how the Japanese "are". When I was a high school student, I was involved in a chorus club and we traveled a lot. When I stayed in Germany, I was surprised how my host families drove. They drove over 100km/hr on highway and would drive fast on narrow streets. Also, buses were not as punctual. These experiences made me more aware of different worlds outside of Japan.		students are interested in English speakers, maybe they like Westerners. Even though they may not speak English any better than myself, they have a better chance of getting a part-time work at English conversation schools for example. The culture of Kawaii [cuteness], also the people's response to the fashion trend. It changes so fast and everyone looks the same also. The culture of nomikai [drinking parties] in which people establish different relationships. Also, the politeness and professionalism here amaze me. Like, the bus driver uses a very polite language.

APPENDIX J. STUDY PARTICIPANTS' DEFINITIONS/UNDERSTANDING OF *AKOGARE*

AND THEIR OVERSEAS EXPERIENCES

Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon.(travel/short study)	studied/worked
What's "*akogare*" to you? (faculty)		英語 I don't think of people but of places that I would like to visit or visit again or things that I would like to do. Dream vacations, for example. My ancestors country, Ireland, has always been a golden land for me. 理想、夢 「憧れ」と聞くと、若い頃を思い出します。	Someone who I want to follow a way, I try to be like Akogare, But I cannot do all the time. For me, it is associated with British and American rock musicians. ときめき 金銭的に裕福な生活，正のオーラ，健康．		Becoming a better person........longing be great, etc. I am not familiar with this term but I sense some Japanese students idolize American culture a lot. I just learn this Japanese word. It comes to my mind the feeling of Japanese people to be (physically) like foreigners with big eyes/nose. I think of my daughter who wants to be like an AKB48 singer. She looks up to them, dreams about being like them. 人、考え方、ライフスタイル Nothing/no one in particular. Something that I want to have but I cannot have. 流暢な英語を自在にしゃべっている方 何かしらの人物 too idealized image. Every place

Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon.(travel/short study)	studied/worked
					and person is real, and is not a perfect idol.
					子供の名前
					Desire, wish
					夢
					希望
					I'm not a fan of it. While emulation of good models is a good thing in language, as well as a lot of other areas, idolization (or "akogare") is not really a good thing as it often leads to unrealistic hopes/expectations
					すぐに実現できないかもしれないけれども試みたいこと
					I was formerly unfamiliar with the term
					Vague trendy catchphrase that means all things to all people.
					After reading the definition, the definition is what comes to mind.
					I'd never heard of it before taking this survey! As for my feelings on it: people have been admiring the desirable qualities

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Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon.(travel/short study)	studied/worked
					in other people for all of human history. It's a natural human attribute.
					Although this is my first time to hear the word "akogare", after checking the link, I understand that it's a word that describes situation in many countries. In all countries, there are people who are taken as idols that every one would like to look like. Such persons can be in evolving various domains: music, education, activist, religion etc.
					Everybody has akogare in their mind and/or heart. It can be a dream of where to live or arrive in life, or beyond an ambition. During the life of a person, ambitions or dreams may change or added, but akogare remains for longer. If a person gets akogare, feels satisfied but with pressure to keep that akogare as much time as possible.
					This was a new word for me which I had never heard before.
					This is a new term for me.
					nothing
					Cherry blossoms and spring (I

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Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon.(travel/short study)	studied/worked
					live in Hokkaido) A house on the beach 特にありません Passion to become a man whom I think perfect and admire his/her jobs. As being the first time to hear about this word, I was initially confused and curious to know about it. I am aware of the word, but I have never felt that it is a part of my emotional repertoire. Perhaps the British are as cold as they are said to be! アイドル I guess akogare has many associations for me just based on the examples I saw. On the one hand, it can be a child's wish of becoming a pilot etc., on the other it can be a place of escape from reality. It can also probably be a deep admiration for some role model but at the same time, if generalized, it could also lead to fetishization (probably the flip side of the coin of orientalism). I have to admit that I am not familiar with this concept so this is really a very initial list of ideas

Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon.(travel/short study)	studied/worked
					that come to mind. Young women students wanting to visit New York city, wanting to have a white boyfriend, wanting to have a 'glamorous' job like flight attendant. Most eager form of a dream. Aspire, role model, mentor, life goal, admire, revere, child-like adoration Admiration, a slight fear, adoration. Something that a person would like to have or be like but is still out of reach to her. 自分のロールモデルのようなもの。自分もそうなりたいと思うもの。 hope a person who is a model of my job Longing for something. 先生・母親

Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon.(travel/short study)	studied/worked
What's "*akogare*" to you? (students)	自己実現 自分の理想像や、自分にない魅力ですかね。 Jose イチロー 将来の夢や尊敬する人物。 The image I want to be. 自分の夢 夢 自分の目指すもの。 はかない事象。	自分にとっての理想。 遠い存在手の届かない存在。 自分がそうなりたいと思う人物が頭に浮かびます。 自分にはないものをもっている人 私は小さい頃から柔道をしているのですが、何かスポーツをするときは、必ず「憧れの選手」を目標にしろと言われ続けていました。なので、私にとっての憧れは、こんな風になりたい。こうありたいと目標として掲げるイメージを持っています。 先輩 目指すもの。あるいは、目指したいけれども届かないもの。 目標よりも高いところにあるもの。 自分には手に入れれない物や存在を思い浮かべます。自分がなりたいもの、やりたいこと夢、輝き、希望 イチロー 先生 手の届かない素敵なもの 理想的な自分. 夢 先輩 かっこいい異性または年上の	理想 理想 夢 目指しているけど届かないもの うらやましい気持ち 尊敬している人や、やりたいこと 尊敬先 自分が憧れる人。 海外旅行（特に欧州）、好きな女優や俳優、本の中の世界自分がなりたいもの、存在。 理解とはもっともかけ離れた感情のこと。（某少年漫画の影響ですが..）当時、この言葉を聞いたときはあまり意味がわかりませんでしたが、昔よりも歳をとったので、なんだか妙に納得できる言葉です。憧れるだけではなにも実にならないのだと。 パフォーマー 尊敬する理想の押しつけ 海外で不自由なく生活 自分の理想。 夢に向かって頑張ってる人 将来 今すぐ手に入らないけど、目標にしたい、と思うよう	目指すべき姿。 Worship 立ち居振る舞いの綺麗な女性。 スーパースター	夢 大学教員 目標 嫉妬、羨 望憧れと聞いて思い浮かべるものは、うーん、素敵な人とか、目標？とか。でしょうか。 人, 夢 叶わない夢あるいは自分ではない者。 女優、有名な人スポーツ選手、尊敬する人 嫉妬、努力

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Overseas experience	none	<1 mon.(travel/short study)	<3 mon.(travel/short study)	<6 mon.(travel/short study)	studied/worked
		人 海外で楽しく暮らす自分！ド ラえもん！ 宇宙！ Respect. よくわからない かっこいい夢 夢 自分の理想や願望。 目標とする対象。 心惹かれる感情。 自分より多くのものをもって いるひと	な対象。 生活とか、体型とか。 目標　夢		

B

University of Hawai'i

Consent to Participate in Online Questionnaire:
オンラインアンケート参加同意書

Exploring the effects of akogare (desires) within the context of Japanese higher education
(研究テーマ)
日本の高等教育における「憧れ」の影響について

My name is Chisato NONAKA, a PhD student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, in the Educational Foundations Program. As one of my academic duties and interests, I have a plan to conduct research. The main objective of my current study is to explore the effects of *akogare* (desires) within the context of Japanese higher education.

Study Description – Activities and Time Commitment: If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to fill out an online questionnaire that includes multiple choice and open-ended questions. The online questionnaire can be accessed via a link, which will be provided at the end of this document. Completing the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes. If you wish to make additions or changes to the response(s) you have already submitted, please contact me. Please provide me with your contact information if you are willing to be contacted for clarifications and/or further involvement in my study. I expect around 150 people will take part in the questionnaire portion of this study

研究者はハワイ大学マノア校教育基礎学博士課程学生の野中ちさとです。学術目的で研究を行っています。

博士課程研究の一環で、日本の高等教育における「憧れ」の影響について調査しています。

研究詳細 - 実施方法、所要時間など：ご協力いただける場合、オンラインアンケートに回答いただきます。設問は選択式、自由記述の2種類あり、後述のリンクからアクセスしていただけます。所要時間は約20分です。回答を提出後、追加や修正を希望される場合は、研究者までご連絡ください。また、回答内容についてお問い合わせさせていただくことが可能な場合はご連絡先をお知らせください。アンケートには計150名ほどの参加を見込んでいます。

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Benefits and Risks: While there may be little benefit to you in participating in my study, the results of this study will help me and other researchers better understand the complex and possibly changing landscape of Japanese higher education which in theory will lead to improved practices for the future. I believe there is little or no risk to you in participating in this study. If, however, you are uncomfortable or stressed by answering any of the questions, you can skip the question or withdraw from the study altogether.

Confidentiality and Privacy: During this study, all data collected from you will be stored on my personal computer under encryption. Only I will have access to the data, although legally authorized agencies, including the University of Hawai'i Human Studies Program, have the right to review research records if necessary.

I will not use your name or any other personally identifying information. Instead, I will use a pseudonym (fake name) for your name and anonymize other information. If you wish, I will also provide you with my working or finalized draft(s) of this study. Please feel free to give me feedback.

The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes including public presentations and both print and electronic publications.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this study is voluntary. You can freely choose to participate or to not participate, and there will be no penalty or loss of benefits for either decision. If you agree to participate, you can stop at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

参加することによる利益と不利益：
本研究に参加することによる利益、不利益は発生しませんが、参加いただく事で、学術研究者が日本の高等教育の現状をより良く理解することが可能となり、教育内容や方法の改善につながります。
仮に、回答が困難な設問があれば、無回答とご記入いただいたり、参加を取りやめることも可能です。

個人情報とデータの取り扱い：取得したデータや個人情報は、研究目的以外には使用しません。データの保管には万全を期し、外部へは漏洩しません。なお、ハワイ大学研究倫理審査委員会など監査機関は必要に応じデータの開示要求ができます。

パーソナルデータは全て匿名化し、個人情報を守秘します。希望者には草稿や最終稿を配布いたしますので、遠慮なくご意見等お聞かせください。

尚、研究成果は学会や学術雑誌などにおいて発表する予定です。

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Questions: If you have any questions about this study, please contact me by phone at (808) 987-1798 or by email at nonakach@hawaii.edu. You can also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Phan Le Ha at halephan@hawaii.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a study participant in this study, you can contact the University of Hawai'i Human Studies Program, by phone at (808) 956-5007 or by email at uhirb@hawaii.edu.

To Access the Questionnaire: Please go to the following web page: (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/15PEa63X bq1XNC1Q9bOo9Ce2lCwRRsR9LNvd3T6j JJMU/viewform?usp=send_form). If you agree to the terms and conditions, please click "I Agree" and proceed.

Please print a copy of this page for your reference.

お問い合わせ：研究者 野中ちさと （電話：808-987-1798、email：nonakach@hawaii.edu）までご連絡ください。研究者本人以外の意見や情報を希望する場合は、担当教員 Dr. Phan Le Ha （email：halephan@hawaii.edu）へご連絡いただいても対応いたします。なお、参加者の権利等に関する質問は、ハワイ大学研究倫理審査委員会 （電話：808-956-5007、email：uhirb@hawaii.edu）へお願いします。

アンケートへのアクセス方法：下記のリンクからお願いします (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/15PEa63X bq1XNC1Q9bOo9Ce2lCwRRsR9LNvd3T6j JJMU/viewform?usp=send_form) 規約に同意いただける方は、「同意します」をクリックして、アンケートへお進みください。

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3

APPENDIX L. CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH
(QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FACULTY)

B

University of Hawai'i

Consent to Participate in Online Questionnaire:
オンラインアンケート参加同意書

Exploring the effects of akogare (desires) within the context of Japanese higher education
（研究テーマ）
日本の高等教育における「憧れ」の影響について

My name is Chisato NONAKA, a PhD student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, in the Educational Foundations Program. As one of my academic duties and interests, I have a plan to conduct research. The main objective of my current study is to explore the effects of *akogare* (desires) within the context of Japanese higher education.

Study Description – Activities and Time Commitment: If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to fill out an online questionnaire that includes multiple choice and open-ended questions. The online questionnaire can be accessed via a link, which will be provided at the end of this document. Completing the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes. If you wish to make additions or changes to the response(s) you have already submitted, please contact me. Please provide me with your contact information if you are willing to be contacted for clarifications and/or further involvement in my study. I expect around 150 people will take part in the questionnaire portion of this study

研究者はハワイ大学マノア校教育基礎学博士課程学生の野中ちさとです。学術目的で研究を行っています。

博士課程研究の一環で、日本の高等教育における「憧れ」の影響について調査しています。

研究詳細 - 実施方法、所要時間など：ご協力いただける場合、オンラインアンケートに回答いただきます。設問は選択式、自由記述の2種類あり、後述のリンクからアクセスしていただけます。所要時間は約20分です。回答を提出後、追加や修正を希望される場合は、研究者までご連絡ください。また、回答内容についてお問い合わせさせていただくことが可能な場合はご連絡先をお知らせください。アンケートには計150名ほどの参加を見込んでいます。

1

Benefits and Risks: While there may be little benefit to you in participating in my study, the results of this study will help me and other researchers better understand the complex and possibly changing landscape of Japanese higher education which in theory will lead to improved practices for the future. I believe there is little or no risk to you in participating in this study. If, however, you are uncomfortable or stressed by answering any of the questions, you can skip the question or withdraw from the study altogether.

Confidentiality and Privacy: During this study, all data collected from you will be stored on my personal computer under encryption. Only I will have access to the data, although legally authorized agencies, including the University of Hawaiʻi Human Studies Program, have the right to review research records if necessary.

I will not use your name or any other personally identifying information. Instead, I will use a pseudonym (fake name) for your name and anonymize other information. If you wish, I will also provide you with my working or finalized draft(s) of this study. Please feel free to give me feedback.

The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes including public presentations and both print and electronic publications.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this study is voluntary. You can freely choose to participate or to not participate, and there will be no penalty or loss of benefits for either decision. If you agree to participate, you can stop at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

参加することによる利益と不利益：
本研究に参加することによる利益、不利益は発生しませんが、参加いただく事で、学術研究者が日本の高等教育の現状をより良く理解することが可能となり、教育内容や方法の改善につながります。
仮に、回答が困難な設問があれば、無回答とご記入いただいたり、参加を取りやめることも可能です。

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Questions: If you have any questions about this study, please contact me by phone at (808) 987-1798 or by email at nonakach@hawaii.edu. You can also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Phan Le Ha at halephan@hawaii.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a study participant in this study, you can contact the University of Hawai'i Human Studies Program, by phone at (808) 956-5007 or by email at uhirb@hawaii.edu.

To Access the Questionnaire: Please go to the following web page: (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1noCIMkii83g1L69GPQBvKbBl8yGdeHvNNl1MRI2I1s4/viewform?usp=send_form). If you agree to the terms and conditions, please click "I Agree" and proceed.

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アンケートへのアクセス方法：下記のリンクからお願いします（https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1noCIMkii83g1L69GPQBvKbBl8yGdeHvNNl1MRI2I1s4/viewform?usp=send_form）　規約に同意いただける方は、「同意します」をクリックして、アンケートへお進みください。

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B

University of Hawai'i

Consent to Participate in Interview:
インタビュー参加同意書

Exploring the effects of akogare (desires) within the context of Japanese higher education
（研究テーマ）
日本の高等教育における「憧れ」の影響について

My name is Chisato NONAKA, a PhD student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, in the Educational Foundations Program. As one of my academic duties and interests, I have a plan to conduct research. The main objective of my current study is to explore the effects of *akogare* (desires) within the context of Japanese higher education.

研究者はハワイ大学マノア校教育基礎学博士課程学生の野中ちさとです。学術目的で研究を行っています。

博士課程研究の一環で、日本の高等教育における「憧れ」の影響について調査しています。

Study Description – Activities and Time Commitment: If you decide to take part in this study, I will interview you at least twice, via one or a combination of email, Skype, text messaging, and in person. One interview session via Skype or in person will last about 30 to 60 minutes. Please let me know your preferred venue for in-person interviews. If scheduling Skype or in-person interviews is found to be difficult, email or text messaging will be used to carry digital conversations.
I expect around 50 people will take part in the interviews.

If permitted, I will record our conversations using a digital audio recorder. I will later type a transcript – a written record of what we talked about during the interview – and analyze the information from the interview.

研究詳細 - 実施方法、所要時間など： ご協力いただける場合、email、Skype、ショートメッセージなどを介したインタビュー、または対面インタビューを数回に分けて行います。Skype または対面インタビューは1回につき約30分から60分を予定しています。対面インタビューは場所をご指定いただければお伺いいたします。Skype または対面インタビューが困難である場合、email やショートメッセージを介した会話を行います。インタビューには計50名ほどの参加を見込んでいます。

同意いただける場合のみ、インタビューを録音させていただきます。録音した会話は原稿に起こし、本研究のための情報分析に使用します。

1

I will begin the first interview session by introducing myself with a few artifacts that are personally and professionally significant to me. An artifact can be a family photo, a memorabilia from a trip, and so forth.

After I introduce myself, I would like to invite you to share your artifacts so I can get to know you better. **Please prepare your artifacts before the interview session.**

I will then ask you to elaborate on your responses to the online questionnaire and continue the conversation until clarity is obtained. The following interview session(s) will be scheduled as needed, via one or a combination of email, Skype, text messaging, and in person.

Most participants will be interviewed individually, however, if the opportunity or necessity arises and is unanimously agreed upon, a group interview may be conducted.

One example of the type of question I will ask is, "Please elaborate on your response to Question 5 on the online questionnaire."

Benefits and Risks: While there may be little benefit to you in participating in my study, the results of this study will help me and other researchers better understand the complex and possibly changing landscape of Japanese higher education which in theory will lead to improved practices for the future. I believe there is little or no risk to you in participating in this study. If, however, you are uncomfortable or stressed by answering any of the questions, you can skip the question or withdraw from the study altogether.

第1回目のインタビューは、まず研究者（野中）が自己紹介を行います。具体的には、公私両面で大切なモノ（例：家族の写真や旅のお土産）などを簡単に紹介いたします。

次に、インタビュー参加者（あなた）のお話を伺います。**前もって、あなたにとって大切なモノや写真などをご準備いただきますよう、よろしくお願いします。**

続いて、事前にご提出いただいたオンラインアンケートの回答に基づいて、質問をいたします。第2回以降のインタビューは必要に応じて、email、Skype、ショートメッセージなどを介したインタビュー、または対面インタビューを行います。

インタビューは個別に行いますが、リクエストがあればグループインタビューの調整も可能です。

インタビューの質問の一例として、「アンケートの Q5 の回答に関して、具体例を挙げてお話いただけませんか？」などとお尋ねする予定です。

参加することによる利益と不利益：本研究に参加することによる利益、不利益は発生しませんが、参加いただく事で、学術研究者が日本の高等教育の現状をより良く理解することが可能となり、教育内容や方法の改善につながります。

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Confidentiality and Privacy: During this study, all data collected from you will be stored on my personal computer under encryption. Only I will have access to the data, although legally authorized agencies, including the University of Hawai'i Human Studies Program, have the right to review research records if necessary.

Upon the completion of this study, I will destroy the audio recordings and interview notes. In my typed transcripts or any of my drafts thereafter, I will not use your name or any other personally identifying information. Instead, I will use a pseudonym (fake name) for your name and anonymize other information. If you wish, I will also provide you with my working or finalized draft(s) of this study. Please feel free to give me feedback.
The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes including public presentations and both print and electronic publications.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this study is voluntary. You can freely choose to participate or to not participate, and there will be no penalty or loss of benefits for either decision. If you agree to participate, you can stop at any time without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Questions: If you have any questions about this study, please contact me by phone at (808) 987-1798 or by email at nonakach@hawaii.edu. You can also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Phan Le Ha at halephan@hawaii.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a study participant in this study, you can contact the University of Hawai'i Human Studies Program, by phone at (808) 956-5007 or by email at uhirb@hawaii.edu.

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研究終了後、インタビュー録音やメモは速やかに破棄します。論文の原稿作成の段階で、パーソナルデータは全て匿名化し、個人情報を守秘します。希望者には草稿や最終稿を配布いたしますので、遠慮なくご意見等お聞かせください。

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なお、参加者の権利等に関する質問は、ハワイ大学研究倫理審査委員会（電話：808-956-5007、email：uhirb@hawaii.edu）へお願いします。

3

Please keep the previous pages of this consent form for your records.
If you agree to participate in this study,
please sign the following portion of this consent form and return it to me.
同意される方はご署名の上キリトリ線から下の部分を研究者にご提示ください。

Tear or cut here キリトリ線

Signature(s) for Consent:
同意される方は該当箇所にイニシャルとご署名をお願いします。

I agree to participate in the study entitled;
以下の研究への参加に同意します；
Exploring the effects of akogare (desires) within the context of Japanese higher education
日本の高等教育における「憧れ」の影響について

Please initial in the box for either "Yes" or "No" to the following:
「はい」または「いいえ」の欄にイニシャルをお願いします。

YES   NO
はい   いいえ

☐   ☐   I understand that I can change my mind about participating in this study,
at any time, by notifying the researcher.
いつでも自由に同意を取り消す事ができると了承しています。

☐   ☐   I consent to be audio recorded for the interview portion of this study.
インタビューの録音を承諾します。

Your Name (Print): _____
お名前

Your Signature: _____
サイン

Date: _____
日付

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ENDNOTES

1. Different expressions of *akogare*

2. The most well-known of all is the famous poetry book あこがれ [*akogare*] (1905) by the prolific poet, Ishikawa Takuboku (1886-1912).

3. Conjugations of *akogare*:

   akogare 憧れ (noun), *akogare no* 憧れの (adjective), *akogareru* 憧れる (verb)

4. Desire and *akogare* are interchangeably used in the existing body of literature in TESOL (e.g. Appleby, 2013; Bailey, 2002, 2007, Ieda, 1991, 1995, Kelsky, 2001a, 2001b; Kimie Takahashi, 2013). While desire may not always be the context-appropriate translation of Japanese *akogare*, the word "desire" neatly captures the pith of *akogare*. Also, by using the English term "desire," this study intends to maintain a close association with the said body of literature.

5. Most of Japan's "internationalization" policies have unquestionably incorporated English as *the* foreign language while neglecting to acknowledge other equally if not more deserving languages in Japan. In fact, there have been times when English nearly became the second official language of Japan (Hashimoto, 2002; Hatta, 2003).

6. This action plan may be treated as a motion to revisit the earlier report "The future of higher education in Japan" (MEXT, 2005), which aimed to allocate a specific and unique function to each JHE institution in the given community.

7. *Nihonjinron* [日本人論] is seen as the powerful force that drives nationalistic or ethnocentric projects in Japan. It is often referenced as an ideology that firmly supports the hegemony of Japan's perceived "homogeneity" (Befu, 2001).

8. JHE institutions include universities (four years), graduate schools (two to five years), junior colleges (two to three years), colleges of technology (five years), and specialized schools (four years).

9. Or enthusiastically called the "Supa Gurobaru [Super Global]" project in Japanese, which has been ridiculed and criticized for its amateurish naming (Kakuchi, 2014; Yanase, 2015).

10. According to the Times Higher Education list of the world's top 800 universities for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017, the *once-invincible* University of Tokyo (Japan) is no longer Asia's #1 university (Kyodo, 2015, 2016). Other Japanese universities have also continuously slipped down the rankings over recent years.

11. Appadurai's "-scapes" refer to the dimension where people, information, technology, business, economy, or ideologies are constantly in flux and continuously shaping the society and vice versa (1991, 1996). Ethnoscapes, for example, bear an idea that the migration of people takes place across the cultural, national, or political borders which continues to shape the local as well as the global landscape.

12. The "us (Japanese) – them (non-Japanese) distinction" as termed by Rivers (2010, p. 451).

13. Also, tantalizingly out of reach from him/her.

14. CanCam. (n.d.). Ikeda Elaiza: Senzoku moderu [Elaiza Ikeda: Contracted model]. Retrieved July 31, 2016, from http://cancam.tv/model/elaiza.html

15. I am referring to Bullough's (1912) "psychic distance" to indicate the distance between the self and the other. Similarly, the concept of "psychological distance" (Trope & Liberman, 2010) captures the essence.

16. I have employed a constructivist view as a major lens to collect, interpret, analyze, and report data which will be discussed in detail in the **Methodology** chapter.

17. Not to be confused with the conventional use of "I and Thou" in theological terms (e.g. Buber, 2000).

18. A person of Japanese and non-Japanese "double" heritage, often used as a better alternative for the more commonly used word: *hafu* or half

19. Approximately 3.2 million students are enrolled in over 1,200 universities and junior colleges nationwide (Higher Education Bureau, 2012; Mitsubishi Research Institute, 2011).

20. In my study, I define the term as "a version of one's reality that is constructed via narration."

21. In my study, I define the term as "a version of one's reality that is constructed via narration, chosen specifically for the particular listener at the time."
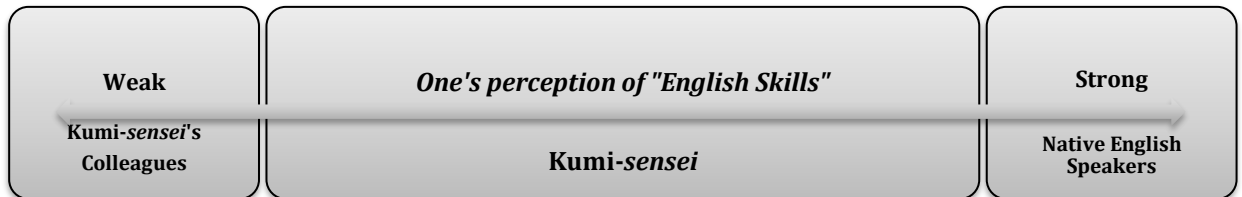
22. I use the terms *emic* and *etic* positionalities for the descriptive purposes here. Although I distinguish emic from etic views, I acknowledge that such notions are often subjective, transient, and also built on each other (no clear line between the two).

23. How an individual positions the self in relation to the desired other (i.e. the target of *akogare*) depends on how he/she perceives the world in a given time and space, and vice versa. Further, one's worldview is in constant negotiation with experiences, people, and places.

24. Such as those from informal conversations, meetings, and observations, or other non-participants whose assistance I solicited in validating English-Japanese translations.

25. Some provided their social media username without any other information (with a message like "Hey, this is me. I'm willing to help you further. I think you know my contact already ☺") or their username was set private which hindered me from figuring out who they were.

26. cf. JET Programme. (n.d.). Retrieved November 18, 2016, from http://jetprogramme.org/en

27. This phrase was used repeatedly by my study participants (mainly faculty members) to describe Ryan.

28. As confirmed by a number of foreign-born faculty members I interviewed, English-medium newspapers in Japan such as *The Japan Times* provide a wide range of "information that we normally wouldn't get through the Japanese media," as explained by F36 (f).

29. Of the eight foreign-born faculty members, two are in Science, five in Language Studies, and one in Art.

30. I ran crosstab queries to see if there are any correlations between 1) the students' choice of ideal mother country (and their reasoning) and their overall travel/study/living/working experiences overseas; 2) the face-to-face interview participants' responses to the Miyamoto case/Japaneseness ideals and their overall travel/study/living/working experiences overseas; and 3) study participants' definitions/understanding of *akogare* and their overseas experience (see **Appendices H, I, and J**).

31. The abbreviation for 'office lady,' a clerical/secretarial female worker

32. Quitting a job to marry someone and become a housewife.

33. Junior colleges have often been referred to as the "brides' school" (M. Harada, 1993, p. 9). A more nuanced description of junior colleges in Japan may be found in the ethnographic work by McVeigh (1997).

34. This action plan may be treated as a motion to revisit the earlier report, "The future of higher education in Japan" (MEXT, 2005), which proposed to allocate a specific and unique function to each JHE institution in the given community.

35. According to the website of Japan Association of Public Junior Colleges (2016) and the latest report submitted by a vice-president of Japan Association of Private Junior Colleges (Aso, 2016), approximately two thirds of junior colleges in Japan are affiliated with a four-year university (and graduate school).

36. See the basic school statistics (MEXT, 2016) for more details.

37. Since the introduction of the infamous policy of "Japanese with English abilities" (MEXT, 2003), communicative language teaching (CLT) has attracted attention of English language educators in Japan. Similar to how internationalization can be understood as *Englishization* of JHE, leading a successful career is often equated with being international—equipped with English skills (T. Yoshida, Yashiro, & Suzuki, 2013).

38. Among 341 junior colleges in Japan, at least 44* are recognized as those that embrace Christian values. *calculated based on the numbers reported by three major associations for Christian schools in Japan ("Association of Christian Schools in Japan," n.d., "Japan Federation of Catholic Schools," n.d., "NSKK School Network," 2014).

39. Japan has Working Holiday Agreements with 16 countries that can issue a special visa for Japanese young adults (i.e. 18 to 30 years old) to study, work, or simply live in a selected country ("Japan Association for Working Holiday Makers," n.d., "The working holiday programmes in Japan," n.d.).

40. I took into account their responses to online questionnaire and interview questions such as: What comes to your mind when you hear the word "English language"?; What is your opinion about the status of English as the global language?; Why are you studying English?; What kind of English do you want to speak and why?; What are your dreams or future plans? etc. (see **Appendices A and B**)

41. Often synonymous with "white" in Japanese TESOL contexts (cf. Nagatomo, 2016).

42. A detailed account of gender disparity and "Western masculinity" in JHE can be found in Appleby's work (e.g. 2014a, 2014b).

43. cf. OECD. (2014). *Education at a glance 2014: OECD indicators*. OECD. Retrieved from http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag.htm

    OECD. (2015). *Education at a glance 2015: OECD indicators*. OECD. Retrieved from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2015_eag-2015-en

    OECD. (2016). *Education at a glance 2016: OECD indicators*. OECD. Retrieved from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance_19991487

44. JHE institutions can be categorized into three different groups: national, public (regional), and private. Out of the 777 JHE institutions today, 86 are national, 91 public (regional) and 600 private (MEXT, 2016).

45. The total number of applications was 109 and 34 of them have been approved for funding ("Selection for the FY2014 Top Global University Project," 2014).

46. Grants-in-aid for scientific research. (n.d.). Retrieved November 16, 2016, from http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-grants/index.html

47. See page 3 of the press release (MEXT, 2014).

48. A joint request for the increase of public funding allocated to JHE institutions was made to the Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications in December 2015 (Satomi, Kiyohara, & Seike, 2015) by President Satomi, the Association of National Universities (also the President of Tohoku University); President Kiyohara, the Association of Public Universities (also the President of University of Hyogo); and the former President Seike, the Federation of Japanese Private Colleges and Universities Associations (also the President of Keio University).

49. Short for **A**ssistant **L**anguage **T**eacher. It is one of the most common English teaching positions available for foreign teachers. They are expected to "assist with classes taught by Japanese Teachers of English" ("JET Positions," n.d.), mainly to help improve students' listening and speaking skills than their reading or writing skills. There have been questions regarding whether ALTs in Japan are being treated as a perfunctory figure

to generate *an image of internationalization* (cf. Bueno & Caesar, 2003; Hashimoto, 2011; Kubota, 2002; Rivers & Houghton, 2013).

50. As far as Japan's academic career-based society [*gakureki shakai*] goes, these students are considered to be on the "elite" track and graduates have better chances of "achieving high-level positions in government and business" (Backhaus, 2014; Cutts (1997) & Kerbo and McKinstry (1995) in Breaden, 2012, p. 26).

51. Many scholars have discussed the dissonance between what the government *claims* English can offer and what English actually offers in today's Japan (Hashimoto, 2009; Kubota, 2011b; Seargeant, 2008).

52. Kumi-*sensei*'s colleagues or even her supervisors often comment on her (superb) English skills by using Japanese words such as: *urayamashii*; *ii desu ne*; *iina*, all of which indicate a sentiment of *akogare* towards someone who has "enviable" qualities.

53. A sample of spectrum of *akogare* towards English skills may look like this:

Weak	*One's perception of "English Skills"*	Strong
Kumi-*sensei*'s Colleagues	**Kumi-*sensei***	Native English Speakers

Note: It is important to clarify that this is just a grossly simplified layer of *akogare*. In reality, there are other layers of the desiring self and the desired other at work to harness a particular *akogare* which may be ephemeral, intermittent, or consistent. Also, it may be articulated quite differently depending on the context and people involved.

54. Kanatani (2008) deciphers Japan's *overheated* passion for English education today. He draws attention to the current practices and policies, national character, *akogare*, business aspects, etc. to dismiss some of the common misconceptions about English education.

55. Several historical JHE institutions have recently been shut down as a result of the nationwide campaign of systematic restructure (K. Harada, 2015; Kida, 2012). Although this "bankruptcy" of JHE institutions had been more common among smaller-scale private universities (particularly located in rural areas, with the frightening "2018

problem"* in sight, most JHE institutions regardless of their location, type, or academic standing are facing financial difficulties today.

*The 2018 problem = the year 2018 is expected to be the beginning of the era when the number of college-age Japanese drops hence many JHE institutions are expected to undergo bankruptcy.

56. Extensive discussions on the effects of English as a dominant language of *science* can be found in the edited book by Ammon (2001).

57. The survey results in the recent five years have indicated that the average high school students' English proficiency is extremely low despite the years of compulsory English education in Japan (e.g. MEXT, 2011). While the proficiency test used in such surveys may only reveal one aspect of the students' English proficiency, many of the students also expressed their disinterest and phobia about English. This phobia is often carried over to the higher education sector (also evident in the narratives by Kumi-*sensei* and Lucas-*sensei*).

58. Scholars have increasingly examined the new generation of "herbivore," "lax," and "enlightened" youth in Japan (Morioka, 2013). Such youth are identified as being so complacent with their life to the degree that they believe they are living in "paradise" (Kaifu, 2008).

59. The significance of "desire" as an alternative framework to the otherwise prevalent "deficit model" in the current research trend is elaborated by Eve Tuck (2009).

60. This discourse of "engage with *kokusaika* or perish" is widely used in Japanese politics, business, and other social arenas. It is partly because the word *kokusaika* was originally "highly charged [with] political-economic" (Oliver, 2009, p. 52) motivation.

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