

**GAKUNEN: TEACHER PRACTICES AT A PRIVATE JAPANESE HIGH
SCHOOL IN THE EARLY 21st CENTURY**

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ABSTRACT

This three-year study is an ethnography of communication of a private high school in Japan. The purpose of this study is to investigate how teachers at this private high school understand their environment in the context of changes in Japanese education and even larger changes in Japanese society. These changes include a decreasing population in Japan, shifting university admission policies, and changes to teacher licensing regulations. Methods of data collection include participant observations, interviews, artifact collection, and focus groups. Although the focus is on teachers, students and informants outside of the school are included in order to provide a fuller picture of the context in which the study is conducted. These data are viewed through the lens of Communities of Practice developed by Etienne Wenger and also through the Ethnography of Communication framework. The intended audience for this study includes people interested in cross-cultural studies, Japanese studies, educators teaching in or studying secondary education outside of Japan, teacher trainers, and western educators working in Japan as well as Japanese educators. The findings suggest that changes in student population numbers, university entrance requirements, and licensing procedures have all placed new demands upon teachers. Japan's decreasing population places greater requirements upon teachers in private high schools to help with student recruitment, and one way to do this is by supporting efforts to brand the school name. In addition, shifting admission policies have placed an emphasis on the connection between high schools and their associated universities. Schools actively work to protect this relationship by introducing new elements to the curriculum in an attempt to better prepare

students for the university experience. Finally, changes to teacher licensing regulations have introduced teacher training to private high schools as well as new members to the central community of practice in the school, the *gakunen*, or the group of teachers and students assigned to a year grade. The response to these new members has varied both among the newcomers and the teachers who were licensed before the changes were introduced. Further data collection and analysis reveal how other societal trends shape the local practices of teachers, and how the teachers in the *gakunen* community of practice work at times together, and at times to resolve conflicts with each other, students, and parents as they confront demands being placed on educators in Japan in the 21st century.

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To Mai, Brady, and Risako.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Teachers in private schools can take care of problems that cannot be taken care of in public school.”

-Statement by a Jogo High School teacher at an open house

“育つ (*sodatsu*) to grow up; be brought up.”

(Nakao, 1995, p. 219)

The Principal's Office

The hallway felt cold as I stood and waited. I could see inside the principal's office as his door had been left open just a few inches—enough for the perpetual orbit of teachers and staff to see that someone was already speaking with him. The office looked warm. It was a rectangular room, with the principal's desk facing the door from the far side. Filling the space directly behind the desk were large windows, through which the room was bathed with light from the rising sun. In front of the desk were two rows of comfortable chairs both facing a small rectangular coffee table that seemed to extend from the desk. The two rows of chairs formed a channel running from the desk to the door. They reminded me of chairs from an old movie on the Roman Empire. The back and arm rests were of equal height and a person would experience sitting in rather than on one of these chairs. Even though the chairs appeared quite comfortable, few were entitled to actually settle in them. In situations such as a formal student interview, the assistant principal would recline into the chair. However, others, such as a homeroom teacher,

would typically sit on the front edge. In meetings, the principal would come out from behind his desk and gesture for the person to sit opposite him as he sat back into a chair.

He was charismatic, a very good speaker. He had also recruited me for my current position via his connections with another school I had visited after returning to Japan. Having completed a Master's degree in Secondary Education in Boston as well as Master's degree in Regional Studies East Asia, I felt prepared for my full-time position at Jogo High School.¹ I had finished a year as a student teacher, received my Massachusetts High School Teaching Certification, and had worked for a year full-time in a public high school in Massachusetts. I had felt prepared, yet one year into the position here I was standing outside of the principal's office with concerns about the focus of my work. Sitting on several committees, teaching a full course load, and coaching school sports both after school and on weekends was extremely time consuming. There were some months with no days off. Work finished at 6, 7, or 8 o'clock, resulting in 60-70 hour weeks. This constant busyness had taken a toll on the quality of my classes. Despite the large number of teacher meetings and the numerous topics covered in these meetings, teaching—at least teaching as I understood it from my studies at Boston College—was not considered a relevant point of discussion. I was visiting his office to ask the principal what my priority should be. The large number of hours did not seem linked to any improvement in the quality of instruction in the school.

¹ All names referring to people or places in Japan in this study are pseudonyms unless otherwise stated.

Interrupting my thoughts, the door opened and the person leaving the room turned back towards the principal, bowed and exited. I stepped in, saying good morning in Japanese with the requisite bow. The room was as warm as it had looked from the hallway. Greeted with a smile, I moved into the room and sank into the chair opposite the principal in an attempt to show this visit was different. I explained my concerns: Should I focus on my teaching or on other more school-wide activities? Given the current work environment, how much change was possible? He seemed to listen carefully and then with a warm confirming manner he answered “子供を育ててください (*Kodomo o sodatete kudasai* ²).” As I left his office, I repeated his encouraging, “raise the kids,” now puzzled with more questions. In the following section I describe my personal motivation and how I ended up in the principal’s office.

Personal Motivation for the Study

The impetus for this study originated from personal questions that I had regarding how to “raise children” in the context of a private Japanese high school, and how to do so in an environment where, from my perspective as a recent graduate, there was very little dialog between teaching professionals about how to teach. As the study evolved into an ethnography on how teachers in a private school in Japan make sense of their practices, however; I began to realize that their local practices are influenced by macro-trends affecting not only the Japanese educational system, but also other elements of Japanese society. These trends include population changes, shifting college admission policies, and

² I use the Hepburn system for Japanese words written in Latin characters.

new licensing regulations for teachers. The population of Japan is undergoing an unprecedented decrease that is creating new demands upon teachers both in terms of their accountability to schools and their daily practices. Shifting college admissions policies have moved away from entrance exams and towards a greater reliance on the recommendation system for college admission. New licensing regulations have introduced new groups and new demands upon teachers. All three of these macro-trends have placed new demands upon high school teachers, influenced their practices, and changed how they are held accountable by school administration and other stake holders, such as parents.

Summary of the Study

In this three-year ethnography of communication (Saville-Troike, 2003) of a private high school in Western Japan, I draw on Wenger's (1998) communities of practice. My purpose in this study is to investigate how teachers at this private high school negotiate and understand their practices within the context of changes in Japanese education and even larger changes in Japanese society.

Theoretical Framework

The framework that I used in this study is *communities of practice* (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). Within this framework, developed by Etienne Wenger, learning is viewed as a social phenomenon. As people come together and participate in a common practice, they develop a shared understanding of the meaning behind their actions, a shared set of routines, and a shared

method to communicate. In Jogo High School, teachers learn the *practice* of a teacher by becoming a member of a *gakunen* (see Appendix A for a glossary of Japanese terms).

The community of practice framework explains this process of learning.

Jogo High School teachers receive no formal training on their roles within a *gakunen* before they are employed at the school. As new members enter this community they learn by participating in this shared practice. The community of practice framework provides a lens to view Jogo High School to address the understanding of participation by teachers in the school and the meaning they attach to products of this participation. I explain this theoretical framework in more detail in Chapter 2.

I trace my choice of communities of practice back to my student teaching practicum in the United States. In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, many teacher preparation programs are conducted at night to allow students to complete several student-teaching assignments, and also allow students the opportunity to find employment later in the course of their studies. This schedule also gives students a chance to discuss, reflect on, and prepare for their daytime experiences as educators. It provides a strong connection between the teacher preparation content in the classes and the actual work of teachers during the day. During my time at Boston College, I completed courses for my Master's degree in Education in the evening (all of the M.Ed. courses were in the evening) and completed a year of student teaching during the day. From my last year of studies at Boston College, I was working as a full-time high school history teacher in the Quincy Public School system.

After completing my undergraduate degree in 1996, I worked in Japan for three years before moving back to the United States to attend graduate school where I graduated with a Master's in education from Boston College and a Master's from Harvard University. I then returned to Japan and attended a teacher-preparation program at Kwansai Gakuin University (not a pseudonym). Contrary to my experience of learning and teaching in parallel in Massachusetts, the course content and teaching praxis was not integrated at Kwansai Gakuin University. The experience was more like a preflight safety briefing for passengers on an international flight. The information was important, but probably not something I would be using soon. This was different from my experience in Boston, and I started to question how teachers in Japan were prepared to teach. If not in teacher preparation programs, how did new teachers learn to do their job? Unlike the process in many public schools in Japan and even high schools from my experience in the United States, in Jogo High School, the most practical lessons learned about teaching are acquired on the job, in a community of practitioners. Community of practice provides a framework to better understand the process of teacher preparation in Japan and in Jogo High School in particular. In the following section, I introduce the methodology of the study.

Methodology

Ethnography of communication is a methodology combining linguistics and anthropology (Saville-Troike, 2003). Developed from the work of Hymes (1974), it looks not only at communication in a culture, but views communication as the genesis of culture. "Although it is evident that new expressions are always created by individuals,

the acceptance of such innovations by others, their spread, and their ultimate effect on the linguistic system is in large part socially determined” (Gumperz, 1986, p. 2). In this study, I use ethnography of communication as a methodology for understanding how teachers in this context see value in their actions. In other words, I attempt to explore how the culture of the institution and the practices of teachers are created and perpetuated by communication in the school?³

Methods of data collection I used with the ethnography of communication methodology included participant observations, interviews, artifact collection, and focus groups. Various methods of data collection were used in order to provide a fuller understanding of Jogo High School. I describe the methodology and methods for this study in detail in Chapter 3.

Research Questions

The research questions that I used in this study have undergone several stages of development. Initially I focused my questions on teachers’ meetings at Jogo High School. I developed these initial questions during a qualitative research course, and subsequently expanded them. Keeping in mind the methodology and theoretical framework of the study, I found my questions evolving, incorporating information from field observations, interviews, prior research, and consultations.

³ Geertz (1973) described culture as “an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life” (p. 89). In the case of Jogo High School, the knowledge and attitudes are not related to life, but rather the knowledge and attitudes towards being a teacher in this school.

Initially, I formulated the following research questions to examine the meanings teachers at this private high school attach to their activities, and the influence of changing macro-trends on the negotiation of these meanings.

1. How do teachers in this school communicate to sustain their practices and make sense of the private school environment?
2. How do external factors influence teacher practice?

I return to these questions in Chapter 2 after a review of the literature and a discussion of the theoretical framework with more focused questions and specific sub-questions.

Purpose of the Study

This study is significant because it provides information on two areas within Japanese education. The first area is the influence of the three macro-trends in Japan. The second area of significance is the focus on a private high school.

Overall, the literature is lacking on the macro-trends and their influence on teacher practice in Japan. The majority of studies in English is either dated or focuses on pedagogical issues such as on teaching styles or the teaching of English. The English language literature has several gaps connected to this study. There are no studies on the effects of the change in demographics in Japan upon the education system in general or private school recruiting in particular. There are also no studies to my knowledge on the effect that the shift in university entrance procedures has had and continue to have on changes in the duties and responsibilities of high school teachers. Finally, there has been little examination of the changes in teacher licensing regulations.

With the availability of information from MEXT on public schools both in English and Japanese, both online and in print, public education is a common focus for researchers of Japanese education. The collection of data on private schools is not as centralized, forcing researchers to spend time at the research site in Japan in order to collect data. This limits the time many researchers are able to spend at the site, as well as limiting access to data about the school at the center of the research. In this study, I provide an in-depth description of a private school in Japan that would be otherwise be unavailable without prolonged engagement in the site in question.

In this study, I add to the scholarly literature in the field, facilitates practice, and informs educational policy. I examine missing elements in the literature on private schools, demographic changes, new admissions procedures and teacher licensing within Japanese education. I facilitate practice by examining the influence of the previously described macro-trends on private school teachers. I also inform policy by examining the effect of these macro-trends on teachers in secondary education in Japan. In addition, in this study, I view the results of recent policy changes in practice in schools in Japan.

Audience for the Study

This study benefits teachers, teacher educators, and school administrators, but also Japanese studies specialists and educational policy makers, including politicians. The combination of various data collection methods including observations, interviews, artifacts, and focus groups over a three-year period helped to form a rich description of Jogo High School. I describe the benefits of this rich description for each of these groups in the following section.

Teachers, both in Japan and without, can gain an insight into how the teacher participants in this study make sense of their environment. As education in the United States shifts towards high-stakes tests, and Japan moves in the opposite direction, teachers in both countries will benefit from the description of that transition in Jogo High School. This study also highlights the importance of activities outside of the classroom for teachers in Jogo High School and the *gakunen* in particular.

Teacher educators can have a view of the working conditions of teachers in a private school in Japan. This view of the challenges Jogo High School teachers face can help educators to tailor instruction to better support and prepare student teachers for their future careers. In particular, the focus on activities outside of the classroom highlights the importance of developing relationships with students in order to be better prepared to make decisions and provide recommendations for the students' future.

In this study, I link changes in national and local or school level policy with teachers. Educational policy makers will have a better understanding of the interaction between policy and the daily work of teachers. School administrators can see the influence of macro trends on teachers in a Japanese high school and also the impact of school level policy changes on teacher practice. For example, Jogo High School purchased a car to initiate a teacher patrol of the neighborhood around the school. The patrol placed new demands upon the teachers, but also opened discussion of the importance of this activity.

Japanese studies specialists view education in Japan in a way that is not typically easily accessible by researchers. Despite the large amount of data available online concerning public schools, information on private schools is limited. This longitudinal

study is a resource of information on a private school that would normally be inaccessible without a significant commitment of time in the field. This study provides one example of the reaction by a private school and teachers to larger national trends.

Organization of the Study

After the introduction, this study can be divided into four sections. These sections include an explanation of the conceptual framework along with the methods and methodology used for data collections, background information on the school and teachers, three data chapters explaining the influence of the macro-trends introduced earlier on teachers in the school, and finally a discussion and conclusion.

The first section contains Chapters 1, 2 and 3. In Chapter 2, I describe the theoretical framework used to view Jogo High school and frame the study. This framework is communities of practice. At the end of Chapter 2, I revisit my research questions and improve them based upon the gaps in the literature and the theoretical framework. In Chapter 3, I explain the methodology and methods of data collection and analysis, and discuss ethical issues related to this study.

The second section, providing background information, contains Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. In Chapter 4, I provide a detailed description of Jogo High School, its teachers, and students. Context is central to ethnographic research, and this chapter explains the context of Jogo High School. In Chapter 5, I posit the *gakuren* as the primary community of practice for teachers in Jogo High School.

In the next section, Chapters 6, 7, and 8, I discuss the influence of the macro-trends upon teachers with Jogo High School. In Chapter 6, I explain demographic changes in Japan and the influence of these changes on Jogo High School as a whole, and on the practices of teachers in the school in particular. In Chapter 7, I discuss the recommendation system used by students in Jogo High School to enter university, and the interaction between this system and the gakunen community of practice. In Chapter 8, I analyze new licensing requirements in Japan that have introduced new policies and new people into the Jogo High School environment. The final section consists of Chapter 9 and Chapter 10. In Chapter 9, I discuss the findings from the previous data chapters, link these findings to the current literature, and explain the contributions of this study. Finally in Chapter 10, I provide a summary of the findings of this study, examine the limitations, and provide suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Even if you don't think you have, or need, a theoretical framework, you actually already do have one and use it all the time. To put it another way, believing that you don't have or need a theory is a theory in and of itself.

(Butin, 2010, p. 58)

You can't pick up rocks in a field without a theory.

(Agar, 1996, p. 75)

In this chapter, I review the literature and explain the conceptual framework used in this study. I start with a review of the literature related to my initial research questions listed in the previous chapter. This is organized into internal and external influences on teachers and schools. I then identify the gaps in the literature. In the next section, after identifying the gaps in the literature, I explain the epistemology, ontology, and the conceptual framework I use to view the Jogo High School setting. First, I explain my epistemology or theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge especially with reference to its limits and validity (Merriam-Webster, 2017a). This is followed by my ontology. Ontology is a branch of metaphysics concerned with the nature of reality or the kinds of things that have existence (Merriam-Webster, 2017b). Finally, I describe the development and application of communities of practice, the conceptual framework used in this study.

Review of the Literature

In this section, I review the literature related to the topic of this study. I divide the literature into two sections. The first section surveys studies connected to internal influences on schools and teachers. The second focuses on external influences.

Internal Influences on Teachers and Schools

Internal influences on teacher and schools in Japan encompass a wide body of research. Due to the volume and to help with organization, I divide this section into three sub-topics to discuss classroom practices, socialization and relationships, and finally teachers, schools, and parents.

Classroom practices. Within the field of classroom practices, two often-referenced topics are the teaching of mathematics and the teaching of science. Many studies base international comparisons on areas using more universally accepted standards, such as the teaching of mathematics (Fernandez, Cannon, & Chokski, 2003; Jacobs & Yoshida, 1997; Lee & Zusho, 2002; Stigler, Fernandez, & Yoshida, 1998; Yoshida, Fernandez, & Stigler, 1993; Whitman, 1991) or the teaching of the physical sciences (Cummings, 1991; Tsuchida & Lewis, 2002) rather than the social sciences. This trend is facilitated by the use of large-scale exams on science and mathematics that allow for an international comparison of students in these two fields. One example is the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Lewis, Tsuchida, & Coleman, 2002). The large number of studies on mathematics and science is indicative of the trend to view academic outcomes as an indicator of teacher performance.

However, unlike the West, academic performance is not the best indicator of teacher performance in Japan because the daily practice of teachers is not focused on classroom instruction. Beyond academic performance, some studies have looked at the classroom related practices of teachers in Japan.

Although the studies above focus uniquely on the classroom practice of teachers in Japan, a number of studies illustrate that teaching academics is only a small part of what is required of teachers. Okano and Tsuchiya (1999) found that teachers in Japan play a wider role than just the cognitive development of their students. Some of their additional work includes preparing students for entrance exams (Rohlen, 1983) and classroom management (Sato & Kleinasser, 2004).

Socialization and relationships. The focus of teacher practice outside of teaching content has a long history within the literature on Japanese education (Lanham & Garrick, 1996; Vaughn, 1996) and it has often been noted that teachers have extensive duties beyond academics, in particular duties regarding the personal growth of students. Teachers in Japan are expected to relate to students at times on a more informal, even personal level. This stance as a congenial, interested, and a counseling presence, as well as an academic figure, is an important part of teacher identity.

Several studies have found socialization to be the focal point of education, from early childhood, to elementary, into secondary school (Akiba & LeTendre, 2009; DeCoker, 2002a; Fukuzawa, 1998; LeTendre, 1998). Similarly, Okano and Tsuchiya (1999) asserted “Japanese teachers are preoccupied with the development of the ‘whole person’ which is manifest in ‘lifestyle guidance’” (p. 217). Hendry (1986) in his work on

Japanese pre-school also concluded that the pre-school experience for these children involved heavily their socialization, as well as explicit instruction in “moral behavior”. This is similar to the findings of Anderson (1995) that classroom instruction often focused on communicative competence in order to promote socialization.

Multiple studies have shown the importance of the relationship between a teacher and a student (Cave, 2016; LeTendre, 1998, 2000; Ninomiya & Okato, 1990). LeTendre (1998) examined this in terms of the practice of the *gakunen* and its connection with teachers. Because teachers have a stronger connection with a *gakunen* than they do with their academic department, the students within that *gakunen* have a central place in their practice. In addition, Takahashi (2011) asserted “how teachers made meaning of their work in their communities of practice connected to certain conceptualizations about what it means to be a teacher in their context” (p. 739).

Overall the literature reviewed in this section, shows the importance of teacher-student relationships and the goal of socialization in educational settings in Japan. However, it does not provide details on how teachers make meaning from these practices and how they are held accountable for them. This is a gap in the literature that this study attempts to answer. In the following section, I review the literature connected with the relationship between parents and schools and teachers.

Teachers, schools, and parents. Several studies have examined the influence of parents upon teachers and schools in Japan. Overall, these studies indicate the lack of connection between parents, schools, and teachers. The reasons for this disconnect include a lack of communication between parents and schools (Peak, 1989; Okano &

Tsuchiya, 1999) and a focus on parents blaming their children rather than the school for poor academic performance (Hess & Azuma, 1991). In addition, Shimahara (2002a) reported that parents are not a strong source of pressure on teachers.

As Japanese education moves further into the 21st century, these duties related to socialization are being further complicated by larger macro-trends: shifts in demographics, teacher licensing, and university entrance requirements. I review the literature connected to these macro-trends in the following section.

External Influences on Teachers and Schools

I conducted this study in the context of macro-level changes occurring in Japan at the beginning of the 21st century. These macro-trends include population changes, shifting college admission policies, and new licensing regulations for teachers. In this section, I review the literature associated with the three macro-trends that are now influencing the high school environment in Japan, and the teachers who work in these schools.

Demographic changes. Japan is undergoing an unprecedented shift in demographics. Since 1948 the population of high school students in Japan steadily increased until a peak in 1989 (see Appendix B). From 1990, this population has steadily decreased and dropped below four million for the first time since the 1960s. The junior high school population, the recruiting pool for high schools, has undergone a similar dynamic, dropping to 3.6 million students for the first time according to MEXT records dating back to 1948. The overall student population has dropped to numbers unseen since

the 1950s. This population change is underrepresented in the current English language literature on education. Some studies examining the decreasing population focused on economics (Kosai, Saito, & Yashiro, 1998; Matsutani, 2009), influence on the family (Ochiai, 1994), social consequences (Coulmas, 2007) and preschool (Boocock, 1991). Only the oldest study listed here (Boocock, 1991) examined these changes in an educational setting, focusing on what would happen in preschool due to the decreasing population. The influence of demographic changes on education in Japan is a gap in the literature. Beyond these studies on policy related to demographic changes in Japan, there is little written on the influence of population changes on academic settings.

Shifting university admissions policies. Studies on entrance exams have a long history both inside of Japan (Foster, 1973; Frost, 1991; Rohlen, 1983; Takeuchi, 1997; and Zheng, 1999) and outside of Japan (Hong & Mi Choi, 2011; Zheng, 1996, 1999). In general, these studies focus on the pressure on teachers, students, and parents associated with these high stakes tests. This is not, however, the complete story for university admissions as Japan progresses into the 21st century. Admissions based on recommendations also have a long history in Japan as an option for students to move from high school to university. Some high schools are directly connected to a parent university; for example, Kwansei Gakuin High School is affiliated with Kwansei Gakuin University. All of the students entering Kwansei Gakuin High School (Kwansei Gakuin High School is not a pseudonym) are on a recommendation track for the university. The *suisen* [(推薦) recommendation] system allows students to enter a university without undergoing the well-documented “exam hell” of entrance exams. Apart from the

recommendation system, another fluid track from high school to university is the case where a high school is given a selected number of slots for students to attend designated universities. Some schools are given many such slots. A newer trend is the increase in high schools accepting students in cohorts for recommendation to an associated university. In the case of Jogo High School, all students are accepted by a recommendation system into Tsuru University. Jogo High School and Tsuru University are separate legal entities, unlike the relationship between Kwansei Gakuin High School and Kwansei Gakuin University.

Beyond entrance exams, some studies have examined the connection between high schools, universities, and socioeconomic status. LeTendre, Gonzalez, and Nomi (2006) argued that, in Japan, socioeconomic status is not a factor for admission to top schools. In other words, money cannot buy entrance into elite schools. In contrast, Rohlen (1983) and Fujita (2010) described the flight from public schools to private schools of students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. Similar to Brown's (1990) study on education in the United Kingdom, Rohlen suggested that, in Japan, socioeconomic factors were becoming more connected to educational outcomes such as admission to better schools. Jogo High School, in a similar fashion, bases educational objectives upon the decisions of parents. Most students enter the Jogo High School system from elementary and are set upon a path a university almost entirely selected according to the wishes of their parents, provided the parents are able to afford the financial burden of attendance.

With the adoption of the recommendation system at Jogo High School, new requirements, such as a research course has been introduced. There are no studies on this type of course connected with a recommendation or its effects on teachers. However, Cave (2016) examined the introduction of integrated studies into junior high schools and reported poor results because teachers were not trained to teach the course.

New teacher licensing regulations. Every 10 years MEXT reexamines the course of study for education in Japan; this includes teacher-licensing procedures. Prior to the most recent course of study, teacher licenses in Japan were issued for life; they did not expire. New guidelines have adjusted both how teachers become licensed and the length of the licensure. These two changes have influenced private schools in Japan by instituting new continuing education requirements for teachers and by also providing new avenues for non-native speakers of Japanese to become licensed teachers. I discuss in more detail the influence of new teacher licensing requirements in Chapter 8.

Some studies (McConnell, 2002; Miyazato, 2006) have investigated the relationships between licensed native speakers of Japanese and non-native Japanese speakers working together in an educational setting. These studies are based upon unequal power relationships where one teacher is primarily responsible for a group of students and the other teacher is focused solely on language instruction. Okano and Tsuchiya (1999) indicated that foreign nationals cannot work as regular teachers in Japanese schools (p. 146).

Concerning the requirement for continuing education in order to renew a teaching license in Japan, I have not been able to locate any studies in English. Some studies investigating professional development programs for teachers in Japan, found that teachers worked hard to improve subject skills and teaching (White, 1984), but that these programs were also easy to avoid (Lamie, 2006). Darling-Hammond (2006) describes support for beginning teachers, including a reduced workload to allow for in-service training. However, these programs are only in place for public schools and are not available in private schools such as Jogo High School.

Another gap in the literature is that there are no studies in English on alternate routes to licensure in Japan, such as special licenses. In other countries, such as the United States, studies on alternative routes to teacher certification have found that overall these programs were beneficial when used to help alleviate teacher shortages (Cornett, 1992; Zumwalt, 1991). The special licensure process does not require the prospective teacher to take any type of formal class instruction. Outside of Japan, some studies on alternative routes to certification have concluded that there is little evidence that more formal university preparation programs result in higher student achievement (Ballou & Podgursky, 2000). Goldhaber and Brewer (2000) found that it is difficult to compare alternative routes to teacher certification because, in the United States, certification standards vary from state to state. In other words, a teacher certified in a “standard program” in one state might have less formal training than a teacher certified in an “alternative program” in a different state.

Gaps in the Literature

In the literature review, I surveyed studies connected with internal and external influences on teacher practices in Japan. The studies on internal influences showed an emphasis on science and mathematics instruction, socialization, and relationship building. However, there is a gap related to how teachers negotiate meaning in schools. Studies on external influences such as changing demographics, shifting university admission policies, and revised teacher licensing regulations on teacher practices were lacking and are a gap that I hope to fill with research question 2. One possible explanation for the limited scholarship in these areas is that these are relatively recent trends. Based upon these gaps in the literature, I have expanded on research question 1 and 2 outlined in Chapter 1. I revisit these research questions later in this chapter after I explain the ontology, epistemology, and the conceptual framework I used in this study. In order to introduce the conceptual framework of communities of practice, I start the next section with my ontology.

Thirty-Six Views of Mt. Fuji: An Ontological Metaphor

In the 1850s, Hokusai produced two series of wood-block prints entitled *Fugaku Sanjurokkei* [(富嶽三十六景) *Thirty-six views of Mount Fuji*] that show various perspectives of Mt. Fuji. The two series provide diverse portrayals of Mt. Fuji, varied from the viewpoints, weather and season of the year. The initial set included 36 woodblock prints, and due to the popularity of the series was expanded by ten more prints. Hokusai later went on to create *Fugaku Hyakkei* [(富嶽百景) *One hundred views*

of Mt. Fuji]. Mt. Fuji, one could argue, is the most recognizable symbol of Japan, so why would multiple reproductions of a subject so well known to the consumer be so popular? Mt. Fuji has one reality, but there are multiple interpretations or views of this reality.

Even though Mt. Fuji can be measured in terms of feet, meters, rainfall, visitors, or any number of categories, a more interesting object of interest is the reality of Mt. Fuji as perceived by people in the Edo Period. In the beginning of this chapter, I mentioned “leaning towards a constructivist epistemology” because I am not completely in that camp. There is a reality to the school, which cannot be measured. How these teachers interpret that reality is central to my main research aim. Although this might seem very close to the constructivist view of reality I cannot make the final step to state that there are multiple realities. The closest research paradigm to this stance is critical realism. It combines a post-positivist ontological view with an epistemological constructionism. I thus put in my lot with critical realism, of which Maxwell (2012) writes:

Critical realists thus retain an ontological realism (there is a real world that exists independently of our perceptions, theories, and constructions) while accepting a form of epistemological constructionism and relativism (our understanding of this world is inevitably a construction from our own perspectives and standpoint).

(p. 5)

There is a reality to Mt. Fuji; its physical dimensions and composition (breadth, height, volume, amount and variety of mineral deposits within its core) do not change based upon time or viewing location. The force driving the popularity of Hokusai’s wood-block prints, however, was not this concrete, quantifiable reality, but the construction of that reality through the standpoints of the viewers, the experiences of perceiving the reality.

Mt. Fuji is more than a natural phenomenon that one can see and remember. It was to Hokusai and remains an ineffable vision, in this sense subject to change based on perspective and context. The representations of Mt. Fuji from disparate locations during distinct times and seasons were different, and not in merely subtle ways. In this study, I focus on teachers' understanding of a particular private school. The teachers occupy locations in the school that influence their construction of its reality. Just as time and location altered a viewer's perception of Mt. Fuji, larger national macro-trends might alter the way teachers in this private school understand their community. In the following section, I explain the communities of practice framework.

Communities of Practice

The central issue in learning is becoming a practitioner not learning about practice. This approach draws attention away from abstract knowledge and cranial processes and situates it in the practices and communities in which knowledge takes on significance. (Brown & Duguid, 1991, p. 48)

Japan's public school teachers have opportunities to share their practice across schools, cities, prefectures and even the nation. For example, one Japanese prefectural board of education requires new teachers to participate in professional development activities during their first year of employment and also at certain intervals during their career. In addition, some school programs provide a formal mentoring system for incoming teachers. In contrast to these more formal induction programs and required professional development opportunities in public schools, the teachers in the context of the private school at the center of this study are limited to developing a sense of meaning almost

solely in their own school. They have less contact with teachers outside of Jogo High School than teachers in public schools have with their peers. They are a product of the private school environment in Japan.

The community of practice framework allows me to conceptualize how teachers enter the Jogo High School community. New teachers enter the community and take part in the shared activities or the practice of teachers in the school. They learn values, understand expectations, and adopt words or phrases associated with these activities. Learning from the collective memory of the community while also negotiating the meaning of these activities, teachers develop an identity in the community. People become Jogo High School teachers through this process of learning, participating, and negotiating. In the following section I describe the development of this process.

The Development of Communities of Practice

Communities of practice was an idea developed from Lave and Wenger's (1991) works on learning outside of the classroom. Lave and Wenger examined how people learn to become midwives, tailors, navy quartermasters, and meat cutters through a process of apprenticeship. New members participate in the community by starting with simpler tasks that still have meaning to the community. These new members learn the vocabulary, routines, and methods from more experienced members, gradually more to more difficult tasks until they become experienced members of the community. They termed this process legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

In a subsequent book, Wenger (1998) moved the focus away from legitimate peripheral participation and towards the community aspect of communities of practice. This focus on community describes three elements to a community of practice. These comprise mutual engagement (the norms of the community), joint enterprise (a shared understanding of the domain of the community), and a shared repertoire (the knowledge and activities used to pursue the joint enterprise).

Four years later, communities of practice was refocused and redefined in a new book entitled *A guide to managing knowledge: Cultivating communities of practice* published by Harvard Business School Press (Wenger et al., 2002). The refocus, as suggested in the title and by the choice of publisher, moves from an understanding of communities of practice to the process of their use and management in a business model. In fact, only in the last ten pages of the text does a non-business model of community of practice in the form of civil society emerge. The redefinition of community of practice comprises domain (knowledge), community (sharing of the knowledge), and practice (the specific use of the knowledge). A private school can be defined in some ways as a business; this business model of communities of practice is not the best fit for an explanation of Jogo High School.

Communities of Practice and Jogo High School

For this study, I use Wenger's (1998) definition of communities of practice because it provides the most detailed description of community, and the community of teachers in Jogo High School is central to this study. Domain is the identity, commitment, and shared competence of the teachers in Jogo High School. Imaging domain in this

sense, some questions arise: How do these teachers negotiate their identities in this setting? How do they commit to the school and themselves? Finally, how do the teachers in this school share and develop competence?

Community in Jogo High School encompasses the joint activities and discussions of the teachers. How do they build relationships and learn from each other? Some examples of joint activities include the various meetings teachers attend and informal teacher cooperation in regard to interactions with parents. Some researchers, such as Little (2002), use the concept of communities of practice to examine the interactions among teachers to develop professionally in the workplace and to support their classroom instruction. I take a similar approach, however, I assert that the practice shared by teachers is not centered upon classroom instruction, but rather on *sodateru* [(育てる) raising students] and at the same time dealing with the influence of larger macro-trends occurring in Japan. Jogo High School displays many features of a community of practice (see Table 1).

The third element of communities of practice is practice itself. *Practice* here refers to the repertoire of resources, experiences, and the shared practices of the teachers in Jogo High School. Wenger (1998) asserted, “the concept of practice connotes doing, but not just doing in and of itself. It is doing in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do” (p. 47). Hodkinson and Hodkinson’s (2003) study of the relationships of an individual teacher in a school used communities of practice, and found that, beyond the local community, in the school the practice of the teacher was influenced by larger national trends, in a similar way as the larger macro-trends in Japan have influenced the practice of teachers in Jogo High School.

Table 1. *Indicators of a Community of Practice*

Subject
1. sustained mutual relationships—harmonious or conflictual
2. shared ways of engaging and working together
3. the rapid flow of information and propagation of innovation
4. absence of introductory preambles
5. very quick setup of a problem
6. substantial overlap in participants' descriptions of who belongs
7. knowing what others know
8. mutually defined identities
9. the ability to assess the appropriateness of actions and products
10. specific tools, representations, and other artifacts
11. local lore, shared stories, inside jokes, knowing laughter
12. jargon and shortcuts to communication as well as the ease of producing new ones
13. certain styles recognized as displaying membership
14. a shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world

Adapted from Wenger (1998) pp.125-126.

Wenger (1998) stated “meaning is always the product of its negotiation, by which I mean that it exists in this process of negotiation. Meaning exists neither in us, nor in the world but in the dynamic relation of living in the world” (p. 54). The teachers of Jogo High School are involved in this *process of negotiation* in this school. This understanding of *process* is central to an understanding of teachers in Jogo High School and makes communities of practice an important component of this study. A community of practice, however, is not an uncontested conceptual framework.

Criticisms of Communities of Practice

One example of communities of practice is Orr's (1990) study of the informal interaction of Xerox photocopier service employees as they discussed their practice outside of formal training. Orr later published his study in a book (1996) in which he stated he was unaware of Lave's theory on communities of practice. The search for evidence of a construct is often retroactive as in the case of the application of

communities of practice to Orr's study. Historians have described this as the tyranny of the construct (Brown, 1974). As Contu and Willmott (2000) write:

The idea that agents, activities and the world mutually constitute each other is absent from the discussion of how communities, boundaries, identities and organizations are accomplished and reproduced. Moreover, these four elements are paraded as if they exist out there in the world rather than being recognized as being artifacts of the particular theory that points to their existence. (p. 271)

The constructs in communities of practice have been criticized for being too vague, allowing them to be applicable to a wide range of scenarios. Critics argue a more well-defined set of constructs would help to strengthen the theory of communities of practice by reducing its ambiguity. In other words, elements of communities of practice are not defined in ways that make them specific enough to be useful. In this sense, the idea of process of negotiation can be used for a majority of interactions between individuals and thus is too open. A better definition of process of negotiation could include specific elements that could identify the action that leads to a better understanding of the practice of the community by the individuals involved.

In addition to the issue of ambiguity, there are several theories similar to communities of practice such as: (a) occupational community (Van Maanen & Barley, 1984), (b) occupational subculture (Trice, 1993), and (c) community of technological practitioners (Constant, 1980). Some of these studies use terms similar to those in communities of practice and at the same time use different definitions concerning the description of the social learning in communities. Similar theories using similar terms

with different definitions have caused confusion in the discussion of communities of practice.

Apart from the benign point that researchers might muddle terminology, specific criticisms focus more directly on communities of practice. Fox (2000) notices the lack of a discussion of power relations in communities (see also Roberts, 2006 on this same point). According to Fox, core or experienced members of a community hold power in relation to their status, and this notion needs to be addressed in the analysis of the community of practice. This criticism is echoed by Contu and Willmott (2003) in their discussion of the “conflict and consensus” of social practices (p. 292). They argue that although Lave discusses the possibility of the influence of power relations, the theory (and her examples) seem to view social practices as naturally occurring in a localized community unco-opted by larger power relations.

Additional studies (Creese, 2005; Rock, 2005; Tusting, 2005) have detailed the need for language analysis in communities of practice. As Tusting (2005) stated “despite the centrality of negotiation of meaning to the communities of practice model, and the key role of language within processes of participation and reification, Wenger does not draw out ideals about the relationship between language and meaning making more generally, beyond stating that meaning making cannot be reduced to language alone” (p. 39). This is also reflected by Creese (2005) who argued that “ethnography of communication and interactional sociolinguistics provide the tools of analysis for an understanding of negotiation within community which is lacking in the communities of practice paradigm” (p. 74).

Despite these criticisms, I maintain that the concept of communities of practice provides a framework to view the community of teachers in Jogo High School. Teachers are not trained to be members of a *gakun* before they enter Jogo High School. Using communities of practice, it is easier to understand their transition into a member of a *gakun*. In the following section I describe the changes in my research questions and show the influence of communities of practice upon these questions.

Research Questions

The research questions in this study have undergone several stages of development. Initially the questions were concerned with teachers' meetings at Jogo High school. I developed this idea first during a qualitative research course, and expanded my initial set of questions. The current set of research questions listed below evolved during the course of the study incorporating information from my field observations, interviews, prior research, consultations, and from a reading of relevant literature.

With my research questions, I examine the meaning teachers at this private high school attach to their activities and the influence of changing macro-trends on the negotiation of these meanings. I attempt to use the point of view of people, particularly teachers, in this school to answer how they communicate and construct these meanings. This ethnographic approach is explained further in the next chapter on research design.

1. How do teachers in this school negotiate meaning in the private school environment?
 - 1a. How do peer interactions influence teacher practice within this context?
 - 1b. What process, if any, is in place for teacher accountability?
2. How do external factors influence teacher practices within this community?

- 2a. How have demographics changes affected teachers with this school?
- 2b. Has the recommendation system affected teachers' practices?
- 2c. How, if at all, have recent changes in teacher licensing practices influenced relations between teachers?

Conclusion

In this chapter, I reviewed the literature related to teacher practice in Japan and identified several gaps. I then detailed the communities of practice framework used to better understand the context of Jogo High School. Finally, using the gaps in the literature and the communities of practice framework, I reworked my research questions into a more detailed form. In the following chapter, I discuss the methodology and methods I use to answer these research questions.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

Anthropology, at least interpretive anthropology, is a science whose progress is marked less by the perfection of consensus than by the refinement of debate.

(Geertz, 1973, p. 29)

At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience.

(Seidman, 2006, p. 9)

In this chapter, I outline the methodology and methods of this three-year Ethnography of Communication including the research site, participants, my research paradigm, issues of trustworthiness, and ethical issues. Concerning the research site, I provide a short description of the school at the center of this study. I then discuss the methods of data collection including observations, interviews, artifacts, and focus groups. I detail each method of data collection along with related threats to trustworthiness and possible counters to these threats. I review the literature on Ethnography of Communication and explain how this approach to research fits this study. Finally, I conclude the chapter with my positionality in relation to this study and a discussion of ethical considerations.

Research Site

At the center of this study is a private Christian junior/senior high school located in Western Japan. Christianity manifests itself mostly in a required religious studies class and minimally in a daily chapel service that beyond the open and closing songs and prayer often have little connection to faith. Students are not required to maintain or profess a certain faith in order to attend the school. Both the junior high school and a high school are located on the same campus. Like most public and private schools in Japan, the junior high school and the high school each have three grades (7, 8, and 9 for junior high school and 10, 11, and 12 for high school). Also typical among schools in Japan, the approximately 1,100 students are required to wear a school uniform. These students attend regular classes from April, the start of the academic year in Japan, to March, following the school calendar (see Appendix C); however, most are in attendance for most of the year for a number of extra classes, clubs, sports and other school related activities. Classes during a typical school day are conducted from 8:30 A.M. to either 3:00 or 3:55 P.M. Monday to Friday and from 8:45 A.M. to 12:40 P.M. on Saturdays. I provide a more detailed description of Jogo High School in Chapter 4. In the following section I detail the participants involved with various methods of data collection.

Participants

Participants contributed to this study in both formal and informal ways. Informal interviews or other types of memos, included short unscheduled exchanges. Individuals who participated in a more formal capacity were included in both interviews and focus groups.

Interview Participants

I formally interviewed twelve members of the faculty of Jogo High School. I divided these individuals into three groups: an initial interview group from the start of data collection in early 2010, a purposely selected group of individuals, and a core group who were interviewed multiple times. I detail each of these three groups in the following sections. I also describe the method of formal interviews in more detail in the section on data collection.

Initial interviews. I interviewed the initial group of three individuals in March 2010 (see Table 2). Mr. Toda, Ms. Abe, and Mr. Matsudaira (the names of participants are pseudonyms) were all teachers in the English department. I had collected the data for a qualitative studies course in my doctoral program, and used convenience sampling and selected individuals who were approachable and who could do the interview in English. This allowed me to transcribe the data in the limited time frame of the required course assignments. These interviews were generally short, running from 12 to 18 minutes and focused on my initial research interest in teachers' meetings.

Table 2. *Initial Interview Group*

Interviewees	Date	Time
Mr. Toda	March 4, 2010	12 minutes
Ms. Abe	March 8, 2010	17 minutes
Mr. Matsudaira	March 9, 2010	18 minutes

Purposely selected group. As my research transitioned from a paper for a qualitative research class to this study I became interested in how the stakeholders in the school viewed their community. I purposely selected teachers who were leaders in Jogo High School, such as the head of academic affairs, the principal, assistant principal, the head of the third-year gakunen, and the former faculty advisor to the student government. These individuals were Mr. Ogasawara, the head of academic affairs, Mr. Akimoto, the principal, Mr. Tsuchiya, the vice-principal, Mr. Kuze the head of the third-year gakunen, and Mr. York who was the faculty advisor to the student government. Each person in the purposely-selected interview group was interviewed once (see Table 3).

Table 3. *Purposely Selected Interview Group*

Interviewees	Date	Time
Mr. Tsuchiya	April 14, 2011	62 minutes
Mr. Ogasawara	April 21, 2011	43 minutes
Mr. Akimoto	May 2, 2011	102 minutes
Mr. Kuze	March 18, 2013	27 minutes
Mr. York	July 12, 2015	67 minutes

Mr. Tsuchiya is a graduate of the attached university. He is pragmatic and central to the daily operation of the school. He is also one of three assistant principals. However, it is Mr. Tsuchiya who runs the daily faculty meetings as well all of the other meetings in which he is in attendance. His role is very similar to an executive officer in a battalion in the U.S. Army. Whereas the commanding officer has overall leadership responsibilities and establishes a vision for battalion as a whole, it is the executive officer who controls the daily operations. He understands the details involved and makes the commander's vision a reality. This makes him very knowledgeable, but also very hands-on which can sometimes intrude on the space of individual teachers. In other words, teachers

sometimes see his suggestions as intruding into areas outside of purview of an assistant principal, such as suggesting specific teaching methods or strategies.

Mr. Ogasawara entered Jogo High School the same year I did and we were assigned to the same first-year high school gakunen. He is a tall, quiet man who is respected both by teachers and students for his ability to manage situations that commonly occurred in the school. For example, gakunen assemblies for students are quite common. Often these assemblies start with a teacher or teachers raising their voices to get the students to “settle down and be quiet.” Both teachers and students see the act of counseling groups of students with a raised voice as an appropriate action by a teacher in that situation. A teacher who does not do this in one manner or another is seen as shirking their responsibility and leaving the work for others to do. Mr. Ogasawara handled assemblies differently. He would go to the front of the room, ask the students to stand, and then allow them to stretch and talk with friends for about a minute. He would then ask them to sit and start the assembly with a formal greeting. He did not yell, but still was able to manage the situation achieving the desired results. From his second year, he was the head of the gakunen and he stayed with this same group of students until they graduated. Once these students left the school, Mr. Ogasawara was assigned to head the academic affairs department. In 2012, he was promoted to assistant principal.

Mr. Akimoto had only been the principal for a couple of years. Prior to his current position, he was in-charge of recruiting and admissions. Recruiting was always an important part of every Jogo High School teacher’s job, particularly during certain times of the year. With a greater emphasis on student recruitment as a decreasing population impacted student recruitment, the selection of the recruiting and admissions head as a

new principal seemed to be a statement by the school. The previous principal, whom I described in the introduction of Chapter 1, moved to the position of chancellor, taking with him certain elements of power he had held as principal, including budgetary matters, leaving a reduced role for Mr. Akimoto when he took over. The new position of principal focused on student recruitment, and had less decision-making power in the school, especially concerning fiscal matters. This redefined role of the principal was discussed in hushed voices in the teachers' room as teachers came to understand that a great deal of power in the school was held by an individual, and not by a position in the school. The position of *principal* in and of itself did not guarantee power.

Mr. Kuze had been a member of the Jogo High School faculty for a long time. He is slightly shorter than the average teacher and speaks with a soft voice. He is also described as being easy to get along with, which is not considered to be a good attribute for the head of a *gakunen*. Accommodating requests by teachers to have a day off or to take care of a student club by missing a *gakunen* activity is often seen as forcing the absent teacher's workload onto the remaining teachers. Despite these ostensible shortcomings, Mr. Kuze was the head of a *gakunen* during the length of this study. He puts in a large amount of time to take care of the students in the *gakunen* and also the school as a whole.

Mr. York was a tenured teacher who was in charge of the student government, which made him responsible for the budgets of all club and sports activities, and the central organizer of the school's culture festival. He is American, having graduated from an ivy-league school, and has a reputation with students for providing academically

challenging classes. Though by July 2015, Mr. York was no longer at the school, at that time I had the opportunity to interview him when he returned to Japan for a visit.

Core interview group. The core interview group consisted of five teachers (see Table 4). Initially my intention was to interview each teacher in this group three times, however, some of the teachers were only interviewed twice due to time constraints in Jogo High School or sometimes due to prior interview responses. I selected these using an operational construct sampling strategy, in other words they were “individuals who manifest a theoretical construct of interest” (Hatch, 2002, p. 99).

Table 4. *Core Interview Group*

Interviewee	Date	Time
Mr. Inaba	November 26, 2012	47 minutes
	December 13, 2012	46 minutes
	March 21, 2013	65 minutes
Ms. Gwang	December 15, 2012	26 minutes
	March 19, 2013	26 minutes
	March 27, 2013	23 minutes
Mr. Samson	February 19, 2013	41 minutes
	March 6, 2013	42 minutes
	March 16, 2013	29 minutes
Mr. Okubo	March 7, 2013	49 minutes
	March 14, 2013	58 minutes
Mr. Inoue	March 9, 2013	91 minutes
	March 19, 2013	57 minutes
	March 23, 2013	82 minutes

The theoretical construct of interest manifested by this group was the desire to study at the graduate level while working in an environment where such time commitments were seen as a distraction. In other words, these teachers displayed an interest in pedagogy, research, or in curriculum development. Areas often viewed as a

distraction or selfishness by member so the Jogo High School community. Despite this, these individuals were active members of the community. In addition, I viewed their positive view of research and advancement as indicators of willingness to not only participate in this study, but to also to continue to contribute over the several years with data collection. I was very interested in how these teachers negotiated meaning while participating in the Jogo High School community.

Mr. Inaba is a Japanese teacher of English in his mid-thirties. After completing his undergraduate degree in Japan, he traveled to Australia to obtain a Master's degree in TESOL. After returning to Japan he started to work on his doctoral degree and continued to teach at Jogo High School. He is a homeroom teacher and also an advocate of curriculum reform in the school. Attempts at reform, however, were met with resistance. I interviewed Mr. Inaba three times.

Ms. Gwang entered Jogo High School about the same time as this study started. She teaches science and is also a homeroom teacher. In addition to the more common duties associated with teaching in a high school, all Jogo High School teachers must speak once or twice a year at one of the daily chapel services. The topic of these talks is left up to the teacher. One of the first chapel talks given by Ms. Gwang concerned the use of her Korean family name and the issues surrounding that choice. During our first interview, I asked how I should describe her considering issues of anonymity and she responded, "Japanese-Korean." Ms. Gwang holds a Master's degree and is enthusiastic about teaching science despite the monopolization of her time by her homeroom duties. I interviewed Ms. Gwang three times.

Mr. Samson is a Canadian teacher assigned to the English department. His interviews took place during his first year as a full-time teacher at Jogo High School. Although he had worked in other schools in Japan, this was his first experience being in the position of a regular member of the teaching staff with all the associated duties and responsibilities of the position. He was also assigned to the football club, which took up most of his evenings and weekends. I interviewed Mr. Samson three times.

Mr. Okubo was assigned to the Japanese department. Prior to becoming a teacher, he was involved with outdoor youth activities. This is a large part of his experience at Jogo High School as well because the school runs several camps for students each year. Summers often see Mr. Okubo away at these camps for a full month at a time. The gap left by the lack of camps in the winter is filled with the process of getting students through the recommendation process for Tsuru University. Mr. Okubo was a homeroom teacher for third-year high school students for two of the three years of data collection. I interviewed him twice.

Mr. Inoue is assigned to the library studies department. In 2005, Jogo High School accepted its first co-ed class into the high school. This co-ed group was also accepted into the new recommendation program for Tsuru University. One component of the recommendation is for students to complete a research report at the end of a two-year research course. Mr. Inoue chaired the committee to develop this research course. Because the course is a central part of the curriculum for all students in Jogo High School, Mr. Inoue spends a large amount of time recruiting teachers from various departments to teach and manage these research courses. He provides support to both students and teachers in the program. I interviewed Mr. Inoue three times.

Focus Group Participants

In addition to interviews, I also conducted focus groups with two groups. I conducted one with a group of high school students and the other was with two university students during their student teaching practicum (see Table 5). Both of these groups were convenience samples and I explain each below.

Table 5. *Focus Groups*

Group	Date	Time
Student Focus Group	May 26, 2012	61 minutes
Student Teacher Focus Group	June 16, 2012	31 minutes
Student Focus Group	June 23, 2012	58 minutes

The first focus group was an intact Saturday class of Jogo High School students. Saturday College is a program of additional classes all Jogo High School students are required to attend. A wide variety of classes, ranging from traditional fare such as remedial math and English conversation classes, to non-traditional classes such as sign language and golf are offered. Students are able to select the classes they want to attend on Saturday. Jogo High School has a large selection of science courses and from 2012 a discussion of making the school more science-oriented began circulating. In line with these discussions and also due to my own personal interest in the subject, I offered a social science research class in 2012. The students of this social science research class were the members of the focus groups. The students were a mix of first-, second-, and third-year high school students from my Saturday College class. This group met twice.

The second focus group consisted of two graduates of Jogo High School. They had returned to the school to complete their student teaching practicum in order to receive

their teacher licenses. I taught both of these students in high school, had been a member of their gakunen when they were students, and I had also taught one graduate in a pedagogy class in university. These individuals had an insider perspective as previous Jogo High School students, but also the view of teachers-in-training in the school. This group only met one time.

Research Paradigm

Ethnography of Communication

This study is an ethnography of communication (Saville-Troike, 2003) of a private high school in Japan. As outlined in the research questions at the end of Chapter 2, this study is an investigation into the meaning-making practices of teachers in a private high school. More specifically, how do teachers make sense of the private school environment and how do both internal and external factors influence teacher practice? In this situated study, I attempt to illustrate how teacher practices are shaped by ongoing changes external to the school (e.g., the changing demographic landscape in Japan, shifting university admissions policies and new teacher licensing regulations). I also explore how local interactions between teachers-as-peers influence teacher practices, and how these interactions reveal and perpetuate power relations among faculty members. Central to the study of these practices is the communication that teachers share with each other. This communication mediates their interaction with those outside of the school as they attempt to go about duties such as recruiting students, preparing college recommendations, and renewing their licenses with the local board of education.

Origins of ethnography of communication. As my research questions call for an investigation into the meaning-making processes at this private school, I conduct this study as an ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Van Maanen, 1988; Wolcott, 2008). As Erickson (1984) writes, “what makes a study ethnographic is that it not only treats a social unit of any size as a whole but that the ethnography portrays events, at least in part, from the view of the actors involved in the events” (p. 52). Whereas the boundaries of ethnography are debated (Agar, 2006; Wolcott, 2008), in this study I use multiple techniques (including observations, interviews, focus groups and artifacts) and prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to focus on meaning making by individuals in this private school.

The origins of ethnography of communication can be seen in the linguistically related research tradition of some of the pioneers in ethnography. Boas (1858-1942), considered the father of American anthropology, argued that in order to access culture, language is the proper medium. Following Boas’ idea his student, Sapir (1884-1939), seeing that culture needed to be accessed via language, postulated that grammar influenced the way people think. In other words, the grammar used within language sets constraints on the culture. Malinowski (1884-1942) considered the participant observation context fundamental to understand speech in an observed community. Malinowski (1932), in his book *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, described the final goal of the ethnographer. “This goal is, briefly, to grasp the native’s point of view, his relation to life, to realize his vision of his world” (p. 25). One way to “grasp the native’s point of view” is to focus on and use the words of the individuals at the center of a study. These were early steps in the merging of linguistics with anthropology.

Following this tradition of blending ethnography and linguistics, Hymes developed Ethnography of Speaking, which examined the combination of language structure, use and culture. Hymes' SPEAKING model described several categories that could be used to study a community (setting and scene, participants, ends, act sequence, key, instrumentalities, norms, genre) (Bauman, 1975). This model was redefined adding nonverbal characteristics of communication. Keating (2007) offered a redefinition wrote, "language is defined broadly to include all forms of speech, writing, song, speech derived whistling, drumming, horn calling, gesturing, etc." (p. 287). One shift from linguistics is the social focus on the speech community rather than a focus on a linguistic element.

Ethnography of communication, from sociolinguistics (Hymes, 1974) and further developed by Saville-Troike (2003), focuses on "the speech community, the way communication in it is patterned and organized as systems of communicative events, and ways in which these interact with all other systems of culture" (p. 2). It has been used in studies in Japan (McLaughlin, 2007) and on teachers and teaching (Duff, 1995, 2002; McLaughlin, 2007). In addition to allowing me to focus the study, ethnography of communication also provides a framework for analyzing data. I describe this framework in the following section.

Focus of ethnography of communication. Ethnography of communication has three units of analysis. These include the communicative situation, the communicative event and the act. The primary unit is the communicative event, which is used for descriptive purposes. The boundaries of a communicative event include a change in participants or a change in the roles of the participants in the event. The communicative

situation is the larger context in which the event takes place and the act is an exchange between participants. Derived from Hymes' SPEAKING model, this framework provides several elements to help analyze speech events including scene (purpose and setting), key, participants, message form, message content, sequence, rules for interaction, and norms of interpretation (Saville-Troike, 2003). These elements are described in more detail in Table 6.

Table 6. *Components of a Communicative Event*

Genre	The type of event
Topic	The content or subject of the event
Purpose	The function of the event
Setting	The location, time, and setting of the event.
Key	The tone or manner of the event
Participants	The people involved with the event
Message form	The form of communication including both verbal and nonverbal.
Message content	The message
Acts	The sequence of the event
Rules	The guidelines which influence communication
Norms	The cultural expectations in the event

Note. Adapted from Saville-Troike (2003), pp. 110-124.

To better illustrate the components of a communicative event, I will describe a typical teachers' meeting at Jogo High School. The components are described in the same order as presented in Table 6. First I describe the scene.

The setting is usually the *daikaishitsu* [(大会室) large meeting room] located on the third floor of the main building on campus. It is a large rectangular room with a row of windows on one side facing out to the inner court. Long dark-brown tables are arranged in a rectangular fashion two deep forming an outer and inner row with two or three teachers sitting at each table. A suggested seating plan is not provided, but many

teachers still sit with the people assigned to the same year-group. Near the front blackboard there are only two of these brown tables. This area is for the principal, vice-principals, and teachers appointed to support the meeting by taking notes and announcing the act sequence of the meeting.

The key is the tone or manner of the event. For example, a person could compliment another person, but do it in a way to be critical. The key of a typical teachers meeting is usually formal and polite. If a person in a meeting wants to be critical or show disapproval of a statement, one common method to achieve this is to increase the formality of their speech and to do so in the form of questions. For example, if a teacher wanted to question the decision to have a meeting for a specific purpose, that teacher could ask if the timing was appropriate, thus indirectly showing disapproval of the meeting. This method is used by many participants, except for those who sit at the two brown tables at the front of the room.

Participants in this event are the teachers and staff of Jogo High School. All teachers are required to attend teachers' meetings. In the beginning of a meeting the head of each year group, such as first-year high school, must state if any teachers are not present and the reason for their absence.

The message form and message content are closely linked. The message form is mostly verbal and formal; however, handouts are provided at the beginning of the meeting for the meeting's agenda, upcoming event schedules, and teacher assignment lists for various assignments. Silence is common for most participants in these meetings except when backchannel messages are sent. Examples of this are grumbling, gasps, laughing or other noises demonstrating the listeners' feelings to a statement made during

meetings. The statement made by speakers during the meeting is the message content. It is the information presented during the meeting.

The acts are the subdivisions with the sequence of the teachers meeting. These include an opening prayer, a statement from the principal and vice-principal who usually defer to the end of the meeting, reports from each of the different departments, and finally reports from each year group in both the junior and senior high school. These reports follow the rules for interaction for teachers' meetings that require a speaker to stand when speaking or asking a question. This holds true for all members except for those who sit at the front of the room.

Breaking of the rules of interaction is one form of moving outside of the norms of the event. Violation of the norms in the event are met with stern facial expressions from people at the front table and then, if continued, with a sharp remark by a sitting vice-principal.

Such would be a communicative event in ethnography of communication. Ethnography of communication also considers the use of language as a means of control and power. Saville-Troike (2003) writes, "The potential use of language to create and maintain power is part of a central topic among ethnographers of communication and other sociolinguistics concerned with language-related inequities and inequalities" (p. 13). In other words, language use helps shape the context and relationships between participants in the given context. Thus, language use helps make meaning. As I document later, language can be used in meetings in ways that discourage participants from challenging points on the agenda or decisions that those leading the meeting would like to see made. Also, even the script in which the language is written (e.g., kanji, katakana)

can be used to position people as outsiders. One example is the use of katakana to indicate Japanese spoken by a non-native speaker, rather than the use of kanji and hiragana used to indicate language spoken by a native Japanese.

Although Japanese is the language used for meetings and for documents inside Jogo High School, English is used in certain situations often associated with power relations as described above. This dual use of two varieties of language is part of the communicative repertoire used by teachers in the school. Code switching, shifting of languages, or even formality are indicators of actual or perceived power relationships. The incorporation of power relations in ethnography of communication helps balance one of the key criticisms of communities of practice as mentioned in Chapter 2, which is the lack of consideration of the influence of core or more experienced members of a community. I explain these examples in more detail in the data chapters.

Data Collection

Data collection for this study started in February of 2010 during a qualitative studies course at Temple University Japan's Osaka campus. Due to the short time frame of the qualitative course, data collection was limited to a few observations and interviews. As that paper developed into this study, the methods were expanded to include focus groups and artifacts in addition to more observations and interviews. The increase in data collection methods facilitated a better analysis of the research questions and allowed me to triangulate the research findings. In addition, I kept a research journal during the course of this study. I describe each of these methods of data collection—

observations, interviews, artifacts, focus groups, and my research journal in the following sections.

Observations. Following the ethnographic tradition that studies “are grounded in a commitment to the first-hand experience and exploration of a particular social or cultural setting on the basis of (though not exclusively by) participant observation” (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Lofland, 2001, p. 4), observations were a central means of data collection. I recorded written field notes (Clifford, 1990; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Jackson, 1990) using thick description (Geertz, 1973). In this sense, thick description, as introduced by Gilbert Ryle and further developed by Geertz, is not simply a description of what happens in a context, but also a description of the context itself, which together allows outsiders to understand the meaning of the description.

I took written field notes during observations unless conditions required my active participation and prevented me from taking notes. These written field notes were on paper, usually a legal-sized yellow notepad and later typed as an electronic version using Microsoft Word. Artifacts such as meeting agendas were included in the observation data collection as they were often inseparable from the object of observation. Observation notes were completed in as much detail as possible given the context. The lens of ethnography of communication (speech event and speech act) also provided a focus for the data collected during observations. After the observation, I completed more formal notes usually the same evening, but in some cases a few days after the event, depending on scheduling. One observation at Jogo High School, for example, started from 16:30, continued for 6 hours 50 minutes, and ended at 23:10, making the writing of more formal

notes not possible that evening. I created these formal notes using Microsoft Word for Mac 2011 version 14.4.1 software. In addition, I made notations in my research journal using the same Microsoft Word software.

For the initial stage of the study, which was part of my coursework, I conducted both formal and informal observations on several types of meetings in Jogo High School. The formal observations included a general teacher's meeting lasting one hour and 15 minutes, a weekly year-group meeting lasting three hours and 40 minutes, and finally a *bukai* [(部会) section] meeting (*bukai* are administrative sections in a school such as student affairs) concluded in one hour and 45 minutes. Informal observations included morning year-group meetings, department meetings, and other meetings in which my active participation limited my ability to take detailed field notes. In general, this selection of meetings provided a small sample of the various meetings conducted over the period of one month.

After this initial observation period, I expanded the range of formal observations beyond meetings. At end of data collection, I had completed 39 formal observations of various types including teacher meetings, year-group meetings, and ceremonies in the school for a total of over 78 hours. A list of these observations is in Appendix D.

Interviews. I conducted both informal and formal interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Opdenakker, 2006; Roulston, 2010; Seidman, 2006; Spradley, 1979) as a means of data collection. During informal interviews or short informal exchanges, I took notes immediately following the interaction. I supplemented these notes with additional information and recorded them in my research journal. I recorded formal

interviews using an Olympus Voice Trek IC recorder when possible and when interviewees granted permission.

I conducted multiple formal interviews. These I planned as a set of three interviews with a core group of seven participants (Seidman, 2006). I completed these three interviews of approximately 90 minutes each over a few weeks to allow the participants to build confidence, trust, and to limit the possibility of idiosyncratic interviews. A set of three interviews allowed the participants to provide a more developed conversation. In the words of Polkinghorne (2007), “Participants are able to articulate only that portion of meaning that they can access through reflection” (p. 11). By providing a short time between interviews, individual could reflect and have more developed answers concerning previously discussed concepts. This also allowed me time to review previous interviews and consider new questions. Answers in the context of a series of interviews also encouraged me and the interviewees to engage in the co-construction of talk (Mann, 2011). I explain the differences in these three interviews in the following section.

My purpose in the initial interview was to gather knowledge about the individual to build a base from which the subsequent interviews could be launched. I asked participants to describe their background and also their experience in the context of the school. I used grand tour questions (Spradley, 1979), such as “Can you describe the main parts of a typical teachers’ meeting?” to elicit an understanding of the participants place within the school. I then used this information to provide points of reference that I pursued further in the second interview.

In the second interview, I focused on details of the person's current life within the school context. We discussed points of interest from the initial interview in more detail with my follow-up questions. I encouraged the telling of stories or events to help enrich the understanding of the meaning teachers make in Jogo high school. In addition, the telling of stories can help to display the meaning individuals construct of events. Returning to the ideas of Polkinghorne (2007), "Storied texts serve as evidence for personal meaning, not for the factual occurrence of the events reported in the stories" (p. 479). I also encouraged figurative expressions to provide a fuller picture of the community in the school. Together I used these follow-up discussions, stories, and expressions to develop a better understanding of how these teachers constructed the reality of the school, and how the larger macro-trends influenced that understanding.

The third interview fulfilled four roles: an opportunity to clarify important issues from the first two interviews, if needed, a reflection on the meaning provided in the first two interviews, a chance for respondent validation, and finally some closure to the interview process. Clarification and reflection on the first two interviews helped to focus the data collected and lead to the search for disconfirming data. I presented theories I developed by coding data during the third interview to allow respondent validation and discussion. For example, I asked about the role of the *gakunen* in contrast to the role of the academic department as a form of member checking. Finally, I restated the goals of the research, briefly summarized the informed consent form again, and thanked the participants in order to provide a sense of closure.

Preparation before each of these three interviews included a review of previous interviews with the same participant and the formulation of a set of questions guided by

the purpose of the interview (first, second, or third). In addition, I developed questions with reference to the Outline Guide for the Ethnographic Study of Speech (Sherzer & Darnell, 1986). Finally, for interviews beyond the initial one, I developed questions to allow for member checking of ideas elicited in the prior interviews.

When allowed by participants, I used an Olympus Voice-Trek V-51 digital audio recorder to make a recording of interviews. I used these recordings to review and to transcribe whole or relevant sections for data analysis. For all interviews, regardless of audio recorder use, I took notes during the interview, reviewed these after the interview, rewrote them, and recorded them in my research journal. I examined audio recordings of interviews to determine important segments to be transcribed in cases of multiple interviews. For single interviews with individuals such as the Jogo High School principal, I transcribed the complete interview to allow for a thorough review of the content.

Concerning transcription, I followed the basic rule as described by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) “state explicitly in the report how the transcription was made” (p. 180). Statements were transcribed verbatim with minimal notations for pauses or other elements. Due to this I avoided commas in order to avoid placing meaning into statements (see Poland, 2003 for a discussion of the changing of meaning due to the placement of commas). Transcription conventions are listed in Appendix E.

In this study, I completed 27 interviews for a total of over 19 hours. A list of these is in Appendix F. I coded interview data in the same manner as the field observations and I describe this coding method later in this chapter.

Artifacts. Artifact collection is an important source of data in an ethnography, as information placed in written form has added meaning. Why take time to write something when is it often faster to communicate orally? Why and how was the document distributed? Written documents are part of the process of institutionalizing norms, policies, and communications in the school.

Within communities of practice, Wenger (1998) described reification as “the process of giving form to our experience by producing objects that congeal this experience into ‘thingness.’ In so doing so we create points of focus around which the negotiation of meaning becomes organized” (p. 58). Artifacts are these objects, and a view to the negotiation of meaning in Jogo High School. These artifacts are also important in terms of communication in the school considering the focus of ethnography of communication. Saville-Troike (2003) points out that artifacts can help “in discovering how a speech community organizes experience in relation to language” (p. 93).

In addition to written documents, I took photographs of various locations and elements of Jogo High School. These photographs helped me to revisit locations and times as I analyzed data. Although photographs are referred to as capturing a moment, I realize that my choice of when and where to photograph influences the summaries I wrote about the pictures. As Sontag (1978) suggested: “nobody ever discovered ugliness through photographs. But many, through photographs, have discovered beauty” (p. 78). My selection of what I photographed influenced the image of Jogo High School created by these photographs.

I completed written summaries of artifacts were and used these for data analysis. I determined the relevancy of documents by looking at the authenticity, credibility,

representativeness, and meaning (Scott, 1990) of the documents. I describe the methods for coding these written summaries later in this chapter. The list of analyzed documents is in Appendix G. Documents in this study include more than paper based artifacts, but also information contained in technology such as websites, emails (Adams & Thompson, 2011), and photographs of artifacts.

Focus Groups. In this study I utilized focus groups (Morgan, 1997, 2010; Morgan & Bottorff, 2010; Murdoch, Poland, & Salter, 2010) with students. My purpose for using focus groups was two-fold. First, focus groups allowed for a sampling of a larger number of people than would have been allowed in the same time frame using interviews. Although the level of detail could be less, there is the added benefit of participant interaction; this was not a factor in interviews. Participant interaction or the co-construction of meaning could come in the form of agreement or disagreement among the participants adding another layer to the data. Second, students might be more willing to communicate when interacting with peers than in an interview with an adult who is also a teacher in the same school. I also hoped that the use of focus groups helped to limit any teacher-student power interactions.

Focus group data contributed to a triangulation of data and provided another perspective on the school. I transcribed and coded focus group data in the same manner as the interview data. Focus groups brought in another perspective on teachers in Jogo high school. The list of completed focus groups is in Appendix H.

Research Journal. I kept a research journal using Microsoft Word from early 2011. This journal served as a record of the processing and collection of data. Beyond simply a list of data collection dates and times, the journal also contained reflections on related literature, and recordings of informal observations and exchanges. Concerning the processing of data, I used the journal to record notes from Skype and email interactions with my advisor, self-reflections on data collection methodology, possible pre-coding categories, and as a platform for self-reflection.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was an ongoing process starting from the initial phases of data collection. The main components of data analysis consisted of three stages of coding, pre-coding, first cycle, and second cycle coding. My purpose for coding was to reduce the large volume of data into manageable units. To assist in coding, I used NVivo 10 for Mac Beta qualitative data analysis software version 10.0.2. I coded audio files of interviews, transcriptions of interviews, field notes, research journal entries, and artifacts were coded using this software.

As I collected data, I pre-coded items of interest by making notations or including written reactions in my research journal. Pre-coding included the notation of key words or ideals of interest to this study. I then used these research journal entries and notations to inform initial coding possibilities for the first cycle coding stage.

First cycle coding differs from pre-coding because I used it to look at large sections of data using formal coding techniques rather than chunks of data as collected. First cycle coding is often referred to as initial coding. In this study I utilized four styles

of coding to help focus the data analysis. These included in-vivo coding (words of the participants), values coding (values, attitudes, and beliefs of the participants), coding based upon ethnography of communication (speech events and speech acts), and the OCM (outline of cultural materials) (Murdock, 1961).⁴ This list can provide insight and additional ways to view the context of this school. Some examples of codes included informal in-group justice, individual behavior characteristics, and socialization processes.

Second cycle coding looks to build theory by linking first cycle codes into categories. These categories are then used to help develop theory. I continued research journal entries concerning coding during second cycle coding and also coded these entries (Saldaña, 2009).

Positionality

Concern with the positionality and cultural background of the ethnographer becomes even more critical when you consider that the ethnographer's background is the initial framework against with similarities and differences in the studied group are assessed. (Agar, 1996, p. 93)

In this section I discuss issues related to positionality including my introduction to the country of Japan, my position within the study, and more specifically my position in Jogo High School.

⁴ OCM (outline of cultural materials) was developed to provide a numerical system for various objects in anthropological research.
http://www.yale.edu/hraf/Ocm_xml/newOcm.xml

My initial encounter with Japan came in 1997 after graduating from university in the United States with a degree in history. I wanted to become a high school history teacher and felt the experience of teaching and also having the opportunity to visit some of the places I might teach about such as Kyoto or Nara would be invaluable. I also felt the urging of high school teachers and others who had encouraged students to get “out of the neighborhood.” My first year of employment in Japan with an English conversation school led me, with the help of my roommate, to a part-time position in a *juku* [(塾) cram school]. Part-time work became full-time and I became the coordinator of the Conversational English program in the *juku* as well as the English instructor for the attached kindergarten. Within the *juku* all of the classes met twice a week, taught by a team of part-timers. One meeting would be with a native speaker of English and the second meeting would be with a native speaker of Japanese. I supervised this team for two years, before I returned to the United States for graduate study. My increased interest in Japan followed me through my studies at Boston College Lynch Graduate School of Education. I completed a year of student teaching and then was employed as a full-time high school history teacher for the Quincy public school system while I completed my Master’s degree in Education. Still wanting to know more about Japan, I applied and was accepted in the Regional Studies East Asia program at Harvard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. I focused my study on Japanese history, completing my Master’s degree thesis on Japanese educational history and also completed fourth year Japanese language courses.⁵ After graduation I returned to Japan.

⁵ Students completing fourth-year Japanese language courses at Harvard University were prepared, according to instructors, to successfully complete Level 1 of the Japanese

Upon returning to Japan, I was introduced to Jogo High School by the vice-principal of another high school in the same area. I started working as a contract teacher. Most teachers enter the school initially on a contract and this seemed to be a standard practice at the school. After the first year, I was given *sennin* (専任) status or tenure and received a temporary teaching license from the prefectural Board of Education. Working as a licensed teacher in the school provided access and created questions contributing to the start of this study. In 2008, I also started the doctoral program at Temple University Japan and this only fueled my curiosity concerning the high school. With only a small pool of current literature on private schools and the lack of research on larger macro-trends (demographics, licensure and recommendation systems) and their interaction with private schools, I selected this site for my study. I informed the principal of my intention to use the school as the focus of this study and received his verbal approval.

During my eight years of full-time employment at Jogo High School I was assigned to a first-year gakunen once, second-year gakunen four times and a third-year gakunen three times. As a result, I have been part of the second-year gakunen school trips twice to Hokkaido and once to Malaysia and Singapore. Each year I was assigned to a bukai including recruiting and admissions, teacher affairs and student affairs. Since 2006, I had also been the coordinator of the international exchange committee.

Due to the length of time as an active participant in this school, I had encountered a few obstacles such as time constraints and the balancing of two roles in the school. Data

Language Proficiency Test (日本語能力試験). The Level 1 test is the highest level of the exam. The JLPT expanded to 5 levels in 2010. More information can be found at <http://www.jlpt.jp/>.

collection while wearing two hats, as both a worker and a researcher, has advantages and disadvantages. My insider status allowed me access, and was the larger or only legitimate hat in the view of my coworkers. Insider status also hindered some elements of data collection as that larger hat held priority. In addition, insider status provided a sense of familiarity that I needed to try and reject in order to have clarity as I collected and analyzed data (Labaree, 2002). I did not encounter any direct barriers to data collection such as teachers showing opposition to my research, but some situations required my attending to the matters at hand rather than stepping back to observe and take notes. Situations such as a student coming into the *gakunen* area of the teachers' room to apologize for some action called for all the *gakunen* members to stand together as the student spoke; it was not a time for note-taking. McConnell (2003) stated "when the goal of research is the elaboration of cultural meaning, as it was in my study, then every barrier is a potential insight" (p. 126). Understanding the importance of the teachers standing together as the students speaks to the *gakunen* provided an insight and furthered my understanding of the environment despite not being able to take notes until sometime after the event. The few obstacles I encountered had helped me to come to a better understanding of the school.

Bias is a serious threat to this study due to my background and my initial interest in this research. My position as a teacher in the school limited my ability to be a researcher at certain times due to work requirements. My position as a teacher also allowing me access and insight that a non-teacher might otherwise had been kept from experiencing. I had to carefully consider the influence of being a co-worker, supervisor, or teacher to people I interviewed or to the students who took part in the focus groups.

The information given to me by others, and how I received and processed that information all influenced and was influenced by my positionality. The first step to help to control for this bias was to recognize it.

Ethical Considerations

In the following section I discuss ethical considerations in regards to this study. In preparation and as required by Temple University, I completed the online training course “Students conducting no more than minimal risk research” on March 13, 2013 offered by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative at the University of Miami.⁶ In addition, two guidelines are central during all stages of this study. These two are non-maleficence and beneficence.

First, non-maleficence or the obligation to do no harm is the primary ethical consideration in this study. This includes the responsibility to protect individuals and organizations by informed consent, confidentiality, and data security. I detail each of these components in the following paragraphs in this section. In addition, anxiety caused by the study is considered harming participants, therefore I was vigilant to try and limit anxiety for participants during all aspects of data collection.

Beneficence or the intention to do good is the second ethical concern in this study. I believe that I can, in this study, as detailed in Chapter 1 contribute to both the literature and also provide a tool for teachers, administrators and others involved in education to

⁶ More information on the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative at the University of Miami (CITI) can be found at (www.citiprogram.org).

have a better understanding of the interaction between the macro-trends described and private school education. It is with this intention that I have completed this study.

Informed Consent

The chancellor of the school was informed of my purpose and intention to conduct this study and gave his approval. For the initial group of interviews that I conducted in 2010, consent was explained and requested at the beginning of the interview. For subsequent interviews I developed a consent form. Initially I was concerned about the signatures on confidentiality forms as a possible threat to confidentiality as the signatures could be used to identify participants. I considered not requesting signatures on the forms. However, I provided the consent form and requested signatures in all interviews from February 2012. The consent form includes an explanation of the study, expectations of participants and precautions, and it is provided in English and Japanese (see Appendices I and J). Participants had the option of signing one or both of the two language versions of the form. I gave one copy of the signed form to the participants and I retained one copy in a secure location.

Confidentiality

All participants were notified of the confidentiality of data in this study through both formal and informal methods. I provided all formal interview participants with a consent form explaining confidentiality in Japanese and/or English depending upon the preference of the individual.

I have used pseudonyms for all participants in data collection and analysis. The school name and other easily identifiable features were given pseudonyms or omitted. In cases where this was in conflict with data collection, I gave confidentiality priority. Whereas confidentiality was a priority, a commitment to the data was also maintained. As per Wolcott's (2003) admonition "To present the material in such a way that even the people central to the study are 'fooled' by it is to risk removing those aspects that make it vital, unique, believable, and at times painfully personal" (p. 4). Nevertheless, as Agar (2006) discussed, the effectiveness of measures to maintain confidentiality can ultimately only be assessed by the reader.

Data Security

I retained all data on a single laptop computer (MacBook Pro 2012) requiring a password to access, and also backed up the data on two portable hard drives. Both of these drives required a password to access, and I am the only person with this access. I stored consent forms, written field notes, and transcriptions in a private room in a desk. I transferred data from the IC recorder to the laptop computer as soon as possible after each interview. No data were retained on the IC recorder as it was a portable device and used for other purposes.

CHAPTER 4

JOGO HIGH SCHOOL

The understanding of a simple poem, for instance, involves not merely an understanding of the single words in their average significance, but a full comprehension of the whole life of the community as it is mirrored in the words, or as it is suggested by their overtones.

(Sapir, 1949, p. 69)

For anthropologists, making the strange familiar is the usual task. But school is familiar for all of us and in opposition to the task of anthropological research in culturally remote settings, the task of the school ethnographer is to make the familiar strange.

(Gordon, Holland & Lahelma, 2008, p. 188)

Given the nature of ethnographic investigation and the need for an understanding of the world in which my research questions are situated, I present this chapter as a form of lonely planet guide, a primer on the context of this study: Jogo High School. First I explain the origins of the school and the school grounds encompassing it. I follow with a description of the teachers, their working conditions, and responsibilities. Finally, I provide information on the students who dwell in the school. My purpose in this chapter is to provide a fuller understanding of the community that is Jogo High School.

Origins of Jogo High School

In the late 1880s, Methodist missionaries created a simple English reading room, which developed into several educational institutions in just a few years. One of these institutions gained independence as a women's English school in the 1920s. From these origins, Jogo Girls High School was founded in 1940 in the downtown area of a large city in Western Japan. After the post-war population boom in Japan, this urban location became restraining on the growth of the school. In 1982, a ground-breaking ceremony was conducted, and in 1983 the school relocated to a lesser developed area of the same city. This move allowed for an expansion of the school grounds from 5,514 square meters to 43,691 square meters. In addition, the number and size of school buildings and facilities increased. With the introduction of a co-ed student body in 2002, the school changed its name to Jogo High School.

Jogo High School is a Christian school. New teachers coming into the school are approached by the head of the religious studies department and asked if they believe in a supreme being. This belief does not need to be based upon any specific religion so there is a certain freedom. No pledges or formal professions of faith are required. However, new teachers are advised that they must attend the daily chapel service. This initial talk and the daily chapel service is the only direct interaction between the Christian facet of the school and teachers for the duration of their employment.

A board of trustees, which includes former principals, the former and current chancellor, and administrators from Tsuru University, controls the school and approves major financial decisions. The primary source of school revenue during data collection was student tuition, but donations became an increasingly large part of total funding.

School Grounds

Since the move to its new location in 1982, the use of space and money to improve the Jogo High School campus has been a continuing theme. The campus constantly changed due to new construction and during the ten years leading to 2013 this trend accelerated, as shown in Table 7. Construction projects included the addition of new buildings as well as the expansion of current ones. New facilities, such as spectator stands next to the sports grounds, were also added.

Table 7. *Construction at Jogo High School from 2001 to 2012*

Year	New Construction
2001	New cafeteria
2002	Swimming pool
2003	Computer room
2004	Gymnasium
2006	Chapel extended to 800 seats
2009	Campsite
2010	Organ imported from Europe/parents building
2011	New stands around football field/Japanese crafts building
2012	Science building

Note. Adapted from Jogo High School information brochure (Artifacts).

Informal discussions of this trend among teachers, and more formal announcements during meetings in the school, centered on two reasons for these changes. First, improvements were needed to attract students during this time of increased competition among schools. Second, due to poor economic conditions both globally and in Japan, it was cheaper to have construction completed during this time. Dropping from a high of 8.9% in the early 1990s, the prime-lending rate in Japan from 2000 to 2012 fluctuated between 2.40% and 1.70%, creating an environment conducive to the financing of large construction projects (Bank of Japan, 2016). In comparison, the U.S.

prime-lending rate in 1990 was 10.01%, but has gradually decreased and from 2012 to 2014 held steady at 3.25%. In 2015 this rate increased to 3.26% (www.federalreserve.gov/releases/h15/data.htm).

Some of these campus changes included the extension of the chapel (allowing the entire high school to attend services at the same time), the construction of three new buildings, the addition of a set of concrete bleachers, and the resurfacing of the Astro turf sports grounds. In 2011, a new building for traditional Japanese culture-related clubs such as *koto* [(箏) a type of harp] and tea ceremony was constructed behind the pool. In September of 2012, a new two-story science building was completed next to the main school building and a dormitory for students opened near campus.

During the summer of 2012 the school was refitted with an updated public address system to meet new government requirements. At the same time the school was equipped with wireless Internet access in all of the classrooms, meeting rooms, and other rooms where classes could be held. Each room was given a separate password required to access the Internet. As of March 2016, these passwords were not issued to students because rules for Internet use were not yet developed. However, other than cosmetically, change came slowly at Jogo High School.

The campus tends to leave a positive first impression on any visitor. Seen as one approaches from the west, the relatively new facilities, beige with red-tiled roofing in a Spanish mission style, are set against the backdrop of green trees on a hill immediately behind the campus to the east. The overall campus is roughly shaped like an inverted teardrop on a slight declining slope from the southern end to the northern end. From the southernmost point, at the highest elevation on campus, rests a new building constructed

in 2010. This building contains a small chapel, meeting rooms and a kitchen; parents and alumni, on occasion, use it for meetings and other activities. Moving north directly above the first building is the first set of tennis courts used by the soft tennis team. Just north of these courts is the football field used mostly by the football and soccer teams. It is an Astroturf field bracketed by a large concrete grandstand recently constructed on the western side, and a large three-floor rectangular activity building to the east. The activity building houses rooms for all of the sports teams and clubs requiring a changing room such as cheerleading, soccer, and basketball. On the second floor of the building is a large music room for the brass band club, and finally on the third floor is a traditional dojo style room use mainly by the kendo club. Continuing north above the activity building is the school gymnasium. Used by various sports clubs including basketball and volleyball, it is roughly the same size as the activity building, but older, with a more cavernous feel. This building also has a large stage used for large school-wide events, such as Christmas mass and graduation. It is the only building on campus capable of holding both the junior and senior high school student bodies at the same time. Across from the gymnasium just above the football grounds is a second set of tennis courts. Together these buildings and sports grounds fill about half of the campus.

The northern half of the teardrop contains the academic buildings. Bisecting the center of the campus are several parking areas linking the two main gates located on opposite sides of the campus. The eastern gate of the campus is the primary gate and leads to a small rotary in front of the main school building on one side and the gymnasium on the other.

The center island of the rotary contains some greenery and flowers. Parent volunteer groups spend considerable time each term maintaining these flowers, along with others around the campus. At Jogo High School appearance is an important element of the school culture. This is reflected in the time spent by parents to detail the flowers shown in Figure 1. Behind the main school building is a second sports area used for additional parking during large school events such as graduation. This area also houses the school pool and an associated building containing a changing room for students as well as supplies and equipment for pool maintenance.

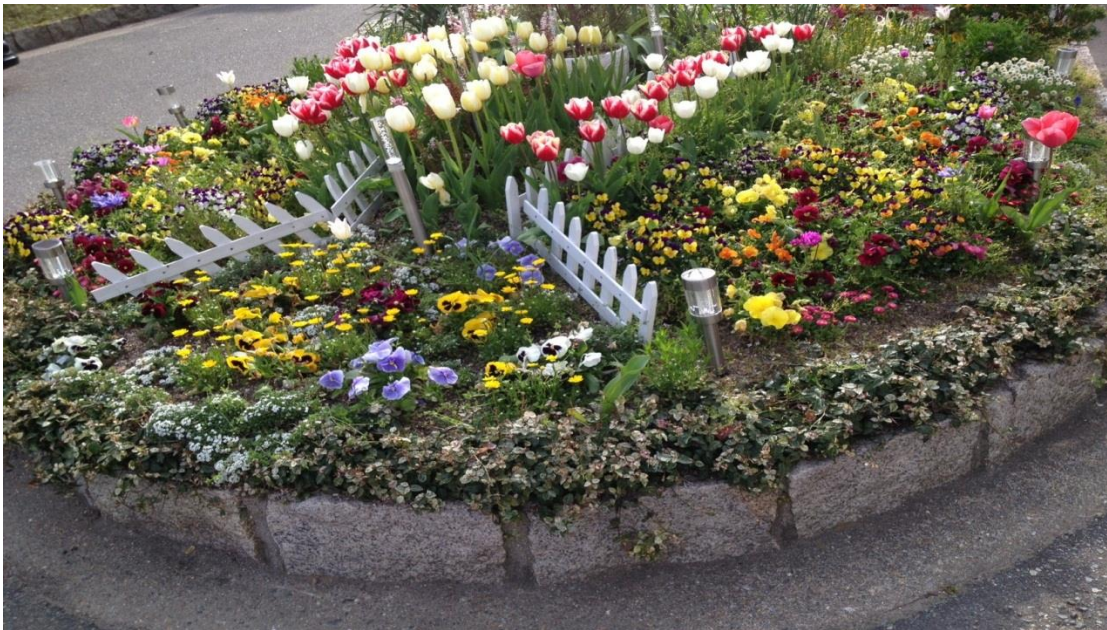


Figure 1. *Flowers outside of the school's main entrance.*

The main school building housing the administrative offices, classrooms, meeting rooms, the teachers' room, is the largest structure on campus. It is shaped like a pentagon with an open courtyard in its center. On the first floor the administrative office greets visitors walking in the main entrance. The eastern side of the building contains the high

school and the western side the junior high school. One gakunen (e.g., first-year high school or tenth grade) is located on each floor. Directly opposite the administrative offices, across the courtyard, are science and computer rooms. The first and second floors have science laboratories and the third floor has one desktop computer room with 38 computers connected to two monitors each. There is also one laptop computer room, where a number of laptops are stored. On the second floor above the administrative office is the teacher's room, the center of daily activity in the school.

Teachers

In the 2012-2013 school year at Jogo High School, there were 76 teachers of which 59 were full-time. In total, 46 teachers were male and 30 were female, with an average age of 45.3. Jogo High School is similar to the national average age for private school teachers, which is 44.1 years of age overall, 45.4 for men, and 40.9 for women (MEXT, 2015a). Mr. Samson, in discussing his experience in a high school other than Jogo High School, related his opinion on why there is a difference in average age between male and female teachers and also why all of the school administration is male.

It was interesting that we are... all of the leadership of the school were all men, the principals, the heads, were... everything, but when they were hiring teachers they would rarely look at hiring a young male teacher. And once I went drinking with the high school vice-principal and I asked him why do you hire young women? And he said first off it is nicer to look at them. Secondly, he goes... some of them will want to make a career out of teaching, but a vast majority of these women, who are very intelligent, who come with very good degrees, and

very good skill sets, many of these women will fall in love, and want to have a family, and then will leave the school somewhere in their late twenties early thirties. And he said they will be paid at a much lower salary rate and they will then resign and then they will hire another 22 year-old... um... female worker to take her place. Have her for ten years and hope that she gets married and resigns as well. And so they are doing this as a cost cutting. When they hire a man they are assuming that they are going to retire this man at their place. They are going to pay him not only the low salary in his early twenties, but they are going to pay him the top salary when he gets to his late fifties and early sixties. And so economics wise it is much smarter for a school to hire young female teachers with the hope that they will get married. (Samson interview, March 6, 2013)

At Jogo High School the chancellor, the principal and the three vice-principals are male. Despite the wide amount of diversity backgrounds, many of the teachers in Jogo High School hold a bachelor's degree from the associated Tsuru University or attended that university's attached high school, Tsuru High School.

All teachers in Jogo High School, including the vice-principals and the principal, are assigned to an academic department as shown in Table 8 below. Academic departments, such as the English Department, schedule teachers to cover different classes by consultation with those teachers. Selection of textbooks is the decision of the teacher in-charge of the class. There are no school-wide testing programs for program support. The role of the academic department in Jogo High School is very limited, as it has almost no influence on the daily practices of teachers in the school. I described this in more detail in Chapter 5.

Table 8. *Teachers in Jogo High School by Department 2011*

Department	Work Status		Gender		Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Male	Female	
Japanese	8	1	6	3	9
Social Studies	8	1	9	0	9
Library Studies	2	0	2	0	2
Mathematics	8	2	6	4	10
Science	6	1	3	4	7
Physical Education	7	2	6	3	9
Music and Art	3	3	2	4	6
English	11	7	10	8	18
Home Economics	2	0	0	2	2
Information/Computer	1	0	0	1	1
Religion	3	0	2	1	3
Totals	59	17	46	30	76

In addition to the full-time faculty there are also 17 part-time teachers. These teachers are not required to attend daily meetings, are not assigned to any committees, nor are they responsible for any student clubs; they are only responsible for their assigned classes. Part-time teachers are often only on campus until the end of their teaching assignment, when they are able to leave.

In addition to the majority of teachers in Jogo High School who hold Japanese citizenship there are teachers with Korean, Canadian, American, and British citizenship. I describe them as holding citizenship other than Japanese because the majority of these teachers were born in Japan. This includes one of the teachers who holds American citizenship. They fall along a continuum of Japanese language, culture, and self-identity. Most of the Japanese-Korean teachers were born in Japan, speak Japanese as their native language, and move smoothly in Japanese culture, but often self-identify as non-Japanese. One teacher, who held Chinese citizenship and grew up speaking Japanese as his native language, has a traditional Japanese name. He changed his citizenship to

Japanese, and identifies as Japanese. In Japan, teachers in kindergarten, elementary, junior high and senior high school must acquire and maintain the appropriate teacher certification for their level if they are to stand before classrooms of students. Teachers who do not have such certification are assigned to assist a teacher who does. These assisting teachers are often seen in foreign language classes and are called Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) in the Basic Plan of Education prepared by the Ministry of Education. They often shift between various classes during the day and perform administrative tasks, though they have a minimized role in the actual assigning of grades. The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program is probably the most well-known ALT program in Japan (see McConnell, 2000, 2002, and 2003 for a description of the JET program). At Jogo High School, none of the teachers who are non-native speakers of Japanese are assigned as ALTs and three of the four hold teaching licenses issued by the Prefectural Board of Education.

All of the non-native speakers of Japanese have some level of Japanese language ability ranging from limited verbal communicative competence where the individual frequently reverts to English or asks for assistance, to a high level of fluency where the teacher is treated as a native speaker of Japanese in all regards. Regardless of language ability, all of these teachers are required to participate fully in required duties such as phone duty, morning duty, and camps (these duties are detailed later in this chapter). The lower language ability of some teachers has caused some difficulty because a large part of communication in the school is in the form of written Japanese. Memos, announcements, and all paper-based communication in Jogo High School are written in Japanese. Some positions in the school require teachers to deal with a large amount of

written Japanese. For example, when I was in-charge of the international committee I was required to answer surveys from the Prefectural government concerning the school's international activities. In addition, I had to translate grade reports from overseas schools into Japanese so that other members of the study abroad credit granting group, a sub-committee in the international committee which I chaired, would be able to review paperwork such as report cards, letters, and other evidence of student's work while overseas when considering whether or not to grant credit to a Jogo High School student for their study abroad experience. In another example, Mr. York, was in charge of the student government and was required to review and approve all sport and club activities budgets. This was all completed in Japanese. Teachers with limited Japanese ability would not be able to fulfill the requirements of these jobs.

In terms of community of practice, this is not to say differences limit participation. As Wenger (1998) stated, "homogeneity is neither a requirement for, nor the result of, the development of a community of practice" (p. 76). If a teacher with limited language ability makes an effort to improve their Japanese language ability and to understand the shared repertoire within the gakunen community of practice, an inbound trajectory to full participation can be maintained. In contrast, less of an effort or even an avoidance of Japanese language usage can hamper how an individual accesses the shared repertoire of the community of practice which includes memos, written school regulations, student records, stories and other verbal and written communication, leading to a peripheral or even outbound trajectory.

Gakunen, Sections, and Committees

Teachers in Jogo High School are assigned to a number of different positions in the school. These include a *gakunen*, a section, and sometimes one or more committees. These assignments do not hold equal requirements of time and effort. The center of work, accountability, and meaning for the majority of teachers is the *gakunen*.

Gakunen. Except for the principal, vice-principals, and heads of each section, all teachers in Jogo High School are assigned to a *gakunen*. Within each *gakunen* there is one head of the *gakunen*, a number of homeroom teachers and some *gakunenzuki* [(学年付) non-homeroom teachers or votaries]. Votaries are responsible for the entire *gakunen*, filling in for homeroom teachers, and supporting the overall work of the *gakunen*. Other English references to *gakunenzuki* include “additional faculty assigned to the *gakunen*” or “designated to the *gakunen*”, however, these terms have the connotation of supplemental, which does not reflect the reality of the situation. *Gakunenzuki* in Jogo High School are a core element of the *gakunen* practice. In Japanese the term *gakunenzuki* sounds similar to *gakunensuki* [(学年好き) like or love the *gakunen*] and this is used as a joke in Jogo High School usually heard when *gakunen* assignments are announced. This idea embodies the devotion to the *gakunen* that is central to the practice of teachers so I have decided to use the English term “votaries” to represent *gakunenzuki* in this context. The principal in consultation with the vice-principals decide the head of the *gakunen*. From that point, the head of the *gakunen* might be consulted about the other members of his or her future *gakunen*. Homeroom teachers are sometimes continued

from the previous year, for example, first-year high school homeroom teachers become second-year high school teachers. Teachers assigned to a homeroom are responsible for about 40 students and the associated paperwork. All teachers assigned to a gakunen are equally responsible for the students in the year-group.

Gakunen assignments are often described in conversation as being “needed.” This “need” depends upon the gakunen. One example comes from my second year at Jogo High School. When I first entered Jogo High School I was assigned to the first-year of high school, which was also the first co-educational gakunen in the school. During my second year, this same gakunen had the school’s first co-educational school trip. I was a member of a three-teacher team to plan the school trip and participated in the planning trip to Hokkaido with the same teachers and a person from the travel company supporting the trip. Near the end of my second year I was called into the principal’s office and told that the following year I would not move to the third-year high school with the same group of students I had taught the previous two years. The school wanted a teacher with experience to help the following gakunen to plan and attend the school trip because none of the teachers had experience with a co-educational school trip.

Teachers described as having ability are needed in a gakunen to take care of students. The gakunen controls a large part of what a teacher does on a typical day including when teachers are able to have lunch and when they are able to go home for the day. For example, gakunen teachers who do not have a first period class are sometimes assigned to stand near the first floor entrance to the school to counsel students arriving late to school. Beyond the gakunen, teachers are assigned to sections, committees and other jobs. I explain each of these in the following sections.

Sections. The *gakunen* is primarily responsible for the daily interaction with students. Other aspects of running the school are specialized in various sections. All full-time teachers in the high school are assigned to one of five sections. These include *soumubu* [(総務部) teacher administration/non-academic issues], *kyomubu* [(教務部) academic affairs], *seitobu* [(生徒部) student affairs], *kikakukouhobu* [(企画広報部) admissions and school promotion], and *shyukyoubu* [(宗教部) religious affairs]. One addition section, *shinrobu* [(進路部) student advancement to university and jobs], was eliminated in 2006 due to the switch to the recommendation system for the majority of student's university admissions.

Teacher assignment to sections is generally determined by the *gakunen*. The school administration allocates slots for different sections to each *gakunen* and during the first *gakunen* meeting of the year teachers mutually negotiate who will take each assigned slot. Some sections, such as admissions, do not require a large number of teachers so only a few *gakunen* will receive a slot for that section. Other sections are important for the running of the *gakunen*. For example, at least two teachers in every *gakunen* are assigned to the student affairs section and one is assigned to the academic affairs section.

Section meetings are scheduled on the school calendar at regular intervals alternating with teacher meetings. The head of each section and sometimes assistants to the head as well are not assigned to a *gakunen*. There is also a clear ranking of sections. Some teachers describe *seitobu* and *kyoumubu* as requiring teachers “with ability”. In

contrast, they describe *soumubu* as for teachers who want to “avoid work” or “can’t do more important work.”

Committees. In addition to sections, some teachers are assigned to an *iinkai* [(委員会) committee]. As of the 2012-2013 academic year, there were 16 committees in the school. These include the reading/library committee, research course committee, counseling committee, information committee, safety committee, curriculum committee, camp committee, international committee, school trip committee, cafeteria committee, and the university recommendation committee. Teacher assignments to committees vary, from zero to five or six, according to the abilities of the teacher, special knowledge of the teacher or the needs of the committee. Most teachers are assigned to one or two committees and this is sometimes connected to other work assignments. For example, all third-year *gakunen* high school teachers are automatically assigned to the university recommendation committee and all teachers responsible for the two-year research class are also members of the research course committee. Therefore, if a third-year *gakunen* member teaches a research class he or she is automatically assigned to two committees before any other assignments. In other cases, a teacher might not be assigned any committee work. Committee meetings are not listed on the school calendar and are only held when arranged by the head of each committee.

The workload and time commitment required by each committee vary considerably. For example, the international committee oversees several student exchange programs each year, reports exchange information to the prefectural

government, interviews outgoing exchange students, tracks them, and reviews the students' records after their return to Jogo High School from overseas to decide if credit is given for their one year of study abroad. This requires a considerable amount of time. Once a student returns from a year of study abroad, the committee must gather records of the student's work overseas, follow up with the host school if there are questions, prepare a recommendation report, and schedule a meeting with the committee members and the student. After this initial meeting a second meeting is scheduled with the student's parents to explain the committee decision and the administrative processes that follow. In comparison, the reading/library committee meets once or twice a year to provide information on course requirements.

Duties, camps and clubs

Beyond gakunen responsibility, sections, and committees, teachers in Jogo High School have a number of other scheduled activities including duties, camps, and clubs. Duties such as phone duty, morning duty, and blue light duty can consume a large part of a teacher's workday and are often the cause of a teacher coming into work earlier than the standard starting time or staying late into the evening. I explain these scheduled duties, camps, and clubs in order below.

Phone duty. Given the centrality of the teacher's role in interacting with students, teachers, not the administrative office, take all incoming calls into the school. All teachers attend to the phones, but each day two teachers are assigned to phone duty on a rotating basis usually resulting in duty once every two months. If a teacher has a

scheduling conflict it is that teacher's responsibility to ask other teachers to switch days. From Monday to Friday teachers assigned to phone duty are required to be in school from 08:00 a.m. to 18:30 p.m. During the winter from November to February phone duty ends 30 minutes earlier at 18:00 p.m. On Saturdays phone duty runs from 08:00 a.m. to 17:00 p.m. Phone duty is not assigned on Sundays, national holidays, or for two weeks in mid-August (Aug. 10-23 in 2012) when the school is officially closed. Outside of these two weeks, two teachers are assigned to attend the phones every day during the summer.

Phone duty encompasses more than simply answering the phone. Approximately 30 minutes before the end of the phone duty assignment the two teachers walk around the school and check each room to make sure lights are off, heating or air conditioning is off, windows are closed and locked, curtains are pulled back, and students have gone home. Finally a logbook entry is completed. Teachers assigned to phone duty copy the information from the club practice times and locations display in the teachers' room (see Figure 7) into the logbook along with other information such as the day's weather, a list of the day's meetings, the names of teachers on duty, start time, end time, and major school events for that day. The phone duty logbooks for the current year along with logbooks for the past two years are kept on the high school vice-principal's desk.

Morning and blue light duty. Morning duty changed gradually from 2004 to 2012. Initially two teachers were assigned, one at each of the main gates of the school to greet the students in the morning. Teachers standing at the entrance to a school as students enter in the morning are a standard practice in Japan. During the *Gakko Kyoiku Ron* [(学校教育論) Theory of School Education] course I attended at Tsuru University,

the only guest speaker to visit the class discussed the importance of greetings during morning duty to better understand and quickly notice students who might be troubled. This type of activity is not limited to teachers. Sometimes students are also assigned with teachers to stand at the entrance to the school in the morning.

During the data collection period, morning duty expanded to seven teachers each morning. One teacher was assigned to each campus gate, another was assigned to a bus stop located across the street from the school, and three more were assigned to various locations around the subway station located approximately ten minutes away from the school by foot. These teachers acted as crossing guards ensuring students crossed the street in an orderly fashion and walked on the right side of the sidewalk so as not to cause trouble for other people using the sidewalk. They also greeted the students. Generally, cars stop for people in a crosswalk and on school mornings this could cause traffic delays as large numbers of students commute to school. In order to avoid causing traffic delays, teachers assigned to morning duty keep students from inhibiting traffic by stopping students from entering the crosswalk if this could slow traffic.

Finally, two teachers are assigned to blue light duty. The school purchased a car and installed a blue light (in Japan emergency vehicles such as fire apparatus and police patrol cars utilize red lights) for teachers to use in the morning to drive in the neighborhood of the school to observe students as they commute to school. Across Japan, parents and neighborhood volunteers assist the flow of students to elementary schools. This works to both observe students and to show people outside of the school the effort the school is making.

Schools have a stake in how the outside world (soto) perceives them. Students, as it were, are the 'face' of any school, and thus it is not surprising that school authorities show great concern for how they present themselves when commuting to and from school. (McVeigh, 2000, p. 65)

A student affairs section meeting reinforced this concept. As phone complaints concerning students travelling to and from school were discussed, one teacher asked if the names or contact information of the people calling in complaints were recorded. The section leader stated this information was not recorded nor was it requested. Another teacher suggested complaints should not be taken as seriously if the caller was not willing to provide their name. The section leader responded saying this was not going to happen and it was important to respond to all complaints in the same manner (Field notes Nov. 24, 2010). Teachers on morning duty wear armbands with the school name clearly displayed. Because the students know the teachers by sight, many teachers understand that the armband is for people outside of the school community. It is considered important to show the outside world that the school is trying to be a good neighbor.

Jogo High School is responsible for students from the moment they leave their house in the morning until they return home. Students are required to use public transportation or walk to school. They cannot use bicycles nor can they accept rides to school. Because there is public transportation within walking distance to the school, bicycles are seen as an unnecessary liability.

Camps. The workload continues into the summer with clubs and camps. The school has several camps during the summer on two islands in the inland sea. During the summer of 2012, 28 teachers rotated between the camps with an average stay of over nine days. That summer, two teachers stayed for 27 straight days. Camp participation is often dependent upon a teacher's *gakunen*, committee work, or academic department.

Several camps are organized by *gakunen*. In order to provide new students with an orientation to the school and to introduce them to the culture of the school, all first-year junior high school students are required to attend a short camp in April. All teachers assigned to the first-year of junior high school are required to attend, along with additional teachers to support the camp. A similar camp is held for first-year high school students, with the same mandatory attendance for teachers assigned to the first-year high school *gakunen*.

Academic departments also hold camps. Each summer, there is a junior high school English camp as well as a high school English camp, both of which usually run for three days and two nights. Members of the English department are responsible for contacting the camp committee for scheduling, communicating with the camp site staff, arranging a budget, making a camp schedule, purchasing food, eliciting parent volunteers, organizing other teachers (such as having a member of the religion committee on hand to do a morning prayer service), and for arranging transportation for students and staff.

The sheer number of camps is a burden logistically with the associated scheduling of teachers, transportation, facilities, volunteers, parents, supplies, and food. A camp committee is responsible for the overall planning of camps throughout the year. Most

members of this committee spend the majority of their summer attending several of the simultaneously run camps. Mr. Inaba commented on being a member of the camp committee during an interview “I had some days off in summer holidays but very few, I think I had two days off” (Inaba interview, November 26, 2012). These two days included weekends and holidays.

Clubs. All teachers in Jogo High School are assigned to one or more clubs. These clubs include both culture-related clubs such as the tea ceremony club, and sports clubs such as soccer. Culture clubs generally have less time commitment than sports clubs, however they usually are assigned two teachers. Sports clubs, in contrast, require much more time and often have three teachers assigned to each club. Mr. Inaba described his time associated with the soccer club as large commitment not just to students, but to parents as well.

The responsibility is huge. And the coach must take care of like parents’ matters, organize some parents’ meetings or have to meet some expectation from the parent and often the coach will be called by the parents about their, you know, attitude towards the players. (Inaba interview, March 21, 2013)

Clubs require explanation meetings for parents, as well as frequent updates so families can plan for tournaments, practices, and other sports club events.

When I entered Jogo High School, I was assigned to the basketball club which included four teams: girl’s junior high school, boy’s junior high school, girl’s high school, and boy’s high school. Almost every day including weekends, the teams had practice and when a club has practice one of the assigned teachers must stay with the club or in a place on campus where club members can easily contact him or her if they have

questions or if there is a problem. According to school rules, one of the teachers assigned to a club must make sure all of the students have left the campus at the end of the day. Not just staying late, but coming in early is part of the club experience for teachers. Once or twice a week, as head coach of the girl's junior high school basketball team, I had morning practice from 07:00 a.m. until just before the morning meeting.

Beyond meetings and practices, the basketball club also participated in tournaments. In preparation for these tournaments, I was asked to attend a prefectural basketball referee club to be certified as a junior and senior high school basketball referee. Most tournaments take place on long weekends and on holidays, requiring teachers to lose what would otherwise be time off from work. Even if Jogo High School's team lost early in the tournament I would often need to attend until the end due to referee duties. During my first several months at Jogo High School having a day off per week was rare. Teachers at Jogo High School commit a large amount of time to some club activities.

Teachers are better able to respond to students' needs because of the amount of time they commit to extra-curricular activities. Jogo High School teachers are involved with a wide range of activities such as sections, committees, duties, camps, and clubs. These appear to be diverse activities, but all call on teachers to devote time to students and are seen by teachers as supporting the students of Jogo High School. The following section details the students at the center of these teacher activities.

Students

Jogo High School is the center of daily activity for not only a group of teachers, also a large group of students. In this section, I provide a description of these students. I divide this description into two parts. The first part is a description of the student body and the second part is a description of the classes these students attend.

The Student Body

The 2012 Jogo High School student body of 642 students was co-educational with slightly more female students than male (55% female). The average age for first-year students was 16 and for graduating students was 18. There were 1,134 students enrolled for the 2012-2013 school year as shown in Table 9. This number has not been constant over the past 20-25 years. From a high of 1,860 students (both junior and senior high schools) in 1988 the student population dwindled to a low of 884 in 2001.

Table 9. *Students by Grade in Jogo Junior-Senior High School 2012*

Grade	Number of classes	Male	Female	Total
First-year JRHS	4	74	82	156
Second-year JRHS	4	73	93	166
Third-year JRHS	4	77	93	170
First-year HS	6	80	124	204
Second-year HS	6	92	136	228
Third-year HS	5	92	118	210

Note. JRHS = junior high school; HS = high school.

In 2002, with the transition from a girls' school to a co-educational model, the student body increased to 987 and has seen a steady increase each year.

Jogo High School is not simply a local private school. Students are mostly recruited from Western Japan, but also from farther away, including a small number of students (less than ten) from international locations such as Singapore and the United States. This results in the student body encompassing a wide geographical area. Students recruited from overseas often have family in the local area or move into Jogo High School's small dormitory located a few blocks from the main campus. However, the majority of the student body faces a long commute on public transportation. As shown on Table 10, the commute for most students takes over an hour each way.

All students are required to complete paperwork detailing their route to and from school using public transportation. The gakunen keeps this information, allowing teachers to understand if train delays or other public transportation issues affect their students. Beyond the wide geographical area of the student body displayed by the long commute time facing most students; the substantial financial commitment required by Jogo High School is an indicator of the socioeconomic background of the student body.

Table 10. *Student Travel Time to Jogo High School One Way 2012*

Grade	Less than 30 minutes	More than 30 minutes	More than 60 minutes	More than 90 minutes	More than 120 minutes
First-year JRHS	15	60	76	4	1
Second-year JRHS	18	39	95	14	0
Third-year JRHS	19	51	89	11	0
First-year HS	17	65	113	6	2
Second-year HS	20	91	101	13	0
Third-year HS	19	89	91	8	1
Total	108	395	565	56	4

Note. JRHS = junior high school; HS = high school.

Because I did not have access to the family income of individual students, a good indicator of the relatively high socioeconomic background of the student body is the financial commitment required by Jogo High School. This financial commitment to attend Jogo High School is not small. During data collection, the exchange rate in December 2012 was 1 U.S. dollar = 82 Japanese yen, which calculates the total for the first year at Jogo High School as \$11,536. Using the exchange rate as of July 2016 which is 1 U.S. dollar = 106 Japanese yen calculates the total of \$8,925 for the first year of high school.⁷ This total includes an activities fee supporting the clubs and sports program. All students regardless of level of involvement in these programs pay this fee. Classrooms in Jogo High School have heating and air conditioning, the costs of which are reflected in the heating and cooling fee. If a gakunen decides that all students in that year-group should read a certain book, or if a teacher wants to purchase poster board for class presentations, then the money pooled together from the educational materials fee can be applied. In addition to the tuition and fees listed in Table 11, Jogo High School asks for a donation of 200,000 yen from the family of each student entering the school to help support various programs.⁸

⁷ In comparison, the first year tuition for the private Christian affiliated Catholic Memorial High School in Boston was \$17,900 for 2015-2016 not including private or public support that families might receive. The tuition for a similar school in Boston with a recommendation system to an attached university, Boston College High School, was \$19,400 for the 2016-2017 academic year.

⁸ The Japanese government has lowered the tax allowance for private school donations from 5,000 yen to 2,000 yen in 2010. It has also increased the maximum allowable deduction from 25% to 30 % of income in 2005 and from 30% to 40% of income in 2007.

Table 11. *Entrance Fee and Tuition at Jogo High School 2012*

	Yen
Tuition	408,000
Activities Fee	193,000
Educational materials fee	20,000
Heating and cooling fee	25,000
Subtotal	646,000
Entrance fee (entering students only)	300,000
Total for first year	946,000

The estimated three-year total cost for students entering Jogo High School in 2012 is 2,238,000 yen. Using the July 2016 exchange rate this equals 21,113 U.S. dollars. This is an excessive burden for families holding a lower socioeconomic status and thus those students might not be able to attend Jogo High School due to the limited financial support available to families. During an informal conversation with a member of the Jogo High School administrative office on August 28, 2016, there are just a few loans and grants available with less than 1% of Jogo High School students receiving some type of aid. The substantial financial burden and the expectation of a large donation to the school indicate that the administration considers the students as holding a high socioeconomic position in Japanese society.

Classes

Over a five-day week running from Monday to Friday students attend approximately 32 class-hours (see Appendix K for a list of class hours by gakunen). This number does not include additional classes held after school or on Saturdays. Most days are divided into six periods of 45 minutes each except for Mondays, which have an

additional class period running from 15:10 p.m. to 15:55 p.m. Homeroom starts in the morning at 08:30 a.m. and the first period starts at 08:40 a.m. Two class periods are conducted then the student body moves to the chapel for a prayer service scheduled for 10:30 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. Two more class periods follow chapel before the lunch period from 12:40 p.m. to 13:20 p.m. After lunch are two more periods of classes before students start cleaning, take part in clubs, and attend special classes such as the Eiken Test preparation.

Students assigned to a class, such as A class first-year high school, stay in the same room for the majority of their classes during the day. Teachers move to the students' room to teach. Student assignment is not based on ability, rather meetings are held at the end of the prior academic year after new gakunen teacher assignments are announced where teachers discuss which students should be assigned to which classroom. Some elements of the decision process include separating possible boyfriend/girlfriend couples, separating students who have had conflicts with each other in the past, providing students with leadership ability to each class, and pairing students with greater subject matter abilities with students with weaker abilities in order to provide support. The matching of students with different abilities is seen to not only benefits the student being supported by the faster learner, but is seen as beneficial to the fast learner as well. This strategy is helpful with large class sizes as it provides individualized small group or pair practice in the following way.

Rapid learners can help those who are slower, and students who do not understand can ask questions of the fast learners. The fast learners, in turn, benefit from being placed in the position of clarifying their understanding as they explain and expand the discussion along the lines of the questions raised by the slower students. (Stevenson, 2002 p. 98)

While classes are not streamed by ability and the majority of classes are required, there is some flexibility in the curriculum.

This flexibility comes in the form of elective courses. For second-year high school, these elective courses include English literature, Chemistry, Music, Arts and Crafts, and Classical Japanese. The electives for third-year high school include Biology, English, Mathematics (Problem-Solving), Mathematics (Special Course), Art, Music, International Politics and Economics, Peace Studies, and Law. During the final term for third-year high school students there are no regular classes, however, there are special second foreign language classes.

All third-year students must attend a special second foreign language class. They select one foreign language class out of German, French, Chinese, Korean, or Spanish. The students do not receive a grade nor do they receive credit for this course. It is to provide them a slight advantage at the university level and in return, at least from the view of Jogo High School, to make the school look better to Tsuru University. It is believed by the administration that students from Jogo High School should have a slight advantage over peers from other schools who might not have any prior exposure to a language encountered in a beginning foreign language course such as French. This initial advantage is important due to the perception that Tsuru University tracks the performance of students from different schools that have entered through the recommendation system.

Conclusion

This chapter detailed the Jogo High School campus as well as the teachers and students connected with the work and study that goes on in the school. The campus is new, appealing, and in flux, as it has undergone almost constant change during the time of this study. In addition, the teachers of Jogo High School have changed both in makeup and in the nature of the everyday work performed. The shift to a co-educational model is, perhaps, the most easily recognizable change at Jogo High School. This shift underscores larger macro-trends such as demographics and university entrance requirements in education in Japan. These changes influence practice in Jogo High School. Practice, for teachers, is found within the *gakunen*. In the following chapter I show how time and space is organized in Jogo High School to support the central role of the *gakunen*.

CHAPTER 5
THE PRACTICES OF A JOGO HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER

The context of practice connotes doing, but not just in and of itself. It is doing in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what we do.

(Wenger, 1998, p. 47)

Identity n. 1. the state of being identical, absolute sameness. 2. The condition of being a specified person or thing.

(Ehrlich, Flexner, Carruth, & Hawkins, 1980, p. 434)

Exemplary teachers are those teachers that continually lay a firm foundation for learning even while using the bricks politicians have thrown at them.

(Meehan, 2016)

In this chapter, I address the first research question described in this study:

- 1 How do teachers in this school negotiate meaning within the private school environment?
 - 1a How do peer interactions influence teacher practice within this context?
 - 1b What process, if any, is in place for teacher accountability?

In this chapter, I also argue that the only true community of practice for a teacher in Jogo High School is the *gakunen*. I address the research questions through this discussion of the *gakunen* community of practice. The *gakunen*, as the only community of practice for

teachers, is demonstrated in the details of the practice of Jogo High School teachers in three sections focusing on identity, centrality in terms of space and time, and alignment with the larger practices of Jogo High School.

To illustrate the importance of the *gakunen*, in the first section of this chapter I provide an account of the identity shift associated with new teachers entering the school. New teachers are hired to teach a specific subject matter such as mathematics or science, however, their identity starts to shift away from being the teacher of an academic subject to an identity of a *gakunen* member as soon as they are assigned a desk. In this section I address how teachers negotiate meaning in the school as they make this transition.

In the second section I explain the centrality of the *gakunen* in terms of space and time. While also facilitating the various satellite activities and commitments of teachers, the layout of the teachers' room is primarily designed to facilitate the practice of the *gakunen*. The teachers' room description provides examples of both the influence of peer practices and accountability in relation to the *gakunen*. Next, in terms of time, a typical day at Jogo High School is examined. As we will see, teachers in Jogo High School teach a number of classes each day, but the school day starts and finishes with the *gakunen*. In addition, there are points during the day when the teachers are refocused entirely upon the work of the *gakunen*. This organization of time helps with the negotiation of meaning and provides a framework for teacher accountability.

In the third section I focus on how the *gakunen* community of practice aligns within the larger constellation of practices that make up Jogo High School. The general teachers' meetings provide a window upon this alignment. These meetings also serve as a point of contrast with the *gakunen* meetings as an example of the different roles these

meetings play for teachers in the school. In this final section I address the research questions discussed in this chapter. In the following section I discuss the transition of new teachers to Jogo High School, as they become members of a *gakunen*.

Teacher Identity in Jogo High School

Teacher identity in Jogo High School is linked to the *gakunen*. The identity of new teachers, at least initially, is associated with the academic discipline they are trained to teach, but it soon shifts to being shaped by the work of the *gakunen*. Passion for the subject the teacher studied in university, a desire to know more, or the allocation of time to the subject are all outward manifestations of the self-identification a teacher might hold with their subject area. This identification is displayed when teachers meet others outside of school and introduce themselves in relation to the subject they teach using phrases such as “I teach math at Jogo High School.” If the conversation continues it eventually leads to the *gakunen* assignment and the work associated with that *gakunen*. For example, second-year *gakunen* teachers might talk about the school trip while first-year *gakunen* teachers talk about helping students adjust to high school. Inside Jogo High School, teachers are referenced according to their *gakunen*. This transition from subject matter teacher to *gakunen* member starts with the hiring process. Hiring practices both in private and public schools have a connection with identity. In the next section I describe this connection.

Getting a Job

The hiring practices of Jogo High School stand in stark contrast to the public school system. Public school systems typically receive a large number of applicants, making a written hiring test the most practical way to start the hiring process. In 2013, for public high school employment in Japan, 37,812 teachers took an employment exam and only 4,912 were hired (MEXT, 2016a).

The city of Kobe provides a more focused example I found in another study that “by February of 2010, the Kobe City Board of Education received just over 2,800 applications for only 390 available positions” scheduled to start in April of 2011 (Ferguson & Derrah, 2010). The large number of applicants in the Kobe City public school system requires the use of several stages in the hiring process that runs from July to September for teachers who start the following April. This process includes an exam and one or possibly two interviews. The purpose of the exam given to applicants is to create a hiring list. The exam has two sections: one on general education and one on the academic subject the applicant wishes to teach. After the hiring list is created, applicants are called for the second phase of the hiring process according to their order on the list. The second phase is a group interview during which applicants discuss various issues concerning education. If required, a third stage is included in the process focusing much closer on the abilities of the applicant within the subject they wish to teach. In contrast, Jogo High School does not use a test in its hiring process.

Unlike the public school process, hiring at Jogo High School is often based upon introductions by current faculty or individuals associated with the school when there is an opening in an academic department, such as math, science, or history. After being

introduced to the school these prospective teachers meet certain members of the school staff, often including the principal, vice-principals, and department head, who interview and informally evaluate the candidate. However, the chancellor holds unilateral power over hiring decisions. My personal entry into Jogo High School illustrates this point.

After completing my studies at Harvard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, I returned to Japan and was introduced by a friend to the vice-principal of a private high school. This vice-principal was a Japanese history teacher and was interested in what I had studied at graduate school, so he asked me to come and do a talk for his history class. During a conversation after the class I mentioned that I had just returned and was actively seeking employment. He called the principal of Jogo High School and set up an interview. Approximately a week later the vice-principal, the head of the English department, and the head of the office interviewed me. They stated the job was part-time and that if the first year went well there was the possibility of the position becoming full-time the following year. Just before noon, the principal, who would be promoted to chancellor in 2006, came into the room and asked me to go to lunch with him. The two of us went to the cafeteria and talked over lunch. Near the end of our meal he smiled and told me to ignore what I heard earlier concerning a part-time position, salary, and benefits. He said I would start full-time with a one-year contract and then receive tenure the following year as long as both sides agreed. We went back to his office where he called a member of the front office to come up and explain the salary and benefits of the position to me. The conditions seemed very generous. I started the following April as a teacher assigned to the first-year of high school. I was also placed on several committees, and became the assistant coach to the basketball team.

On the rare occasion when the school is unable to find a suitable candidate, a public search is conducted by the posting of advertisements for the position. When applications are required they are filled with details on the person's knowledge of a subject and their ability to teach it. For the English Department this might include details such as the candidate's TOEFL or TOEIC score, activities associated with English speaking clubs, and awards received by students the candidate advised. From 2004 to 2012, the English Department made one public announcement to hire a new faculty member. During the same time period the school hired four full-time English Department faculty members and a small number of part-time teachers. The introduction of prospective teachers by people in or associated with Jogo High School is the preferred method to bring new teachers into the school.

A Shift in Identity

The introduction of new teachers to Jogo High School starts their inbound trajectory into the *gakuren* community of practice. This introduction by an insider, in contrast to an exam or public advertisement, is significant. Rather than focusing on the academic ability in the subject to be taught, the introduction includes a recommendation on the ability of the prospective teacher to work well with others. The practice of the *gakuren* depends upon the interpersonal relationships of the members of the *gakuren* and not their ability to teach an academic subject. The practice of the *gakuren* is the combination of working closely together daily (mutual engagement), shared history of this engagement (shared repertoire), and accountability to pass all of their students to the next grade or into the Tsuru University (joint enterprise).

The close association to the academic department during the hiring process shifts once the teacher enters the school. The identity of a teacher moves from a central focus on an academic discipline to being a member of a *gakunen*. An indication of this is the location where the individual spends time in the school. All teachers are listed on a seating chart in the teachers' room. This chart lists *gakunen* areas, but makes no reference to academic departments. The seating chart acts as a boundary object showing who is a member of each *gakunen* community. Boundary objects as defined by Wenger (1998) are "artifacts, documents, terms, concepts, and other forms of reification around which communities of practice can organize their interconnections" (p. 105). The amount of time allocated to *gakunen* meetings in comparison to academic department meetings is another indicator of this shift.

The frequency of *gakunen* meetings facilitates the mutual engagement of teachers within a *gakunen*. This is not the case with academic departments. Each *gakunen* meets at least twice daily while academic departments do not have frequent meetings and might only meet once a term. All academic departments in Jogo High School are assigned a room for the exclusive use of that department. In-coming teachers rarely see this room during their first few months. Moreover, these rooms often go unused for most of the year, except for entrance exam writing meetings. Members of the English department use their department room mostly as a depository of extra textbooks and for personal storage. It is often filled with boxes and difficult to navigate due to the clutter. On average the English department uses its assigned room to hold two or three meetings per year. Due to this lack of use, material such as old textbooks, new textbook samples, and boxes of personal storage accumulate in the room hindering its use and requiring the first few

minutes of each meeting to be used to clear spaces to sit and to make some room on the main table so the teachers can see each other during the meeting. Ms. Gwang described the contents of the science department meetings.

Derrah: 教科の会議はどのような話ですか?

[In academic department meetings what do you talk about?]

Ms. Gwang: 教科の会議は...え...一学期は...え...だ。月一回あってで...まあ...ん...そんなにないけどま...土曜講座の進行具合とかえ...なか追試さん高2とか高3の追試の問題の話とかをすることとえ...オープンキャンパスの準備の話をしたりするの...9月以降は入試問題の話。

[In academic department meetings... first term once per month.. we don't really have them that often. (we talk about) Saturday courses, additional tests, problem questions for second-year and third-year high school students, and we talk about preparations for open campus. After September we talk about the entrance exams]

Derrah: なんか理科の教え方とか話さない?

[You don't talk about the teaching of science?]

Ms. Gwang: ほぼしない。会議ではしない。

[We really don't. At meetings, we don't]

(Gwang interview, Dec. 15, 2012)

The daily practice of teachers is centered on the *gakunen* and not the academic department. The use of the academic department room aligns with the view held by many teachers that academic departments are generally weak and have no influence on the daily activities of teachers. In a conversation with Ms. Gwang, she described the academic departments as “科目は薄いね、薄いすごく薄い” [subjects are weak, yeah, weak.. really weak] (Gwang interview, March 27, 2013). Academic departments have a few administrative duties such as assigning teachers to classes for the academic year and preparation for entrance exams, but little influence even when students have difficulty with a subject such as mathematics or history. Wenger (1998) suggests that “developing a practice requires the formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants. As a consequence, practice entails the negotiation of ways of being a person in that context” (p. 149). The lack of meetings, non-use of an academic department room, and infrequent opportunities to engage, limits teachers and does not allow them to negotiate their identity in terms of academic departments. These opportunities are limited to the *gakunen*.

Accountability for new teachers is centered on the *gakunen*, not the academic department. The *gakunen* is responsible for students’ academic performance. When students have difficulty with an academic subject the issue is discussed in a *gakunen* meeting even if the subject matter teacher is outside of the *gakunen*. The *gakunen* discusses possible solutions and takes responsibility for the situation. The *gakunen* might decide to consult others outside of the *gakunen* and if this course is chosen usually one teacher within the *gakunen* is in charge of that consultation. That teacher also reports the

results back to the gakunen. Even if the majority of students within a gakunen have an issue with a subject such as math, the math department does not have a meeting. It is exclusively the domain of the gakunen to decide upon academic matters for its students. Despite this, teachers in Jogo High School spend very little time on academic matters. Mr. Inaba stated, “Japanese teachers can only focus on subject matter about 5 to 10%” (Inaba interview, March 21, 2013). Teachers in Jogo High School conduct classes in English, mathematics, and other subjects, but these endeavors are directed almost entirely by the individual teacher and without a substantial time commitment. Academic departments have almost no influence on the daily activities of teachers.

New teachers are held accountable in terms of time by their gakunen. Time spent in the teachers’ room is important to the practice of the gakunen. Once new teachers are assigned a desk in the teachers’ room within their gakunen area, they quickly learn that they should spend the better part of their non-teaching hours at this desk. If teachers do not spend a significant amount of time in the teachers’ room without informing other members where they could be contacted it can become an issue within the gakunen. However, even informing other members of a gakunen that a teacher will leave the teachers’ room to go to, for example, the library for a certain period of time, requires that statement to be articulated in the form of a request. In this example, a teacher wishing to go to the library would first approach another member of the gakunen and ask if that teacher will be in the teachers’ room for however long the requesting teacher thinks he or she will be in the library. The teacher then asks person remaining in the teachers’ room to “watch over things” and to contact him or her if “something happens” as all members are responsible for the joint enterprise of the gakunen.

Teachers in the *gakunen* are mutually accountable to each other. They need to answer the phone, respond to queries from other Jogo High School staff, and handle student issues coming up during the course of the day. When a teacher leaves the *gakunen* area of the teachers' room that teacher is asking other teachers to cover his or her share of work that can only be performed by members of a *gakunen* who are physically present in that area. Working together to take care of the complex duties of the *gakunen* requires teachers to support each other in this effort.

New teachers learn that time is a measure of accountability in the *gakunen*. They observe these exchanges and see the messages left on desks explaining where a teacher is when away from their desk. A failure to pick up this repertoire of communicating absence both verbally and in the form of artifacts such as messages left on desks would result in a conversation between more senior members of the *gakunen* community and that teacher. These expectations are not reified in the form of written rules or policies, but the understanding of these expectations is central to becoming an experienced member of the *gakunen*. Some teachers describe leaving the teachers' room for non-teaching activities as escaping from work. Mr. Samson compares these expectations of accountability of place and time in relation to the *gakunen* with the lack of expectations concerning his classroom practice.

They have never asked me about what is happening inside my classroom which I think is inadequate, but they are very concerned with time...like the prison. They are very concerned that no one escapes..um, but they don't really care what happens inside of it. Sort of like a Thailand prison. (Samson interview, February 19, 2013)

The time required by the practice of the *gakunen* can make a single day longer as well as require teachers to work on weekends, national holidays, and vacations. Mr. Inaba described the time commitment during his first year as Jogo High School as demanding. “During the first...freshman year, I only had only three days off that year including (the) new year (holiday)” (Inaba interview, November 26, 2012).

To summarize this section, the daily activities and time commitments of the *gakunen* define the majority of a teacher’s responsibilities and define how they are held accountable. Practices of the teachers revolve around the *gakunen* and not the academic department. Although teachers entering Jogo High School are hired into a department such as mathematics, science or history, they are assigned to a *gakunen* shaping their peer interactions. This assignment starts the teacher’s inbound trajectory into the *gakunen* community of practice: the location of the negotiation of meaning.

The Centrality of the *Gakunen* in Jogo High School

Various communities of practice exist in Jogo High School. The office workers in the first floor administrative office, the cafeteria workers, members of the library staff, and the maintenance crew can be viewed as separate communities of practice in the constellation of Jogo High School. While teachers interact with members of these diverse communities, their interactions are not sustained enough for full participation. Teachers, for example, interact with members of the office staff, but not on a daily or regular basis. The majority of these interactions involve the office passing information to teachers such as which students are behind on tuition payments. This information is then reported in a

gakunen meeting (Field notes, Jan. 25, 2011). These interactions support the practice of the gakunen.

In Jogo High School, teachers are responsible for making sure all of the students within their gakunen advance to the next grade. This is the core of the joint enterprise of the gakunen. It is how those inside and out measure the gakunen. For example, the first-year high school gakunen needs to make its students pass successfully to the second year while the third year high school gakunen is concerned with getting its students accepted and placed in an appropriate department in Tsuru University. This includes duties associated more with a school's main office such as contacting parents about late tuition payments if this could interfere with a student graduating.

In Jogo High School, for teachers, the gakunen is the only community of practice. There are many other organizations or communities to which teachers in Jogo High School belong. Some of these include sports clubs, academic departments, sections, committees and even job categories such as homeroom teacher. Membership in these groups is mostly decided by the school administration. One exception is section assignment, which is mutually negotiated in the first gakunen meeting of the year. Sport clubs, sections, committees, and positions in a gakunen such as homeroom teacher or votary are decided by the school administration behind closed doors. However, none of these are a community of practice for teachers, as they do not include the teachers in mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire. Sports clubs provide an example of the association of teachers with a non-teacher based community of practice.

For teachers, sports clubs are not a community of practice. They are based upon power relationships and are not truly mutual. Teachers and students assigned to a club do not share a repertoire. The students in a club can be considered a community of practice, but the teachers, while involved with the club, are outside of it. Unlike coaches in the United States, teachers assigned to a club have the same relationship as a Jogo High School vice-principal to a *gakunen*. While they work closely with a *gakunen* the relationship is based more on power, providing an outside guideline for the *gakunen*. Teachers assigned to a club maintain a peripheral trajectory to the club's community of practice. The teacher is involved and it is part of the teacher's identity within the *gakunen* community of practice, but the teacher does not fully participate in the club's community of practice. Teachers assigned to a club are not part of the conversations in the club's locker room as the students change. He or she is not part of the negotiation of how to report to the teacher the product of the club's activities while the teacher was doing something else. The teacher does not run in the drills during practice nor does he or she take part in the discussion of the practice on the way home. Discussing the various levels of organization of the insurance company, Wenger (1998) argues the companies, divisions, or even whole offices should not be viewed as a community of practice. "Viewing these levels of aggregation as a community of practice would likely be misleading because it would overlook the multiplicity and substantial disconnectedness of the perspectives involved" (Wenger, 1998, p. 124). Teachers are not involved in the multiple sustained interactions of the club, substantially disconnected them from the club's community of practice.

To summarize this section, there are many different communities of practice with Jogo High School. However, for most teachers the *gakunen* is the only community of practice to which they belong and it is central to the operation of the school. In terms of the research questions, the *gakunen* is the context in which teachers negotiate meaning to their practice with Jogo High School. Teachers' peer interactions are structured around the *gakunen*. One aspect of this structuring is the use of space. In the following section, I explain the centrality of the *gakunen* through the use of space in the busiest room in the school: the teachers' room.

The Teachers' Room

The teachers' room provides affordances for teachers to conduct their work and in this sense its design and adaptations are reflections of teachers' practices. In other words, the properties of the teachers' room help to define its use. Wenger (1998) writes, "whatever it takes to make mutual engagement possible is an essential component of any practice. For claims processors, for instance, coming to the office is a key element of their practice" (Wenger, 1998, p. 74). For Jogo High School teachers, a key element of their practice is being in the teachers' room. One of the largest and most crowded rooms in the school, the teachers' room includes desks for all teachers in both the junior high school and high school. It also provides a set of resources for the negotiation of meaning and activity in Jogo High School by acting as the school's center of communication. The teachers' room is set up to facilitate the practice of the *gakunen*. This is congruous to the layout of the navigation bridge in Hutchins *Cognition in the Wild* (1995), which showed how the bridge is designed to facilitate the job of the navigation crew of a U.S. naval

ship. “The setting of navigation work evolves over time as partial solutions to frequently encountered problems are crystallized and saved in the material and conceptual tools of the trade and in the social organization of the work” (p. 374). In a similar way, the only major change in the layout of the teachers’ room was the shifting of the gakunen seating arrangement.

The change to the gakunen-seating plan in 2006 facilitated the mutual engagement of the gakunen. As shown in Figure 2, originally members of a gakunen would sit around an island of desks, forcing members to stand for the early morning and afternoon meetings. This arrangement was changed so that the teachers now sit back to back and can simply turn their chairs around to allow the entire gakunen to meet. Instead of having to walk around an island created by desks to talk to gakunen members on the other side teachers can easily talk to any member of the gakunen. This is the only major change to the teachers’ room and it was made to facilitate the practice of the gakunen.

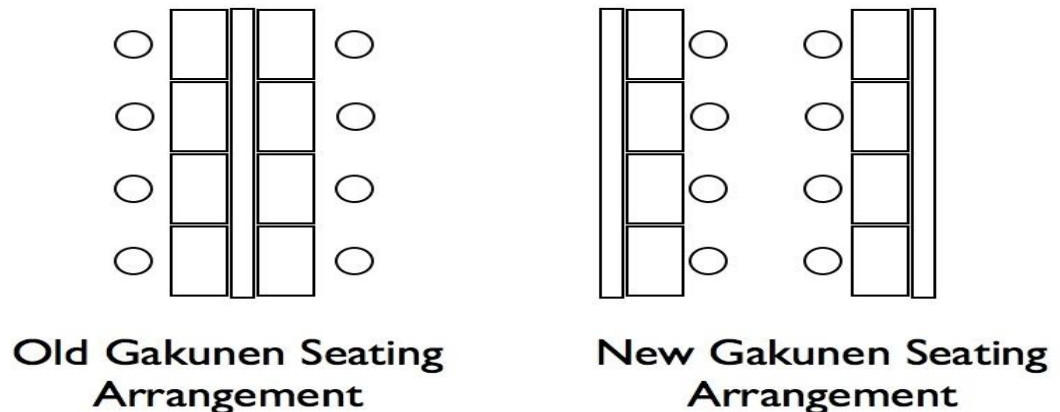


Figure 2. Gakunen seating plan. Small rectangles represent individual teachers’ desks. Circles are teachers’ chairs.

A major internal factor with the context of Jogo High School influencing the practice of teachers is the layout of the teachers' room as shown in Figure 3. This room is home to all of the gakunen making up Jogo High School.

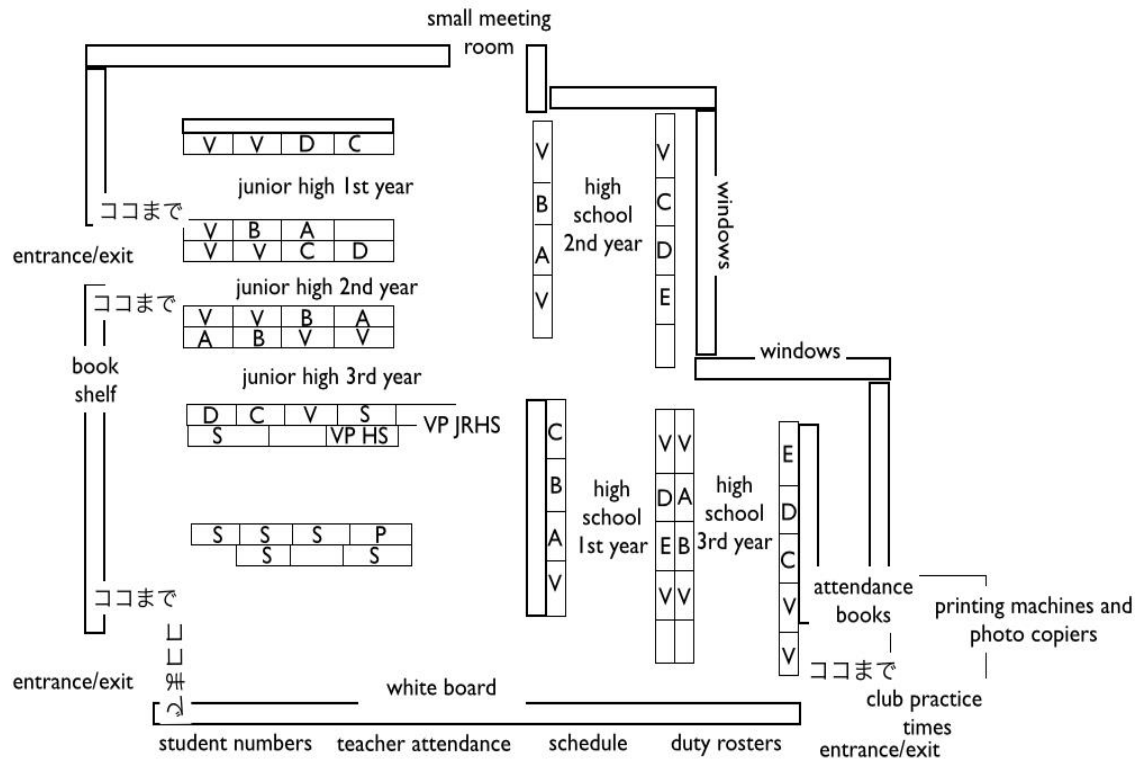


Figure 3. The teachers' room. Small rectangles represent teachers' desks. Letters in those rectangles denote the homeroom teachers and the homeroom they are assigned to within the gakunen. V denotes votaries assigned to each gakunen and S represents section leaders.

The right side of the room has seating for each gakunen in the high school while the top left is for the junior high school. Before the start of a new academic year, the head of each gakunen decides the seating arrangement of the teachers assigned to his or her

gakunen. It is common to find homeroom teachers sitting next to the head of the gakunen often in alphabetical order by homeroom. For example, the head of the gakunen sits first in the row of desks followed by the A class homeroom teacher and then the B class homeroom teacher. New teachers often find themselves seated closest to the entrance or close to a phone. The bottom two rows on the left side of the room are for administration, the vice-principals, heads of sections, and their assistants. All other teacher's desks are arranged by gakunen with teachers sitting next to and with their backs to teachers in the same gakunen. For example, all of the teachers assigned to the first-year high school gakunen sit together. Newer teachers are often situated more peripherally to the center of the gakunen area, but still are heavily engaged in its practices. The design of the room and assigned seats afford easily arranged meetings by the gakunen. Any additional meetings such as section and committee meetings are held in separate meeting rooms. They are peripheral to the practice of the gakunen both in purpose and in physical space.

The hodgepodge appearance of a teacher's desk in Jogo High School is an example of the reification of the practice of the gakunen. Figure 4 shows the desks of the third-year junior high school gakunen and it is representative of all of the gakunen in Jogo Junior and Senior High School. A typical teacher's desk at Jogo High School is a mess. Beyond textbooks, paperwork from clubs, committees, school events and other non-classroom teaching make up the bulk of the material encompassing the teacher's workspace. Class schedule changes, grades, attendance records are the sediment from various modes of communication accumulating on teachers' desks. In Jogo High School none of these records are solely in a digital form and most are only paper based.



Figure 4. Teachers' desks in the third-year junior high school gakunen.

In a gakunen meeting concerning the school trip it was decided to collect stories from students for the gakunen newsletter, which is sent to parents each term. A suggestion to collect some of this material electronically was met with resistance. “Many students can’t do that. Many university students can’t either.” Another teacher stated “that is something that has to be decided by the school. The kids aren’t ready.” Finally, the head of the gakunen intervened saying “this time let’s do it by paper.” (Field Notes, April 24, 2010). This is just part of the material that accumulates on the desk of a teacher. In contrast, a desk that is too neat or lacking clutter often invites comments from other teachers about “having it too easy” or someone who is “just not doing their job.” These comments are used only to refer to members of a gakunen.

In the front left of Figure 5, there are two desks not cluttered. These are the desks of a vice-principal in charge of the junior high school and the religious section head. They, by virtue of their position, do not belong to a *gakunen* and because of this have less clutter on their desks. In some schools in Japan, vice-principals and other administrative people such as section heads are seated separately from other teachers. Within Jogo High School these individuals are separated to a lesser extent due to the limited space in the teachers' room. There is not enough area available to create a separate section for the school administrators' desks.

The clutter on a desk is part of the shared repertoire of teachers. As Wenger (1998) states "joint pursuit creates resources for negotiating meaning" (p. 82). The height of the stack of papers on a desk has meaning and allows teachers to judge other teachers' participation in the joint enterprise of a *gakunen* at Jogo High School. Teachers in a *gakunen* have complete responsibility over all aspects of the students within their *gakunen*. Different handouts might have importance for only a small group of students, but teachers need to care for all of the students within the *gakunen*. Retaining papers to keep up to date on various activities shows that the teacher is actively involved in taking care of the students in the *gakunen*. If a student has a question any teacher in the *gakunen* should be able to answer that question and the only way to be able to do this is to retain lots of paper on one's desk. Failure to do this pushes the work onto other teachers within the *gakunen*.

The white board. The white board in the teachers' room is a tool, part of the shared repertoire of the gakunen community of practice because it provides information to teachers as needed during their peer interactions. It is located close to the desks of section leaders allowing them easy access and post information. This is a position of power in the teachers' room. Information provided by groups such as the kyomubu is an internal factor influencing the practice of teachers within a gakunen. This long white board stretches the full length of the teacher's room (see Figure 5 and the bottom of Figure 4).



Figure 5. Information boards inside the teacher's room.

The board is updated daily by members of the academic affairs section. From right to left this board lists various duty rosters such as phone duty and morning duty, upcoming meeting times and locations for that day, and a listing of teachers coming in late, leaving early, attending meetings outside of the school. The information is displayed to provide quick access to members of a gakunen during any part of the day. This includes even the cafeteria menu for the month. The far right side of the board displays the number of students assigned to each class within each gakunen in both the junior and senior high school. Finally, the class schedule for the entire school along with schedule changes is posted. This board provides access to information supporting the practice of the gakunen and is also a reminder of the number of students assigned to each class and gakunen. This board is easily seen from most locations in the teachers' room.

The white board also functions as a tool for teacher accountability. The names of teachers who are out sick or away on school business are listed on the white board. Each morning this list is updated and if teachers feel someone is excessively away from school regardless of the reason comments can be heard such as "wow Mr. Suzuki is out on business again today. That makes work tough on the other members of that gakunen." Jogo High School did not use a substitute teacher system. Members of the gakunen were responsible to cover classes if the academic affairs section could not arrange something else. Displaying a listing of various non-gakunen duties such as blue light duty and phone duty on the white board makes these assignments public to all and serves as a form of accountability. For these duties, a paper lists who is assigned and provide a short description of the expected norms and rules for that duty. In contrast, a written set of norms and rules for gakunen responsibilities is never provided as the gakunen members

mutually negotiate those as a group. Just as teacher attendance is displayed on the white board, student attendance is displayed in the form of attendance books kept in the teachers' room. This is connected with teacher accountability.

Attendance books. Class attendance books are artifacts of and part of the shared repertoire of the gakunen community of practice. Attendance books for each homeroom are stored in the teachers' room next to the exit closest to the high school classrooms. At Jogo High School, like many Japanese schools, students only move to other locations in the school for their home economics, physical education, art, music, and computer classes. For all other classes and activities, the students stay in their homeroom. This is not a new practice. During his field work in the 1970s, Rohlen (1983) observed, "students remain at the same desk in the same classroom virtually all day" (p. 179). In order to help teachers in the important process of tracking information about students, one attendance book is kept for each homeroom class and all teachers who teach that class keep attendance records in the same book. This is helpful for the gakunen as non-gakunen teachers might be responsible for some of the academic classes taught within the gakunen. Teachers going to teach a class are required to bring that book for attendance purposes and then return it at the end of the class period to the teachers' room for the next teacher (see Figure 6).

The attendance books are a reification of the practice of the gakunen because they facilitate the joint enterprise of ensuring that students advance to the next stage. Homeroom teachers use these books to track a wide variety of information on each class as a whole and on the individual students in the class. For each class, the total number of

hours of instruction for each subject, such as history, is recorded. The total class hours, originating from MEXT requirements, is tied to Jogo High School requirements for advancement to the next grade level or in the case of third-year students, for graduation and recommendation to Tsuru University. Attendance books are also a method the school uses to make teachers accountable for their practice.



Figure 6. Attendance books.

Attendance books provide another example of teachers being held accountable with time. Teachers are held accountable to provide makeup classes for students who miss more than one third of the total classes for a single subject within one term. The attendance books are used to calculate the number of makeup class hours teachers need to provide for students who are frequently absent. Teachers provide these additional class hours after school in addition to their other duties and time requirements. These

calculations of class hours make the *gakunen* accountable to the school and ultimately to the Ministry of Education. Both homeroom teachers and votaries spend a considerable amount of time at the end of each term calculating these absences and class hours.

The teachers' room is also a central location for students and their interaction with the teachers of their *gakunen*. If a student comes to school late, has to leave early, or wishes to go to the health office, he or she must first go to the teachers' room to get a permission slip signed. Only teachers assigned to the same *gakunen* as the student can sign this slip. This practice ensures that teachers who are familiar with the student allow them to go to the health office, allows quicker and more efficient communication with the homeroom teacher and the *gakunen* as a whole, and acts as a resource not only on who has a cold, but also as an insight into other issues which can concern students.

The teachers' room is a center for teacher-student communication. It is also where students go to get extra help, where student leaders go to collect work to be handed back to students, and where members of clubs go to consult with teachers about practice and upcoming events. In the following section I detail some parts of the teachers' room used to facilitate this practice.

Clubs and boxes. Information is a tool, and part of the shared repertoire of the *gakunen*. Next to one of the entrances to the teacher's room is a schedule written on a window with a listing of all the clubs in the school. Every day a student member of each club writes practice times and locations on this board. Knowing the time and location of club practices facilitates the practice of teachers in Jogo High School. Although teachers know the students well enough to remember which club or clubs they belong to they

might not know the times or the location of a club's practice. If a teacher wants to talk with a particular student or gather a group of students he or she can check the club practice board to find the location of a student or to consider if that day is a good time to call them, because it is possible that a majority of students could be involved in practice in which case the teacher could decide to wait until another day.

Part of the rhythm of the gakunen joint enterprise is the flow of information between teachers and students. Just below the club practice schedule is a row of six boxes—one box for each third grade homeroom. These boxes are A4 paper sized and color coded by gakunen. All of the boxes of a gakunen are the same color such as red, blue, or green and each is marked with the respective homeroom (Figure 7 shows these boxes just below the club schedule).



Figure 7. Club practice times and locations.

Teachers place handouts, announcements, graded work, and other materials to be distributed to a class into these boxes. In the beginning of the school year, the homeroom teacher brings the box to the classroom during the afternoon homeroom, but as students start to take over responsibility for different aspects of their class and gakunen the class student leader retrieves the box and distributes the contents before the start of homeroom. This allows more time for teacher-student communication during homeroom.

Koko made. Disruptions in the flow of communication between teachers and students create more work for a gakunen. During certain times of the year including a week before and after midterm exams, final exams, and entrance exams, students are not allowed to enter the teacher's room beyond a few feet, marked off with black tape on the floor at all three entrances (see Figure 8).

The same tape is used to write the words *koko made* [(ココマデ) up to here] in katakana next to the line on the floor. The intention is to keep students from seeing sensitive material that might be placed on desks in the teacher's room. When students are not allowed to enter the room, the workload of teachers increases as they become messengers for students, deliverers of assignments, and retrievers of club changing room keys and other items students need to get or receive from teachers' desks. This extra work increases in direct relation to the proximity of a teacher's desk to one of the entrances to the teachers' room—a fact not lost upon new teachers finding themselves in this position within the gakunen-decided seating plan.



Figure 8. Koko made.

Part-time teachers from all departments are all located in a much smaller room down the hall from the teachers' room where they share desks pushed together to make a single square table in the center of the room. On each desk in this room there is a nameplate listing the name of the teacher and the day or days they are on campus. The desks in this room are clean. Part-time teachers are responsible for some of the same academic classes as full-time teachers, but their desks look different. Part of the reason

could be that they share desks, however, it seems that it is mostly because they are not involved in a *gakunen* and therefore the reification of that practice does not accumulate on their desks. Part-time teachers are simply responsible for the academic classes they teach. They do not attend the morning meetings and are limited in the amount of information they receive both do to their location and their role in Jogo High School. The physical distance of the part-time teachers' room also represents the distance of part-time teachers' practices from those of the *gakunen*.

In Jogo High School, teachers belong to a *gakunen* community of practice where the access to information is important to their mutual engagement. Teachers within a *gakunen* at Jogo High School do not go outside of the *gakunen* for help unless that is decided upon by the *gakunen*. This is reinforced by outside groups, which defer to the *gakunen*. For example, discipline problems within a *gakunen* are reported to the discipline committee, but nothing is acted upon unless the *gakunen* asks the discipline committee to intervene. The importance of reporting to the discipline committee is, for a *gakunen*, not the act of providing information to the committee and in turn the school, but in hearing problems in other *gakunen* so that teachers watch out for similar issues within their own *gakunen*.

In Jogo High School, teachers in a *gakunen* confront difficulties first within the *gakunen* and then go outside the community only if that is mutually negotiated. In describing the claims processors, Wenger (1998) states that "because they belong to a community of practice where people help each other, it is more important to know how to give and receive help than to try to know everything yourself" (p. 76). Exchanges of

information can support the gakunen by providing an insight into possible problems allowing the gakunen to develop a local response.

To summarize this section, the teachers' room is designed to facilitate the practice of the gakunen. Various types of information such as the daily school calendar, student numbers, announcements, club schedules, and even the cafeteria menu is available to teachers simply by standing to view the information posted around the room. This is allows teachers rapid access to information helping to facilitate the practice of the gakunen. The teachers' room in Jogo High School exemplifies the findings of Ahn (2016), who described the teachers' room as the central place in a school for communication and as a place to help beginning teachers adjust to the school environment. In the following section I detail how time is used to refocus teachers onto the practice of the gakunen in the beginning, middle, and end of the day.

A Typical Day at Jogo High School

The start of a typical day varies widely by teacher according to morning club practice, school assigned duties, and gakunen duties. A teacher holding a morning practice for their club might come into school before 07:30 a.m. Some teachers are assigned duties outside of the school at bus stops and the local subway station requiring them to be at these locations at 08:00 a.m. Even in the school, a gakunen could assign two or three teachers to stand near the gakunen shoeboxes to encourage students to be on time to school and to talk with students who have a tendency to be late to school. This assignment is negotiated and decided within the gakunen as a response to a problem, in this case the increase in tardiness by gakunen students. Because it is negotiated, the

gakunen teachers are held mutually accountable and a report of that day's shoebox duty is part of the morning or afternoon gakunen meeting. In other words, the teachers in a gakunen discuss and agree on a response. This agreement makes those teachers mutually accountable to each other to follow the response. In those meetings, the continuation of the duty is negotiated with the gakunen. Various duties, decided by both the school administration and also by the gakunen, are common for teachers with a gakunen. Most of these duties involve contact with students in settings beyond the classroom. This gives teachers a better perception of the students, allowing for a quicker identification of potential problems, which would then be addressed by the gakunen.

For most teachers, Jogo High School starts with a general meeting for the faculty at 08:20 a.m. in the morning. Any students in the room leave before this meeting starts. Teachers stand at their desks as soon as the meeting is called to order by a short series of musical tones on the speaker system followed by the usual greeting of "*ohayogozaimasu*" [good morning] by the vice-principal. Some topics covered include changes to the regular teaching schedule, announcements of any meetings, and a call for any announcements from the teachers in attendance. Faculty advisors for sports or other clubs announce awards won by the team or individuals members of that club. Information on upcoming sports team playoffs or tournaments is also provided. New people coming into the school such as student teachers, exchange students, or other visitors introduce themselves and say a few words at this meeting. The teachers do not sit back down until the meeting ends a few minutes later. The morning gakunen meeting follows right after the general meeting in the morning.

The morning gakunen meeting is an opportunity for community maintenance and to develop local responses as peer interaction influencing the practice of teachers within the gakunen. For example, a teacher will not formulate a response to a problem on their own, but would discuss the issue with the gakunen, receive advice, and possibly help. This also raises awareness of the issue and can influence the practice of all the teachers within a gakunen. It is a local response influencing peer interaction. The morning gakunen meeting also focuses on the daily gakunen schedule and includes announcements that need to be made in homeroom, any schedule changes, and requests for help. It is in these small meetings that teachers find support for their practice. Problems or concerns of teachers are mentioned in these short morning meetings so all teachers within the gakunen are aware of the issue. Ms. Abe related,

so for small meetings, I could maybe talk about my student who I have some difficulty with and ask for advice or tell the other teachers the situations I have with him or her, and then they could support me. Otherwise, nobody knows about the students and their issues with me then. (Abe interview, March 4, 2010).

Morning gakunen meetings are an opportunity to voice issues related to the gakunen and to negotiate a response. This makes the teachers mutually accountable because all the teachers in the gakunen are part of the process. Wenger (1998) stated “the enterprise is joint not in that everybody believes the same thing or agrees with everything, but it is communally negotiated” (p. 78). Teachers might not agree on the best response to an issue, but they do negotiate their response. It is only in the gakunen where teachers are afforded the ability to do this to any large extent.

The afternoon gakunen meeting is held after the last class of the day. Teachers discuss information that needs to be passed on to students in the afternoon homeroom. For teachers, each day begins and ends with a refocus onto the gakunen practice.

Time used for gakunen activities takes priority over academic matters. Most days are divided into six periods of 45 minutes each except for Mondays, which has an additional class period running from 15:10 p.m. to 15:55 p.m. Morning homeroom runs from 08:30 a.m. to 08:40 a.m. followed by the first period, which starts from 08:40 a.m. If the morning meeting runs late then classes might start late. Homeroom is not cut short to accommodate the teaching schedule. It is common to see first period teachers in the hallway outside of a class after 08:40 a.m. waiting for the homeroom teacher to finish. These practices take priority over academics. Two class periods are conducted, then the student body moves to the chapel for a prayer service scheduled for 10:30 a.m. to 10:50 a.m., but finishing just before 11:00 a.m. is common. On occasion, teachers have spoken well past 11:00 a.m. during their chapel talk. They are not interrupted and the following period starts late with the grumbling of some teachers. The junior high school chapel takes place between first and second periods just before the high school chapel service.

Chapel is a high school-wide event with the complete high school student body attending the same service. It comprises multiple components as shown in Table 12. A similar service for the junior high school is held just before the high school chapel service. Chapel is a carefully orchestrated gakunen activity, for all teachers are required to know their roles and expectations.

Table 12. *Components of a Chapel Communicative Event*

Genre	Chapel Service.
Topic	A prayer service and a short message which varies each day.
Purpose	For the school's administration, it is to keep with the tradition of Christian schools. For the gakunen, it is a chance for the gakunen to move as a group and to check students' uniforms.
Setting	In the school chapel after second period.
Key	Formal.
Participants	All of the teachers and students in Jogo High School.
Message form	Spoken Japanese, but once per term an English service is held.
Message content	Most of the content is formulaic except for the message given by the day's speaker which can be on any topic the person wishes to speak on and feels will benefit the high school as a whole. A common theme is personal experiences, but topics vary. Some examples include a review of a book a teacher read, comments on a trip taken, and a discussion of volunteer activities.
Acts	Entrance to the chapel. Greeting. A prayer. A song. One teacher or student group gives a short message for 10-15 minutes. A final prayer.
Rules	All members must attend. Teachers wake up students who fall asleep or become distracted in some way. The day's speaker has control over the timing of the event and decides when to finish by initiating the final prayer.
Norms	Uniforms must be worn strictly according to school rules. For example student blazers must be worn during certain times of the year according to the school calendar. Female students must tie their hair back.

Note. Adapted from Saville-Troike (2003), pp. 110-124.

Each homeroom teacher enters the chapel, and stands in the area of the assigned seating for their class. As students filter into the chapel, the teachers check attendance using the class attendance book. Teachers not assigned to a homeroom have several responsibilities. One or two teachers move to the hallway where the gakunen classrooms

are located to encourage students to move to chapel with haste, observe any issues that could develop (because most of other teachers have left the teachers' room to move to the chapel), and to physically verify that the *kyucho* [(級長) student leader of a homeroom] or *fukukyucho* [(副級長) assistant student leader of a homeroom] has locked the classroom door after the last student leaves. Other *gakunen* teachers stand just outside the entrance to the chapel to ensure that students are dressed properly. Blazers are required, top buttons of shirts need to be fastened, and for girls, their hair needs to be pulled back and tied. Ms. Hashimoto, a graduate of the school, during her description of a typical day for a student stated that for “chapel we have to dress properly, button shirts, wear jackets, tie our hair (Jogo High School) was very strict about that” (Hashimoto, February 8, 2012).

Two more class periods follow chapel before the lunch period from 12:40 p.m. to 13:20 p.m. After lunch, there are two more periods of classes before homeroom, cleaning, clubs, and specials classes such as the Eiken Test preparation (see Chapter 7 for a discussion of the Eiken test). Teachers typically do not eat lunch during the designated lunch period as they are too busy with student issues during that time. They use the time afforded during lunch to track down students who might not have submitted assignments, call the homes of absent students, follow-up with students concerning school events they are involved in, and as a meeting time for clubs. In the event that a student is avoiding a teacher, lunchtime is an appropriate time to call students to the teachers' room using the public address system because classes are not be disturbed. This is a rare event that elicits teachers to murmur, “I wonder what that student did?” when it does happen. Finally,

students use the time to visit the teachers' room to ask questions and even to just chat with teachers.

Approximately once per week, usually on Tuesday, there is a more formal gakunen meeting in the afternoon after classes finish and approximately every other week there is a general teachers' meeting for the whole school. On alternate weeks when a school-wide meeting is not held, a section meeting is held. In addition, at various times there are academic department meetings, committee meetings, event meetings, entrance exam meetings, school excursion meetings and even "emergency meetings." In my eight years at Jogo High School I experienced one emergency general teachers' meeting and several emergency gakunen meetings. The average meeting at Jogo High School lasts about an hour but can run much longer. The frequency of meetings varies by gakunen with the time of year. For first-year high school teachers the first term of the year often requires frequent meetings as some new students experience issues adjusting to high school. For second-year high school teachers, first term and second term up to the school trip, which is held in the early part of the second term, is busy with preparation and planning meetings. In the case of third-year high school a large number of additional meetings are scheduled for second term as teachers decide on the students' recommendations for university (see Table 8).

The daily schedule in Jogo High School refocuses the teacher onto the gakunen in the morning meeting, during chapel, and in the afternoon gakunen meeting. In the next section I place the gakunen community of practice within the larger structure of Jogo High School. I explain this in the context of general teachers' meetings.

The Gakunen in Jogo High School

The use of time and space in Jogo High Schools shows the gakunen is the only community of practice for teachers. There are, however, many other communities in the school including the several different gakunen communities in Jogo High School. In this section I explain how the gakunen community of practice aligns itself with the large constellation of practices that constitute Jogo High School.

Meetings

The teachers of Jogo High School attend a large variety of meetings including academic department meetings, committee meetings, club meetings, section meetings, and the largest and most comprehensive in terms of attendance for teachers the general teachers' meeting. In the following pages, I describe one such teachers' meeting at Jogo High School.

A general teachers' meeting. The largest meeting room in the school is located on the second floor of the main school building. The right side is lined with windows running from waist high to the ceiling, facing out into an outside center court allowing the hills just beyond the school to be seen over the building on the opposite side of the court. The blackboard in the front of the room is a bit run down and is slightly curved with the center of the board set back and the wings curving out towards the room. The rear of the room is a plain off-white wall partially concealed behind the storage of extra folding tables.

Teachers sit at tables arranged in a horseshoe shape (see Figure 9). In the middle of the room, two more tables are placed beside each other. Two more tables arranged with chairs so that the backs of the chairs face the blackboard cap the open end of the horseshoe.

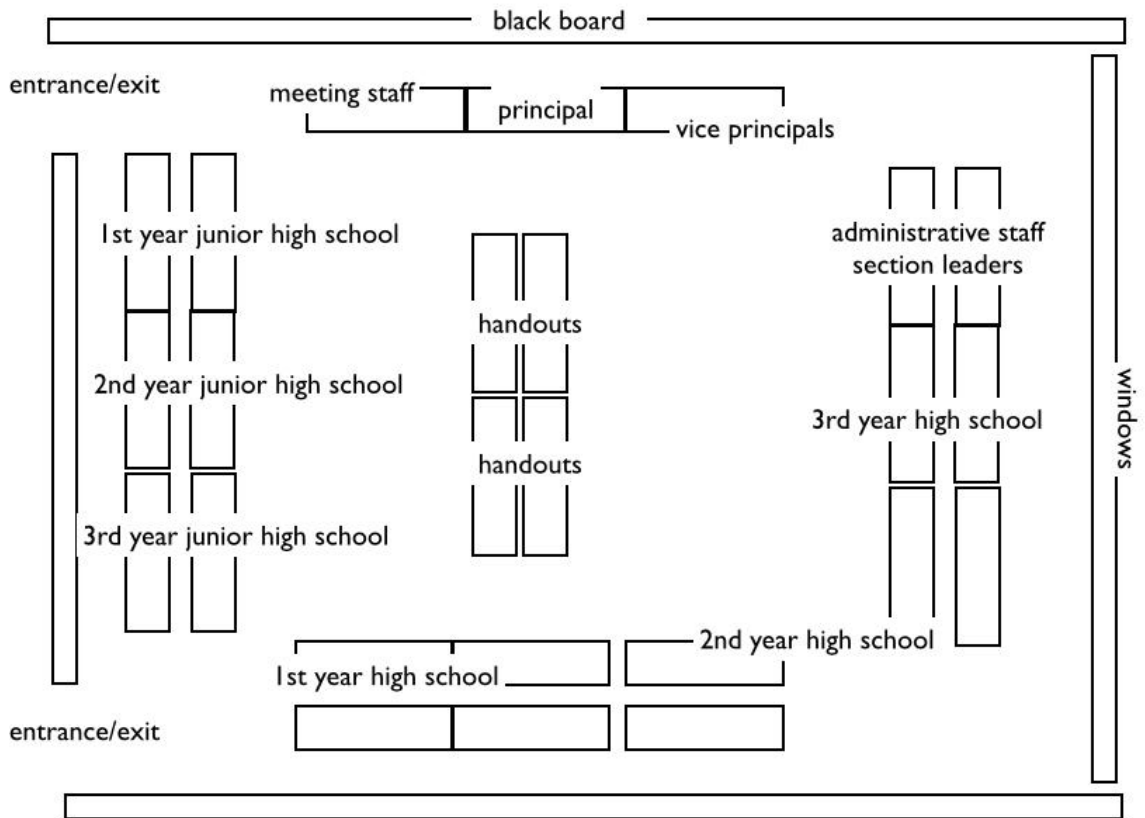


Figure 9. The room setup for a general teachers' meeting.

Written on the blackboard from right to left vertically in white chalk is the agenda for the meeting. Large roman numerals signify the order as follows: principal, sections (religion, admissions), and then gakunen (junior high school first-year to third-year then the three high school gakunen).

Five to ten minutes before the meeting begins, teachers start to enter the room, collect the handouts for the meeting placed on the two tables in the middle of the room, and sit behind false-wood colored folding tables with black legs arranged in two horseshoe shaped rows with the open end facing the blackboard. Metal folding chairs with green padding on the back and seats are placed three per table. Sometimes this room is used for classes so the first teachers to arrive arrange the tables and chairs to the typical meeting setting.

The new principal who started in April 2010, Mr. Akimoto, the current high school vice-principal, Mr. Tsuchiyama, and the junior high school vice-principal sit at the very front table with their backs to the blackboard. Two other teachers from one of the gakunen sit at the front table. One takes notes on the meeting and the second calls the agenda in a standard format decided by the school administration. These jobs are assigned to each gakunen on a rotating basis. On the left side of the horseshoe are most of the junior high school teachers. Near the center is a mix and the right side is mostly high school teachers. On the right side near the blackboard four members from the administrative office are also seated. All of the heads of the school years are seated in the inner row of tables around the horseshoe. Most of the section heads sit near the administrative office staff.

As mentioned earlier, many teachers school start their day well before the initial school-wide morning meeting at 08:20 a.m., but the general teachers' meetings typically begin at 17:30 p.m. This meeting, as well, was scheduled to start at 17:30 p.m., but there was a short delay waiting for more teachers to filter into the room. The teacher announcing the agenda took a microphone and called the meeting to start at 17:35 p.m.

(see Table 13 for the sequence of acts in the general teachers' meeting). He asked the head of the religion department to lead a prayer who then stood and started a prayer. All of the teachers bowed their heads and folded their hands during the prayer.

Table 13. *Sequence of Acts in a General Teachers' Meeting*

Start of the meeting	Call for the start of the meeting Attendance Prayer Confirmation of handout
Part I School administration	Principal Vice-principal (s)
Part II Sections reports	Religious section Teacher affairs Student affairs Admissions General affairs Front office announcements Others (alumni, parents or others not covered earlier)
Part III Gakunen reports	First-year junior high school gakunen Second-year junior high school gakunen Third-year junior high school gakunen First-year high school gakunen Second-year high school gakunen Third-year high school gakunen

The high school vice principal, Mr. Tsuchiya, while seated, stated that this meeting was for the upcoming entrance exams, but there were some other announcements as well. He asked if there were any other business to place on the agenda and after a brief moment of silence he continued by saying, "let's start." He instructed everyone to take a look at a blue handout. At 17:40 p.m. the new principal, currently the head of the admissions department, started to read the number of students who had applied to our

school, how many students had come to the school to visit and ask questions, and also how many students had called the school by phone to ask questions about admissions. The high school vice principal then stated the number of students who had applied that year had dropped. Whether this was a result of demographic changes in Japan or not was not discussed, probably because it was considered common knowledge. The decreasing population in Japan had been a common feature in the news for a number of years.

The general teachers' meeting is the source of many of the materials accumulating on a teacher's desk in Jogo High School. One of the handouts that was placed on the center table before the meeting started listed 26 items to be completed in preparation for the entrance exams. After each item, a single teacher was listed as "in charge" of that job and then several other teachers were listed to assist. The vice principal read each number and the name of the item, calling the teacher in charge to stand and describe how the preparations are progressing. The answer to the first item was "still preparing," however, something seemed wrong. A large number of teachers were talking amongst themselves and some looked very confused. After a few more seconds of confusion someone stated that while the dates on the handout were correct the days of the week were not. Mr. Tsuchiyama made a statement about the problem and carefully read each date along with the corrected day of the week. "February eighth is a Monday not a Thursday, February ninth is ...," he continued, with several more corrections. Most teachers listened and marked corrections on their handouts. The list of 26 items was then continued with many very brief answers such as "finished," while others described preparations in more detail.

The principal, while sitting, started to read a schedule for the day of the entrance exam. He pointed out that two of the times listed were incorrect and asked everyone to make the correction. Most people listening wrote something on their handouts.

In the room, there were two sets of sliding doors near the front and back of the left sidewall. Dark green curtains covered the windows on the two sets of sliding doors. At 17:55 p.m. there was a knock on the door closest to the blackboard. Everyone stopped talking and many people looked towards the door. It opened a crack and a student appeared. One of the teachers sitting near the door stood up and ran to the door going out into the hallway to talk with the student. The vice principal stated again that the number of students who had sat the entrance exam was small. He then asked the teacher in-charge of the academic affairs section to talk next. This teacher, Mr. Ogasawara, stood, smiled and asked for everyone to look at the handout for exam proctors. The room was very quiet as he spoke in a soft voice, and I only heard one teacher cough until the teacher sitting beside me made a comment and several people around me laughed. I could not hear his comment. We were located in the rear row in the center of the horseshoe very close to the wall at the back of the room. The explanation of the proctor handout finished and Mr. Ogasawara sat down. The vice principle again spoke while seated and explained the floor plans as listed on page five of a multi-page handout. The principal jumped in and mentioned that the room marked on the third floor as “influenza” was for students with influenza. The vice principal continued. Just as done during the junior high school entrance exams, the health office was to be used for students who were sick and the influenza room used for students with the flu. The vice principal then asked the teacher sitting next to me if this plan was okay.

The teacher sitting next to me was in charge of the teacher affairs section which handles matters such as making sure rooms have the correct number of chairs, having teachers stamp the attendance book, and arranging parties such as the end of the year party Christmas party and the *sobetsukai* [(送別会) farewell party]. He would be a vice principal the following year and was the only person in charge of a department sitting in the back of the room. He stood and directed people to page six of one of the handouts. He further explained the chairs in each room should be setup as shown in the diagram on the handout. While he was talking, out of the approximately 15 teachers seated near me about seven were looking at him and the rest just looking down. The third year high school teachers, he continued, should help with cleaning on the preparation day before the test. Then he sat down. As soon as he said this there was a low rumbling coming from the seated teachers to the right who were mainly high school teachers. The head of the third year high school *gakunen* stood and said the third year teachers would not be in school that day. The teacher next to me then stood and said “okay then first-year high school will have to do it” and he resumed his seat. The vice principal in the front of the room repeated the transaction without standing: “third year teachers won’t be in school that day so the first-year high school teachers will help with the cleaning.” Then he turned to one of the people seated to his right who worked in the administrative office. I was unable to understand what they said as the teacher seated next to me took to his feet again. “Not first-year, but second-year teachers should help,” he offered, and then he sat back down.

One feature of aligning the *gakunen* practice with the larger constellation of practices in Jogo High School always involves taking account of the various time commitments with the school. Changing topics, the vice principal turned to the head of

the English department seated in the first row to his left and asked about having a meeting for all of the teachers who would conduct interviews during the entrance exams. She stood and stated a meeting would be held on the morning of exams at 10:10 a.m. and also Monday at 17:30 p.m. in this room. The vice principal cut her off and said that she could not use this room because there was another meeting already scheduled. She continued, “okay, in the English Room” and the exchange ended. The vast intricate time schedule of various meetings, events, and other commitments concerning school wide events are often worked out in these general teachers’ meetings.

The principal, Mr. Akimoto, talked about additional preparations for the exams. He stated that examinee number XX wanted to play the piano during the interview so that student’s interview would take place in the music room. A low “oh” could be heard from several teachers. He continued, examinee XX studied classical ballet and wanted to dance during the interview so a radio needed to be prepared. Another louder “oh” was again heard and several teachers were smiling.

The vice principal finally called an end to the entrance exam meeting and asked if anyone had any additional announcements. A “final thank you” was said along with the statement that we would now start the meeting concerning the graduating class. He directed everyone to three handouts one on a B4 sized paper and two on B5 sized paper. He began to read the handout listing all of the graduating students who would receive awards. The number of students receiving awards by club followed this: “two students from the sailing club, one from the tennis club.” He then asked if everyone one agrees. About four teachers said “okay” and the vice principal responded with “good.”

The head of the third year high school gakunen stood and directed everyone to another handout. At 18:25 p.m. she said “as is written on the paper I will explain about the awards” and she began to read the handout. The teachers sitting on both sides of me were reading different handouts and as I looked around the room about seven teachers were sleeping. The head of the third year gakunen continued describing one of the award recipients who had returned to Japan after living overseas for some time. “She is handicapped by her Japanese, but really tries; she was captain of the brass band for three years.” Concerning another student she continued. “He doesn’t stand out, but he really tries hard.” Effort is valued over ability at Jogo High School. She finished reading the handout at 18:34 p.m. and sat down. The vice principal stated that while high school graduation awards were based solely on performance during high school, now junior high school time would also be considered. “Anything to say?” No one replied. “Let’s vote on the awards.” Almost everyone raised his or her hand at the same time. The vice principal remained seated and said, “Thank you.” The head of the third year high school gakunen stood up, said thank you, and then resumed her seat.

Called by the teacher announcing the agenda, the head of the religion department stood up. He directed everyone to a handout listing duties for teachers concerning the graduation preparation day and the day of the graduation ceremony. He also talked about the decreased number of students who had applied for the high school entrance exam for some reason. He mentioned something else that I did not catch, and then he sat down.

General teachers’ meetings also function to create a public sense of accountability. The head of the third-year gakunen stood again. “Since a lot of people were absent from the graduation meeting I will explain again:” she then listed the names

of students who had missed too many classes and the number of classes they needed to make up. Teachers are responsible to provide make-up classes for any students who miss more than one third of the total number of class meetings in one term. She then sat down.

The vice principal stated the student council had made some changes, however there was a lot of debate so the changes were still under discussion. He finally ended the meeting by asking when the next meeting would start. "Is 19:15 p.m. okay?" The meeting ended at 18:50 p.m. and most people left except for the people who needed to attend the meeting starting in 25 minutes. Handouts containing personal information such as grades and student names were collected at the end of the meeting and disposed of by the teacher in-charge of the related section or *gakunen*. Teachers retained other handouts, but many were simply discarded. Those with deadlines or dates become part of the accumulation of artifacts on a teacher's desk.

The majority of teachers moved back to the teachers' room where phone calls were made, paperwork completed, and some *gakunen* called impromptu meetings to discuss any that had come up during the day or in preparation of the following day. Finally teachers checked their *gakunen* classrooms to make sure students have gone home, the air conditioning and lights were off, windows closed, and curtains were pulled back and tied. After these final checks, some teachers prepared for the next day's lessons.

The role of a general teachers' meeting. Jogo High School is, using the words of Wenger (1998), a constellation of practices that are too diverse to be a community of practice. These practices include the work of the office staff, the vice principals, section leaders, librarians, nurses and others that contribute to the daily operation of the school.

General teachers' meetings allow the community of practice of the *gakunen* to align with this larger constellation. Jogo High School as an institution creates programs, initiatives, sets goals, or defines objectives; however, for the individual teacher meaning is negotiated through practice and reification within the *gakunen*.

A general teachers meeting is not an event which teachers look forward to with buoyant anticipation. It pulls teachers away from activities much closer in meaning to their practice such as providing supplemental lessons, overseeing clubs, and talking with students. The teachers are in a vortex with various responsibilities competing for their time. It is also a communicative event where teachers have little influence. As Ms. Toda remarked:

ま...会議にはなっていないと思います。あの意見を出し合ってみんなで決めていくってということではなくて、トップからの伝達の間かなと思います。特に思っている意見を出して、え...議論をするという場所にはなっていないと思いますね。

(Toda interview, March 4, 2010)

[I don't think they are meetings. They are not an exchange of opinions to come to a decision, but a place for reports from the top. Especially I don't think it is a place to debate ideas].

Several teachers presented this view of a top-down transfer of information during teachers' meetings. Another example comes from Mr. Samson.

Generally speaking, it's the head people telling you about the decisions they have made and giving you an opportunity voice disagreement and if you haven't voiced disagreement and it is probably unwise to do that...then the agenda goes smoothly

and decisions that have already been made in the pre-meetings are rubber stamped during the big meetings. (Samson interview, March 6, 2013)

The lack of connection between large teachers' meetings and the everyday practices of teachers is shown through, in terms of ethnography of communication, the culture of the event. Teachers in a gakunen are required to take care of the students assigned to their gakunen. This requires a significant amount of time and general teachers' meetings consume large chunks of this commodity. These meetings do not connect directly with the everyday practice of teachers within a gakunen. Ms. Toda observed:

ぼくにとっては全然関係ないですね。ま...え...サポートにはならな...え...なんていうんですか...あの...そこで今後ま...やるべきといわれたことは職員会議でやるべ...こういう風に生徒に対してやりなさいと言われたことは守りますけれども...うん...その会議の中なかでの話し合いが自分のま...担任としてやっていく仕事のサポートになっているという事は感じません。 (Toda interview, March 4, 2010)

[For me they have no connection at all (with what I do). They don't support what I do. When things are described as something I must do, something the students must do, then I follow that, but the talk during the (general teachers') meetings, for me as a homeroom teacher, does not feel that it is supporting my work].

For many teachers, the general teachers' meeting is not closely associated with the practice of the gakunen beyond a simple transmission of information. There is information such as dates and times that teachers take note of, as seen in the prior description of a teachers' meeting (see Table 14).

One of the most common actions of a teacher during this type of meetings is to make corrections if errors are found on handouts. Handouts taken from the general teachers' meeting provide a reminder of larger school requirements upon the *gakunen*. However, on the whole, these meetings have little influence on the daily practices of teachers except for the time they take away from the other activities. These meetings do organize time and resources for large school-wide events that influence teachers at certain times of the year, but not on a daily basis.

In a discussion with Mr. Matsudaira about the general teachers' meetings, he described them as a representation of the hierarchy of the school.

Matsudaira: Some people say that they're checking who's where in the *soshiki* (organization) where are they, who, who he is, who and why, so they're checking, like, who is principal, ---- who is boss. Yeah.

Derrah: So they're showing their roles within the school in the meetings?

Matsudaira: Right, showing their roles and who, yeah, showing who's who. And that's, yeah, that's well, function of that meeting has. (Matsudaira interview, March 9, 2010)

Table 14. *Components of a General Teachers' Meeting Communicative Event*

Genre	General Teachers' Meeting.
Topic	The content or subject of the event.
Purpose	To relay information from administration to teachers.
Setting	After classes usually around 17:30 p.m. in the large meeting room.
Key	Business like one-way transmissions of information.
Participants	All teachers in the junior and senior high school as well as a vice-principals, principal, and representatives from the health office and the administrative office.
Message form	Spoken Japanese and written documents.
Message content	Reports on what has been done and how resources have been coordinated to complete tasks.
Acts	Start of the meeting. Part I School administration. Part II Sections. Part III Gakunen.
Rules	All members stand when speaking except for the principal and vice-principals. Disagreements within the gakunen are not handled in this meeting. More experienced or older teachers can interject.
Norms	Questions to clarify information given during the meeting are welcome, however, other questions beyond clarification are discouraged by a rapid drop in the level of politeness used in response.

Note. Adapted from Saville-Troike (2003), pp. 110-124.

From the beginning of the meeting the agenda is written on the board as a physical reminder of the order of the school. Then after a short prayer, setting the atmosphere of the meeting, the principal has the first opportunity to speak. The leaders of the various sections speak in order. After the sections are finished the leaders of each gakunen speaks in turn starting with first-year junior high school and finishing with third-year high school.

The norms and rules (see table 15) of the general teachers' meeting reinforce the view that a general teachers' meeting is a display of power in Jogo High School. Because these meetings provide information that has already been decided, the norms of interaction allow for questions asking for clarification. Responses to these questions are often handled in a polite key. Harris (2003) argued that people in positions of power can display this power by being polite. Also Locher (2004) stated that politeness is a negotiation of status. The administration in Jogo High School display their positions of power by using a polite key up to a certain point in general teachers' meetings. On this point, Mr. Samson remarked:

On several occasions, the ...a person will add information and...but if they add too much they will get subtle or unsubtle hints from the school administration that they are wasting everyone's time because other people have already thought about it and made the decision. And I have seen on two occasions people belittled because they did not accept the administrations understanding of the direction the program was going. (Samson interview, March 6, 2013)

Sometimes the content of teachers' meetings overlaps with gakunen meetings. For example, information can be presented about students who are taught by a teacher, but who is not a member of the same gakunen. Mr. Tadachi is assigned to the high school third year gakunen. While most of his teaching responsibilities are with third year high school students he teaches some classes in the junior high school. Teaching students in a different gakunen could leave a teacher at Jogo High School without information on students having difficulties or in need of support that is important to their practice in the classroom. Mr. Tadachi said:

I'm teaching junior high department too, so the...but usually I don't know the...I don't get information from the junior high department. But at the meeting, I can get the same information about particular students then I...that would help for me to teach him or her. (Tadachi interview, March 8, 2010)

One example of student information shared with the whole school concerns the use of school facilities. Jogo High School has one elevator in the main building housing classrooms. Students are not allowed to use this elevator unless permission is given. If a student has a foot injury he or she could be allowed to use the elevator for a certain amount of time. This type of information would be shared by a *gakunen* during a general teachers' meeting and is important as teachers encounter students from different *gakunen* while teaching, in clubs, and during camps.

The role of a *gakunen* teachers' meeting. The *gakunen* meeting is the focus of the negotiation of meaning for teachers in a *gakunen*. The nature of the general teachers' meeting stands in contrast to the *gakunen* meetings. Ms. Abe described the contrast.

The big meeting that all the teacher's meeting got.. like.. just giving information, announcements, and no discussion. Sometimes they had a little discussion, but in all staff meetings are like that. But the grade teachers' (*gakunen*) meeting is really has discussions. (Abe interview, March 4, 2010)

As shown in Table 15, norms of the *gakunen* meeting are different from those of a general teachers' meeting.

Table 15. *A Gakunen Meeting as a Communicative Event*

Genre	Gakunen meeting.
Topic	Discussion of students, teacher assignments and responsibilities.
Purpose	To pass information about students who made need support, develop a plan of action, and to clarify how all teachers within the gakunen will support the plan. To coordinate the socialization of students in the gakunen. To plan for gakunen related events. To get students into Tsuru University.
Setting	Usually in one of the gakunen classrooms starting after cleaning is complete.
Key	Supportive.
Participants	Teachers who are members of the gakunen.
Message form	Mostly verbal but a very simple agenda is usually provided.
Message content	The gakunen schedule, issues with individual students, school trips, graduation, and extra classes.
Acts	Start of the meeting. Part 1 general gakunen announcements. Part 2 each homeroom teacher talks about any issues with students. Part 3 other teachers discuss any issues that needed to be addressed.
Rules	All teachers are expected to contribute and offer suggestions.
Norms	The discussion continues until a consensus is reached.

Note. Adapted from Saville-Troike (2003), pp. 110-124.

The gakunen meeting continues to discuss issues within the gakunen until some type of consensus is reached. Teachers might not agree completely, but they negotiate the meaning of their practice and in doing this make themselves mutually accountable. One example of a gakunen disagreement concerned a student who was not doing well in mathematics. One of the causes of this was the student continually being late and her mathematics class was during the first period. Within the gakunen, all of the teachers

agreed something needed to be done and that all teachers would work towards the goal of having this student pass mathematics. The disagreement concerned who would be primarily responsible for the plan. Some teachers felt it was the mathematics teacher's duty to follow up with the student and support her studies while other teachers voice the opinion that it was the homeroom teacher's responsibility to make sure the student came to school on time. This disagreement was negotiated at length in a gakunen meeting. This example shows how the gakunen influences peer interactions for teachers in Jogo High School.

The Gakunen and Accountability

A gakunen in Jogo High School has a wide range of responsibilities. However, the prime responsibility is to make sure that all of the students within the gakunen advance to the next grade, graduate from the school, and are placed into the appropriate department in Tsuru University. This is the goal of the joint enterprise of the gakunen. The methods to achieve this are negotiated within the gakunen community of practice. Teachers hold each other mutually accountable for these interpretations. Mr. Okubo describes this mutual accountability in terms of the gakunen trusting each other and working as a team when asked about what is important to a gakunen:

でも大事なことはやっぱり trust だね。こう働く人たちも team だからそれはやっぱり communication もだと思うし。(Okubo interview, March 7, 2013)

[but the important thing, still, is trust, isn't it? Because these people are a team. It is after all communication I think].

For a Jogo High School gakunen, it is very important that the members move together and participate in gakunen activities as a team.

Working together is part of the mutual engagement of the gakunen community of practice. During my first year at Jogo High School, my gakunen decided that some girls in the gakunen were wearing their skirts too high, and that some had also slightly dyed their hair. The gakunen decided to call a *gakunenshukai* [(学年集会) a gakunen student and teacher assembly] after classes. When a gakunen decides to assemble students for any reason this assembly takes precedence over other activities the students might have planned. I personally did not really feel comfortable measuring girls' skirts, so I was quite relieved when I heard that I was scheduled for a non-gakunen meeting at the same time of the assembly. Certainly the seven other teachers in my gakunen could handle this task. I approached the head of my gakunen and explained the situation expecting a quick response allowing me to attend the non-gakunen meeting. The response was not quick. She explained that there were enough teachers, so I would not have to measure skirts, but that was not the most important part of the activity. It was important for the students to see that all the members of the gakunen were there together to show that the activity was important. It was also important for my peers. I attended the assembly. Ms. Gwang suggests a similar understanding of the importance peer influence on teachers' work:

そのもと求められてる仕事が子供たちのに関わることでやらないといけな
いことはやっぱりやらないと、そのせき…責任があるからやらないやいけ

ないだと思ふことと、もう一個はでも…あの…その…よく仕事やる人が評価されるみたいな空気があるじゃないですか。で…それをこう恐れてるていうか、こうしない一生懸命やらないと私も評価が下がっていくんじゃないかという思ふから。それをそう思われたくないし、その…怖いから評価されなくなったらいやだからがんばってやる。やってしまうかな。

(Gwang interview, March 27, 2013)

[Originally the job expected of us is to take care of the children, so of course I think it's our responsibility to do that. One more thing, there is an environment in which people who do their job well get evaluated, and if I don't do my very best, my evaluation will go down, I think. You end up just doing the work because you are afraid to be thought of that way or to be evaluated that way].

This evaluation is not official. Jogo High School does not provide annual reviews or progress reports. Accountability is mutually negotiated within the gakunen. When I asked Mr. Inaba why teachers do certain things within the gakunen, he responded: “We are emotionally forced, I don't know how to explain (laughter)” (Interview, March 21, 2013). Peer influence on the practice of teachers is an important component of accountability in Jogo High School.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown that the only true community of practice for teachers in Jogo High School is the gakunen. Teachers interact with various groups, but the only group in which they maintain sustained relations and negotiate meaning of their practice

is the *gakunen*. This is reflected in the setup of the teachers' room and also the Jogo High School daily schedule, which focuses teachers onto the practice of the *gakunen* throughout the day.

Because the focal community of practice is the *gakunen*, this strongly influences how teachers negotiate meaning in the school, how peers influence their practices, and accountability. With regards to negotiating meaning, the *gakunen* also shapes how peers influence teacher practice. First, members of a *gakunen* spend their day together mutually engaged in the joint enterprise of the *gakunen*. Second, the daily schedule of Jogo High School refocuses teachers onto the practice of the *gakunen* in the beginning, middle, and end of each day. Third, teachers in a *gakunen* sit together allowing the reification of their practice to be visible in this setting. The *gakunen* is also the locus of accountability for teachers. As we have seen in this chapter, teachers are accountable to the *gakunen* for time: time spent in the *gakunen* area of the teachers' room, time spent on *gakunen* activities, time devoted to supporting students. They are also accountable to the school indirectly through the *gakunen*. The school and administrators also delegate responsibility to the *gakunen* while addressing issues of accountability to parents. This reflects the findings of Takahashi (2011) who asserted "how teachers made meaning of their work in their communities of practice connected to certain conceptualizations about what it means to be a teacher in their context" (p. 739). These conceptualizations are provided by the methods used to hold teachers accountable within their practice.

The focus on the *gakunen* provides the setting for peer interactions. Teachers are provided a forum to ask for help, request information, and share opinions within the *gakunen* community of practice. As a group, these *gakunen* teachers mutually negotiate

their responses and, in turn, hold each other mutually accountable for the gakunen joint enterprise. The larger constellations of practices constituting Jogo High School also hold teachers responsible, but not directly. Accountability flows through the gakunen making it the locus of negotiation of meaning for teachers.

CHAPTER 6

DEMOGRAPHICS

Japan's population shrank by nearly a million during the last half-decade, official census figures confirmed on Friday, an unprecedented drop for a society not ravaged by war or other deadly crisis, and one that helps to explain the country's persistent economic woes.

(Soble, 2016)

For the first time, the number of people aged 65 or older surpassed those aged below 14 in every prefecture.

("Japan's population falls by record level," 2013)

The number of children in Japan under 15 years old has fallen to a record low of 16.17 million, stretching the downtrend to a 34th consecutive year.

("Japan's child population falls to record low 16.17 million," 2015)

In this chapter I address the following research question:

2a How have demographic changes affected teachers within this school?

I begin this chapter with a description of demographic trends in Japan followed by the effects of these changes in education, both public and private. Then moving from general to specific, I detail changes in Jogo High School due to demographics. One of these

changes is the branding of the school in order to appeal to prospective students and their families. Another change is the focus on the recruitment of returnees as a source of future students and the influence of this on the practice of the *gakunen*. In the next section I explain the processes and decisions involved with bringing new students into Jogo High School. I then highlight the influence of these demographic changes on teachers' practices and particularly in their interactions with both students and parents.

Declining Population

Japan is undergoing an unprecedented change in demographics due to a declining birth rate. This story has been a frequent topic in newspapers and on television both domestically and internationally. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) conducts a population census every five years. Since 1950 the population of Japan has shown a consistent five-year growth rate of over 4.5% that is until 1985 when this rate dropped to 3.4%. From 1995 the rate dropped below 2% and the latest 2010 census calculated the five-year growth rate at 0.2% (MIC, 2010b). As a group since 1920, children from 0 to 14 years old, have made up 20-30% of the total population of Japan. In 1990, this number dropped below 20% and has shown a steady decline. The 2010 census showed that 0-14 year olds made up only 13.2% of the Japanese population (MIC, 2010a).

This drop in the birth rate and subsequent reduction in the number of children has resulted in a drop in student numbers. From a peak of over 27 million students in 1983, the population of school-age children has decreased to just over 20 million in 2006. The junior high school population dropped from 6 million in 1986 (the highest since 1964) to

3.6 million in 2006. The high school student population shows a similar yet slightly delayed demographic trend. From 5.6 million students in 1989, the number of high school students decreased by 2 million by 2006. The decreasing student pool for high school admissions is placing new challenges on high schools in Japan. The reaction to these challenges varies by context: public and private.

Public Schools

Jogo High School is a private school; however, in this section I provide a comparison by describing the different response to demographics in the public sector of education. In the public school context, the reaction to the declining population issue has been two-pronged. These include both reorganization in schools and school closures. From 1990, the number of national and local public high schools has steadily decreased and by 2013 the total number of national and local schools dropped by more than 500 (see Table 16). High schools have a much larger number of total classes. As a result, local boards of education can avoid closing high schools by simply reducing the number of classes, for example, from ten classes per gakunen to seven or eight.

Elementary and junior high schools tend to have fewer students than high schools; therefore, eliminating some classes in several elementary or junior high schools is not viable from a fiscal standpoint. An elementary or junior high school retains expenses for the building, grounds, maintenance, and utilities even while servicing a small number of students, therefore it is perceived to be financially better to close a school and redistribute the students to other schools.

Table 16. *Number of Secondary Schools in Japan 1955-2013*

Year	Total	National	Local	Private	Percentage of Private Schools
1955	4,607	21	3,691	895	19.4
1960	4,598	23	3,554	1,021	22.2
1965	4,849	24	3,633	1,192	24.6
1970	4,798	24	3,550	1,224	25.5
1975	4,946	17	3,701	1,228	24.8
1980	5,208	17	3,951	1,240	23.8
1985	5,453	17	4,147	1,289	23.6
1990	5,506	17	4,177	1,312	23.8
1995	5,501	17	4,164	1,320	24.0
2000	5,478	15	4,145	1,321	24.1
2005	5,418	15	4,082	1,321	24.4
2008	5,243	16	3,906	1,321	25.2
2009	5,183	16	3,846	1,321	25.5
2010	5,116	15	3,780	1,321	25.8
2011	5,060	15	3,724	1,321	26.1
2012	5,022	15	3,688	1,319	26.3
2013	4,981	15	3,646	1,320	26.5

Note. Retrieved from MEXT on July 14, 2015 (MEXT, 2015c)

From the view of the Hyogo Prefecture Board of Education (Director of High Schools Hyogo BOE, interview, March 23, 2012) the worst of the school closings and reorganization is over. Some parts of Kobe, particularly the wards in the West of the city, are continuing to see a drop in student populations; in contrast, schools in the East are seeing slight increases. This trend continues even now.⁹ The worst might be over for elementary schools, but the demographic problem of fewer students is moving to the secondary and tertiary levels of education. In 2018, it is expected that the number of students going to university will only be 40% of the total seats available in universities in

⁹ According to the 2015 population census the two eastern wards of Kobe, Nada and Higashinada, both had population increases while all of the other wards west and north of the city had population decreases. For more information on the 2015 census see the Japan Office of Statistics
http://www.estat.go.jp/SG1/estat/GL38020103.do?_toGL38020103_&tclassID=000001068779&cycleCode=0&requestSender=estat

Japan. The following section describes how private schools have responded to demographic changes.

Private Schools

Private schools have responded differently than public schools to student population changes. A *shiritsu gakko* [(私立学校) private school] is any school founded under the *Shiritsu Gakko Ho* [(私立学校法) Private School Law of 1949]. From 1955 to 2000, there was a gradual increase in the number of private schools and as of 2012, the number of private secondary schools accounted for over 25% of the total number of secondary schools in Japan (see Table 17). From 2000 to 2012, the number of private high schools in Japan has remained relatively constant despite the decrease in student population. During the same time period, the number of students enrolled in private secondary schools has remained close to 30% of the total secondary school student population, a level maintained since 1965 (see Table 17).

This varying of student population creates a situation where a steady number of private high schools are competing for a dwindling number of students. As a result, private schools are making efforts in several areas to be more competitive for students. This starts with how students are recruited. The following section describes how Jogo High School has recruited students during this time of demographic changes and influence of these recruiting processes upon teachers in the school.

Table 17. *Number of Students in Secondary Schools in Japan 1955-2013*

Year	Total	National	Local	Private	Percentage of private
1955	2,592,001	8,069	2,072,163	511,769	19.7
1960	3,239,416	9,595	2,300,552	929,269	28.7
1965	5,073,882	11,435	3,397,215	1,665,232	32.8
1970	4,231,542	10,600	2,936,428	1,284,514	30.4
1975	4,333,079	9,919	3,015,114	1,308,046	30.2
1980	4,621,930	10,211	3,311,327	1,300,392	28.1
1985	5,177,681	10,217	3,710,992	1,456,472	28.1
1990	5,623,336	10,338	4,001,232	1,611,766	28.7
1995	4,724,945	10,161	3,288,245	1,426,539	30.2
2000	4,165,434	8,824	2,930,295	1,226,315	29.4
2005	3,605,242	8,857	2,527,462	1,068,923	29.6
2008	3,367,489	8,875	2,354,002	1,004,612	29.8
2009	3,347,311	8,815	2,340,653	997,843	29.8
2010	3,368,693	8,751	2,357,261	1,002,681	29.8
2011	3,349,255	8,679	2,337,733	1,002,843	29.9
2012	3,355,609	8,615	2,328,102	1,018,892	30.4
2013	3,319,640	8,585	2,287,673	1,023,382	30.8

Note. Retrieved from MEXT on July 14, 2015 (MEXT, 2015b)

Recruiting Students into Jogo High School

Demographics have a strong influence on student recruitment at Jogo High School. As a private school, Jogo High School's survival depends upon a steady flow of new students and their tuition payments. This is a fact not lost upon teachers in the school. Mr. Okubo offered the following observation: “学校としてはたぶんサバイバルレースもう始まっているね” [As far as the school is concerned the survival race probably has begun] (Okubo interview, March 7, 2013). The most obvious effect of demographic change at Jogo High School is the transition from a girls-only school to a co-educational format in 2005.

The End of Jogo Girls' High School

When Jogo Girls High School moved to its new campus in 1982, the school had an enrollment of over 1,100 female students. This number continued to rise until a peak in 1991 when a gradual decline began. Compared to student numbers in 1991, Jogo High School enrolled about one-third the number of students in 2004 and reduced the number of homeroom classes by half. In order to stop this downward trend Jogo Girls' High School transformed from a girls' school to a co-educational format.

The transition to a co-educational format occurred with the induction of the first group of 54 male students into Jogo High School in 2005 (see Table 19). This group entered Jogo High School by recommendation from Jogo Junior High School which had become co-educational just three years before. From 2005, there were effectively two schools at the high school level: Jogo Girls' High School and the new co-educational Jogo High School. Jogo Girls' High School consisted of girls admitted into the high school directly from junior high schools other than Jogo Junior High School. These students were not on the same recommendation system as the new Jogo High School co-educational students who were admitted to the high school by recommendation from Jogo Junior High School.

Academic ability decided class assignment in Jogo Girls' High School, creating a competitive environment. Students were tracked according to academic ability and placed in three different streams. Most students were placed into regular classes while some students were streamed into honors classes and an even smaller group into an advanced class. A small number of approximately thirty recommendation slots were available to Tsuru University and these were awarded to the top students in the graduating class.

Some recommendations to other universities were also awarded, but many students took entrance exams to enter university, creating a sense of academic competition. The nature of complaints from students reflected this academic competition. Mr. York remembered the only time students complained about the quality of instruction was in Jogo Girls' High School (York interview, July 12, 2015). Many of these complaints centered on the idea that students were not receiving information to help them be competitive either in the school for the recommendation to Tsuru University or to prepare them for entrance exams. The atmosphere of academic competition dissolved with the end of Jogo Girls' High School.

Jogo High School slowly transitioned to a full co-educational format (see Table 18). Direct admission of male students into the high school was not allowed until the following year while female students were still allowed to apply to Jogo High School from outside junior high schools, though this number was gradually reduced. The last group of non-recommendation students admitted into the girls' only division was admitted in 2008 and they graduated in the 2010 school year. Currently Jogo High School accepts all of the students from Jogo Junior High School who complete the recommendation requirements along with a group of direct admission students from other junior high schools. All of these groups are co-educational.

The transition to Jogo High School influenced teachers' practices by creating a new environment the teachers were not used to working in. Some teachers were initially resistant to the transition to a co-educational format and raised concerns about teaching boys stating, "boys are more difficult." The loss of the competitive drive for ranking in

the graduating class and the need for entrance exam preparation were a concern. Some teachers had only taught girls' classes until the school became completely co-educational.

Table 18. *Jogo High School Classes and Students 1982-2013*

Year	Number of Classes	Students		
		Male	Female	Total
1982	30	0	1180	1180
1983	29	0	1205	1205
1984	31	0	1367	1367
1985	32	0	1368	1368
1986	35	0	1503	1503
1987	37	0	1584	1584
1988	40	0	1770	1770
1989	39	0	1700	1700
1990	39	0	1742	1742
1991	40	0	1776	1776
1992	39	0	1741	1741
1993	35	0	1505	1505
1994	32	0	1379	1379
1995	33	0	1332	1332
1996	32	0	1274	1274
1997	31	0	1214	1214
1998	29	0	1139	1139
1999	29	0	1087	1087
2000	26	0	962	962
2001	24	0	847	847
2002	24	0	853	853
2003	21	0	773	773
2004	18	0	712	712
2005	18	54	589	643
2006	17	110	523	633
2007	17	199	459	658
2008	16	225	409	634
2009	15	256	388	644
2010	15	260	361	621
2011	16	279	369	648
2012	17	264	378	642
2013	17	267	398	665

In addition to changing to a co-educational format, Jogo High School responded to changing demographics by branding its name to make it more attractive to potential students. Here *branding* includes an emphasis on greetings, a focus on Saturday classes, the cultivation of an international image, an effort to make fans of the school at events, and an effort to recruit returnees. I discuss each of these in the following sections.

Branding

In order to attract new students Jogo High School has attempted to brand itself in a number of ways. Branding involves not just a selective addition of new features or programs to improve the image of the school, but also the protection of that image of the school to the outside world. Blue light duty and morning duty are two examples of protecting the image of the school by placing teachers in the community during the morning commute in order to deter or limit the development of problems such as students walking in large groups and blocking other pedestrians or traffic. One of the simplest methods to improve the image is to elevate the importance of greetings.

The Jogo High School administration makes greetings a focus. The beginning of a class in Jogo High School starts with a decided formulaic greeting. Teachers who do not do this or allow students to do it poorly are considered weak or not caring about their job. The importance of greetings extends beyond the classroom and includes interactions between teachers and the administration where even teachers are corrected in reference to greetings. During one general teachers' meeting in May 2012, the principal scolded everyone in attendance describing two recent incidents. In the first, a teacher had entered a room that the principal was in and did not say a greeting. The principal admonished the

crowd, “First time to ever see that at Jogo High School.” The second involved a part-time teacher who had greeted the principal with his hands in his pockets. In this case the principal exclaimed in disbelief: “What kind of society is this? You (looking at the other administrators) should call and talk to that teacher.” (Field Notes, May 23, 2012). In addition to greetings, branding at Jogo High School includes the following elements: Saturday classes, an international outlook, and an attempt to make fans of the school. I will describe each of these points in the following sections.

Saturday classes. In reaction to school problems in the 1970s and 1980s, the Japanese government adopted a policy of *yutori kyoiku* [(ゆとり教育) relaxed education] to lessen the perceived stress and burden on students (see Sato, 2011 and Bjork, 2011 for a discussion of *yutori kyoiku*). Some formerly required parts of the curriculum were reduced or eliminated, including the gradual reduction of Saturday classes during the 1990s. By 2002, Saturday classes were gone from public schools. *Yutori kyoiku* has since become controversial, blamed for the weakening of academic standards, and a public point of debate. The term “*yutori*” used alone has entered the lexicon in Japan as a term to describe a doltish action by a younger person. In the June 6, 2016 episode of the variety television program *Sugiru TV* [(過ぎる TV) Beyond TV] broadcast on ABC Television, the show surveyed a number of women in their teens and twenties about what makes them think of an older man as an *ossan* [(おっさん) literally uncle, but closer to old fart]. One of the top responses was “anytime an older man comments on a mistake they make by saying ‘*yutori*.’” This public view, at least by older people, of the negative

influence of the yutori kyoiku changes has created an opportunity for private schools to offer something not available in the public school system.

In contrast to the public school system, then, Jogo High School has a comprehensive Saturday class curriculum. Classes are divided into a morning session and an afternoon session with a chapel service in between. Jogo High School students are required to take Saturday classes, but they are allowed to choose the classes they wish to take depending upon their interests. Classes required for graduation purposes take place Monday to Friday at most schools, including Jogo High School. On Saturdays, supplemental classes are held in order to help students in subjects they were having difficulty with or to provide opportunities to study subjects outside of the required curriculum. These classes are appealing to prospective students and their parents. In the 2010 school brochure, the first four pages discussing features of the school detailed the Saturday course. Only the section on camps that followed the section on Saturday courses matched this page count.

This advantage for private schools and Jogo High School in particular is slipping away. With the latest curriculum change mandated by MEXT, public schools are now allowed to reinstitute Saturday classes. The decision is the prerogative of local boards of education. In 2015, Kagoshima became the first public school system in the country to bring back Saturday classes (Kagoshima Public Schools Start Saturday Classes, 2015). As Saturday classes return to public schools, Jogo High School has offered more original courses not available in public schools. The originality of these courses—such as golf and sign language—has required the school to bring in teachers from outside. Jogo High School teachers who are not assigned to instruct a Saturday class are assigned to support

outside teachers, further increasing their time commitments. During the period of my data collection, Saturday classes were not reintroduced in public schools in the same area as Jogo High School. The competitive advantage over public schools might not last long due to MEXT policy changes, but this still has ramifications for the practice of Jogo High School teachers.

To summarize this section, demographic changes have placed new demands upon schools in Japan. One way private schools have responded is to use Saturday courses as a method to attract prospective students. This focus on Saturday classes has increased the time commitment of teachers in Jogo High School by having them prepare and teach these courses as well as support their administration. Teachers have responded by using these classes as a chance to interact with students in a class of the students' choosing. In effect, these Saturday courses have become part of the shared repertoire of Jogo High School teachers allowing more time with students in a structured environment. This time allows the teachers to understand the students better, to detect issues students have earlier, and to make better decisions concerning students based upon this understanding. Teachers find meaning within this Jogo High School requirement and support the joint enterprise of the *gakunen*. In the following section, I detail another Jogo High School requirement upon teachers in the form of creating and maintaining an international school image.

An international image. In addition to branding itself as offering educational opportunities in the form of Saturday classes that are not available in public schools, Jogo High School tries to present an international image to prospective students. Pictures of

visiting exchange students are frequently displayed in the school's promotional material along with testimonials of Jogo High School students' experiences when studying abroad.

This is an example of the conflict of larger Jogo High School policies and the realities of the gakunen enterprise. Jogo High School administration encourages student exchange programs. It states it is good for the Jogo pupils to be exposed to students from overseas. The experience is seen as a potential learning opportunity and a tool to promote the school. From 2003 to 2013, Jogo High School accepted 69 foreign exchange students for short-term programs, and, from 2005 to 2012, for long-term programs lasting approximately six months to a year, accepted 16 foreign exchange students (see table 19). Participants included students from New Zealand, the United States, Australia, Norway, Mexico, Finland, Thailand, and Germany. However, the reality of the exchange students' day-to-day experience is left to the gakunen. The smiling faces of exchange students figure prominently in school promotional materials, but it is up to the gakunen to take care of these students.

The gakunen must agree to accept an exchange student and this can be the cause of debate depending on the grade of the student taking part in the exchange. For example, an exchange student coming into Jogo High School during the second year of high school will be involved with the school trip. Another issue is finding a homeroom teacher to agree to accept the student into their class. Any problems that come up between the exchange student and the host family become an issue for the gakunen because the school holds the gakunen accountable for parental complaints. Homeroom teachers must assign the exchange student required jobs such as cleaning duties and ensure that the student is informed of class and gakunen announcements, which could be difficult if the exchange

student does not have sufficient Japanese ability. Another example of a concern is a homeroom teacher who is involved with taking care one or more Jogo High School students who are having difficulty, but might not be able to spare additional time to help an exchange student.

Table 19. *Jogo High School Students Studying Overseas 2006-2012*

Year	Program	Male	Female	Countries
2006	I	0	3	Belgium, Mexico and Australia
	II	1	1	United States
2007	I	2	2	United States, Great Britain, and Germany
	II	0	2	New Zealand and Germany
2008	I	0	3	United States
	II	0	0	None
2009	I	4	1	United States, Germany, and Thailand
	II	0	1	United States
2010	I	4	7	United States, Great Britain, Canada, Denmark, Mexico, and Germany
	II	0	1	Finland
2011	I	1	4	Canada, Great Britain, and New Zealand
	II	1	1	United States
2012	I	3	5	United States, Canada, Brazil, and New Zealand
	II	0	2	Canada and United States

Note. Program I allows students to receive credit for their year abroad returning them to their original gakunen with the same classmates. Students going abroad using Program II does not receive credit for their studies overseas and drops back to the following gakunen.

The various concerns I listed above, including the disruption of the day-to-day classroom activities due to the introduction of an exchange student, are part of the negotiation of teachers when they decide whether to accept an exchange student.

Making fans of Jogo High School. A frequent comment from the school’s administration in general teachers’ meetings held in preparation for large school-wide events is to make sure guests become “fans of Jogo High School.” These large events

include *taikusai* [(体育祭) sports day] held in May and *bunkasai* [(文化祭) culture festival] held in November. Both of these events require a large commitment of time by Jogo High School teachers.

The first large school-wide event of the year is the sports festival. It takes place on one day in May and attracts a lot of visitors to the school. At Jogo High School, each *gakunen* is split into a white team and a red team that complete in a number of athletic events. Some of these events include relay races, a tug-of-war, and *kibasen* [(騎馬戦) cavalry fight]. It is also a chance for the school to appeal to prospective students.

Prospective students routinely visit a school event in consideration of applying to the school. The website *Chyuko juken koko juken navi pasu* [(中学受験高校受験パスナビ) Junior Senior High School Entrance Exam Pass Navigation] provides a national listing by area of *bunkasai* and *taikusai* events for prospective students and their parents. When visitors enter one of these events at Jogo High School they are asked if they are related to current students or if they are interested in possibly applying to the school someday.

Due to the promotional aspect of school events, preparation is detailed and time consuming for teachers, but it is also part of the practice of a Jogo High School teacher because he or she is able to spend time with students outside of class in a structured format. For the 2010 sports day, teachers had a preparation meeting on May 11 from 16:45 p.m., covering 15 pages of handouts. A sports day leader and assistant leader from each *gakunen* are each responsible for certain elements of the preparation. During the week before the sports day, a special class schedule is introduced which provides large

“practice times” for each gakunen. This schedule makes it difficult for teachers to plan for lessons as the schedule is created to provide large blocks for each gakunen to go outside and practice marching, *Jogo taiso* [(体操) calisthenics], and the opening ceremony of the event. During the gakunen practice times the gakunen teachers are encouraged to go outside as well to support the students. On May 13 teachers were required to be on the school athletic grounds ready to start the rehearsal day at 08:30 a.m. After a quick meeting by each group of teachers, the leader or assistant leader in each gakunen checked student attendance. Because students came to school in their regular school uniform they needed to change into their gym uniform. Students usually use their classrooms to change, but because the school is co-educational, two classes team up, with one used for male students and the other for female students. Gakunen teachers are assigned to check the gakunen area inside the school when the students are changing. An additional practice day is held on May 14 before the taikusai on Saturday May 15. This event is decided by the administration of Jogo High School and used as a promotional activity, but again as they do with Saturday classes, teachers use the event as part of the shared repertoire of the gakunen. The grouping of teachers and students with one another prepare and participate in events facilitates the mutual engagement of teachers.

Making fans of Jogo High School also includes the idea of protecting the name of the school in the neighborhood by not violating the expectations of neighbors. To illustrate, parking is not allowed in the school during large events such as taikusai and the bunkasai because there simply is not enough space. Parents and other visitors are therefore requested to use public transportation. However, some parents try to park their cars in a local supermarket and then walk over to Jogo High School, resulting in a full

parking lot and hindering the supermarket's clients' ability to access the supermarket. To keep this from happening two teachers are assigned to stand outside of the supermarkets and to watch for parents doing this. If such parents are discovered, the teachers politely ask them not to park in the supermarket. This extra duty for teachers is assigned during both taikusai and bunkasai.

Bunkasai is held in November at Jogo High School and it is a two-day event. The first day is just for students while the second day, Saturday, is open to the public. The second day ends with a fireworks display as parents and other visitors slowly filter out of the school. Gradually, cleanup begins. Most homerooms run some type of food shop such as selling sausages or *okonomiyaki* [(お好み焼き) a pancake-like food with various ingredients]. At the end of the day there is usually food, mostly ingredients left over so these are brought to the teachers' room and people are free to take as much as they want. It is a long day of a two-day event, which takes weeks to prepare.

The final day ends with teachers, administration, and some students gathered in the teachers' room. Everyone is exhausted and once everything has been put away the teachers and the students involved with the student government return to the teachers' room. In my field notes for one such event, I wrote:

The teachers stand as the vice-principal makes some announcements starting at 20:10 p.m. He begins with the number of total guests and the number of students who are thinking about applying to Jogo Junior High School or Jogo High School. There is a small round of applause as he begins to thank people for their hard work, saying this year's event was even better than last year's festival. Next the students take turns speaking. "Thank you for all of your help. We have lots of

memories now. We will do even better next year.” The next student tries to start after some applause, but can’t because she is crying. Her friend tugs her arm “can I talk?” She nods with her head down sobbing. Teachers start to move in closer to listen to and see the students. “Sorry I made a lot of mistakes. I am sorry for the trouble I caused lower classmates. I promised I would not cry but...” and she starts to cry. More students start to talk and cry as some teachers’ eyes begin to water. The last student is a senior leader in the student government. “Last night I was here until 20:30 p.m. and I came back in at 06:00 a.m. I collapsed when I heard the final fireworks. It was really a great success due to the underclassmen, the teachers, and the Jogo family. This school really is a family.” More than a few teachers are crying as the students say thank you in unison, bow, and leave the room. (Field notes, November 6, 2010)

This event has multiple purposes. The school administration sees this as an event to showcase the school. That year, the opening of the meeting began with the school administration talking about the number of attendees to the event and how that could translate into possible student applicants later. However, the teachers’ reaction came in response to the students. Spending time with students outside of the classroom in a meaningful way is an important part of the gakunen joint enterprise. Seeing the reaction of the students to the time committed to the event reinforces the methods used by teachers in this school. The time spent with students is part of the process of helping to create an environment where students are able to grow. The tears at the end of bunkasai and other events are a physical representation of this growth and reinforce the value teachers find within their practice.

Demographic changes in Japan have an influence on how Jogo High School recruits students. By branding, the school shows that it provides opportunities not always available in other locations. Events such as taikusai and bunkasai provide potential applicants a window into the school. While these events provide teachers with the opportunity to interact with the students in their own *gakunen* the external face of these events is not lost to them. Ms. Gwang describes school events:

私学だったら、それがこう…何、CMにもなるじゃないですか。ま…広告にもなるし、そのイベントがおきや…外部の人に入ってもらえる、だからすごく大事だと思います。受けにきた人が (Jogo High School) のことをその…何…い…よく思ってもらえる場なのかもしれないですね。てなれば、ああそこ良かったよって思ってもらったら、またその兄弟とかその友達とかが受けてくれるかもしれないっていうのはあるかもしれないね。(Gwang interview, Dec. 15, 2012)

[If it's a private school, you wonder what kind of commercial something will become, or what kind of advertisement. When people attend an event, I think it is very important. It can be a chance for people to think well of Jogo High School. They can say that something or other was good, and later maybe a sibling or friend will possibly apply].

Events such as taikusai and bunkasai take a considerable amount of time away from instruction. In addition, the adjusted schedules are completed and provided just before they are enacted. This does not allow teachers to do much advanced planning. For example, a teacher could teach world history to three different classes in the same

gakunen twice a week, but due to the adjusted bunkasai or taikusai schedule might meet one class three times, another only once and the third class not at all. All three of these classes are still required to have the same midterm and final exams, creating a planning burden on teachers. This is often resolved by the trading of classes by gakunen teachers. For example, if a teacher met A class one class period more than the other classes in the gakunen, that teacher can ask others in the gakunen if they need an A class period. This trading is part of the local response of the gakunen facilitating the mutual engagement of teachers in Jogo High School.

Returnees. While the population of students in Japan is decreasing, the number of Japanese students living outside of Japan, in general, has increased since 1988 with only a slight decrease in 2011 (see Table 20). As the number of students studying overseas increased, so have the recruiting efforts of private schools focusing on this market. Japanese students are at a disadvantage when they apply to schools back in Japan. The level of this disadvantage depends upon the type of school they attended while overseas.

Table 20. *Education for Japanese Children Living Abroad 1988-2012*

Year	Total number of children	Full-time schools	Supplemental schools
1988	44,123	83	127
1993	50,842	83	165
1998	49,670	95	181
2003	52,462	82	188
2008	61,252	87	201
2009	61,488	89	204
2010	67,322	89	201
2011	64,950	89	203
2012	66,960	88	202

Note. Retrieved from MEXT on September 7, 2013 (MEXT, 2016b)

In order not to fall behind their peers back in Japan many children abroad try to maintain some level of Japanese language based education. The simplest method is to attend a full-time school where the language of instruction is Japanese, but this is not always available. Another option and sometimes the only option depending upon location, is a *Nihongo Hoshu-ko* [(日本語補習校) Japanese Language Supplemental schools]. Supplemental schools meet on weekends while the student attends another school in the host country. Supplemental schools, like the full-time schools, use Japanese as the primary language of instruction to help students maintain their language and to keep pace with the entrance examination preparation of students in Japan.

Returnees, known historically as *kikokushijo* [(帰国子女) returnees], are not officially defined by MEXT. Jogo Junior and Senior High School describes a returnee as students who have lived “2 years or more” in a foreign country as stated in the school’s student recruitment brochure (for a detailed description of the use of the term *kikokushijo* see Clark, 2017). Some private schools offer special entrance exams for returnee students that include different standards than the schools’ regular entrance exam, or might only consider a comparison between returnee students’ entrance exam results to determine acceptance. Public schools generally do not have special considerations for returnee students, compelling these students to compete with the general student population. Students who attend a non-Japanese language based school outside Japan could be at a significant disadvantage on the language-based portions of an entrance exam. For example, the Hyogo Prefectural Board of Education does not have any special programs in place for returnee students. One public (prefectural) high school does have a larger

portion of English on its entrance exam leading the head of the high school division to suggest this school as a possible alternative for returnees. Even this option can be problematic if the student lived in a country such as Germany or China that does not use English as the primary language for instruction in the education system. Many returnee students have not attended Japanese schools overseas and have not received a lot of entrance exam preparation. Private schools then become an attractive option for returnee students and their families, but this also creates challenges for teachers.

In order to have these students, Jogo High School created a separate returnee test so they did not have to compete with students who had remained in the Japanese education system. Jogo Junior High School also adjusted the curriculum to support these students. Working on the assumption that returnee students would be better at English, these students were pulled out of regular oral communication classes and placed in special returnee classes taught by native speakers of English. This provided opportunities for students with advanced levels of English, but was problematic for students who had lived in non-English language based countries. Suggestions to provide instruction in mathematics and Japanese to help the returnees catch up with their peers were rejected because nobody was “trained to teach those types of classes.” Part of this resistance was also due to the centering of academic matters within the *gakunen* rather than the academic departments. It is up to the *gakunen* to decide ways to support students with needs. This, in turn, resulted in *gakunen* teachers providing supplemental classes for individual students in each *gakunen* as needed rather than a more formal approach across *gakunen* by the mathematics department. In other words, the *gakunen* is responsible for planning support for students who might need help with an academic subject.

Students returning to Japan after studying for two or more years in a foreign country have thus provided Jogo High School a pool of possible students amidst the ever-increasing competition among private schools due to the decreasing student population. Jogo High School is a member of a private school association. This association assigns recruitment guidelines including a maximum number of students a school can recruit. While this number helps schools plan and keeps lower level schools from being locked out of the possible student pool it has not eliminated competition. It has, instead, refocused schools onto recruiting the best possible candidates. Returnee students were not initially included in the number of students private schools were allowed to accept as agreed by the private school association, and thus were both an extra source of income as well as a safety net in the case of low student enrollment.

Recruiting returnee students has become less of an advantage than it might have once been, in three distinct ways. First, while the number of students overseas has increased, the number of these students returning to Japan has slowed since 2009-2010 (see Table 21).

Table 21. *Japanese Children Who Have Returned from Abroad 2005-2012*

Year	Total number of children	Junior high schools	High schools
2005-2006	10,368	2,383	1,910
2006-2007	10,307	2,515	1,721
2007-2008	11,077	2,841	1,766
2008-2009	11,749	3,065	2,016
2009-2010	12,118	2,995	2,049
2010-2011	10,589	2,644	1,963
2011-2012	9,990	2,301	1,772

Note. Retrieved from MEXT on July 20, 2016 (MEXT, 2016b)

Second, the private school association started to include returnee students accepted in the total number of students a private school was allowed to accept. Third, more private schools are creating programs to appeal to this population. Despite these trends the increased efforts by Jogo High School to recruit this group has increased the time commitment and range of duties for teachers in the school.

Getting into Jogo High School

The recruitment of students is directed by the administration and done by teachers. The most easily observed manifestations of this are the school's entrance examinations. These exams require a considerable time commitment by teachers both in preparation and execution. There are several entrance exams offered by Jogo High School.

Students enter Jogo High School by taking one of three different sets of entrance exams. There are exams for junior high school, high school, and a returnee exam. Chronologically the first set of exams is for the junior high school, and this exam accounts for the majority of students who later enter Jogo High School. This junior high school entrance exam is broken into two separate tests labeled A and B.

The A test has two sections: math and science. More students sit for the A test than the B test. They are students who consider Jogo Junior High School their first choice, and due to this, it is uncommon for students who have registered to miss it. Even sickness does not deter students from taking the A test. The health office prepares an area staffed by teachers for examinees to take the exam if they are not feeling well.

The number of students taking the B exam is smaller and generally includes students who failed the A exam, students who failed an exam at another school, or students who missed the A exam for some reason. Approximately 160 students were admitted in 2011 during the two junior high school exams. The B test contains sections on math, Japanese, and a composition.

Both the A and B tests require students to complete a physical assessment and an interview. Two teachers interview the student and his or family in Japanese. English is not used in these interviews. My last few years at Jogo High School I was asked to be part of the team to conduct interviews for prospective junior high school students. For most interviews both the family and mother attended while a few consisted of the student and one parent. I did not experience any interviews without a family member present.

The school brochure states the school admits 80 boys and 80 girls in the junior high school entrance exam process. It also states, “all Jogo Junior High School students who keep up their grades and fulfill the necessary requirements will be recommended for entering Jogo Senior High School.” Because most students are admitted into university by recommendation, once admitted these students might never have to take another entrance exam again.

The next exams, taking place in February, are the high school entrance exams. These exams consist of two sections: Japanese language and English language. The students must also complete a physical assessment for athletic ability and finally two interviews. The first interview is in Japanese while the second is in English. Two teachers conduct each interview. Approximately 75 students are admitted during the high school entrance exams while the projected incoming group is described as 40 boys and 40 girls.

In general, more girls enroll in the school after gaining admission. These students are then expected to attend the attached university. “All students will be recommended if they can maintain minimum grade requirements. In 2011, all of the Jogo High School graduates were recommended for entrance into Tsuru University” (Jogo High School brochure 2010, artifact).

The third set of exams is the returnee entrance examination. This exam is for admission to both junior and senior high schools; however, it is limited to students who have lived outside of Japan for over two years. The exam is given both in Japan and in Singapore each year. Prior to the exam, a small group of administrators and teachers travel to Shanghai, Jakarta, Bangkok, and Singapore to hold information sessions on Jogo High School. In 2012, for the first time, similar information sessions were held in New York, New Jersey, Chicago, Dallas, and San Francisco in addition to the ones in South East Asia.

The returnee entrance exams are a burden for teachers in Jogo High School. For teachers in Jogo High School this effort to recruit internationally primarily takes time away from their practice. Teachers missing classes to administer admissions tests in foreign countries return and do make-up classes for those missed while away. For some there can be benefits such as an opportunity to develop better cultural understanding through cross-cultural interactions with students, support organizations, and the experience of traveling abroad. In my experience of several trips to administer entrance exams in Singapore, teachers who might be more open to international interactions do learn from the opportunity. Other teachers who lean in the opposite direction use the opportunity to reinforce their preexisting concepts. I have not seen movement between

these two groups. In other words, rather than change existing preconceptions these trips reinforce them.

The junior high school entrance exam takes most of the day. Once it is finished some teachers start to grade exams while others clean and return the classrooms to their original order. The teachers who conducted interviews go over their notes and wait to report the results to the chancellor in his office. After these reports, the administration meets, where they make the admission decisions. The rest of the faculty waits for the meeting that follows later in the evening, which has the façade of a joint decision, but in line with most general teachers' meetings is more of an announcement of decisions already made.

The junior high school admission meeting is set up in a similar fashion to general teachers' meetings. Handouts list all the applicants arranged in order from highest total score on the paper components of the test. Next, each subcomponent score is listed, along with scores on the interview, physical assessment score, current school, juku, any relatives currently in or graduated from Jogo High School or Tsuru University, hometown, other schools applied to and other miscellaneous information. The vice-principal starts the meeting with an explanation of applicant numbers and comparisons with other schools. Section leaders next describe any issues such as "the air conditioning was too loud in room XX" before each academic department describes the relevant components of the test. The administration prepares one additional handout that has several blank spaces for the number of students accepted and the passing score on the test. After the administration explains the scores and rationale for them, the teachers are

asked to vote to confirm the decision by raising their hands. This vote is not counted. This process has the appearance of a joint decision, but all has already been decided.

On entrance exams, the passing score and failing score are separated by a gap. All prospective students who achieved the passing score or above are accepted while all applicants below the failing score are rejected. The students between these two scores are selected based on other factors. For example, having a brother or sister in Jogo High School would be enough to get an applicant residing in this middle zone accepted.

The decisions to accept students are a delicate balance of hedged bets. The private school association allocates a number that a school can enroll in the form of collaborative competition. If a school brings in too many students that school could be penalized with a reduction in its allocated number of students it can enroll the following year. However, not all of the students who are accepted then enroll, so decisions need to be carefully weighted. To do so, the school relies on a formula based on previous enrollment rates to determine the number of students that should be accepted. For example, one applicant was rejected because all of the other schools she applied to were girls' schools and the administration felt that is the type of school she wanted despite her being just below the passing score. In the week following the faculty-wide meeting to approve the admission decisions, the faculty is informed on a daily basis of the number of admitted students who have elected to enroll. This is an indication of the concern of the Jogo High School administration over student numbers.

The high school admission meetings are much shorter due to the smaller number of students admitted at that level. In 2011, the meeting was scheduled to start at 20:00 p.m. after the scoring of the high school entrance exams and subsequent pre-meetings, to

which only the school administration is privy, but did not start until 20:30 p.m. As in the junior high school meeting, one of the handouts requires teachers to fill in some information such as the passing score on the exam and the number of students accepted. The veneer of a group decision is displayed by asking for questions and confirmation as the explanation is provided. During the admission meeting held on February 10, 2011, the vice-principal accidentally read out the final number of accepted students for this exam before there was a chance to ask teachers to confirm the decision. Everyone laughed. The meeting ended at 21:32 p.m. (Field notes, February 10, 2011). These decisions have been made already and everyone knows it.

To review this section, entrance examination preparation and administration takes a large amount of time away from teachers. While most of this work is unrelated to a teacher's practice within a *gakuren* it does provide a slight opportunity to gain insight into the incoming student body, allowing a *gakuren* to make preparations for any perceived issues. In other words, teachers who are assigned to the new first-year high school *gakuren* are very attentive to the information given during the entrance examination process. Other teachers also understand that for a private high school this process also ensures their future employment in terms of keeping the school viable. In the following section I discuss the influence of demographics on the interactions between teachers and students.

Demographic Influence on Student and Teacher Interactions

The decrease in the student population has affected the interaction between students and teachers outside of classroom instruction. One opinion sees the students as

having less need to push themselves as the onus shifts to the teachers to get the students through the program and to graduation. In this sense, it could be argued that demographics have forced teachers to change their practices and become better teachers in response. However, in practice at Jogo High School the opposite has occurred. Teachers need to spend more time on administrative issues and when students have academic problems the common response of a *gakunen* is to provide additional classes after school, because this application of time is easily seen by both the school administration and parents. This is seen as students taking less responsibility. As student populations decrease, the pressure on teachers to take care of students increases, leading some students to feel less of a need to be self-reliant and, in turn, to depend more on their teachers. Mr. Inaba described this as high school students acting like elementary students in the school.

As a high school teacher (it is like we) are doing, working with elementary school children like giving out the handout every information is on it and read it again and make sure and after a couple of days some students lost the handout ..okay I will copy again and give it to students. That is not what I expect for 16 to 18 year (old) kids. (Inaba interview, November 26, 2012)

In this example, Mr. Inaba provided handouts to his class and read them for the students as part of his role as a homeroom teacher. When he reminded them about the notice some days later, some students asked him to read the notice again or to provide them with additional copies. An additional indication of changing student and teacher relations is seen in the accountability of grades.

The gakunen is held responsible for the grades given to students, not for what they learn or achieve. Jogo High School holds the gakunen responsible for this in a number of ways. Teachers responsible for a class within a gakunen different from their own gakunen defer decisions about grades to the gakunen responsible for those students, because that gakunen is perceived to know those students. Teachers in Japan are not gatekeepers who need to ensure students have acquired a certain body of knowledge. In other words, teachers are not placed in a position to judge whether a student has met a minimal standard to pass a course or to retake the course in order to achieve that standard. Teachers are responsible to do whatever they need to do to get the student to pass the course. The grade meeting, discussed in the next section, provides evidence for this. It is a more holistic view of the goals of education. Ms. Gwang discusses the power relations between a teacher and a different gakunen within which she teaches a class:

学年の圧カプレッシャーの方が強いと思う。あ...その...いろいろだと思うけど 授業を担当してる人が、例えば私いま中1だけど、中2に授業行ってたとすると、ま...その授業担当としての気持ちはあるけど、その子のことは授業以外は知らないじゃないですか。家族分からないし、ほかのときのことは分からないから、その子がどんな子か分からないから、授業の側面からのことは言えるけど、でもこの子をこうして欲しい...て...学年から言われたら、依頼されたら、あ...じゃあってもう引いちゃう...も...それぞれよりも、もう自分が押すことはないですね。

(Gwang interview, March 19, 2013)

[I think the power of the gakunen is strong. There are a lot of things, but for example, I am in the first-year junior high school gakunen, but teach some second year junior high school classes. I have an opinion because I am in charge of those classes, but for the students I don't know anything about them outside of class. I don't know about their families. I can talk about their class performance, but if the gakunen makes a request I have to pull back. There is no way I can press my opinion (against a gakunen request)].

Because it is the gakunen's responsibility to place all of the students into Tsuru University, grades are an important part of the gakunen practice because a low grade point average could disqualify a student from receiving the recommendation. The centrality of the gakunen regarding grades is reinforced by the school administration. The gakunen, not the academic department, is responsible for the grades given to students. Mr. Inaba reflected upon this understanding: "We moving as a grade (gakunen) system so if there is some problem happen in the classroom we need to tackle the problem as a grade (gakunen) group of teachers" (March 21, 2013). This responsibility is demonstrated by the gakunen to the school administration at the end of each term in a school wide meeting. At the end of each term, the administration holds two general teachers' meetings to discuss grades given during that term. The first meeting is just for the high school faculty while the second meeting includes both the junior high and the high school. To prepare for this meeting the gakunen holds a separate meeting.

The gakunen uses the end of term gakunen grade meeting to decide what information concerning the grades given to its students during the term will be presented

in the high school grade meeting and then to the whole school. Each gakunen is required to provide a handout listing information as shown in Table 22.

Table 22. *Parts of a Gakunen Handout for a Grade Meeting*

Item	Content
Student numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students in each homeroom. • Total number of students in the gakunen. • Any changes to these numbers with explanation. • A list of students studying abroad.
Grade Failures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three columns listing students who failed one class, students who failed two classes and students who failed three or more classes. • These columns are divided by homeroom. • Each listing has the student's name, class failed, and grade.
Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of students who were absent for more than one third of any single subject's class meetings, the name of the class, total number of classes held during the term and the number of times the student attended.
Overall average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A listing of any students who have an overall failing average for the term and their point total.
Students with two or more failures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more detailed listing of all students who failed two or more classes. • Each listing has the student's name, all classes taken during the term, grades for each class passed or failed, total number of points, average for the term, and the student's numerical ranking.
Excused absences due to sickness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A listing of any students who have an extended excused absence due to a sickness such as influenza.
Special Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A listing of any student who received special counseling for serious offenses such as cheating, and who administered the counseling, that is usually someone outside of the gakunen.
End of term warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The date and time for the end of term warning assembly.
Gakunen average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A grade breakdown of all the classes the gakunen took during the term. • Each listing states the class name, number of credits, teacher in charge, average score, highest score, and a breakdown of the number of students falling within four-point grade bands (100, 99-95, 94-90, 89-85, continuing to zero).

Note. Adapted from 2011 *Nendo Koko 2 Nen 1 Gakki Jyouho Hokokukai Shiryo* [(2011 年度高校 2 年 1 学期成績情報報告会資料) Year 2011 First Term Grade and Information Meeting Briefing Materials] (Artifacts).

The 2011 end-of-the-first-term grade meeting was held on a Saturday morning at 09:00 a.m. with both the junior high school and high school teachers in attendance. The seating arrangement was similar to a general teachers' meeting except that for this meeting teachers were required to sit with their *gakunen* as a group. Each *gakunen* in turn, starting with the first year of the junior high school and finishing with the third year of high school explains the points listed on the *gakunen* produced *Gakki Jyoho Hokokukai Shiryo* (see Table 23). Reports usually take the form of an explanation of why the student failed, such as did not hand in work or did poorly on tests, followed by a simple plan of action to address the issue. Many such reports end with “*shido shimasu*” [(指導します) I will counsel the student]. Most end without questions, but some, on occasion, draw comments from other teachers.

One junior high school teacher in 2011 ended her report with “He isn't doing his homework. He isn't writing notes so I'll check them more often. I will also give him special classes before next term's final exam.” This drew a remark from Mr. Okubo who was in a different *gakunen*. “Having homework due on the same day as other classes isn't fair to the students. We need to be careful about that. And we shouldn't have homework due the last week of the term either.” Nobody responded to the comment. I noticed several high school teachers sleeping as the junior high school teachers continued their report. One junior high school teacher stated: “There were times when I praised him and when I did, he really tried hard. But most days, I couldn't and his motivation dropped. I will try to raise his motivation.” At this point one of the library studies teachers, who was not in a *gakunen*, interjected referencing Mr. Okubo's prior statement: “All subjects

should meet and decide what needs to be turned in, how many points, and when. This should be in the course syllabus.”¹⁰ Mr. Tsuchiyama quietly nodded his head in agreement. There was no follow-up to the comment.

Table 23. *An End of Term Grade Meeting as a Communicative Event*

Genre	Large teachers' meeting.
Topic	Discussion of students who failed classes during the term.
Purpose	To pass information about students who made need support, develop a plan of action, and to clarify how all teachers within the gakunen will support the plan.
Setting	Held in the large meeting room.
Key	Accusatory for some and apologetic for the gakunen.
Participants	All teachers and administrative staff.
Message form	Each gakunen prepares a handout used to support a verbal report in Japanese.
Message content	A list of students who failed classes and other gakunen specific information concerning the term as list <i>Gakki Jyouho Hokokukai Shiryo</i> .
Acts	Start of the meeting. Part 1 general announcements by the school administration. Part 2 each gakunen in the junior and senior high school reports.
Rules	All members are allowed to ask questions or comment.
Norms	The content of the gakunen reports are decided in gakunen meetings. If teachers have concerns they should have discussed these with the gakunen sometime before this meeting.

Note. Adapted from Saville-Troike (2003), pp. 110-124.

¹⁰ There is a syllabus for each class taught in Jogo High School. They are, however, prepared a year in advance by the current teacher responsible for the class. Because in most cases, that teacher does not teach the course the following year and does not even know who will teach the course or which textbook will be used, the syllabi produced are intentionally vague. They are also often ignored.

The floor turned to the first-year high school. The head of the *gakunen* explained each situation and ended one report with “He has lots of worries. He is having trouble with his parents. Depends upon the day. We want to help him do his best.” Mr. Tsuchiyama interrupted while seated: “The student failed six classes. Just saying you will do your best isn’t enough. It will be trouble, but all of the subject teachers need to talk and figure how to get this student to pass” (Field notes, July 16, 2011). Jogo High School holds teachers accountable for getting the students in their *gakunen* to the next stage.

Student grades can be the start of a discussion to hold a student back a year, but they are not the deciding factor. The reasons for failure are the critical parts to make the decision. If a student has failed some classes, but suffered a death in the family, that student might not be kept back, depending upon other factors. Because it is the responsibility of the *gakunen* to get the student to pass his or her classes, holding a student back is viewed as a failure by the *gakunen*. It is a problem the *gakunen* should have negotiated a solution to and the failure to do so is seen by many as simply giving up and passing the problem onto the next group of teachers. In Jogo High School this idea is often discussed using the terms *sekinin* [(責任) responsibility] and *meiwaku* [(迷惑) trouble or annoyance]. Mr. Inoue describes this understanding:

みんな上がりたいっていうのは結局その上げられなかったら下の学年の人たちに迷惑をかけるという言い方よくするじゃないですか。で...いや...ま...それはそうでしょうよ。迷惑はかかりますよ。(Inoue interview, March 9, 2013)

[We want everyone to go up. After all if they all don't go up we are causing problems for the gakunen behind us. People don't often say that? They're right. It is causing problems for others].

The gakunen decides if the student should advance to the next grade or be held back a year. If they do advance the student, the student needs to take a *Saishiken* [(再試験) make-up test] the following June. If the teacher who failed the student is in the gakunen, which is often the case, he or she is in charge of getting that student ready for the saishiken. Mr. Samson described the process.

When you fail a student you have to give reasons why you are failing the student.

You have to explain that they did poorly on tests and that they didn't hand in assignments and things like that... when a teacher fails a student they actually have to give up portions of their spring vacation to tutor the student and create new tests for the student so they can get the student to pass the previous year.

(Samson interview, March 6, 2013)

Preparation for the make-up test includes creating materials and providing extra classes to help the student prepare. This same teacher is also responsible for creating the make-up test, grading it, and reporting the new score to the school. It is not announced to students, but if a teacher creates a difficult test and the student fails, the teacher needs to start the process from the beginning, which means providing additional classes, creating a *sai-saishiken* [(再々試験) make-up make-up test], grading it, and reporting the new score.

The school would increase pressure on the teacher to provide more classes for the student

because it was the teacher who, by that point, had failed to do his or her job twice. The onus is on the teacher to pass the student leading some teachers to take the path of least resistance. As a case in point, I proctored the 50-minute make up test in 2010. Most of the students were finished in 15 minutes and nobody was working on their test after 25 minutes (Field notes, June 15, 2010). All the students passed.

Before the application of the make-up test systemic pressure to pass students, the *gakunen* can even actively work to avoid this. Ms. Gwang discusses one example.

例えばいったんね。何かその...とても理科が苦手な子で全然点数が取れないんですね。本当だったらそのままテストの点数をつけたら欠点、だめだけど学年の先生にこの子はこういう子だから、もし落として来年再テスト高校ね...高2になって再テストしてもきっと受からないから、だから今年課題をさせて受からせてほしいと思う。(Gwang interview, March 19, 2013)

[For example, if there is a student who is bad at science and really can't get any (good marks) if I just consider the test grades that student will fail. A *gakunen* teacher might say that student is this type of person and if you fail the student, next year they will take the make-up test in high school. In the second year of high school they might not be able to pass the make-up test so it is better to give makeup work this year (so the student can pass the class)].

From the position of a gakunen, *kadai* [(課題) tasks or in this sense make-up work] provided while the student is actively studying the subject is more beneficial than *kadai* given in the next academic year while the student is involved with a new set of classes. Again, time provided to a student is the ultimate measure of accountability. The sharing of this effort and time given within a gakunen is part of the mutual engagement by teachers. A teacher doing gakunen duty by standing near the gakunen shoe box area could ask a student not to be late and then remind the student that he or she has mathematics *kadai* for Mr. Tanaka due the next day. Later in the afternoon the homeroom teacher might call the student's house to remind the student about the *kadai* and also inform the parent. The mathematics teacher collects the *kadai*, grades it, and meets with the student to discuss any problems. The gakunen head reports these actions to the vice-principal. This process requires a familiarity with the student and an investment of time by all of the teachers within the gakunen and some outside of the gakunen, but it is effective in supporting students who have difficulties. As these practices illustrate, having all of the students within a gakunen successfully advance to the next year or to Tsuru University is central to the joint enterprise of the gakunen.

Demographic Influence on Teacher and Parent Interactions

With the demographic pressures on Jogo High School, the administration has placed an emphasis on responding to parents' concerns. A phone call to the high school vice-principal causes the administration to hold the gakunen responsible. Failure to address these issues causes the school to develop an image of being unresponsive to parents' concerns. This image is easily found online in the form of discussion groups and

posts, which could hinder the school recruiting efforts. This section details the influence of demographics on the socialization process linked with parents' expectations.

Teachers are part of the socialization process of students in Japan. An important part of the practice of a *gakunen* teacher in Jogo High School involves spending time with students outside of the classroom. Classes are generally large with an average of about 45 students per class. Given this number and the methods for instruction, the classroom environment is teacher fronted, limiting teacher-student interactions. Outside of the classroom, interactions allow teachers to develop a better understanding of their students and to support their socialization. Less than one hour of classroom time is not enough to support relationship building between the teacher and students. The school is central to socialization as Peak (1989) explains:

Although family training may provide some influence, it is clear that the schooling experience plays an overwhelming role in training appropriate social behavior in contemporary Japan. It is the teacher and one's classmates, rather than one's mother, who teach children what it means to be a member of Japanese group society (p. 122).

The decreasing student population is, in the view of some teachers, making it harder for students to be effective in peer social interactions.

人口減ってますね。影響あると思う。それは子供が減ると親が子供を育てるときに一人っ子一人の子供しかいない兄弟いないそうすると過保護過干渉 overprotective とか over intervening ね。で、子供の independence がやっぱりちょっと spoil されちゃうよね。自立しないそれと human relationship ね。human skill

がなかなか身に付かない。そうすると学校にくるでしょう。勉強はできる これだけでも質問出来ないで help できない support できないお互いだから自分でやらなきゃいけない。homework を自分でやらないとか time management しないとかいろんなところで子供の数が減って、親が過保護に過干渉にすると弱い子が増えちゃうような気がしますね。 (Okubo interview, March 7, 2013)

[The population is decreasing, right? I think that has the effect that kids are decreasing and parents with kids have only one child without siblings. They become overprotective and over-intervening, and the independence of children can be spoiled. They don't have self-reliance, and don't gain skill with human relationships. Then they come to school, right? Even if they can study, they can't ask questions or support each other so they have to do homework by themselves, and don't do time management. I get the feeling that in many places, the number of children is decreasing and overprotective, over-intervening parents are raising and increasing number of weak children].

Given this involvement of teachers and the school in the socialization process of students, the lines between teacher and parent's responsibility becomes blurred. Viewed from outside of the school, teachers might seem to take the role of parents. Teachers might ask parents about a student's diet and sleep habits, which, at least, in the United States, might seem to be more the parent's responsibility than the teacher's. It would be intruding on the responsibility of parents. This is not the case in Japan, where the boundary is much less clear. Ms. Gwang and I discussed this issue.

Derrah: In regards to raising students where is the line between the responsibility of the school and the responsibility of the parents?

Gwang: それは私も今分からない。私からしたらえそれは親の仕事でしょって思うことも、でも学校に言ってください。先生がやってください。

[I also don't know that now. Even about things that, to me, are the jobs of the parents... "Please tell the school." "Teacher, please do this."]

Derrah: Could you provide some examples of what parents ask teachers to do?

Gwang: え...宿題しないとか先生が言ってください。成績が悪い勉強さすのも私が言ってもだめなんです。親がね、先生から言ってください部活行きたいって言うんですけど、こんな成績だったら行けないじゃないですか、でも私が言っても聞かないんで先生とかクラブから成績が悪いから部活来たらだめって言ってくださいとか。(Gwang interview, March 19, 2013)

[When they don't do homework, they say for the teacher to please tell them to do it. The grades are bad, but they won't study even if the parents tell them to. The parents ask for teachers to tell the students that if they want to participate in club activities, with these grades they won't be able to because they won't listen when we (the parents) tell them. They want teachers to tell students that they can't go to club because their grades are bad, and other things].

Complaints from parents about clubs are common in Jogo High School. Due to concerns about the school image and the connection with student recruitment in a period of decreasing student numbers, teachers are required to address parents' complaints even if they seem extreme. Mr. Inaba discussed one example of a club complaint that also shows the extent of power some parents feel they hold over teachers.

Most of the parents are supportive... I think not some, most of the parents are supportive, but some are ...monster parents... call me (at) home or (on) my cellphone. It's a really simple complaint like why did you treat my boy like that or why my boy couldn't get in the game? My terrible example is, you know I was a soccer coach, and all the students must buy their own uniforms. Kids like to wear loose one, not so tight one so I asked the students the size of the pants and I ordered them. And it was too big, one of them for one kid, and one parent, his mother called me and she complained about it. Why didn't you check my boy's pants size properly? And I told her that is his choice. She didn't listen to me and asked me to come to her house and do *dogeza*. *Dogeza* is one of the politest ways of apologizing to put the knees on the ground. I went there and apologized, but said I would not do *dogeza*. (Inaba interview, March 21, 2013)

If parents feel that *gakunen* teachers are unresponsive to their concerns, they complain to the school. These complaints are the responsibility of the *gakunen* who then meet and discuss a mutual response to these complaints. For some issues, it is easier to appease the parents than to stand one's ground, which ultimately takes time from the *gakunen*.

Derrah: Who do they complain to?

Gwang: ああ...いろいろだと思う。主任に言うこともあるだろうし、校長とか副校長に言うこともあるだろうし。(Gwang interview, March 19, 2013)

[Ah, a lot of different people, they tell the gakunen head, and the principal and vice-principals too].

The literature of Japanese education seems to indicate the limited role of parents with the school. Peak (1989) found that, “although mothers and parents frequently assert that they desire close and open communication, in fact problems are rarely discussed” (p. 100). Shimahara shared a similar finding in comparison to U.S. parent-teacher interactions. “Parents were not as strong a source of external pressure for Japanese teachers as they were for American teachers” (Shimahara, 2002b, p. 143). This is also argued by Hess and Azuma (1991). This does not seem to be the case at Jogo High School as parents frequently contact the gakunen to help settle family issues, even those unrelated to the school. Mr. Inaba describes one such incident when he received a late night call from a parent asking him to help control her son.

But that is really really terrible. Midnight my.. you know..the... my student in my classroom parents called me twelve o'clock or one o'clock in the morning. My boy doesn't listen to me and he didn't get out of his room and he is throwing something at the wall. (Mr. Inaba) please come out to help. Ohh my goodness. I went there. Because his mother was crying. (Inaba interview, March 21, 2013)

Jogo High School holds teachers accountable to complaints by parents even when these complaints are not directly related to school. While this can seem beyond what a teacher

should do in practice, responding to these issues is important to the gakunen joint enterprise because it identifies a problem allowing the gakunen to form a response. If Mr. Inaba gains insight into an issue affecting his student, he can discuss this issue with the members of his gakunen, and together as a group they can negotiate a response. The administration might view this as “taking care of a customer” or “keeping the parents happy” because it is the parents who chose and pay for Jogo High School, and in the view of the gakunen this is important for a different reason: It is central to the gakunen practice to support students to successfully complete the program at Jogo High School.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I described the influence of the decreasing student population on the practice of teachers in Jogo High School. One of the most prominent changes was the shift to a co-educational format from a girls’ only school. In addition, the focus on recruitment has, in the form of branding the school image by developing Saturday classes, fostering an international image, and the intent to make fans of Jogo High School, placed new time demands upon teachers. These demands have also providing opportunities for teachers to reconsider their practices. The process of students entering the school and the systems in place for teacher accountability, such as the saishiken and response to parents’ concerns, can be viewed with a different intent by the school administration; however, for teachers this is aligned with the joint enterprise of the community of practice of the gakunen. For example, the school views the saishiken as a way to maintain academic standards. However, teachers in Jogo High School have taken a more general approach to the preparation and use of these tests. Pressuring a student to

study and providing extra work can cause more harm if a student is having personal problems. Teachers are aware of these other issues and use this knowledge as they approach saishiken preparation.

Beyond the saishiken, teachers use challenges arising from issues such as demographic changes for their own purposes. They use them to find meaning in their practice. For example, Saturday classes are an opportunity for teachers and students to build relationships due to the various interactions associated with a day at school such as homeroom and cleaning. In addition, some teachers see the increased pressure concerning student requirement as a time to improve practice. Mr. Okubo described the increased pressure on schools to recruit students as an impetus for change.

生徒を集めるのが苦勞するよね。で…もしかしたらいいことかもしれない。みんなよい教育をして特色を出して、で…先生たちも真剣に教え方とか生徒との関わり方を考え直す。今までのやり方のいいところは残すし、悪いところは変えなきゃいけないっていう風になる大きな…あの…とかかもしれないよね。今生徒が減ると競争がま…競争が激しくなるから学校も変わらないといけない。(Okubo interview, March 7, 2013)

[Gathering students is hard work, but that can be a good thing and make for a good education with some uniqueness. Teachers might need to try to rethink how students are taught or dealt with in order to preserve good things and change bad things. The decrease in students now has made the competition for them tougher so schools will have to change].

Within these responses, there is a positive view of these changes. Mr. Okubo sees demographic changes as promoting a sense of re-evaluation of practices among teachers.

Demographic changes have placed new demands upon teachers in Jogo High School related to branding and student requirement. Teachers have responded by using these demands as opportunities to interact with students, current or future. Demographic changes have also influenced the relationships between teachers, parents, and students in a negative way. Parents are vocal with their concerns and this can be excessive at times as see by the extreme example of Mr. Inaba receiving late night phone calls. Some teachers have also indicated that demographic changes have made it harder to help students with socialization. Finally, in a positive light, demographic changes are seen by some teachers as a chance for change as schools reevaluate themselves in order to attract new students. In the following chapter, I discuss the influence of changing university admission policies on the practices of teachers in Jogo High School.

CHAPTER 7

UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

No single event, with the possible exception of marriage, determines the course of a young man's life as much as an entrance examination, and nothing, including marriage, requires as many years of planning and hard work.

(Vogel, 1963, p. 40)

To the degree that elite education is tied to money, educational opportunity is distorted, and the legitimating power of the merit principal declines.

(Rohlen, 1983, p. 313)

In this chapter I address the third research question:

- 2 How do external factors influence teacher practices within this community?
 - 2b How has the recommendation system affected teachers' practices?

In the Japanese education system, the two most common methods for high school students to enter university are entrance exams and the recommendation system. Jogo High School, originally Jogo Girls' High School, relied predominately on the entrance exam system to advance the student body into university. It was not used exclusively, however, and the recommendation system supplemented the entrance exams (for a detailed history of entrance exams see Foster, 1973; Frost, 1991; and Mulvey, 2001). When Jogo High School moved from a girl's school to a co-educational school the use of

the entrance exam system was virtually eliminated. In this chapter, I describe the influence of this shift on the practices of teachers at Jogo High School. First, I describe entrance exams for university admissions. Next, I detail the recommendation system. Finally, I analyze this recommendation system within the context of Jogo High School along with its influence on the teachers who work in the system.

Climbing the Academic Ladder

For high school students in the Japanese education system there are two primary methods for gaining admission to university. The most well-known and more frequently utilized method is university entrance exams. These high-stakes tests come in a number of forms and are seen as a driving force in the education system because the content of the tests is a focus for many high school and *juku* programs. The second and lesser-known method to enter university is the recommendation system. The recommendation system holds the image of helping students to get into university who are not able to compete in the entrance exam system. I describe both of these methods in the following section.

University Entrance Examinations

High-stakes university entrance exams are not limited to Japan, as several other countries including China and Korea use these exams to determine university entrance. China, in particular, has a long history of testing dating back thousands of years (see Miyazaki, 1976, for the history of examinations in China). The *Gaokao* [National Higher Education Entrance Examination] was introduced in 1952 and is the examination taken

by third year Chinese high school students in order to enter university. The exam lasts nine hours and is taken over two days. In Korea, high school students sit the *Suneung* [Scholastic Aptitude Test] for about eight hours in order to secure university admission. During the testing period, the exams are frequently mentioned in the media indicating their importance. News programs often include videos of the police, using lights and sirens, to take students running late to their exam site.

In Japan in 1979, national and other public schools created the Joint First Stage Achievement Test in order to screen university applicants. This test consisted of seven different subject areas. Later, the Provisional Council on Education recommended a change to the testing system and in 1990 the *Daigaku Nyushi Senta Shiken* [(大学入試センター試験) University Admissions Center Test] was developed. Both private and public universities use this entrance exam for student recruitment. Later universities were allowed to reduce the number of subject tests to as few as just one test when considering application decisions. Private schools produce their own entrance exams that function as both gatekeeping and a source of revenue for the university.

Entrance exam preparation takes a substantial investment of resources and this investment is reflected in popular culture. A solitary student sitting wearing a *hachimaki* [(鉢巻き or ハチマキ) headband] with the expression *gokaku* [(合格) pass] written on it is a popular cultural image of exam preparation. The *hachimaki* represents the student's determination to focus on exam preparation. Rohlen (1985) characterized the exams as “of the kind for which a capacity to grind away for years in preparation makes a difference” (p. 33). This is also argued by Stevenson (2002) who stated: “regardless of a

student's current level of performance, opportunities for advancement are always believed to be possible through heightened effort" (p. 102).

The Nestle Company provides another example of popular culture interacting with students preparing for entrance exams. Nestle's Kit Kat candy bar is popular among students preparing for exams as a good luck charm. Its name sounds, serendipitously, similar to the expression *kitto katsu* [(きつと勝つ) surely I win]. The Nestle company has printed messages of encouragement on the candy's packing such as "good luck" or "*ganbare*" [(頑張れ) do your best or hang in there]. According to the Nestle Japan's website "today one in three students buys one before an exam and one in five bring them to the test site" (きつと願いかなう)[definitely wishes come true] (retrieved from <https://nestle.jp/brand/kit/inbound/>). Beauchamp (1991) wrote:

There is a widely held view among many Japanese that the value of entrance examinations is not in the information memorized and regurgitated upon command, but rather in the intense, difficult, and often lonely experience of preparing for those examinations. This, we are told, strengthens one's character and moral fiber and prepares the individual for the arduous challenges lying ahead. (p. 39)

The influence of university entrance exams is blamed for poor performance in some areas such as English due to the exams focus on grammar. Students study English for years in high school and spend their evenings and weekends in *juku*, but never develop communicative competence. LeTendre (2002) claimed: "The most significant driving force in setting national standards lies in the complex forces generated by the entrance

exams, the hierarchy of high schools and colleges, and the cram school industry” (p. 31). It is much more practical to test grammar and reading on a wide scale to simply sort students into a hierarchical order to determine college admissions. It would be prohibitive logistically to test students with a writing sample or by interview over such a large number of test takers. In addition, this allows for clearly correct answers. Ambiguity is not acceptable to schools when determining a young person’s future or when faced with the scrutiny of juku teachers. Writing samples or interviews can involve a wide variety of criteria with which to judge a sample. Grammar provides a clearer target and seems from the position of schools and test takers to be fair. Time used to prepare for a grammar test is more likely to produce results than another option more open to interpretation.

Despite the negative image of entrance exams, pressure both in schools and from outside, forces schools to resist change in the entrance exam system. Frost (1991) observed: “Publishers selling examination guides, the lucrative cram school industry, and the universities which make money for themselves and their faculty from giving and correcting examinations simply have too much at stake to change” (p. 303). Many schools sell old exams to help students prepare for upcoming entrance exams and some make significant money doing this. This is in addition to the revenue provided by administering the exam.

The Recommendation System

Student populations are dwindling and the expected school closings in the public sector have occurred. However, in the private sector just the opposite is transpiring. The number of high schools has, in contrast, not decreased, but increased from 5,453 in 1985

to 5,478 in 2000 as shown in Table 17. Most of this increase has come in the form of private schools growing by 32 schools during the same period. Concurrently, from 1985 to 2000, the number of students in high school has dropped by over one million. These decreasing student numbers with a slight increase in private schools create an environment of increased competition between schools for new students.

New private schools at earlier levels of education such as elementary schools are opening (see Table 24).

Table 24. *Number of Elementary Schools in Japan 1955-2013*

Year	Total	National	Local	Private
1955	26,880	76	26,659	145
1960	26,858	76	26,620	162
1970	24,790	71	24,558	161
1980	24,945	72	24,707	166
1990	24,827	73	24,586	168
1995	24,548	73	24,302	173
2000	24,106	73	23,861	172
2005	23,123	73	22,856	194
2008	22,476	73	22,197	206
2009	22,258	74	21,974	210
2010	22,000	74	21,713	213
2011	21,721	74	21,166	216
2012	21,460	74	21,166	220
2013	21,131	74	20,836	221

Note. Retrieved from MEXT on July 14, 2015 (MEXT, 2015a)

Over the past ten years the number of public elementary schools has declined by over 3,500 schools. Private elementary schools, however, have increased from 172 schools in 2000 to 220 schools in 2012 as shown in Table 25. These new schools are often linked to a junior, senior high school, and a college locking in a student population for many years. For example, a private college, with an attached high school, can open an elementary school to allow it to recruit a student body at earlier ages. Parents, who are

more of a factor in school selection with younger children, are attracted by the elimination of entrance exams and the virtual guarantee that their children proceed up the escalator of success. In the Kansai area, Ritsumeikan Primary School opened in 2006 and Doshisha International Academy Elementary School opened in 2011. Both of these schools are linked to prestigious universities in the Kansai area and all students are on a recommendation system for entrance to the attached schools continuing to university.

College admissions policies have shifted in many private schools away from intense entrance exams or exam hell (Mulvey, 2001). Recommendations have long been a feature in college admissions, more traditionally in the form of one or two slots teachers use to select students, who then bypass the standard entrance exam requirement.

However, more recently more seats are available through the recommendation system. The link between a high school and a university generally takes one of several forms.

Fuzokuko [(付属校) attached or affiliated schools] are schools within the same corporation. The *gakko hojin* [(学校法人) school corporation] of the school and the university are the same. In *fuzokuko* most of the students are on the recommendation system or are at least expected to go to the affiliated university. In reality, some students with ability go to universities outside of the attached university. Some examples of these schools include many of the universities referenced as Kan-Kan-Do-Ritsu (関関同立) which include Kwansei Gakuin University, Kansai University, Doshisha University, and Ritsumeikan University¹¹. These schools are considered the top four private universities

¹¹ These names are not pseudonyms.

in the Kansai area of Japan. Tsuru University has three fuzoku schools: Tsuru Elementary School, Tsuru Junior High School, and Tsuru High School.

A second type is the *teikeiko* [(提携校) partnership or alliance] schools which have a limited number of students in a dedicated program for recommendation to a certain university. Students generally enter the high school by applying for the specific program in the high school as requirements and classes might be different than the non-recommendation students. These students then continue in a cohort format until graduation. Seikyo High School in Osaka is an example of a high school that is a separate corporation, yet has a program for students to receive a recommendation to Kwansai Gakuin University. The students in this program take different classes than other students and focus on other requirements. They need to complete a research course and pass the level 2 Eiken test in order to receive the recommendation.

A third type is the *shiteiko* [(指定校) designated school]. These high schools have less of a relationship than the other types of connections described in this section. The high school is provided a few slots sometimes only one or two often with conditions to receive the recommendation. For example, a school might have one slot to a certain department in a university provided that the student completed a certain set of required classes and received a specific grade point average. If a student fulfills the requirement the school could recommend the student using this program.

In the last category, *keizoko* [(継続校) continuation schools], all students in the school are on the recommendation track for a specific university. However, unlike fuzokuko, keizoko are a separate corporation or the school's corporate identity legal

identity is different. Jogo High School is a keizoko to Tsuru University. This term is not frequently used and is frequently the subject of questions by parents at explanation meetings. A similar term, *keizokuko* [(系属校) family system school], is used on the Internet and by juku to describe the relationship between Jogo High School and Tsuru University; however, Jogo High School uses the term keizoko so I use that term. As of 2013 there are only two schools using this term in Japan.

The current trend in private schools is the decreasing influence of entrance exams, logically leading to an increased freedom in, and more time to focus on, instruction. The data from this study suggest this last element has failed to come to fruition and instead the focus continues to be on the socialization of the students. The teachers are expected to help raise children, and this trend is strengthened by the parents' position with the system. As schools recruit students at younger and younger ages, the students' voice decrease and is replaced with an increased role for parents in the process. Schools recognize and respond to the parents by keeping the focus on socialization, hindering attempts to develop more academically challenging environments. The elimination of the often-described ubiquitous entrance exam process in some contexts calls for a reexamination of the forces in play in education in Japan at levels below university.

Jogo High School and Tsuru University

Before the introduction of the co-educational class, Jogo High School had a shiteiko relationship with Tsuru University. This means, with the introduction of the first co-educational group of students in 2005, there were effectively two schools in the high school: a co-educational group on the recommendation system with a keizoko

relationship, and a girls' only division with a shiteiko relationship with Tsuru University. As shown in Table 25, the students being recommended are matriculating in Tsuru University at rates close to 95%, and in the last couple years of data collection this increased to 97%. Jogo High School uses resources, such as space and time, to facilitate students to receive the recommendation to Tsuru University. For example, the school requests Tsuru University faculty to come and speak with the student body about the different departments and majors that are available. No other universities come to speak with the students, creating a situation where it is easier for the students to simply focus on the recommendation to Tsuru University. This results in a trend of increasingly higher percentages of students attending Tsuru University.

Table 25. *Jogo High School Graduates and University 2003-2012*

Year	Division	Number of Jogo High School Graduates			Percentage of graduates entering Tsuru University
		Total	Entered University	Entered Tsuru University	
2003	Girls	254	116	23	20
2004	Girls	290	151	39	26
2005	Girls	191	103	36	35
2006	Girls	203	121	32	26
2007	Co-ed	103	101	96	95
	Girls	121	86	22	26
2008	Co-ed	114	110	104	95
	Girls	76	66	26	39
2009	Co-ed	178	173	163	94
	Girls	53	47	27	57
2010	Co-ed	160	155	148	95
	Girls	39	37	17	46
2011	Co-ed	203	201	194	97
2012	Co-ed	207	201	195	97

Note. Year indicates the beginning of the school year. This means 2003 represents the 2003 to 2004 school year.

Jogo High School is a keizoko school to Tsuru University, linked from 2005. Students wishing to enter the junior high school could take the entrance exam in elementary school, and if successful might never have to take another entrance exam during their academic career, thus eliminating the need to commit time and money to entrance exams and also to juku for test preparation.

In his ethnography, *Japan's High Schools*, Rohlen (1983) lamented the negative influence of entrance exams saying, “the university entrance exam is the dark engine driving high school culture. One wonders whether academic high schools could remain as orderly and serious if this pressure were absent” (p. 317). Now, as we have moved into the 21st century, this question is no longer hypothetical.

The Recommendation to Tsuru University

The keizoko recommendation system to Tsuru University is a central feature of Jogo High School. One teacher, Mr. Samson, commented:

You hear about the university constantly in almost any meeting, it is the major concern of the higher ups, the vice-principals, the principal, and the head of the board because by having the recommendation they get a steady flow of decent quality students taking the test and entering the school and once they enter our job is to make sure they enter into the university. (Samson interview, February 19, 2013)

The recommendation system is a selling point for the school and stressed to parents and visitors at school explanation meetings. When I asked Ms. Hashimoto, a Jogo High School graduate, who first thought about the recommendation to Tsuru University, she

stated “probably the school in the beginning, then the parents” (Hashimoto, February 8, 2012). It can be difficult for elementary students to seriously consider plans for university. From the perspective of parents, if they can afford to send their children to Jogo High School, they do not have to worry about entrance examinations ever again, can feel confident that their children will attend a good private university, and can receive the support and recourses that Jogo High School has to offer.

To receive the recommendation to Tsuru University, Jogo High School students need to satisfy requirements in the following areas: grade point average, English ability, graduation report, and interviews. There are a few other conditions such as attendance and school life, but these are generally not an issue because teachers address them from the first year of high school.

If attendance is an issue in the third-year gakunen it becomes a topic within gakunen meetings, and action enacted, such persistent phone calls to the student to get him or her come to school. One student who was having difficulty came to school for only the last period for an extended period of time, so that she would not be technically absent and thus would remain eligible for the recommendation. Make-up classes, as mentioned earlier, are the responsibility of teachers.

Jogo High School students need to complete 82 credits to graduate. The passing grade is 50, however, to receive the recommendation a student must have an average of 60. This is calculated by adding the grade received for each class. In other words, a student needs $82 \times 60 = 4,920$ points after three years in Jogo High School. This averages to about 1,640 points per year. This number is reported in the *Gakki Jyouho Hokokukai Shiryo* by the gakunen in each end of the term grade meeting.

The recommendation process requires a large time commitment by a gakunen. One aspect of this time commitment is the administration of the paper work associated with the recommendation process. Students must write a self-introduction and answer some essay questions as part of the application process. Some of the essays required just one page of writing to complete while the essays for other departments required about eight pages of writing from each student. The gakunen checks these self-introductions and essays before they are sent to the university. In a recommendation committee meeting the vice principal stated these items must be completed in black pen and if there is one mistake the student must rewrite it. Once completed, the student submits the original and three copies to the gakunen. The students are not allowed to make these copies at school. This is an additional element of the process policed by the gakunen. The paperwork associated with the recommendation process is a substantial burden upon teachers. In the following section I explain another part of the recommendation process: the successful completion of the level 2 Eiken test.

The Eiken Test

The Eiken test is the only requirement for the recommendation to Tsuru University that is graded externally. In other words, it is the only element measured by someone outside of Jogo High School or Tsuru University. The Eiken test is given three times per year at seven different levels, with level 7 being the easiest level of difficulty. For levels 2 and above there are two stages to each administration. In the first stage, students take a written test with a listening component in June, October, or January. If the

student passes the first stage successfully, they have an interview test approximately one month later. The Eiken website describes the test in the following manner:

EIKEN is an abbreviation of Jitsuyo Eigo Gino Kentei (Test in Practical English Proficiency), one of the most widely used English-language testing programs in Japan. It is offered at 7 levels: Grade 1, Grade Pre-1, Grade 2, Grade Pre-2, Grade 3, Grade 4, and Grade 5. The total number of examinees since 1963 exceeds 95 million. (Eiken, 2016)

MEXT lists the Eiken Level 2 as a goal for third year high school students in Japan. This goal has not been met. According to a 2011 MEXT report on communicative ability only a small percentage of high school students have achieved the Level 2 certification.

10.1% of third-year senior high school students of public schools had English abilities of STEP Grade 2 or higher. 20.3% of the students had English abilities equivalent to STEP Grade 2 or higher without having taken an external certification test, making the total number of students proficient at this level at around 30.4%. (MEXT, 2015b)

Jogo High School has encountered similar difficulties.

Because the gakunen is held accountable for its students, the gakunen teachers are responsible to get the students to pass the Eiken level 2 test. The English department did not organize a response to increase the number of students passing the test. The gakunen, rather than the English Department, is responsible to get the students to pass the Eiken test. Additionally, some teachers have been unprepared to teach courses that would help students pass a test that included listening and an interview. Teachers in the school are more familiar with the grammar translation method of teaching and the preparation for

university entrance exams. The recommendation requires at least the Pre-level 2 certification. The school administration stated goal for students is to achieve Level 2. This has caused difficulty between some teachers and the school administration, particularly Mr. Tsuchiyama the high school vice-principal, because he is responsible for the recommendation system in the school. He also chairs the recommendation committee. He views passing the Eiken test in a similar way as entrance exam preparation has traditionally been viewed. An application of effort and time creates results. This view has caused some conflicts with teachers. Mr. Inaba has described the difficulty with the “school especially vice principal in senior high school section. He yelled at English teachers, he treated us as...like...student teachers. He has no idea about English education nor English itself” (Inaba interview, November 26, 2012). This has increased pressure from outside of the gakunen, and has become a frequent topic of conversation within gakunen meetings. Still, however, this has aligned with the central element of the gakunen joint enterprise that is to advance the students. Gakunen teachers have negotiated a response to the problem. Some teachers have taught Eiken study classes after school and others adjusted their regularly assigned classes.

I’m doing my best on the regular classroom using two or three hours to prepare for one class so I don't have any time to teach Eiken after school. I told students focus on the class you will be fine. You will learn lots of words and you will get used to the listening, but students and parents expected teachers to have extra Eiken class(es) focusing on grammar and listening class after classes even though they don't do their homework on the regular class or do not do the hard tasks in the regular classes. (Inaba interview, November 26, 2012)

Accountability in Jogo High School is measured in time. Students, parents, and even teachers wanted extra classes dedicated to Eiken preparation because it is easy to show the effort placed into something simply by applying time. Mr. Samson echoed this feeling “Japanese think you are working harder by staying longer and if there is a problem they will show they are working harder by staying later at the school” (Samson interview, February 19, 2013). Extra classes provided the school a way to show parents the Eiken problem was being addressed.

Fifty-five percent of the first group of students to graduate under the new recommendation system within the keizoko relationship with Tsuru University completed level-2 or higher by December 2007, just before their graduation (see Table 26). While this percentage is much higher than the percentage of public high school students MEXT reported in 2011, parents of students in the 45% who had not passed complained to the school. Parents were concerned and in response the school administration hired a part-time teacher to conduct Eiken preparation classes.

Table 26. *Jogo High School Eiken Certification Rates 2008-2012*

School year of graduation	Month data collected	Lower than Pre-level 2	Pre-level 2	Level 2 (Test only no interview)	Level 2 or higher
2007-2008	Dec.	1%	35.9%	62.1%	55.3%
	Feb.	1%	25.2%	73.8%	55.3%
2008-2009	Dec.	0.9%	26.7%	72.4%	64.6%
	Feb.	0.9%	16.5%	82.6%	74.8%
2009-2010	Dec.	0%	14.5%	85.5%	78.2%
	Feb.	0%	10.6%	89.3%	86.6%
2010-2011	Dec.	0.6%	11.7%	87.7%	80.9%
	Feb.	0%	9.9%	90.1%	88.9%
2011-2012	Dec.	0%	18.6%	81.4%	76.0%
	Feb.	0%	14.7%	85.3%	82.4%

Note. Numbers were compiled twice for each third year gakunen: after the October administration of the Eiken test and after the January administration.

The gakunen was made responsible to support these classes. Students who had not passed Eiken level two were split into two groups. One group was given handouts to complete in a separate room, while the Eiken instructor held a class for the other group. After the class the two groups would switch. One member of the gakunen was assigned to each room to support the teacher. During a gakunen recommendation committee meeting Mr. Tsuchiyama stated: “the Eiken teacher is in-charge of these classes. If she says the paper is black and you see that it is white you will say it is black. There will be no complaints just do what she says. Everyone will help and prepare the photocopies she requests” (Field notes, April 2, 2012). Singleton (1989) has described *trying hard* as the single most important behavior expected of Japanese students; findings reflected by Blinco (1991) as well. The administration of Jogo High School expected the same of the teachers and the students. As long as students spend sufficient time to prepare for the Eiken test they will pass. Teachers were required to commit time as well.

The third-year gakunen was held responsible in terms of time. A common pattern of the gakunen community of practice is for the gakunen to identify a problem, the teachers to mutually negotiate a response, and for the gakunen to commit time and effort. Teachers are held accountable for the time and effort applied to the problem. Before the June Eiken test a series of preparation classes were organized, and teachers assigned to them. Regardless of the subject they taught, every teacher in the gakunen was assigned to fill the time slots listed in Table 27. This was in addition to other normal duties.

Table 27. Supplemental Third-year High School Eiken Classes April to June 2011

Date	Group	Location	Time
April 12 (Tuesday)	1	Large Meeting Room	15:45-19:00
	2	Classroom	15:45-19:00
April 13 (Wednesday)	1	Classroom	15:45-19:00
	2	Meeting Hall	15:45-19:00
April 16 (Saturday)	1	Large Meeting Room	9:45-11:30
			11:30-13:00
		Classroom	13:00-16:00
	2	Classroom	9:45-13:00
April 19 (Tuesday)	1	Large Meeting Room	13:00-16:00
	2	Classroom	15:45-19:00
April 21 (Thursday)	1	Classroom	15:45-19:00
	2	Large Meeting Room	15:45-19:00
April 23 (Saturday)	1	Large Meeting Room	9:45-13:00
		Classroom	13:00-16:00
	2	Classroom	9:45-13:00
		Large Meeting Room	13:00-16:00
April 26 (Tuesday)	1	Large Meeting Room	15:45-19:00
	2	Classroom	15:45-19:00
April 28 (Thursday)	1	Classroom	15:45-19:00
	2	Large Meeting Room	15:45-19:00
April 29 (Friday)	1	Large Meeting Room	9:45-13:00
		Classroom	13:00-16:00
	2	Classroom	9:45-13:00
		Large Meeting Room	13:00-16:00
April 30 (Saturday)	1	Large Meeting Room	12:45-15:30
		Classroom	15:30-18:00
	2	Classroom	12:45-15:30
		Large Meeting Room	15:30-18:00
May 3 (Tuesday)	1	Large Meeting Room	9:45-13:00
	2	Classroom	13:00-16:00
May 4 (Saturday)		Classroom	9:45-13:00
	1	Large Meeting Room	13:00-16:00
		Classroom	13:00-16:00
	2	Classroom	9:45-13:00
May 7 (Saturday)		Large Meeting Room	13:00-16:00
	1	Large Meeting Room	12:45-15:30
		Classroom	15:30-18:00
	2	Classroom	12:45-15:30
May 10 (Tuesday)		Large Meeting Room	15:30-18:00
	1	Large Meeting Room	15:45-19:00
	2	Classroom	15:45-19:00

Table 27 (continues)

Table 27 (continued)

Date	Group	Location	Time
May 17 (Tuesday)	1	Large Meeting Room	15:45-19:00
	2	Classroom	15:45-19:00
May 19 (Thursday)	1	Classroom	15:45-19:00
	2	Large Meeting Room	15:45-19:00
May 21 (Saturday)	1	Large Meeting Room	12:45-15:30
		Classroom	15:30-18:00
	2	Classroom	12:45-15:30
		Large Meeting Room	15:30-18:00
May 26 (Thursday)	1	Classroom	15:45-19:00
	2	Large Meeting Room	15:45-19:00
May 28 (Saturday)	1	Large Meeting Room	12:45-15:30
		Classroom	15:30-18:00
	2	Classroom	12:45-15:30
		Large Meeting Room	15:30-18:00
May 31 (Tuesday)	1	Large Meeting Room	15:45-19:00
	2	Classroom	15:45-19:00
June 2 (Thursday)	1	Classroom	15:45-19:00
	2	Large Meeting Room	15:45-19:00
June 4 (Saturday)	1	Large Meeting Room	9:45-13:00
		Classroom	13:00-16:00
	2	Classroom	9:45-13:00
		Large Meeting Room	13:00-16:00
June 5 (Sunday)	1	Large Meeting Room	9:45-13:00
		Classroom	13:00-16:00
	2	Classroom	9:45-13:00
		Large Meeting Room	13:00-16:00
June 7 (Tuesday)	1	Large Meeting Room	17:00-19:30
	2	Classroom	17:00-19:30
June 9 (Thursday)	1	Classroom	17:00-19:30
	2	Large Meeting Room	17:00-19:30
June 11 (Saturday)	1	Large Meeting Room	9:45-13:00
		Classroom	13:00-16:00
	2	Classroom	9:45-13:00
		Large Meeting Room	13:00-16:00

Note. Adapted from *Eiken hoko tanto syahyo* [(英検補講担当者表) Eiken Practice Class Duty Roster (Artifacts)]

Once the results of the paper test were announced in the summer, another set of classes was arranged for students who had passed the initial paper portion of the Eiken test. This set of classes focused on the interview section of the Eiken test. The interview follows approximately one month after the written section of the test. Again, time was the method to show accountability, and some of the classes ran for more than five hours (see Table 28). The time devoted to these classes by all members of the gakunen regardless of

individual teacher's academic subject, can be easily explained to both the school administration as well as parents. For the students who did not pass the June administration of the Eiken test, a new set of preparation classes similar to those listed in Table 28 was scheduled. These ran during the summer and concluded just before the next test in October.

Table 28. Eiken Classes June-July 2011

Date	Time
June 14 (Tuesday)	17:30-19:00
June 16 (Thursday)	15:45-19:00
June 18 (Saturday)	12:45-18:00
June 21 (Tuesday)	15:45-19:00
June 23 (Thursday)	15:45-19:00
June 25 (Saturday)	12:45-18:00
June 28 (Tuesday)	15:45-19:00
June 30 (Thursday)	15:45-19:00
July 2 (Saturday)	12:45-18:00
July 9 (Saturday)	12:45-18:00

Note. Adapted from 2011 *Eiken niiji taisaku koza tanto syahyo* [(英検2級二次対策講座担当者表) Eiken Level 2 Second Round Test Strategy Class Duty Roster] (Artifacts)

To conclude this section, Eiken test preparation illustrates the centrality of the gakunen in accountability to both parents and the school. Jogo High School holds the third year gakunen accountable for students' successful completion of the level 2 Eiken test due to perceived concerns over the Jogo High School and Tsuru University relationship. Students can receive the recommendation to Tsuru University after completing the pre-2 level Eiken test; however, Jogo High School states that level 2 Eiken is the standard. Part of the reason for this is the concern that Tsuru University tracks student progress and compares this progress with the different methods and schools from which they entered the university. There seems to be evidence that this is

true. Meikan High School was a teikeiko to Tsuru University and recruited about 90 students each year for this program. The students took different classes than the other students and were on the recommendation track. The program was reduced over time to just 30 students. I visited the school in 2011 and spoke with several teachers and was informed that the program was not the “best match” for their students. Another teacher at Meikan, whom I have known for approximately 20 years, told me that Tsuru University decreased the number of slots in the teikoko program because many of the students did not achieve Eiken level 2 and performed poorly after entering. Meikan High School, as of 2016, is no longer able to recommend students to Tsuru University.

The Research Course

In order to receive the recommendation to Tsuru University, Jogo High School students must complete a two-year research course. One of the student teacher interviewees, Ms. Hashimoto, said: as students we were “expected to get into (Tsuru University) so during our six years we did not take classes that aimed to pass entrance exams, like memorizing lots of things, but we had more unique classes” (Hashimoto interview, February 8, 2012). One of these unique classes and another requirement to receive the recommendation to Tsuru University is the two-year *gakujitsukenkyu* [(学術研究) applied research studies] course. Jogo High School started the *gakujitsu kenkyu iinkai* [(学術研究委員会) Applied research committee] to develop the course. The committee had one year to visit schools having a similar program, such as the high school

attached to Tsukuba University¹², to develop guidelines for the course, and to encourage teachers to volunteer to teach the course the following year.

The course is based upon one book chosen by the teacher responsible for the class. The teacher and students would read the book together, discuss themes, and then students would research topics developed from the class. In the second year, the course culminates in a final applied research studies report that is formally submitted.

Resistance and problems. There were several problems when the course was launched. The first problem was that teachers just did not want to teach the course. Many teachers stated that they did not know how to do it and were worried about the time commitment. Academic departments were asked to recruit teachers, but this was not successful and some teachers were assigned the course by the school. They were told they had to teach it. A second problem concerned teachers having difficulty grading students in this new class. This type of course was a new format for teachers who were used to textbook-centered instruction focused on entrance exam preparation. During the initial offering of the course one teacher gave all of his students in his class the same grade. This led a discussion within the gakunen responsible for those students.

A research day. In response to the issues raised by various gakunen concerning the applied research course, Jogo High School initiated a once-per-week research day for high school teachers to support to improvement in their skills and to allow them to

¹² Tsukuba University is not a pseudonym.

prepare for the applied research course. Some teachers in the school resisted this one-day reduction in time. Some teachers, such as Mr. Kuze, saw this as a distraction from the practice of the *gakunen*. Mr. Kuze stated:

あの...これは本当は言ったらあかんかも知れんけど、その研修とかあるじゃないですか。ま...それはね...あの...当然与えられた権利やからま...とってもいいと思うんやけれども、やっぱりね。あの...ま...僕が古い人間やからと思うねんけども、その...そう簡単にやっぱ研修はクラスを持った限りはね。ま...取りづらいなどは思いますはね。縁ね。それはほんまに、それはもうあれやから、うん...だからそのへんはやっぱり、あの今せなあかんことっていうかな。そんなんは、やっぱり特になんか先生によってはね。いろんなどころを見てもらえたらなというね。思うんですよ。(Kuze interview, March 18, 2013)

[This is actually something I maybe shouldn't say, but there is research isn't there? Well, that's a given right so I think it's okay to take (the research day off), however of course, I'm old so that's what I think but simply put, for research as long as you have a class (*gakunen*)... I think it's also a little hard to take. The edge(?). That's really what it is, there of course... The things that have to be done now, are of course a (*nazo*?) puzzle. Especially, for teachers, a lot of different things need to be looked into I think].

From Mr. Kuze's position, the research course interferes with the time a teacher needs to commit in order to facilitate the practice of the *gakunen*. Due to the start of the research course high school teachers have been given one day off each week. As I started the

doctoral program at Temple University, I had to ask official permission from the school to do so, because the program could hinder my school duties. My request went to the board of regents and was approved. Initially I would leave school early on Fridays so that I could attend classes on Friday evenings. Once Jogo High School initiated the research day option for high school teachers, I requested to have Friday as my official research day. This was also approved.

In addition, peer interactions discourage teachers from their own study. Teachers are often opposed to these attempts by the school to encourage teachers to study. To illustrate this point, I can relay an experience I had at an end-of-year party. Usually every term a *gakunen*, as a group, goes out for dinner. This is part of the joint enterprise of the *gakunen*. One teacher is responsible for arranging reservations which include *tabehodai* [(食べ補題) all-you-can-eat] and *nomihodai* [(飲み補題) all-you-can-drink] for 60 or 90 minutes. Near the end of the evening each teacher makes a comment or reflects on the last term. This ends with the head of the *gakunen*. The mood is very relaxed and “thank you” is an oft-heard expression referencing different events from the past term. After the official dinner, many teachers continue to the *nijikai* [(二次会) second party or after-party]. A change of venue also brings a change of key and as the drinks flow “thank you” changes to “there is something I wanted to talk with you about.” In the *nijikai*, at the end of the first term I started Temple, my *gakunen* head turned towards me. She was not happy. While I had always made the appropriate polite statements when leaving to attend classes at Temple University, I had not followed up to see who had covered my cleaning responsibilities or other *gakunen* tasks. She had to ask other teachers to cover my work,

which required her to make impositions on other teachers in the gakunen causing some trouble. I had missing opportunities to interact with students, and thus relied more on my co-workers to detect and respond to possible problems within the gakunen. At that point in my career, I understood the importance of even pro forma displays in the school, but I had not fully realized the importance of after-school cleaning with students. Coming from my studies at Boston College, which encouraged teacher-based research, I felt I was doing something that the other teachers should be doing as well. But self-improvement interferes with the mutual engagement of the gakunen. Once the gakunen identifies a problem, the mutual negotiation of the response becomes much more difficult when teachers have time commitments outside of the gakunen. Teachers fail to meet their responsibilities in an area where they are held accountable by the gakunen and ultimately by the school.

The Jogo High School administration does not facilitate the research day for high school teachers by applying resources or support. The school states that teachers should take the research day, but makes no effort to allow this happen. If a teacher takes a research day it is in addition to all of his or her regular responsibilities. In this situation, taking the research day is a burden for teachers. School or gakunen events require multiple duties to be performed, such as setting up chairs, cleaning, and other preparations. These duties are always listed on a handout provided in a meeting well before the event. It is rare to see these duty rosters making allowances for a teacher's research day. When I asked another teacher about this in an informal discussion he responded, "maybe that is Tanaka sensei's research day, but that gakunen has to get that

done.” Mr. Inaba, who was allowed time on Friday afternoon and Saturday for his studies frequently encountered this issue.

Even though I said I can’t come on Friday afternoon or Saturday because of class.

My name is always on (the handouts listing jobs) I feel every time I must go and apologize and you know how other people feel. Oh, Mr. Inaba ...again... said I can’t, I can’t, I can’t. (Inaba, March 21, 2013)

The administration of Jogo High School has made efforts to improve instruction by allowing teachers a day for professional development. The gakunen has been resistant to these efforts in part due to the requirements of the mutual engagement and the joint enterprise of the gakunen, but also due to accountability measured in terms of time and effort to the school and parents.

The graduation report. The final step in the two-year gakujitsu course is the submission of the research report by the student to the teacher in-charge of the class. The submission of the report is very formal. The process of completing the research report is more important than the product. Great care is taken to ensure reports are formatted correctly, have the required components, and are handed in on time. Teachers prepare printed receipts and stamp them with their *inkan* [(印鑑) stamp used as a signature] once students officially turn in their reports. Students yell with a sense achievement once they receive the stamped receipt. These formalities are the location of learning and a gakunen responsibility. There are no warnings or discussion of plagiarism, which is rampant in these reports. Content is not an issue or a concern. This is reflected in the students’ reaction once they have the receipt in hand.

A *gakunenshukai* [(学年集会) a gakunen student and teacher assembly], when called, is usually held in the afternoon just after homeroom. Sometimes they are scheduled in advance, but they can be called for the same day. They are decided by the gakunen and are called for a variety of reasons including preparation for school trips, announcements concerning recommendations to Tsuru University, or other issues that the teachers in a gakunen decide need to be addressed in front of the whole gakunen.

Just after one gakunen assembly as the students were leaving the hall, one student was held behind. Three teachers surrounded the student and spoke with him. He had asked another teacher, outside of the gakunen, to print out his research report because that day was the due date. According to school rules students are not allowed to ask teachers to print out these reports. The students must be responsible to do this on their own. The teachers spoke with the student about responsibility, thinking, and talking to someone if there is a problem. The student stated to cry, and due to this, the teachers felt that the student had reflected on and understood the problem with his conduct. The situation was resolved (Field notes, Nov. 28, 2012).

Principal and Chancellor Interviews

Another requirement of the recommendation is the successful completion of two interviews in Jogo High School. It is also a gakunen responsibility to prepare students for and to facilitate the interviews with the chancellor and principal. Students are required to answer a few questions in writing in order to prepare for these interviews. The focus of the questions is related to the department the student would like to attend and also to a faculty member they would like to take a class with at Tsuru University. During a

gakunen assembly one teacher stated, “I am speaking to you not as a gakunenzuki, but as a member of kyomubu. You must turn in your interview preparation work or you will not be able to get a recommendation” (Field notes, Nov. 28, 2012). This teacher was a broker between the practice of the gakunen and the kyomubu. In this case, he felt the need to shift his role away from being a member of the gakunen to an outsider, because of the conflict his statement made with the joint enterprise of the gakunen, which in this case was to ensure that all members received the recommendation to Tsuru University. In terms of ethnography of communication, this is a metaphorical style shift, which is a role shift utilized by the speaker to support an agenda (Saville-Troike, 2003).

The principal and the chancellor separately interview all of the third year gakunen students. These interviews take place over six days, with about 40 students interviewed each day. The interviews last for about 20 minutes per student. One teacher is assigned to stand in the hallway outside of the chancellor and the principal’s offices (they were next to each other) to keep the students quiet as they wait their turn. Three chairs are placed outside of each office for students waiting to be interviewed. The bulk of the students wait in a designated classroom, where another gakunen teacher is posted. During this time other members of the gakunen check in on the students waiting in the hallway and in the classroom to encourage them. Homeroom teachers and the head of the gakunen stand by in case either the principal or chancellor call for them if there is an issue with a student’s preparation for the interview.

There are 86 time slots for teachers to cover (see Table 29 for the 2012 time slots). Homeroom teachers took six slots each while votaries fill about 11 slots. The last slot of the day was the least desirable, as the chancellor did not keep to the timetable.

Interviews were, according to the schedule, to end about 18:00 p.m., but they often continued past that time with some ending as late as 20:00 or 21:00 p.m. The gakunen is responsible to instruct students who do poorly in these interviews. After the interviews are complete the principal and chancellor call in the head of the gakunen and discuss any issues that come up during the interviews. Issues include being unable to answer questions about the university department the student wishes to attend, a lack of depth to answers, or even answering in a low voice. The head of the gakunen then calls a gakunen meeting where these issues are discussed, a plan formulated, and teachers assigned to instruct and practice with the students before a follow-up interview with the principal and chancellor are scheduled. This process repeats until the student passes the interviews. The gakunen identifies a problem, the teachers mutually negotiate a response, and then the gakunen applies time and effort to help the students improve their performance on the interviews. The school holds the gakunen accountable for the results.

Table 29. *Chancellor and Principal Interviews 2012*

Date (Day)	Time
December 10 (Monday)	09:00
	10:00
	11:00
	13:00
	14:00
	15:00
	16:00
December 11 (Tuesday)	17:00
	09:00
	10:00
	11:00
	13:00
	14:00
	15:00
December 12 (Wednesday)	16:00
	17:00
	10:30
	11:00
	13:00
	14:00
	15:00
December 13 (Thursday)	16:00
	17:00
	09:00
	10:00
	11:00
	13:00
	14:00
December 14 (Friday)	15:00
	16:00
	17:00
	09:00
	10:00
	11:00
	13:00
December 15 (Saturday)	14:00
	15:00
	16:00
	17:00

Note. Adapted from 2012 *Nendo incho kocho mensetsu kyojin* [(2012年度院・長校長面接教員役割分担表) 2012 Chancellor Principal Interview Teacher Duty Roster] (Artifacts)

The Recommendation Decision

The process of informing students about the various recommendation requirements, reminding them about deadlines, and managing the associated paperwork also requires a significant time commitment. In order to support this process, teachers assigned to the third-year gakunen are also members of the recommendation committee meeting frequently (see Table 30 for the 2012-2013 meeting dates). During these meetings, the school administration is updated on student progress, and plans of action are devised if there are any problems.

During these meetings, the teachers decide which department in Tsuru University students will be recommended for admission. Students are ranked by points, which are a sum of their total grades. The top students receive their first choice of departments. Jogo High School is allocated a set number of recommendation slots for each department in the university. Students are assigned, in order based upon their ranking by points, their first choice until all of the slots for a department are filled. The gakunen discusses and decides placement if a student is unable to be placed into their first choice. In this situation, the familiarity with the students is an immense benefit, as teachers are able to discuss what could be the best outcome for various students.

Table 30. *Recommendation Committee Meetings 2012-2013*

Meeting dates	Start time
April 2 (Monday)	13:30
April 11 (Wednesday)	13:30
May 7 (Monday)	19:30
June 1 (Friday)	16:00
July 9 (Monday)	13:30
July 17 (Tuesday)	13:30
July 20 (Saturday)	10:00
September 5 (Wednesday)	13:30
September 20 (Saturday)	16:00
October 20 (Saturday)	13:30
November 2 (Friday)	16:00
November 5 (Monday)	19:00
November 7 (Wednesday)	19:00
November 13 (Tuesday)	16:30
December 3 (Monday)	13:30
December 6 (Wednesday)	13:30
December 17 (Monday)	20:30
December 19 (Tuesday)	13:30
December 20 (Wednesday)	18:30
January 5 (Saturday)	10:00
January 9 (Wednesday)	16:00
January 25 (Friday)	16:00

Note. Adapted from Field Notes 2012 to 2013.

Recommendation System Problems

Without the pressure of entrance examination preparation, some students, and some teachers, have less motivation to devote themselves to the classroom. Mr. Inoue gave voice to the opinion that teachers in Jogo High School might not have been putting forth their best effort. He stated “現場の中高中学校高等学校に関わる人たちにとって、推薦制度が いいものとして機能するかという問題が、どんどん根深くなっていくんですよ。” (Inoue interview, March 9, 2013). [This middle high... In this junior high school and high school the problem of people who are connected to a recommendation system not functioning (working) is becoming deeply rooted]. Part of this is due to the amount of time required by activities outside of the classroom, but also on the understanding that the

gakunen on the whole is responsible to make sure all of the students receive the recommendation to Tsuru University. Mr. Okubo described the lack of outside supervision, which leads to falling academic standards.

継続校の良いところは、あの...やっぱ long term で教育の goal setting ができるし、それは良いところで、大学の prep school になろうと思えばなれるから、それは良いところだけど、先生が勉強しないといけない、甘えるでしょ。甘えるっていうのは、例えば中間テスト期末テスト、それ先生が教えたことをテストするでしょう。でも outsider の check はないでしょう。outsider の誰も、だからなんかこう...生徒があんまり勉強してなくても、とにかく大学に入れば ok て、そういう風に考えてしまう人が出やすい仕組みになってる。(Okubo interview, March 7, 2013)

[A benefit of the keizoko school is being able to set long term educational goals. That is a good thing, if the school wants to be a university prep school, it can. That's good but the teachers have to study or they can take it too lightly, for example the midterm and final exams test students on what the teacher taught, right? However, there is no outsider (third party) to check on that. With no outside checks, even if students don't study much, it's okay as long as they get into college. It's becoming easy to find people who think that way].

Because the gakunen system encourages pushing students to the next grade despite poor academic performance, students with difficulties can create a difficult situation in the

third year of high school. Mr. Inoue spoke about such a situation in regards to one student who was unable to receive the recommendation to Tsuru University.

客観的にそう上がってたら、それだけでもう評価が決まってるなと思えますね。
(3秒)先生たちも言ってたんですけど、あのほかの先生らも言ってたんですけど、高校1年から2年に上がるときの hurdle を一番厳しくしておかないとあかん。こういう推薦制度の学校ていうのは、この...ま...あの録音 sight じゃないですけどもま... (student's name) の件じゃないですけども、やっぱり高3の最後の最後でだめねって言われたら、こらもう完全に(Jogo High School) 教育の失敗なんですね。(student's name) が悪いんじゃないぼくらの教育 system が失敗しましたということを実は証明しただけの話なんですよ。(Inoue interview, March 9, 2013)

[Objectively if (the students) go up (to university) just that decides the evaluation I think. Teachers are saying that. Other teachers are saying that, for a recommendation system school the hurdle from first year high school to second year high school needs to be made more severe. This time, the things we saw with the (student's name) incident. Still for third year of high school, at the last final point to say no good (the student could not get the recommendation) the complete Jogo High School education system is a failure. (Student's name) wasn't wrong, our education system failed and this story proved that].

The joint enterprise of the gakunen is to advance students. This can come into conflict with the recommendation system between Jogo High School and Tsuru University, resulting in students not receiving the recommendation. This systemic problem with the school is recognized by many teachers, including Mr. Inoue, but has yet to be resolved due to a combination of pressure from parents and administration along with the joint enterprise of gakunen in the first and second year of high school. In these terms, the gakunen has started to recognize the problem, but has yet to mutually negotiate a response.

Protecting the Relationship with Tsuru University

The Jogo High School administration protects the keizoko relationship between Jogo High School and Tsuru University above all other considerations. This need is placed above the needs of students. Even students with ability who might be able to attend a more prestigious university are actively encouraged to attend Tsuru University. The school administration described the relationship between Jogo High School and Tsuru University in the following way.

すごい大学で助かったとか大学でもよくがんばってるっていうふうに評判を得ているか、だからそういう受験とは関係ないけどもえ(2秒)そういう大学、大学院で役にたつそういう勉強をしっかりと教える学校であってほしいというふうに思っている。

(Tsuchiyama interview, April 14, 2011)

[I think I want this school to support the university, to have the reputation of trying hard. There is no connection to (university) entrance exams, but I hope this school will truly teach in a way that will support study at the university and in graduate school].

Here again the concept of trying hard is measured in terms of time and effort. The Jogo High School administration wants the best and brightest students to continue on to Tsuru University in order to protect the connection between the two schools. This concern is not unique to Jogo High School. Ritsumeikan University provides an example of similar concerns. Ritsumeikan has several affiliated schools including Ritsumeikan High School founded in 1994, Ritsumeikan Junior High School founded in 2002, and Ritsumeikan Elementary School founded in 2006. All of these schools share a recommendation system allowing a student to start in the attached elementary school and continue to graduate from the university without taking an entrance exam beyond the initial one. During informal conversations with Ritsumeikan faculty, I was informed of the concern that students with ability were escaping from the system, in other words attending a university other than Ritsumeikan. In reaction to this the school administration is making an effort to improve the curriculum to provide a more challenging environment for students. In a similar situation, the Jogo High School administration wants its students with ability to stay within the system and attend Tsuru University. Many in the faculty share this concern over the connection to Tsuru University. Mr. Okubo describes this concern:

付属じゃないからね。別のあの学校法人じゃないからね。そうだから信頼されなくなったら終わり。(Jogo High School) は嘘言ってるとか (Jogo High School) の

学生徒は大学入って全然勉強しないってそういう風にあの評価されたらもうだめ
ね。

(Okubo interview, March 7, 2013)

[(We) are not a fuzoko school. Separate school legal entity. If we lose the trust of
the university it is over. If the university judges that (Jogo High School) is lying
or (Jogo High School) students don't study at all after getting into university then
it's no good].

Teachers in Jogo High School see the solution to this problem with the improvement of
practice and creation of change in the school.

They (Tsuru University) may not see (Jogo High School) as a real family
member...that is my true opinion. They are still thinking ...ohh there is a school
called (Jogo High School) and some of them will come to (Tsuru University).
Smart teachers working at (Jogo High School) know that and they are worried
about in the future our relationship will be broken. So teachers, I think, stupid
teachers tend to just they want to keep this good relationship. That means they
don't want to change anything. Keep this situation. Do what we are told by (Tsuru
University), but smart teachers know that there is something to be improved to
keep good relations to (Tsuru University). (Inaba interview, March 21, 2013)

The administration addresses this issue by trying to recruit the best students possible.

These students would then represent Jogo High School at Tsuru University. Teachers are
held accountable in terms of time and effort, and not in the quality of their classes,

limiting their ability for professional development and their ability to develop the academic program at the school.

Conclusion

For Jogo High School teachers, the keizoko relationship with Tsuru University requires a significant amount of time and effort. This time commitment includes the paperwork and administration of the recommendation process, administering the principal and chancellor interviews, and providing Eiken classes regardless of academic discipline. The lack of entrance examination pressure has allowed teachers to provide a greater range of and more challenging classes such as the applied research course. However, many teachers are not prepared to teach these classes. This is similar to the findings of Cave (2016), that junior high school teachers in Japan were not prepared for new MEXT initiated classes nor did they have the time to become prepared. Teachers at Jogo High School are also pressured by the administration to encourage all students to attend Tsuru University, against the wishes and best interests of some students. Some teachers rationalize this conflict of interest by linking this with the ideal of school survival. Other teachers envision survival by the development and advancement of the school, which is difficult with the current system of accountability in Jogo High School. Currently the best method to deal with these outside pressures is to try to avoid being placed into the third year gakunen.

The recommendation system has affected all the gakunen in Jogo High School, but the greatest burden is on the third-year gakunen. The joint enterprise of the gakunen centers on bringing students to the next stage in their education. For first-year high school

this means promotion to the second year. It is not until the third year of high school when an outside factor in the form of the Eiken test can interfere with gakunen joint enterprise. In Jogo High School, the third-year gakunen has identified this problem, mutually negotiated a response, but the application of the required time and effort had become a significant burden.

The recommendation is an attractive feature of Jogo High School for parents, provides new opportunities for a broader range of courses such as the two-year research course, and moves students away from the memorization based ideal of entrance examination preparation. It has also placed new burdens on teachers, in particular the third-year gakunen teachers, who faced a greater commitment of time and effort in terms of supplemental Eiken classes, classroom expectations, and the administration of getting all of the students into Tsuru University. The gakunen is responsible to ensure that these burdens are met. In the next chapter, I discuss the influence of changes in teacher licensing requirements on teacher practice in Jogo High School.

CHAPTER 8

NEW LICENSING REGULATIONS FOR TEACHERS

All in all the legitimization of it all was a huge positive. In fact, even though Temple probably helped my teaching a lot more in practical ways, the licensing was a huge positive in subtle but real ways.

(York interview, July 12, 2015)

Language is one of the integrated systems of society and culture, and that language reflects the functions in relation to social categories.

(Saville-Troike, 2003, p. 253)

This chapter addresses the research questions linked to changes in teacher licensing regulations: how do external factors influence teacher practices within this community and how, if at all, have recent changes in teacher licensing practices influenced this context and have these changes revealed domination/subordination of individuals or specific groups? To what extent are these relationships systematically perpetuated and how are the relationships sustained? In order to address these questions, I begin this chapter with a discussion of the term *teacher* in Japan. This term is used to reference different jobs, roles, or positions, and the meaning is often dependent upon the intentions of the speaker. Sometimes these intentions come into conflict with the realities

of new teachers coming into the education system in Japan. To provide an understanding of the term *teacher*, I detail a brief survey of the history of teacher training. I follow this with a description of current methods to obtain a teaching license, which had resulted in a newer, somewhat idiosyncratic view of the term teacher in Japan. Finally, I discuss the influence of these changes upon the practice of teachers with Jogo High School.

As the new view of the term teacher comes into practice, this can conflict with an older understanding of the roles of educators in schools. Non-native speakers of Japanese are more frequently becoming licensed teachers making them responsible for the full range of responsibilities concerning students and work in schools. However, some teachers might view these licensed non-native Japanese speakers in the older yet common frame of ALTs, who are responsible solely for teaching content. The teaching of academic content is secondary or even tertiary to a teacher's role in a school. As I discuss in this chapter, in Jogo High School some teachers use language in reference to their ostensible colleagues to systematically perpetuate their expectations of this lesser and marginalized role of non-native speakers of Japanese.

A Teacher in Japan

The literature on teachers in Japan takes two approaches to the term *teacher*. The first is a general reference to the word without a definition of its meaning. The second use involves language instruction and utilizes a wide variety of terms to refer to people who teach including ALTs (assistant language teachers), JTEs (Japanese teachers of English), and NESTs (native English-speaking teachers). Ask anyone if they know what the word teacher means and you will be hard pressed to find someone who would say no. Ask a

group of stakeholders in a school, such as students, parents, school leadership, government officials, alumni, or university staff connected with a high school who fills the role teacher in that school and you might receive different answers. The term teacher is similar to the term *patriot*. Many people can probably define what a patriot is, but the examples given could excite debate. As the saying goes, “One person’s patriot is another’s terrorist.” In other words, two individuals could have a conversation about teachers in Japan, but develop different understandings based upon their initial definitions of the term teacher. Gallie (1956) defined this concept as an essentially contested term. He stated:

Any particular use of any concept of commonsense or of the natural sciences is liable to be contested for reasons better or worse; but whatever the strength of the reasons they usually carry with an assumption of agreement, as to the kind of use that is appropriate to the concept in question, between its user and anyone who contests his particular use of it. When this assumption cannot be made, we have a widely recognized ground for philosophical enquiry. (p. 167)

The term teacher is a concept of commonsense. However, the usage and application of the term can be contested. Because the term teacher is used ambiguously and inconsistently in Japan, I argue that it is an essentially contested term. The meaning is often dependent upon the intentions of the speaker. For example, once when I answered the phone at Jogo High School the person on the other end requested to speak with a teacher. I stated that I was a teacher at the school. She then restated her request asking for someone on the international relations committee. I was the head of that committee at the time and stated that fact. She seemed increasingly frustrated and said she wanted to speak

with a “real teacher.” In her view I, as a non-native speaker of Japanese, did not fit her definition of a teacher. My approach in this chapter is to define the term *teacher* by describing how a person becomes officially recognized as a teacher in Japan, or in simple terms, how a person becomes licensed by the government to be a teacher. In the following section, I begin by tracing the development of teacher education from its origin in the Meiji Period.

A History of Teacher Training in Japan

From the Meiji Period (1868-1912), the national government has defined who a teacher is in Japan. Teacher training was driven by the national goals of unifying and modernizing the country. To ensure the link between the education system and national goals the government initiated teacher training and the application of the term teacher.

Before the Meiji Period there was no formal system for teacher training (for a discussion of education during the Edo Period see Dore, 1984; Najita, 1987; and Rubinger, 1982). Becoming a teacher was accomplished by simply advancing within an area of study. For example, schools trained students and awarded certificates for advancement in subjects such as art. Once an individual reached a high level of certification they would then be considered a teacher. Collins (1989) described the Edo Period as having “the traditional expectation that teachers would evolve naturally from those who were learned” (p. 217). There was no governmental authority to regulate the teaching of educational methods to teachers. There was no single authority able to define the word teacher. This changed in the Meiji Period.

The Early Meiji Period

A key element of modernization was envisioned within western ideals and the tool to adopt these ideals was education (for a detailed description of Meiji Period education see Duke, 1990). Educational reform was built upon the informal educational practices of the Tokugawa Period, which included a high rate of literacy. Dore (1965) wrote: “When, in 1868, the new government took over and began its program of forced-pace modernization, its decrees ordering the establishment of a universal system of elementary schooling already had substantial foundations on which to build” (p. 32). However, these reforms were intended to be a break from pre-Meiji education (Platt, 2004). The goal of education reform in the Meiji period was to unify the country, to nationalize the language, and to create an educated public that could help the nation develop and compete internationally.

The Mid-Meiji Period

Meiji Period schools integrated students into a new modern society. In his book *Mori Arinori*, Hall (1973) quoted the first minister of education for Japan as saying: “The administrators of our various schools should at all times be mindful of the fact that the undertaking is on behalf of the state, not on behalf of the individual student” (p. 397). Students were required to wear school uniforms and had to submit to discipline. They were taught the elements considered requirements of a modern society, such as the basics of hygiene. The focus of learning in schools was on practical matters directly benefiting the state in its efforts to modernize. Mathematics, reading, and writing were needed by citizens of the nation to run the train systems, factories, and businesses of modern Japan.

All aspects of the lives of people were modernized in order to modernize the state.

In addition to being a method of modernization, the new Meiji government's education system was a tool to consolidate power. The new school system was meant to be a break from the past. Local governments had to apply to have pre-Meiji or newly constructed buildings designated as schools. This application required a detailed report listing the subjects taught in the school. To maintain control after the initial certification of a school, the central government used inspections. Statistics were also kept to detail progress and to emphasize the centrality of education under the national, rather than local, governmental control. These attempts at control were met with some resistance, and attacks did occur on schools that had been created by the central government. In addition to controls on schools, the Meiji government also placed controls on students, mostly in the area of students training to become teachers. These students were held to higher standards. The government used certification of the schools as a means to place standards on who became a teacher and what qualifications teachers would be expected to have.

The Late Meiji Period

In the later Meiji Period, the national government further placed loyalty to the state as a center element of education. The Imperial Rescript on Education was proclamation of in 1890. It “insisted that loyalty and filial piety, plus respect for the constitution and the law, be put at the heart of the educational system” (Beasley, 1999 p. 228). The Rescript was a tool to this end. Gluck (1985) suggested that: “In the interests of both standardization and control, the Monbusho acted first to institutionalize the Rescript by

distributing copies to the schools and laying down guidelines for their storage, handling, and ceremonial reading” (p.147). The Rescript was placed in a position of respect in schools and at some assemblies it was read to the student body. Gluck (1985) gave the following account:

School children heard the principal intone the Rescript on each national holiday, each school ceremony, and at special monthly convocations held expressly for the purpose. In the lower three grades children repeated the words after the teacher in *shushin* [(修身) ethics instruction] class; in the fourth grade and above they were expected to recite it from memory. (p. 148)

The Rescript was held in high regard. There were stories of school principals’ running back into burning buildings to save the copy of the Rescript (Gordon, 2014). It was a physical reminder to teachers about the purpose of education.

The Meiji educational reforms expanded education and for the first time provided a standardized structure to the schools. The structure of the new school system was meant to provide a basic education for all. Education was compulsory for four years, with four more optional. Parents paid fees until 1900, when free public education was implemented. In 1887, only 47% of school age children were attending school, but after the initiation of free education in 1900, school attendance increased. By 1905, 95.6% of school age children were attending school (Botsman, 2004). As schools expanded, so did the education for teachers.

Normal Schools

To staff the new school system, the government established normal schools that were schools for the training of teachers. Beyond these schools, a higher level of education was also established, embodied in institutions such as Tokyo Imperial University. In 1872, the Tokyo Normal School was established as the first school for the education of teachers and Marion Scott, an American, was recruited to teach there for three years. The Teacher Training Ordinance of 1886 stated: “the Ministry of Education will determine entrance requirements and assignments upon graduation” (Duke, 2009, p. 328). By 1876, the number of normal schools had increased to 94 throughout the country. The first normal school for women was established in 1874. In 1929, colleges in Tokyo and Hiroshima were established for graduates of higher normal schools so they could continue their education. These schools were still under the control of the state increasing the level of control over the training for teachers.

Training inside the normal schools was strict, and took the form of military discipline. Students were required to stay in dorms, attend roll calls, and undergo inspections as would be required in a military unit. If teachers were trained in a strict manner it was hoped that this level of discipline would filter down to other students and help alleviate some of the problems developing in society due to modernization such as corruption. Platt (2004) wrote, of this period: “Education was not a key to unlock the potentialities of the individual, but instead served as a tool to prevent corruption and disorder among the people” (p 253). This means education was not meant to help individuals develop to their maximum potential, but instead to provide the basic skills required of citizens in a modern nation, such as reading and math proficiency. Teachers

were trained in order to meet national goals. By 1945, the majority of licensed teachers in primary schools were graduates of normal schools (Collins, 1989).

After the Meiji Period

With the radicalization of politics in the 1930s and into the 1940s, the education system followed suit. From 1941, the focus in schools changed to almost solely emphasize the training of imperial subjects, rather than members of a modern nation as it had in the Meiji Period. One of the core components of producing imperial subjects included the introduction of martial arts into the curriculum. Education stressed loyalty, and tried to unify the nation in support of the war. As the war continued the government shifted students and teachers away from education to industry to support the war economy, and eventually closed the normal schools.

Post-War Reforms

After 1945, another reform of teacher education was enacted, and much like the initial change in the Meiji Period it was influenced by the United States. During the occupation of Japan after the Second World War, the United States Education Mission came to Japan in 1946. Jointly sponsored by the War and State Departments 27 members led by George Stoddard made up the mission (Shibata, 2005). This mission established the 6-3-3 format of education in Japan, which is six years of elementary education, three years of junior high school, and three years of high school.

Of all the reforms initiated by the occupation forces, including the constitution, those within education were the least successful. In terms of curriculum, shushin was

banned along with judo and kendo. Both judo and kendo returned in to Japanese schools in September of 1950, but not shushin. In 1958, the Ministry of Education introduced *dotoku* [(道徳) post-war moral education], which has received persistent criticisms by the teachers' union since then (Shibata, 2005). Another major reform was the transfer of educational decisions from the Ministry of Education to local administration. This failed as well, and today MEXT is central to changes in Japanese education. While overall educational reforms failed, some reforms concerning teacher education were successful.

One successful element of occupation educational reforms concerned the moving of teacher training from the national to local level. The United States Education Mission's recommendations had an influence on teacher education, and included training for specialized fields as well as professional education after certification. In addition, the mission reinstated some of the same teacher training as had been done in early Meiji, based upon U.S. models. An education reform committee was established in 1946 in order to look into implementing the recommendations of the United States Education Mission, resulting in the transition of teacher training from state controlled schools to universities. Many of the pre-war normal schools become education departments in universities in the late 1940s. For example, Otsu Normal School became Shiga University Faculty of Education when Shiga University was founded. According to Shimahara (1991), "by 1979 nearly 85 percent of the 444 colleges and universities and 84 percent of the 518 junior colleges were participating in teacher education" (p. 264). Normal schools continued for training of teachers for elementary and middle schools. In the following section I describe the process of receiving a teaching license in this new system.

To summarize this section, I traced the history of teacher education in Japan. From its beginning, the application of the term teacher has been used by the government to advance national goals and objectives. This continues today, as the government looks towards globalization it has changed licensing requirements in order to increase the number of computer and language specialists in schools. These changes have resulted in an increase in the number of non-native speakers of Japanese becoming licensed teachers. Some of these teachers bring a Western-perspective of teaching centered on academic outcomes not aligned with the *gakunen* community of practice. In addition, some Japanese teachers view these new members as holding a limited role such as an ALT rather than recognizing their fully licensed status. These various views contribute to the contested status of the term *teacher*. In the following section, I describe the new licensing requirements in Japan and their influence on the practice of teachers in Jogo High School.

Teacher Licensure in Japan

To teach in either public or private schools and be responsible for a class of students in Japan, a person needs a teaching license issued by a prefectural Board of Education. The requirements to receive a license are detailed later in this chapter. However, there is one exception. According to an administrator at the Hyogo Prefectural Board of Education, a school can apply for permission for a non-licensed part-time teacher to be responsible to teach a specific class (Interview Feb. 24, 2015). Some teachers, such as members of the JET program, are ALTs and do not have a teaching license. They are assigned as assistants to licensed teachers and are not responsible for a class of students. In McConnell's (2002) words:

The JET Program is a particular useful lens for examining educational reform because its origins were almost entirely top-down. In a sense, national-level ministries embarked on a course of forced diversity without ever consulting those most dramatically affected by the policy, namely, local educational administrators and Japanese language teachers (p. 124).

Many of the JET program teachers are recruited from university and come to Japan for the experience of living overseas, to fill a gap year, or to gain experience teaching. JET teachers are supposed to assist a licensed teacher who is responsible for the class. The practice of ALTs, however, is peripheral to the practice of teachers in schools such as Jogo High School. Mr. Okubo explains his view on the difference between licensed teachers and ALTs:

絶対違うと思う。絶対違うと思う。それからスペシャリテーも、あの専門性っていうのかな。モチベーションはやっぱ本気で日本のことを勉強しようとする日本人のことを理解しようとする。で、ALT の人は just for my experience とかね。それとか若いときの経験でステップアップのホップステップジャンプとか、そういう風に考えてる人もいて ok だと思うのね。open でしょ。だれにでも、で…でも日本で免許とろうと思ったら大変だったでしょ。大変だよ。時間もそうだし、system が日本はちゃんとしてないから、もうとつても疲れるよね。もお金もかかるし時間もかかるし。

(Okubo interview, March 7, 2013)

[It's definitely different, it's definitely different I think. There's specialty expertise motivation. Indeed, earnestly studying about Japan, trying to understand Japanese people but people who are ALTs are doing it just for their experience. Experience while they are young.. hop, step, jump they are thinking in that way and I think that is okay. Things should be open, anyone is okay, but getting a Japanese teaching license is really difficult I think. Difficult in terms of time and the system isn't properly developed. It's really tiring and it costs money and time].

Similar to the measurement of accountability of teachers to the *gakunen* in terms of time and effort, Mr. Okubo sees the time and effort required to acquire a teaching license as a reification of the shared repertoire of teachers in Jogo High School. People who are willing to make the effort and expend resources, such as time and money, are showing a commitment that is an important element of the repertoire of the *gakunen* community of practice. Change is happening, and a new application procedure has made a teaching license much more accessible for people who are not native speakers of Japanese. In turn, non-native speakers of Japanese are taking a more active role in schools than the much debated and frequently marginalized ALT.

Requirements for Licensure

Today, the most common method to obtain a teaching license in Japan is to take a required set of courses while in university, and complete a short teaching practicum. The required classes vary depending on the academic subject such as English or mathematics and by the level (elementary, junior or senior high school) of the certification. A teaching

license awarded by the prefecture using this system is valid in all prefectures in Japan. Non-traditional options exist to complete these requirements as well. Correspondence programs, that usually require a short time in residence to finish, can also lead to licensure. In the following section, I describe recent changes to the teacher licensing process.

New Regulations

In March 2009, the Ministry of Education instituted changes in the teacher licensing system. These changes included a change in the validity period of issued licenses and instituted a new alternate route to certification. First, licenses are no longer valid for the lifetime of the holder; instead most licenses are current for 10 years while some are valid for as few as five years or, in the case of a temporary license, just one year. After 10 years, a renewal process must be completed. Prior to limited term licensing, it was possible for an individual to obtain a teaching certification in university, work in a field outside of education for an extended period of time, and then become a teacher without the need for any type of recertification. That time has ended. New licensing requirements have also introduced expanded continuing education for teachers.

The national government requires professional development days during a teacher's first and tenth year of teaching. Hyogo Prefecture requires further training in addition to the national requirements at a teacher's fifth and fifteenth year of teaching. The head of the upper secondary division of the Hyogo Prefectural Board of Education sees these certification renewal procedures as a duplication of effort, and not really beneficial by some at the prefectural level because of programs already in place (Director

High Schools Hyogo BOE, interview, March 23, 2012). These requirements are missing in the private school setting, leaving just the recertification process as an opportunity for outside professional development.

License Renewal

License renewal was initiated in 2009. Even today, as MEXT attempts to adjust the teacher licensing system, change has been slow. Guidance is provided and slowly elements of change are beginning to appear. Renewal requires completion of 30 or more hours of courses designated as license renewal courses. Teachers can take these courses at universities, or other agencies designated by the government. Within the 30 hours of training, approximately 12 hours are on educational policy, the teaching profession, and collaboration while an additional 18 hours focuses on instruction (MEXT 2016a). Mr. Okubo gave his view on license renewal:

まだ受けたことがないので、自分には直接ないけれどもそうね。多少は影響あるかな。その聞いてると、とっても良かったていう…受けてね。10年目の研修を受けてよかったていって帰ってくる先生と、ん…あんまり良くなかったて言う先生と、やっぱりいるんですね。だから 100% guarantee じゃないんだらうなって思うけど、でも日本に学校の先生って何万人いるんだらう。4万人5万人 10万人すごい数いるんですけどね。その先生たちが一度免許持ったら1回も勉強しないまま最後まで 30年働く人もいますよ。もう全然勉強する気持ちもない、時間もないとか言ってね。でもそういう人たちがいることを考えると、今の system はあってもいいのかなて思うけど、勉強する先生はいつでもどこでも勉強してるから、邪魔

になるかもしれないよね。つまらないかもしれない。その辺のこう割合がね。人数の割合がどのくらいあるのかよく分からないけど。 (Okubo interview, March 7, 2013)

[I have not done it yet so. Personally I have had no direct contact. I wonder if there will be somewhat of an influence (from renewal requirements). Some teacher might come back from the ten-year renewal training and say it was really good. Some might say it wasn't good. I think there is no 100% guarantee. In Japan I wonder how many thousands of teachers there are? 40,000, 50,000, 100,000? It's a big number. Within those numbers, there might be teachers who get a license and then work for 30 years without studying, that don't feel like studying and say that they don't have time. Considering those teachers then this system can be good I think, but for teachers who are studying then this could be a hindrance. But I don't know that proportions between these two groups].

In other words, the license renewal system was in its early stages and the impact of these changes is still not known. Prior to this renewal system people could obtain a teaching license in university, work in an un-related job, and then turn to teaching after retiring. This could be especially profitable because teacher salary scales are based predominately on age. The license renewal requirements are extremely simple. However, change is happening. In addition, these renewal requirements introduce required training.

License renewal introduces some required professional development into private schools. License renewal also introduces costs to individual teachers. Mr. Inoue spoke of the costs involved:

そういう風に国が義務付けするんやったら、絶対国がその費用を負担すべきやと思うんですね。(2秒)え…なんでこっちが交通費払って、んないちいち大変な思いを個人的にして、私たち別に更新したくてやってるんじゃないですけど。

(Inoue interview, March 9, 2013)

[Once this became mandatory I think, definitely the country (government) should bear the cost. Our side, every time bearing transportation costs, every time is personally difficult to consider. We are not the ones who want to do the renewal].

The literature on teacher practice in Japan suggests that teachers teach the way they were taught. Change in this practice is thought to be the result of the teacher's interaction with peers rather than from professional development activities. Shimahara (2002a) wrote, "the content of professional development is derived from the shared repertoire of practice, rather than from research and academic scholarship" (p. 25). While the license renewal system is new and yet to be analyzed, this study reveals that the license renewal system has little influence on teacher practices in Jogo High School.

The Special License

In addition to the change to license time limits, a new category of teaching license was introduced. The *tokubetsu menkyo* [(特別免許) special licensure] are different in

how they are acquired and in regards to the area of validity. Teachers with special licenses have the same rights and responsibilities, except that their license is only valid in the prefecture where it was awarded. These teachers also undergo the same renewal procedures as those who have the more common teaching license. They are awarded by the prefectural Board of Education, but the regulations making them possible are from the MEXT. An individual cannot apply for him or herself, rather a school must apply for an individual.

There are two stages to the application process. First, the school must submit an application package containing the following items to the Prefectural Board of Education: a 5,000 yen application fee, a statement from the school with a signature on the individuals, the individual's academic record (university transcripts) translated into Japanese, proof of graduation from university, a work history, a description of the individual's human relationship abilities in four categories (counseling, research, society, responsibility), a health declaration, and finally a recommendation from the school for the individual. The recommendation form must include three points: a reason for the person to receive a license, an assessment or statement of the individual's ability to teach, and a description of his or her character. This is not a new development. The character of a prospective teacher has been a condition of licensure since the 19th century. Lincicome (1995) found this requirement from 1880: "Article 37 of the Revised Education Law (Kaisei kyoiku-rei), promulgated in December 1880, stated that a *hinko fusei naru mono* [persons lacking good character] shall be barred from becoming teachers" (p. 76). This is due to the amount of time and the nature of the relationship between teachers and students in the high school setting in Japan.

After receiving the application materials from the school, the Prefectural Board of Education forms a *kenkyu iinkai* [(研究委員会) research committee] to review the application. This group decides if the application advances to the second step. One possible cause of a rejection of the application might be that a weak reason was given for the particular person to receive a license. The school must demonstrate that the individual is needed more than another teacher in the school who already holds a teaching certification. During an interview at the Hyogo Prefectural Board of Education, a member of the teacher certification group suggested that experience could influence the application process as well. This individual said: “A person with only university experience applying for a junior high school license could create a problem or debate” (Staff Hyogo BOE, interview, Oct. 11, 2011). Once the Board of Education decides upon this initial stage, the application proceeds to the second stage.

The second stage of the application process involves a visit to the school by five to seven members of the prefectural Board of Education. The school applying for a license on behalf of an individual teacher receives notification well in advance of the visit, and in turn notifies the teacher involved. This notification is usually at least a month in advance of the visit. The teacher prepares a lesson plan and any related materials for the lesson, with copies for each member of the Board of Education who visits the school. These members observe a class taught by the individual seeking a license, followed by an interview conducted in a room in the school between the members of the Board of Education and the teacher wishing to receive licensure.

The contents of the interview vary according to the license status and background of the individual. For individuals holding a temporary license, the content of the

interview consists of questions concerning content based on courses completed at a university in Japan, curriculum content, and some pedagogical questions. For individuals without a teaching license, the questions focus more on co-teaching and the relationship between teachers. For example, questions ask specifically about how the applicant cooperates with licensed teachers who are considered to be in-charge of the classroom because they were licensed. Mr. York was interviewed as an ALT because he did not hold a teaching certification. Due to this status, some of the questions he encountered dealt directly with his relationship with his cooperating teacher.

The school is notified of the results of the application process from a few weeks to a few months later. Out of six applicants for special licensure consulted during this study, only one failed the process, but was awarded a five-year license after revising some materials submitted to the Board of Education. It is important to note again that it is the school that submits the application to the Board of Education for the individual who receives the certification. This system requires the Board of Education to reject the school if there is an issue, rather than the individual, making it more difficult for the Board of Education to deny the application because it would interfere with the relationship with the school.

All of the licenses in Table 31 were awarded to individuals working in private schools, except for one license for nursing which was awarded to an individual working in a prefectural high school. As of 2011, all of the special licenses awarded by the Hyogo Prefectural Board of Education were for high school and junior high school certification; however, special licenses for the elementary level are possible.

Table 31. *Special Licenses Awarded by the Hyogo Board of Education*

Academic year	License	Level	Nationality
2009	English	Junior high school	Australian
2009	English	Junior high school	Australian
2009	English	Junior high school	British
2009	English	High school	Australian
2009	English	High school	British
2009	Nursing	High school	Japanese
2010	English	High school	Japanese
2010	English	High school	Australian
2010	Nursing	High school	Japanese
2010	English	Junior high school	Australian
2011	Nursing	High school	Japanese

Note. Adapted from an interview with the staff of the Hyogo Prefectural BOE on October 11, 2011.

The number of special licenses issued is small compared to the total number of teacher licenses issued in Japan. Nationally in 2008, there were 217,626 ordinary teacher licenses issued out of which 47,437 were high school licenses, while 56 special licenses were issued in 2008 and only 346 were issued from 1989 to 2008 (MEXT, 2015a).

The majority of foreign teachers in Japan at the high school level are working as an assistant language teacher or ALT. Each year in Hyogo Prefecture, a list of high school English teachers is published in the *Hyogo-ken Kotogakko Eigo Kyoin Meibo* [(兵庫県高等学校英語教員目録) Hyogo Prefectural High School English Teachers Name Book] and a copy of this list is sent to each school in the prefecture. In the 2014 edition, 85 teachers were listed with non-Japanese names including names written in English and katakana. Out of this group of 85 teachers, 72 were listed as ALTs. The remaining 13 teachers not listed as ALTs had the following designations: 4 listed as part-time, 2 listed

as *rinkou* [(臨講) adjunct teacher], and 7 with no status designated. During the 17th AILA World Congress in Brisbane, Australia I attended a presentation on teachers in Japan and had the opportunity to ask some questions. After the presentation, an audience member approached me and identified herself as a university faculty member from Tokyo. She asked if I held a Japanese teaching license and after I confirmed that I did, she mentioned that her research indicated that there are only about 50 foreigners in Japan who hold a Japanese teaching credential. This is a small percentage of the total number of teachers in Japan (see Table 33).

Jogo High School and Licensing

In Jogo High School, the teacher licensing changes have two influences on teacher practice. First, it introduces some professional development where previously there had been no required formal professional development program. Second, it allows non-fluent Japanese speakers to become licensed teachers in the school. One major effect of moving foreign teachers into Jogo High School is the mixed reaction of teachers in the school. Some teachers are accepting of non-native speakers of Japanese coming into Jogo High School as licensed teachers. A smaller number of teachers have not accepted this new development. In the following section, I detail how some teachers use language to resist the equal standing of non-native speakers of Japanese.

Non-native Japanese speakers who hold a teaching credential and work in Jogo High School have changed interpersonal dynamics within the school. An ALT might team-teach, but the members of this team are not equal. Not holding a license places one party at a disadvantage. Sometimes teachers recognize differences based upon outdated

assumptions of roles with the school in the sense of the power relationship between non-licensed and licensed teachers.

During my third year in Jogo High School, I was approached by a member of the history department and asked about my opinion on the formation of a history club for students. He continued, stating that he was making a poster and wanted to include quotes from several teachers in order to foster an interest in students and attract members. I agreed and gave him several options. The entire conversation was conducted in Japanese. Sometime later, the same teacher showed me the completed poster to get my approval before he copied and posted it around the school. The poster began with a statement of intent to form a history club and included quotes from various teachers including me. However, my quote, while appropriate and grammatically correct, was written in katakana rather than a combination of kanji and hiragana as the other quotes were. The Japanese language uses kanji, hiragana and katakana. Kanji and hiragana are used for the bulk of written communication while katakana is often used with *loan words* or words directly adopted from foreign languages such as the word *glass* which in katakana is written as *gurasu* [(グラス) a glass or cup] or *garasu* [(ガラス) a pane of glass] depending upon the desired meaning of the word glass. Katakana is rarely used to write common Japanese language expressions, which can be written using kanji and hiragana; the exception is the expression of extraordinary speech. In manga, for example, if a person yells in anger or pain the emphasized speech can be written in katakana. Katakana had also been used in the poster to express the speech of a non-Japanese native speaker. I had thought this usage, at least in the Jogo High School setting, was relegated to the past (for a discussion of foreigner stereotypes in media see Fukuda, 2017). When I enquired

why katakana was used, the teacher responded: “because you are a foreigner.” “The students already know that I am not Japanese so what do you want to say by using katakana,” I retorted. “It is standard to have foreigners’ speech written in katakana,” he continued, “but if you don’t like it I will rewrite it using kanji.”

He had come to me to get approval for the poster indicating that he at least considered my approval a possibility. He was heavily involved in the peace studies program, a long-term member of the history department whose members also included the principal, two vice principals and the future chancellor, and a proponent of the school message, yet he felt the need, consciously or unconsciously, to emphasize differences.

Another example of the use of language to marginalize teachers included my interaction with a part-time teacher in 2011. I was proctoring a midterm test when a Japanese part-time teacher entered the room. Greetings and formalities are important and often repeated in Jogo High School. He entered, bowed, and I bowed in response. He then looked over at me and remarked, “excuse me” in English. I did not think that he was trying to be difficult, and felt in fact he was probably trying to be kind. However, this presumption on the part of some Japanese teachers that they must speak English to foreigners is something I had been working to try and discourage and more so in front of students. I explained that I could speak Japanese and tried to explain why in this position, it would be best to use Japanese, to which he responded “that’s no good?” in English (Field notes, May 26, 2011).

The use of katakana to represent differences, or code switching to English places my identity within the domain of a “foreign language teacher.” As a member of a *gakunen* at Jogo High School, my affiliation with an academic department is secondary if

not tertiary to my role in the school. This form of address—which was ostensibly just a polite use of my native language, but which I perceived was also a means to reduce my relative status—made me uncomfortable, especially when it happened in front of students. Wolfram (2007) stated “in the case of different languages, speakers may make symbolic choices in their language use or manage code switching to signal ethnic identity” (p. 78). Similarly, Mr. York described the lack of recognition by some teachers: “I don't think the negative teachers who ignored or tried to consider the license as illegitimate even had much effect on anything... or rather the licensing didn't affect whatever negative influence they might have had on us” (Interview, July 12, 2015). Beyond teachers, however, he felt it was important for other members in Jogo High School:

As for students, I don't think they really cared at all, or knew for that matter. They didn't even tend to really care if a teacher was a part-timer, *sennin* [(専任) tenured], full time contract, licensed or not. Students for the most part just judged teachers individually. I do think having a license was a huge positive for the parents. Parents knowing a teacher had a license and some kind of government certification to be teaching their kid definitely made them feel better about the non-Japanese teacher. (York interview, July 12, 2015)

It is important to emphasize the teacher-parent interactions in Jogo High School, which come in a variety of forms, including explanation meetings and phone calls which are easier to navigate when parents know a teacher is licensed.

Some teachers in Jogo High School viewed foreign teachers as people who possessed different values. Mr. Inoue describes his concern about the value of time in Jogo High School:

やっぱり日本人の人よりも外国人の人っていったらすごく家庭とかも自分の時間とかもすごい大事にしてると思うんですね。日本人はそれを特に大事にしてない。(2秒)結構あのうるわしいぐらいに犠牲にする、うん、例えばその何時以降はやっぱり家族のために帰ってあげるとかそんなん言ったらなんていったらいいんかな。またそんなん言ってみたいな感じでばかにする人多いじゃないですか。

(Inoue interview, March 9, 2013)

[I think foreigners value their family and personal time more than Japanese people do. Japanese don't really value that. ...for example, after a certain hour, it's time to say I should go home to my family. If (someone) feels like saying such a thing, the number of people that would make fun of them is not small].

While this statement seems understandable in Jogo High School, where time is the measure of accountability to the school and to the gakunen, this could be problematic. Mr. Samson is a licensed teacher and also a non-native speaker Japanese. He reflects upon his experience of working with part-time teachers who are native speakers of English and those teachers misunderstanding of the Jogo High School environment:

I'm working with two part-time western employees of our school, English teachers, and they don't understand that by failing a student that they are actually

creating either work for themselves or work for their Japanese colleagues and because they are sort of oblivious they create work for their Japanese colleagues by failing someone. So I had a conversation with someone who failed someone with a 49 and another time with a 48. The Japanese teachers came up to that person and said why are you failing them with a 49? why are you failing them with a 48? And from a Western perspective they said here was the test, here was the assignment, here is their grade, and it is very cut...clear cut. (Samson interview, March 6, 2013)

This is an example of the different understandings of the educational system in Jogo High School. These differences do exist. However, understanding is not limited by membership of group, gender, or race. Even when a non-native speaker of Japanese has a good understanding of Japanese education, some teachers attribute a limited sense of understanding due to the teacher's racial background. Mr. York describes the influence of holding a teaching license in the face of these issues:

As for the license effect question... for us - I can honestly say that it gave me a better sense of confidence, but also a sense of being justified. I now had a piece of paper that put me on the level of other teachers and something official to refer to when the Japanese teachers start their "in Japanese schools..." shit implying that despite teaching in Japanese schools longer than them, they know better than me thanks to being Japanese. (York interview, July 12, 2015)

Other teachers see a benefit to bringing in people with new ideas into the teaching profession in Japan. Mr. Okubo describes the different stance of teachers who are fully licensed versus those who are employed as ALTs:

今日本の資格っていうのは外国人にとっては全然フェアじゃないと思う。それを我慢して分かってて資格とってくれる人ってのはすごい人だと思うのね。だからやっぱり資格を持ってる人に来て欲しいし、もうちょっと資格とりにやすくしてあげないといけないと思うんだけど、もうそれは生徒の気持ちとかプログラムデザインとかティーチングアプローチとか全然違うよね、ALT の人は。

(Okubo interview, March 7, 2013)

[Japan now is not at all fair to foreigners who hold a qualification. Those who understand and persevere to get a qualification are great I think. So (we) want people who hold a qualification. I think the costs of getting a qualification must be made cheaper. The students' feelings, program design, and teaching approach are completely different with people who are ALTs].

Being seen as an equal in the school is important when non-native Japanese speakers want to engage with some of the many opportunities afforded in Jogo High School. This equality allowed me to participate in some of the best experiences I had as a high school teacher. In the following section I describe one of these experiences.

Having a teacher's license has allowed me experiences that I would not have been able to have as an ALT. I was the mentor for a student teacher in 2012. That year, Jogo High School accepted 11 students for a student teaching practicum from May 28 to June 16. Out of these 11 students 8 were graduates of Jogo High School. The student teachers were assigned two cooperating teachers. One teacher was for homeroom responsibilities

and the other was for an academic subject. I stated an interest, and the school asked me to be the academic subject cooperating teacher for one of the student teachers.

The experience started with a meeting on May 24 to explain some of the rules and expectations of the practicum experience. These included writing a journal each day on all aspects of the practicum, participating in the morning and afternoon gakunen meetings while taking notes, attending Saturday classes, and observing as many classes as possible. A schedule of observations needed to be submitted to the academic affairs section by June 1, but adjustments after were allowed. Some of the rules included no discussion of personal information with students or exchanges of contact information such as phone numbers or email addresses.

My student teacher turned out to be one of the graduates from Jogo High School. She had taken my two-year research course on Japanese history and I knew her well. I shared my experience of being a student teacher at Boston College and we discussed the goals and objectives of education and how those fit into the reality of a Japanese setting such as Jogo High School. As a student teacher, she taught my class and completed her student teaching requirement. It was one of the better experiences I had at Jogo High school and it would not have been possible if I did not hold a Japanese teaching certification. Mr. York also reported the personal benefits of having a license:

The last thing is the trickle down effect from all of this... us, feeling legitimized and confident due to the license... the parents being on board due to the license, and the good teachers being more able to see us as equals and partners were all positives that trickled down to the micro-interactions we'd have with students,

parents, and colleagues. (York interview, July 12, 2015)

The introduction of the special license has allowed more individuals to become licensed. This benefits not only the school financially in terms of higher salary support from the national government, but also in the feelings of these teachers as they enter the *gakunen* community of practice.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I summarized the history of teacher training in Japan. The training, duties, and responsibilities of teachers have been linked to national goals and objectives from the Meiji Period. In other words, to advance national policy, the government has controlled the application of the term teacher. This continues today. Recently, new national objectives have again caused a redefinition of the term teacher in high schools in Japan. Non-native speakers of Japanese are becoming more active in schools as they obtain teaching credentials within the Japanese system. This stands in contrast to this group's more traditional role as assistant teachers. This redefinition is not universally accepted and is a point of conflict in schools. Within Jogo High School this conflict revolves around the use of language to limit or categorize some teachers. This is an attempt to separate them from the more traditional role of teachers involved with the *gakunen* practice, and instead relegate these foreign teachers to positions as simple teachers of an academic subject. The teaching of academic subjects is secondary or tertiary to the mutually negotiated practice of teachers in Jogo High School.

Recent changes in licensing practices have influenced Jogo High School by introducing a degree of professional development in the form of license renewal and also

by moving new teachers into the *gakunen* community of practice. License renewal has yet to show an influence on practices in Jogo High School, as most teachers did not need to renew during my period of data collection. However, the introduction of new teachers had influenced the context and revealed their domination by some members of Jogo High School. The reaction on both sides were mixed. Some of the teachers in this study such as Mr. York and Mr. Samson wanted to become licensed teachers and took an inbound trajectory into the *gakunen* community of practice. Others resisted these efforts; preferring the limited role of being an English teacher and limited time commitment associated with that position. Jogo High School pushed for all teachers to be licensed. For teachers who were already licensed, there was a mixed reaction as well.

CHAPTER 9
NEGOTIATING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A TEACHER IN 21st CENTURY
JAPAN: A DISCUSSION

If anthropological interpretation is constructing a reading of what happens, then to divorce it from what happens—from what, in this time or place, specific people say, what they do, what is done to them, from the whole vast business of the world—is to divorce it from its applications and render it vacant.

(Geertz, 1973, p. 18)

In this chapter, I interpret the data presented in chapters 5-8 in terms of my two research questions. First, I address the research question on how teachers in Jogo High School negotiate meaning. Then, I interpret the results of my second research question concerning the influence of external factors on teachers practice. These factors include demographic changes, changes in the recommendation system for university admissions, and recent changes in teacher licensing practices. Finally, I argue that teachers in Jogo High School find meaning in their practice from a larger sense of purpose. The *gakunen* shapes the peer interactions of teachers and holds them accountable in terms of time. Large macro-trends such as demographics, university admissions, and licensing also influence the practice of teachers, but it is only in this larger sense of purpose where teachers find meaning in the countless hours they give to their practice in Jogo High School. I term this concept *sodatsu*.

National trends in Japan in the 21st century are placing unprecedented demands on the teaching profession and leading to a reappraisal of what it means to be a teacher. The *gakunen* continues to be the primary community of practice for teachers, and the joint enterprise of this core teacher community of practice in schools continues to have the goal of socializing students, moral education, and the development of the whole person. Teacher practices within the *gakunen* are aimed at supporting these objectives in a large part by laying the foundation of close relationships with students through continual contact in multiple aspects of their lives. At the same time, the *gakunen* is held accountable to the school, parents, and the affiliated university for facilitating and guaranteeing the smooth transition of students to the next normative step in their education: admission to the connected university, Tsuru University. Although these roles, practices, and expectations have not changed dramatically, the means by which they are played out and responded to are in the process of being renegotiated. As a result, what it means to be a teacher in 21st century Japan is being put into question.

Negotiating the Role of a Jogo High School Teacher

In this section, I discuss how teachers in Jogo High School negotiate the meaning of their practice. Wenger (1998) stated “I will use the concept of negotiation of meaning very generally to characterize the process by which we experience the world and our engagement in it as meaningful” (p. 53). For teachers in Jogo High School, this process of experience and engagement are closely linked to peer interactions and accountability. Both of these are inseparable from the *gakunen* community of practice, and I detail each in the following sections.

Teacher Peer Interactions

While there are many communities of practice in Jogo High School, the *gakunen* is the primary community of practice for teachers. Teachers, who enter Jogo High School, are recruited depending upon the academic discipline for which they are licensed. However, once they enter the school, they are brought into the *gakunen* community of practice. The arrangement of both time and space in Jogo High School facilitates the peer interactions of teachers within a *gakunen*. The position of the *gakunen* seating arrangement, at least twice daily *gakunen* meetings, and the ability to discuss what is important for their practice allow teachers to mutually negotiate responses to issues. When there are problems, the *gakunen* responds in a simple and standard method. The *gakunen* identifies the problem, negotiates a response, and applies time. This mutually negotiated response provides meaning to the practices of teachers. Academic departments have a very limited role in the daily activities of teachers in this school. This is similar to LeTendre's (1998) findings that a teacher's primary affiliation is not with his or her academic department, but to the grade he or she is assigned. The *gakunen* provides teachers with the context to negotiate their practice.

Information provided to the *gakunen* is the start of teachers mutually negotiating a response if needed. This response includes identification of the problem, a mutual negotiation to formulate a response, and the application of time to address the issue. Peer interactions are both provided for and limited by the joint enterprise of the *gakunen* community of practice.

In the following paragraph, I explain how the joint enterprise of the *gakunen* influences peer interactions and how this links to the meaning making of teachers. I have

stated that the *gakunen* community of practice is held accountable to the school and parents in terms of bringing the totality of the student body to the next grade or in the case of third-year students, to place them into Tsuru University. This is the goal of the *gakunen*. Multiple studies have suggested that the goal of education in Japan is socialization (Akiba & LeTendre, 2009; DeCoker, 2002a; Fukuzawa, 1998; Hendry, 1986; LeTendre, 2000; LeTendre, 1998). This idea accounts for the large number of hours Jogo High School teachers put into the school. However, socialization is just one aspect of the role of a teacher in Jogo High School.

This study finds that Jogo High School teachers fall closer to the findings of Sato (2004) who asserted that a key element of schools is the quality of relationships. She wrote: “I often observed academic study time reduced in order to maintain countless hours spent on non-academic endeavors” (Sato, 2004, p. 4). Her observations led her to the conclusion that a key element of learning in Japanese schools is the quality of relationships. This study can build upon her work as she noted the limitations of her approach, acknowledging she herself did not attend teacher/staff meetings, referring to these as “closed sessions” (p. 38) and “private ‘insider’ times when teachers can express their true feelings, air conflicts, and work out problems” (p. 40). In this study, I found such meetings in Jogo High School were some of the most valuable chances to observe teachers. This study adds to the literature by providing not only a view of the various meetings teachers attend, but by also explaining the different roles these meetings fill in relation to the *gakunen* community of practice.

Previous studies have found that the role of teachers is to socialize students, to provide moral guidance, and to develop the ‘whole person.’ Anderson (1995) in his

unpublished dissertation on language socialization in an elementary school in Japan, argued that the teacher's role is to facilitate communication between students to allow them to develop communicative competence in their first language. The students learn to interact with each other in an appropriate manner and understand societal norms during this classroom interaction process. Anderson's study focused on how students used different styles of language during three types of interactions, namely greetings, presentations, and reactions. During his 17 months of fieldwork, Anderson found such practical communication activities were the focus of classroom lessons, and teachers did not directly teach.

Moral education has also been suggested as the focus of teacher practice in Japan. Hendry (1986) in his work on Japanese pre-school also concluded that the pre-school experience for these children involved heavily their socialization, as well as explicit instruction in "moral behavior" (see Roesgaard, 2011 for a history of moral education in Japan). Similarly, Okano and Tsuchiya (1999) asserted "Japanese teachers are preoccupied with the development of the 'whole person' which is manifest in 'lifestyle guidance'" (p. 217). Socialization, moral education, and the development of the "whole person" are all elements of the practice of teachers in Jogo High School, but it is not the end goal. Teachers in this school use time to build relationships with students in order to better understand the students and create an environment where the students can grow.

Teachers within a *gakuen* spend a significant amount of time with students in a variety of settings, allowing them to better understand the students, which, in turn, allow the teachers to quickly identify any issues that develop with the student and to also formulate an informed response with consultation of the *gakuen* to these issues. The

internal factors in the school focus the teacher onto the mutual engagement of teachers within the *gakunen*. The significant amount of time devoted to non-instructional tasks in order to build relationships with students is a large element of this practice, and provides a familiarity with students that teachers share in their pursuit of the *gakunen* joint enterprise.

The context of Jogo High School limits most faculty peer interactions to members of the same *gakunen*. Space and time are two limiting elements. In terms of space, the close seating proximity of fellow *gakunen* members provides opportunity for peer interactions with members of the same *gakunen*. In terms of time, the daily schedule of Jogo High School encourages *gakunen* peer interactions as teachers exchange information about students. This includes talking to other *gakunen* teachers about which students went to the nurses' office and why, which parents called the school with questions and concerns, or even information from others outside of the *gakunen*. Peer interactions within the *gakunen* afford teachers an opportunity to adjust their practice unlike other interactions. In general, interactions between *gakunen* teachers and individuals outside of the *gakunen* are limited. I discuss one limiting factor, accountability, in the following section.

Teacher Accountability

In this section, I discuss what process, if any, is in place for teacher accountability. As explained earlier, for the *gakunen*, accountability to the school is measured by the advancement of the entire student body assigned to that *gakunen* to the next logical step in their educational career. This could be simply advancement to the

next grade in the high school or placement in university. For teachers, accountability to the *gakunen*, the school, and to parents is measured in terms of time.

Teachers are held accountable in Jogo High School directly to the *gakunen* in terms of time and indirectly through the *gakunen* to both the school and parents. A teacher sleeping at his or her desk is not considered lazy. That teacher probably wants to go home, but staying in school and providing time to the *gakunen*. That teacher is there to help if something happens within the *gakunen*. That teacher is being accountable to the *gakunen*. The *gakunen*, in turn, is held accountable to parents and large school-wide programs by the school's administration. If problems or issues do occur the response of the *gakunen* is measured by the time commitment of the teachers within the *gakunen* to address the issue.

The use of time as the measure of accountability for teachers is problematic for comparative studies. Many comparative studies on teacher-related outcomes focus on student learning outcomes as measured by standardized tests (Baker & LeTendre, 2005; DeCoker 2002b; LeTendre, 2002). With Jogo High School, learning outcomes are secondary or even tertiary considerations for teachers, and the school does not use these to measure teacher accountability. During data collection, many teachers informally commented that students learn even in a poorly taught class, and while they would like to spend more time on class preparation, that is a luxury they cannot afford. Doing so would take time away from the joint *gakunen* enterprise and require other members of the *gakunen* to fill the gap.

For the *gakunen*, accountability is measured by bringing the complete student body that started the school year in April to the next grade in Jogo High School, or to a

department in Tsuru University. The number of students in each homeroom and the total number of students in each gakunen is prominently displayed on the large board in the teachers' room. Anything influencing this number is formally discussed in a number of meetings both at the gakunen level, and if not resolved, again at a general teachers' meeting. Informal discussions also occur in situations such as the final yearly gakunen dinner at a local restaurant. The last speech of the dinner is reserved for the head of the gakunen, the content of this speech almost always reflects upon the success of the joint gakunen endeavor of bringing all of the students to the next stage in the natural order of Jogo High School. It is rare when this goal is not achieved, but on the occasion when a student either leaves the school or is held back a year, that failure of the gakunen sets the tone for the evening. One frequent comment to this situation is "We should have spent more time on that."

With regards to taking time away from the gakunen community of practice, the findings of this current study are similar to those of Poole (2010) in his work on university faculty in Japan. Discussing the concepts of *uchimuki* (inward looking) and *sotomuki* (outward looking), he posited that teachers who were *uchimuki* devoted considerable amount to time and loyalty to the school. This is observable in actions such as administrative duties. Others, viewed as *sotomuki*, used time for research and to write. Those holding the latter position believed that researching and publishing would raise the standing of the university as well as improve instruction, but they were seen by the administration as not loyal or even selfish. This concept is similar to the results of this study. Teachers leaving school early to attend graduate classes or for self-improvement are leaving the work of the gakunen to their co-workers. Worse, they are not spending

time to build relationships and develop an understanding of students that will inform decisions the gakunen needs to make. This leaves an extra burden on the other members of the gakunen. In this regard, this study confirms what LeTendre (2000) found; namely, that teachers and students doing things together gave the teacher a stronger sense of identification with students and allowed teachers to sympathize with students. In Jogo High School, this allows teachers to provide more informed decisions about students while helping them to formulate better responses to problems.

Both Mr. Inaba and myself reported accountability to the gakunen in terms of time. Mr. Inaba talked about the need to apologize to other members of his gakunen when he was absent to attend graduate school classes. In my case, I had an exchange with the head of my gakunen at an end-of-term dinner. She was upset that I had not apologized for taking the allowed research day to continue my studies. Jogo High School initiated a policy to allow high school teachers to take one day off each week as a research day. The objective of the policy was to increase the academic level of the teachers, classes, and finally students. However, teachers, many of whom felt this attempt at faculty development conflicted with the norms, expectations, and goals of the gakunen, resisted this effort. The administration's attempt to renegotiate what it means to be a teacher failed because it had not taken into account the peer interactions of teachers and how they are held accountable within the gakunen.

In this way, this study provides a local and culturally sensitive way to understand teacher accountability and what it means to be a high school teacher in Japan. Rather than a focus on educational outcomes measured by standardized tests, accountability in Jogo High School is measured in terms of time devoted to the gakunen and its larger purpose

of bringing the entirety of the students in the *gakunen* to the next grade level or to admission to Tsuru University. In order to work towards this joint enterprise of the *gakunen*, teachers use their time to foster relationships with and understandings of the students. The large amount of time committed to non-instructional tasks has been noted in many studies as a negative aspect of education in Japan because it interferes with the improvement of instruction (Akiba & LeTendre, 2009; Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999; Rohlen, 1983). However, this commitment of time is central to the practice of the *gakunen* and any attempt to limit the time teachers dedicate to the *gakunen*, and to foster student relationships, can be seen as an unwelcome attempt to renegotiate local understandings of what it means to be a teacher.

In addition to these local questions of licensing and teacher identity in the schools, teachers have to contend with macro-trends that are redefining their responsibilities and the expectations being placed on them. Demographic changes, changes in the recommendation system for university admissions, and changes in teacher licensing practices are discussed in the following section.

Macro-Trends Influencing 21st Century Japanese Education

In this section, I discuss the three macro-trends influencing education in Japan, and consequentially the practice of high school teachers. These external influences on teacher practice include demographic changes, changes in the recommendation system for university admissions, and recent changes in teacher licensing practices. First, I discuss the influence of demographic changes on teacher practices with Jogo High School.

Negotiating the Response to Demographic Changes

How have demographics changes affected teachers with this school?

Demographic changes have affected the practice of teachers in Jogo High School in multiple ways. The most observable change due to demographics is the transition from Jogo Girls' High School to the co-educational Jogo High School. This was done to increase the number of potential students. However, beyond this change, student recruitment continues to influence teacher practice.

Demographics have caused schools like Jogo High School to place a larger emphasis on student recruitment. Branding requires teachers to attend school on Saturdays, deal with exchange students, and assist returnee students as they transition back to Japan. All of these issues are discussed and dealt within the gakunen community of practice. Jogo High School is not an elite school, nor is it near the bottom of the high school rankings, so the school is able to recruit students. However, the emphasis is on recruiting the best possible students because these students represent the school in further recruiting efforts, and later represent Jogo High School at Tsuru University. In order to do this the school places significant resources into branding the school and protecting the image of the school. The increases in the number of teachers assigned to morning duty at the local train station and around the school along with the purchase of a car for a mobile morning patrol are some examples of protecting the image of the school. Increased demands on teachers in order to brand and protect the image of the school are just one element of the influence of demographics on teachers practice. In the following section, I discuss the influence of demographics on a more central element of teacher practice: teachers' relationships with parents and students.

Demographics have also influenced the interaction between teachers and students as well as between teachers and parents. Some teachers have reported that the declining student population has made their relationships with students more difficult in two ways. First, fewer children have siblings. This allows those children to be the center of attention, and to benefit from family resources in the form of time and money. According to some teachers, there is less need for these children to compete for resources, leading them to be more passive. Second, fewer siblings provide fewer opportunities for children to develop interpersonal relationships, making interactions in the school context harder for the teacher to facilitate.

In addition, demographic changes have placed a renewed emphasis on the accountability of teachers to parental concerns that, in some instances, have required teachers to devote a significant amount of effort and time to satisfy. The administration of the school views parents as the primary client both before and after a student is admitted. In the case of Jogo High School, the reason for this is two-fold. First, most students enter the Jogo High School from Jogo Junior High School. The decision to pick a junior high school is more heavily influenced by parents than decisions later in the student's academic career, so the school focuses on appealing to parents. Second, as discussed in Chapter 6, social media plays a role and could counter efforts Jogo High School makes to brand its name if parents are not satisfied. For these reasons, Jogo High School holds teachers accountable for parental concerns regardless of the commitment required to resolve the issue. Multiple respondents including Ms. Gwang, Mr. Okubo, and Mr. Inoue reported this requirement. One extreme example was Mr. Inaba receiving a late night call

for help from a mother fighting with her son. In Jogo High School, teachers are held accountable to parental concerns.

The findings of this study do not seem to align with the current body of literature on teacher and parental relationships in Japan. Overall, the literature indicates a disconnect between parents and schools. The reasons for this disconnect include a lack of communication between parents and schools (Okano & Tsuchiya, 1999; Peak, 1989) and a focus on parents blaming their children rather than the school for poor academic performance (Hess & Azuma, 1991). In addition, Shimahara (2002a) reported that parents are not a strong source of pressure on teachers. In contrast, this study shows a strong link between parental concerns and teacher accountability in Jogo High School. It is important to note that many of these studies cited in this section are probably based upon data collected in the 1990s or 1980s when demographics were arguably less of an issue. However, Jogo High School is a private school that needs to compete for students and demographic changes in Japan are making this more difficult.

This study helps to fill a gap in the literature on the influence of demographic changes on education in Japan. Some studies have addressed demographic changes in relation to economics (Kosai, Saito, & Yashiro, 1998; Matsutani, 2009), influence on the family (Ochiai, 1994), social consequences (Coulmas, 2007) and preschool (Boocock, 1991). However, the literature concerning the influence of demographic changes on education is lacking. This contributes to the literature by detailing how demographic changes have forced changes in the school in terms of branding and student recruitment, both of which have influenced the practices of teachers in Jogo High School.

The population of Japan will continue to decrease for some time, so the challenges due to demographic changes will only get worse for teachers in schools like Jogo High School. Schools will require teachers to spend more time recruiting students and branding the school name. In addition, an increasingly diverse student body could require more time for the gakunen to pursue its joint enterprise of developing relationships in order to have the knowledge of students to bring them to the next grade or to placement in Tsuru University. At the same time, teachers will use this as an opportunity to create an environment where the students can grow.

Negotiating Changes in the Recommendation System for University Admissions

In this section, I discuss how Jogo High School teachers negotiate changes in the recommendation system for university admissions. This discussion is divided into two parts. First, I discuss the influence of the recommendation system on teachers practice. This includes the application of new requirements such the Eiken Test and a research course as part of the requirements for students to receive the recommendation to Tsuru University. In the second part, I explain the connection between the recommendation system and socioeconomic status.

The Recommendations System. Has the recommendation system affected teachers' practices? All students who enter Jogo High School are on the recommendation system to attend Tsuru University. Both the school and parents hold the gakunen responsible to ensure that all students in their care enter that university. The

recommendation system has placed demands upon teachers in terms of time and effort to help students negotiate the system.

The Eiken Test is the only outside criterion students must clear to receive the recommendation to Tsuru University. Although this is an English language test, it is the gakunen and not the English department that is responsible to get students to successfully pass it. The majority of students are able to complete the exam. However, the students who do not, take up a significant amount of resources as the school requires the gakunen teachers, regardless of academic department, to apply time to resolve the issue. Some teachers describe the Eiken Test as the greatest burden of the recommendation system. In addition to the Eiken Test, the recommendation system requires students to complete a two-year research course. Teachers in Jogo High School, however, are not trained to teach this type of course. This aligns with Sato and Kleinasser's (2004) findings that teachers teach as they were taught. The common element to both the Eiken Test and research course is that teachers are not trained or well prepared to attend to these recommendation system requirements.

In order to support teachers and to increase the academic level of the school, Jogo High School initiated a research day for teachers. This allowed teachers to take one day a week to further their studies. The research day was not successful, mostly due to the efforts of teachers to oppose its use. Taking time away from the gakunen community of practice created tension within the gakunen. Time for personal study conflicted with the core elements of teacher practice with the gakunen. Some teachers felt obligated to do gakunen work rather than spend a day on professional development while others simply did not want a research day.

Overall the recommendation system has placed new demands upon teachers in Jogo High School. A large part of the process is facilitated by the *gakunen* practice, but some elements, such as the Eiken Test and the research course, are requiring teachers to perform in areas in which they are not trained. Again, this results in the *gakunen* mutually negotiating a response that is measured for accountability in terms of time committed to the issue. Time for extra Eiken preparation classes, regardless of the teacher's ability to understand English, time to develop and teach the two-year research course, and time to discuss and filter students into the various departments of Tsuru University. The research course places demands upon teachers that they are sometimes not ready to meet. This is similar to the findings of Cave (2016) who found that while appropriate for school purposes, the new integrated studies courses were not completely successful because teachers were not trained to teach them.

Students and teachers have virtually no pressure to prepare for university entrance exams and this creates a more relaxed atmosphere in Jogo High School. Rohlen (1983) stated: "without the entrance exam competition, neither textbooks nor curriculum requirements would be sufficient to keep instruction as strictly focused on the narrow path of encyclopedic learning as it is now" (p. 266). Reports from teachers indicate that his prediction has proven correct. Memorization of large amounts of information for test preparation has been replaced with a wider range of course. While teachers have struggled to develop new classes and to motivate students who do not feel the weight of looming entrance examinations, they are providing a more well-rounded education for the students in their care. However, for the administration, there is a need to protect the

relationship with Tsuru University. This need can place pressure on students to attend Tsuru University rather than a better school.

Education and Socioeconomic Status. The financial cost to attend Jogo High School is significant and can limit the ability of some students to attend. With the transition of Jogo High School into a keizoku relationship with Tsuru University, academic success becomes linked to socioeconomic status. As stated in Chapter 4, the tuition for Jogo High School is substantial and the school provides very limited financial support leaving the burden on parents. In addition, the school requests financial support from families as soon as they enter the school. This links with Fujita (2010) who described the flight from public schools to private schools of students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. It is also similar to what appears to be happening in some other countries. For example, in Britain, according to Brown (1990), there were three waves of change in British education. The first is the development of mass schooling. The second wave is the shift to an individual centered model of education. The “third wave” of education shifts away from the development of the individual student, and the system of meritocracy associated with this stance, to education based upon the socioeconomic background of the family, and more specifically upon the wishes of the parents. Jogo High School, in a similar fashion, bases educational objectives upon the decisions of parents. Most students enter the Jogo High School system from elementary and are set upon a path of university almost wholly designed by the wishes of their parents, provided the parents are able to afford the financial burden of attendance. These findings stand in contrast to LeTendre, Gonzalez, and Nomi (2006) who found that in

relation to elite universities in Japan “it remains clear that money cannot buy educational status” (p. 27). While the parents of Jogo High School students do not purchase access to an elite university, they are able to secure access to a respected university and the benefits that go along with that access.

Because students enter the school at a young age and then advance in the school without the need to sit entrance exams, it is the parents whom the school appeals to as a potential customer base. Rohlen (1983) has noted that: “The rise to preeminence of a set of private schools like Nada marks a significant change in which money appears increasingly significant to the purchase of educational advantage” (p. 312). In a similar light, then socioeconomic background can limit access to Jogo High School. As the school appeals to a select parental pool, teachers are held accountable to any issues parents bring up.

As more schools change to a recommendation system or open new schools in order to recruit students into their recommendation system at an earlier age, the issues such as teachers facing requirements that they are not trained for will increase. Also, socioeconomic status will continue to be an avenue for some to ensure a certain academic level of achievement. This, again, places the burden on teachers to help students navigate the recommendation system as they are held accountable for their students’ placement in the connected university.

Negotiating the Changes to Teacher Licensing Requirements

On the one hand, a trend toward faculty diversification and specifically increases in non-native Japanese professionals has led to the creation of different licenses.

Although some non-native Japanese-speaking teachers have actively obtained regular licenses and have attempted to take an inward trajectory to the gakunen community of practice, others have not and have preferred to emphasize their academic subjects over the normative priorities of the gakunen. In addition, some veteran Japanese teachers have either willingly or unwittingly played a part in positioning non-native Japanese-speaking teachers peripheral to the core faculty and practices of the Gakunen. This requires teachers to negotiate the term teacher in Jogo High School.

Negotiating the term teacher. How, if at all, have recent changes in teacher licensing practice influenced relations between teachers? Special licenses have challenged the definition of teacher held by some individuals. Instead of a person operating within the role of an ALT, and who is responsible solely for academic responsibilities, non-native speakers of Japanese who become licensed are becoming members of the gakunen community of practice in Jogo High School. This membership is challenged by some individuals who use language to position teachers as being solely “members of the English Department.” This is a vastly reduced role in the school when compared to the activities of a member of a gakunen. A teacher functioning in the role of an academic department member has no power in the Jogo High School system and is effectively marginalized. Teachers assigned to a gakunen are responsible for the function of every other part of the school as those parts link to their students. As illustrated in Chapter 5, if tuition payments are late a gakunen teacher follows up with the family and not the front office. If a student fails a course, the gakunen, not the academic department associated with the course, develops a plan. Part of this is due to the lack of guidance

from the Ministry of Education on the contested definition of what it means to be a teacher in Japan.

It is time for Japan to decide if it wants foreign teachers or teachers who are foreign. No clear message from MEXT has been given, leaving these choices to schools and individual teachers. The results have been mixed. One example of these mixed results is the use of katakana to represent the talk of a non-native speaker of Japanese on a poster for students. Considering the critical approach of ethnography of communication. As Savile-Troike (1998) wrote: “There are fundamental differences of interests between social groups, and that inequalities in distribution of linguistic capital are related to sociopolitical exploitation and oppression” (p. 254). This teacher intended to use language to emphasize his view of foreign teachers in Jogo High School. He was heavily involved in the peace studies program, a long-term member of the history department whose members also included the principal, two vice principals and the future chancellor, and the head teacher of a gakunen, yet he felt the need, whether consciously or unconsciously, to emphasize differences.

In the case of Jogo High School, the school has actively hired foreign teachers, and facilitated their acquisition of teaching licenses and to participate in the activities of the gakunen. However, at times, they are still being actively marginalized in the school. Some of these teachers choose to be more peripheral members of the community. For example, some teachers have tried to avoid full participation in gakunen activities. Also, as we saw in the case of katakana being used in a poster to represent the speech of a non-native speaker of Japanese, foreign teachers are sometimes actively marginalized in the

school. Ironically, in this case, the foreigner was being positioned as an outsider by a faculty member heavily involved with the school's administration.

I have found no studies on the influence of non-native speakers of Japanese becoming licensed and working in schools in Japan. Some studies have examined the interaction between licensed Japanese teachers of English and the native English assistant teachers such as Miyazato (2006) who noted that native speakers of English held power in the classroom, but not in the school overall. In Jogo High School, all of the fulltime non-native speakers of Japanese were licensed; there were no assistant language teachers. In another study, Okano and Tsuchiya (1999) suggested that foreign nationals cannot work as homeroom teachers nor can they be hired as regular teachers (, p. 146). Jogo High School provides a different picture of non-native speakers of Japanese working in a high school in Japan.

This study adds to the literature by describing a school where foreign nationals do work as both homeroom teachers and regular teachers. It also details the misunderstandings arising due to these new roles played by non-native speakers of Japanese in a private high school in Japan. In Jogo High School the introduction of non-native Japanese speaking teachers has been, overall, a positive experience for most teachers, students, and parents. Despite the contested nature of the term teacher in Jogo High School, teacher peer interactions and teacher-student relationships have often developed as those involved developed a new understanding of the term teacher in the Jogo High School context.

Professional development. The requirement to renew a teaching license has introduced more professional development into Jogo High School. The requirement to attend a course for license renewal is new and has yet to impact the practices of teachers. However, this study adds to the literature because Jogo High School does not fit the narrative of professional development for teachers in Japan. Western scholars doing research on Japan often describe teachers' professional development based upon public school requirements. For example, Darling-Hammond (2006) describes support for beginning teachers:

By Japanese law, beginning teachers receive at least twenty days of in-service training during their first year in addition to sixty days of professional development on topics such as classroom management, computer use, teaching strategies, and counseling methods. Beginning teachers have a reduced teaching load, attend in-school training with designated guidance teachers twice a week, and receive out-of-school training weekly, including seminars and visitations to other schools. (p. 334)

Along the same lines, White (1984) reflected this view of continuing education for teachers, stating, "teachers work hard at improving their skills and knowledge of their subject, and attend refresher courses and upgrading programs provided by the Ministry of Education" (p. 92). This is not the case at private schools, and in Jogo High School new teachers do not have a reduced workload nor do they attend seminars in-school or out. In a different light, Lamie (2006), considering the voluntary nature of some professional development programs, stated "it is theoretically possible, therefore, that a teacher can go

through her entire career without attending any professional development courses” (p. 533). The findings of this study fall closer to the conclusion of Lamie.

As we have seen in Chapter 8, MEXT has recently introduced a requirement for professionals to renew their teaching license every ten years, requiring teachers to seek out more professional development. This policy has yet to make an observable impact on the practices of teachers at Jogo High School, but it is clear that tensions exist and will continue to brew between the need for professional development and the daily demands and responsibilities of the *gakunen*. Whereas several Western researchers have claimed that teachers are actively taking advantage of opportunities to further develop as professionals (Darling-Hammond, 2006; White, 1984), it remains an open question whether teachers at Jogo High School will seek out more professional development. With this in mind, Akiba and LeTendre (2009) stated, “if the ministry (MEXT) aims to truly improve teacher quality, it needs to implement a reform to dramatically improve teacher workload rather than simply increasing the required professional development hours” (p. 34). In schools such as Jogo High School, this would be problematic. The main finding of this study suggests that teachers giving time or “being there” for their peers, for students, for the school is where teachers find meaning in their practices. This is how teachers are able to create an environment where students can grow. This is the larger construct of *sodatsu*. I discuss this construct in more detail in the following section.

Negotiating the Construct of *Sodateru* or Raising Students

Sodatsu is, in Jogo High School, how teachers find meaning in their practices. It is the central element of teaching classes, attending meetings, checking cleaning, guiding students, and counseling them. It is not taking the role of a parent. Sodatsu for teachers in this school is creating an environment where the students are able to grow. Building a relationship with a student, knowing how close or distant to be in order to support that student is crucial. Teachers are involved in a myriad of decisions concerning students. These range from deciding if a student is assigned to clean the classroom or the hallway after school, to much more important decisions such as the department a student will enter in Tsuru University. All of these require a deep understanding of the student that develop from sustained interactions. Fifty minutes in a classroom of 40 to 45 students are not enough to serve this purpose. In addition, it is a team of teachers, in the form of a *gakunen*, who work together to develop this understanding. It is the *gakunen* that makes these decisions. It is the *gakunen* that shapes the peer interactions of teachers and holds them accountable. A team of teachers, working together, all with a deep understanding of the students in their care is a powerful force in a young person's life.

Despite all of these additional demands and the underlying expectations and goals of the *gakunen*, a motivational driving force for committed teaching professional in Japan is *sodatsu*. Admittedly, there are the token teachers who are just clocking in the hours before retirement, but most are highly dedicated to raising moral, competent, intellectual and interesting individuals who will go on to contribute to many walks of life. The majority of the time, this individual driving motivation can work in concert with the demands of the *gakunen*, but at others, particularly with regards to some of the newer

demands being placed on the gakunen, the needs of the school and gakunen can come into conflict with the personal motivations of teachers. In all likelihood, as Japan potentially has to deal with a more diverse population and student bodies, and as more demands are placed on teachers to add new programs (e.g., IT literacy, computer programming) to an already packed curriculum, the challenges of sodatsu as many teachers still understand this today will only increase.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

This is the closing chapter of this dissertation. First, I provide a short summary of the findings. I follow this with a discussion of the limitations of the study leading to some suggestions for future research. Lastly, I provide my final thoughts.

Summary of the Findings

In this study, I explained the centrality of the gakunen community of practice to teachers in Jogo High School to illustrate the importance of the idea of sodatsu. However, sodatsu is not simply teachers taking the role of parents. The gakunen, as a team, invests time to develop a better understanding of the students in their care, allowing them to both detect potential problems and to formulate a response to any issues which arise. As Japan entered the 21st century, three macro-trends have further complicated the daily practice of teachers. Ultimately, teachers, while attending to the complications from these macro-trends, respond in a way that is faithful to the idea of sodatsu. Anything which interferes with this objective is met with resistance, such as the implementation of a research day for teachers.

This study benefits teachers, teacher educators, and school administrators, but also Japanese studies specialists and educational policy makers, including politicians. Teachers, teacher educators, and school administrators will benefit from the detailed discussion of the peer interactions, gakunen community of practice, and the role of various teacher meetings in the school. This study also provides a different view of the

role of teachers from that commonly held in the West, that teachers should focus on academic outcomes.

Japanese studies specialists will benefit from the insight into a private school during a period of change in Japanese education. The long-term aspect of the study provides rich detail and allows researchers to form a nuanced picture of the workings of a private high school in particular and also the *gakunen* community of practice. In addition, researchers can view a range of reactions of the school, the *gakunen*, and teachers to larger macro-trends in Japan.

This study provides policy makers and politicians with a view of the influence of larger policy decisions, such as changes in teacher licensing requirements, upon schools and teachers. It is important for both policy makers and politicians to look beyond the intended purpose of education policy changes and see the influence of these changes upon the people who work in schools.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. I have tried to use various methods to increase the trustworthiness of this study. These methods include a long involvement at the research site, the triangulation of various methods of data collection, the search for negative cases, and finally respondent validation. However, limitations include my positionality in the study as a participant-observer, the lack of attention to power relations with the use communities of practice, and the single research site.

The day I entered Jogo High School, I began my inbound trajectory into the *gakunen* community of practice. As I transitioned to be a researcher as well as a member

of a gakunen, there were times being a participant-observer limited my ability as an observer due to the need to take an active role in the research setting. “There is a frequent assumption that participants—the insiders—are so absorbed in the event or circumstances that they cannot see the larger picture or perform objective analysis of the events in which they have participated” (Murchison, 2010, p.85). This stands in contrast to Saville-Troike (2003) who stated “in recent decades awareness has grown that the researcher can develop a deeper understanding of the culture by adopting a functional role and becoming a participant” (p. 89).

I worked at Jogo High School for a total of eight years and have returned on numerous occasions, such as when I was asked to be a judge for the English speech contest. These return visits have allowed me the opportunity to renew contacts and follow-up with individuals beyond my initial attempts at respondent validation. Here, again, I feel as if my relationship might have interfered with my respondents’ validation. It was as if they were saying “yeah, now that you mention it, that's right” in a manner to help me. As Maxwell (2005) stated “participants’ feedback is no more inherently valid than their interview responses; both should be taken simply as evidence regarding the validity of your account” (p. 111).

Suggestions for Future Research

I hope this study provides some insight into the private high school environment in Japan. I spent eight years at Jogo High School as a teacher and in that time I completed three years of data collection. However, schools continue to change and I can only hope this study provides a snapshot of the school during the period of data collection. Spradley

(1979) stated “it is well to realize that what you write, indeed that every ethnographic description, is partial, incomplete, and will stand in need of revision” (p. 204). In this view, more research into similar settings would provide an interesting comparison to the results presented in this study.

Another approach to doing a similar study would be to consider the lack of attention to power relations by my choice of communities of practice as my conceptual framework. The use of Individual Network of Practice to examine teachers as the center rather than the community of practice as done in this study could provide a different view of Japanese private high schools. “The concept of individual networks of practice is more attuned to each individual’s relationships within or beyond a social group, community, or institution” (Zappa-Hollman and Duff, 2015 p. 339). Power relationships in the school could provide an interesting insight into the practices of teachers in private high schools in Japan.

Finally, while this study has shown some of the misconceptions linked to the comparisons of education, teachers, and private schools in Japan with other countries, more work is needed.

More space devoted to comparative ethnographic work would go a long way toward changing the current dialogue about comparisons with Japan and perhaps inhibit the recurrent use of stereotypes and reasoning based on stereotypes that has afflicted so much of the current debate. (LeTendre, 1999, p. 43)

More ethnographic work is needed on teachers in terms of private schools, licensing, and the changing work environment in which they function. Special licenses, as they are being utilized now, are a new element to education in Japan. It would be interesting to see

how the teachers, students, parents, and schools continue to change as more non-native speakers of Japanese become more involved in education in Japan as full members of *gakunen* community.

Final Thoughts

In concluding this study, I would like to address one question that seems to logically flow from the results. Would I want my children to be educated in Jogo High School? In his seminal work on high schools in Japan, Rohlen (1983) ended with a reflection on a similar question he was asked regarding his view of high school education in Japan:

On one occasion following a lecture on the merits of Japanese education, I was asked abruptly whether I would like my children to be educated in a Japanese high school. I unhesitatingly said, no adding defensively that I would say the same about most American high schools. Reflecting on my answer later, I realized that my response to high schooling in Japan was in part a reflection of my own very American sense of independence...it also reflected my feeling that Japanese high schools represent but a small part of that country's humanistic tradition, a tradition rich in beauty, sensitivity, and spirit. At present this tradition survives, even thrives in places, without significant support from public education. Here lies my own ultimate squabble with Japan's high schools. The well-intended teachers and well-behaved students put their efforts to purposes that are ultimately shallow and uninspired. The nation benefits economically. Society is well run. But it is a system without much heart. (p. 320)

Although I understand his sentiment concerning the description of purposes as “shallow and uninspired” in regard to entrance exam preparation, schools such as Jogo High School are free from this restraint. This freedom provides some advantages for students because they are allowed the freedom to take diverse classes without the burden of those classes leading to a high stakes test. Teachers, when prepared for these classes, can help students become much more well-rounded individuals than would otherwise be afforded in the entrance examination preparation system. Would I want my children to be educated in Jogo High School? It depends. If my child were academically gifted then I do not think Jogo High School would provide the opportunities for him or her to achieve her potential. In addition, the institutional pressure to attend Tsuru University might not be in my child’s best interest. If my child were an average or below average student and I felt that attending Tsuru University would be a good outcome, then having a team of 7-8 teachers within a *gakunen* work diligently to achieve that goal would be worth the associated cost in terms of opportunity.

Thinking back to the principal’s encouraging *kodomo o sodatete kudasai* [(子供を育ててください) raise the kids] I think I now have a better understanding of what he was saying. My conceptualization of the *gakunen* practice places his statement in a new light. Whereas there are drawbacks to the system of Jogo High School for some students in terms opportunities to reach their maximum potential, this is offset by the lengths teachers go to support students (and parents) in need. Jogo High School is not the best model for all students; no high school is. However, it does provide a supportive

environment for students. The school makes a contract with incoming students that it is accepting responsibility to get them to the end goal of acceptance to Tsuru University. The fulfillment of this contract is largely due to the effort of teachers assigned to each of the school's gakunen.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF JAPANESE TERMS

Bukai (部会)	A section with teachers assigned to manage an aspect of the running of the school. All teachers in Jogo High School are assigned to one bukai. An example of a bukai is kikakukouhobu (see below).
Gakunen (学年)	A year-group in a school. Jogo High School has three year-groups (first, second, and third) representing each of the three years of high school. The U.S. equivalent would be sophomore, junior, and senior years. Most teachers in Jogo High School are assigned to a gakunen.
Gakunenzuki (学年付)	A teacher assigned to a gakunen, but not assigned to be a homeroom teacher. These teachers do not have the paperwork burden that homeroom teachers are required to complete, but they are responsible for all students within a gakunen, which usually numbers over 250 students in the high school.
Inkai (委員会)	A committee in the school. Committees have a narrower focus than bukai. Teachers in Jogo High School might be assigned to one or more committees. An example of a committee is the international committee that coordinates overseas programs for Jogo High School students going overseas and visiting exchange students.
Kikakukouhobu (企画候補部)	This is the admissions and school promotion section. Teachers assigned to this section are responsible for promotional materials, explanation meetings for prospective students and parents, as well as playing a primary role in entrance exams.
Kyomubu (教務部)	This section is responsible for academic issues such as class scheduling, midterm and final exam proctoring, classroom assignments, and rules concerning grades. At least one teacher in each gakunen is assigned to kyomubu.
Seitobu (生徒部)	This is the student affairs section. It is responsible for student discipline, uniforms, the student government, clubs and sports teams, and rules concerning students. At least one teacher in each gakunen is assigned to seitobu.
Shyukyoubu (宗教部)	The religious affairs section is responsible for the daily chapel service, assigning teachers to speak during chapel, volunteer activities, and special events including Christmas related activities.
Shinrobu (進路部)	This section was responsible for helping students enter university. Since Jogo High School transitioned to a school where all students are

expected to use the recommendation system to enter Tsuru university,
this

- Sodateru (育てる) A verb which means to be raised or grown.
- Sodatsu (育つ) A verb which means to raise or grow.
- Soumubu (総務部) This section is responsible for teacher affairs and general duties that are not covered by other sections. Teachers are required to stand at various posts around the school and at the local train station when students are coming or leaving school. Soumubu creates the teacher assignment lists for these duties. It also is responsible to track teacher attendance and vacation time. For duties not covered by other sections, the teachers in this section must replenish and order paper for the copy machines and make sure classrooms have the correct number of chairs and desks.

APPENDIX B

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, UNIVERISTY, AND

TOTAL STUDENT POPULATIONS IN JAPAN 1948-2013

Year	Total number of students	Junior high school students	High school students	University students
1948	17,215,747	4,792,504	1,203,963	11,978
1949	18,621,278	5,186,188	1,624,625	126,868
1950	19,427,182	5,332,515	1,935,118	224,923
1951	19,970,331	5,129,482	2,193,362	313,158
1952	20,136,770	5,076,495	2,342,869	399,513
1953	20,799,743	5,187,378	2,528,000	446,927
1954	22,076,027	5,664,066	2,545,254	491,956
1955	22,974,002	5,883,692	2,592,001	523,355
1956	23,607,342	5,962,449	2,702,604	547,253
1957	23,974,889	5,718,182	2,897,646	564,454
1958	24,248,731	5,209,951	3,057,190	578,060
1959	24,357,495	5,180,319	3,216,152	597,697
1960	24,457,713	5,899,973	3,239,416	626,421
1961	24,696,074	6,924,693	3,118,896	670,192
1962	24,696,411	7,328,344	3,281,522	727,104
1963	24,609,675	6,963,975	3,896,682	794,100
1964	24,629,381	6,475,693	4,634,407	852,572
1965	24,481,274	5,956,630	5,073,882	937,556
1966	24,119,005	5,555,762	4,997,385	1,044,296
1967	23,739,579	5,270,854	4,780,628	1,160,425
1968	23,453,082	5,043,069	4,521,956	1,270,189
1969	23,282,466	4,865,196	4,337,772	1,354,827
1970	23,235,009	4,716,833	4,231,542	1,406,521
1971	23,335,987	4,694,250	4,178,327	1,468,538
1972	23,565,991	4,688,444	4,154,647	1,529,163
1973	24,187,529	4,779,593	4,201,223	1,597,282
1974	24,641,093	4,735,705	4,270,943	1,659,338
1975	25,158,719	4,762,442	4,333,079	1,734,082
1976	25,690,388	4,833,902	4,386,218	1,791,786
1977	26,186,777	4,977,119	4,381,137	1,839,363
1978	26,656,819	5,048,296	4,414,896	1,862,262
1979	27,110,438	4,966,972	4,484,870	1,846,368
1980	27,451,909	5,094,402	4,621,930	1,835,312
1981	27,667,407	5,299,282	4,682,827	1,822,117
1982	27,793,979	5,623,975	4,600,551	1,817,650
1983	27,828,833	5,706,810	4,716,105	1,834,493
1984	27,801,187	5,828,867	4,891,917	1,843,153
1985	27,763,003	5,990,183	5,177,681	1,848,698
1986	27,541,049	6,105,749	5,259,307	1,879,532
1987	27,336,289	6,081,330	5,375,107	1,934,483
1988	27,087,146	5,896,080	5,533,393	1,994,616
1989	26,767,567	5,619,297	5,644,376	2,066,962
1990	26,349,707	5,369,162	5,623,336	2,133,362
1991	25,874,430	5,188,314	5,454,929	2,205,516

Year	Total number of students	Junior high school students	High school students	University students
1992	25,365,318	5,036,840	5,218,497	2,293,269
1993	24,825,745	4,850,137	5,010,472	2,389,648
1994	24,300,710	4,681,166	4,862,725	2,481,805
1995	23,796,698	4,570,390	4,724,945	2,546,649
1996	23,297,307	4,527,400	4,547,497	2,596,667
1997	22,789,970	4,481,480	4,371,360	2,633,790
1998	22,331,363	4,380,604	4,258,385	2,668,086
1999	21,942,875	4,243,762	4,211,826	2,701,104
2000	21,598,920	4,103,717	4,165,434	2,740,023
2001	21,270,841	3,991,911	4,061,756	2,765,705
2002	20,972,158	3,862,849	3,929,352	2,786,032
2003	20,733,949	3,748,319	3,809,827	2,803,980
2004	20,513,652	3,663,513	3,719,048	2,809,295
2005	20,367,965	3,626,415	3,605,242	2,865,051
2006	20,147,205	3,601,527	3,494,513	2,859,212
2007	19,907,976	3,614,552	3,406,561	2,828,708
2008	19,748,904	3,592,378	3,367,489	2,836,127
2009	19,605,281	3,600,323	3,347,311	2,845,908
2010	19,541,832	3,558,166	3,368,693	2,887,414
2011	19,430,606	3,573,821	3,349,255	2,893,489
2012	19,283,319	3,552,663	3,355,609	2,876,134
2013	19,127,474	3,536,182	3,319,640	2,868,872

Note. Adapted from MEXT: Statistics <http://www.mext.go.jp/english/statistics/>

APPENDIX C

JOGO HIGH SCHOOL CALENDAR

April

- First-year high school orientation camp
- Opening ceremony
- Start of classes first term
- Student health check
- Saturday classes start

May

- Sports festival practice (5 days)
- Sports festival practice
- Sports festival

June

- First- and second-year high school singing contest
- University department explanation meetings

July

- Final exams first term
- Closing ceremony
- Summer vacation begins late July

August

- Students come to school one day in preparation for the second term
- Summer camp second-year junior high school
- Elementary school camp

September

- Opening ceremony second term
- Summer homework exam days
- English camp for first-year junior high school
- Start of second term
- Second-year junior high school trip
- Third-year junior high school trip
- Second-year senior high school trip

October

- Midterm exams second term

November

- Culture festival
- First-year high school recitation contest
- Second-year high school speech contest
- Singapore entrance exams

December

- Final exams second term
- Closing ceremony
- Christmas mass
- January
- Opening ceremony
- Start of third term
- Junior high school entrance exams A and B

February

- Junior high school marathon
- High school entrance exams A and B
- Third year high school final exams
- High school graduation ceremony

March

- Final exams
- Closing ceremony
- Junior high school and high school camps

APPENDIX D

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Table D1. *Field Observations*

Object of Observation	Date	Time
High School Entrance Exam Meeting	February 9, 2013	75
A Test Entrance Exam Meeting	January 20, 2013	80
B Test Entrance Exam Meeting	January 22, 2013	90
Overseas Entrance Exam Meeting	November 26, 2012	65
Recommendation Meeting	November 2, 2012	410
Entrance Exam Meeting	February 10, 2011	62
Student Affairs Meeting	February 27, 2013	36
Student Affairs Meeting	February 8, 2012	18
Student Affairs Meeting	October 24, 2012	87
Student Affairs Meeting	November 24, 2010	60
Gakunen Meeting	February 5, 2013	120
Gakunen Meeting	April 2, 2012	200
Gakunen Meeting	November 14, 2011	84
Gakunen Meeting	June 20, 2011	90
Gakunen Meeting	March 30, 2011	410
Gakunen Meeting	January 25, 2011	165
Gakunen Meeting	June 2, 2010	120
Gakunen Meeting	May 25, 2010	145
Teachers' Meeting	October 31, 2012	70
Teachers' Meeting	September 4, 2012	95
Teachers' Meeting	May 26, 2012	90
Teachers' Meeting	May 23, 2012	100
Teachers' Meeting	November 16, 2010	95
Teachers' Meeting	February 3, 2010	75
A School Visit	October 23, 2012	240
B School Visit	October 23, 2012	300
C School Visit	October 15, 2011	345
Opening Ceremony	April 11, 2011	105
Entrance Ceremony	April 2, 2011	100
Gakunen Student Meeting	November 28, 2012	35
Student-Teacher Meeting	May 24, 2012	60
Year-End Grades Meeting	July 16, 2011	106
Student Discipline Meeting	May 17, 2011	120
Parents Meeting	March 5, 2011	195
Culture Festival Meeting	November 6, 2010	50
School Trip Meeting	April 24, 2010	85
Club Supervisor Meeting	April, 4, 2010	40
Exam Proctor	May 26, 2011	50
Make-up Examination	June 15, 2010	60

Note. Time is in minutes.

Total Field Observations: 39 observations

(78 hours 53 minutes)

APPENDIX E

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

(word)	Words unspoken, but added to provide context or to make an utterance easier to understand.
(Name, interview, date)	Name of the person interviewed,
...	Pause by the speaker

Interview data was transcribed verbatim. Commas and periods were added to help with ease of readability. However, other punctuation marks were not used in order to avoid limiting the meaning of the data. Interview data in Japanese was transcribed in block quotes with a block translation in English immediately following.

APPENDIX F

FORMAL INTERVIEWS

Table E1. *Core Interview Group*

Name	Gender	Department	Language	Date	Time
Mr. Inaba	Male	English	English	November 26, 2012	47
				December 13, 2012	46
				March 21, 2013	65
Ms. Gwang	Female	Science	Japanese	December 15, 2012	26
				March 19, 2013	26
				March 27, 2013	23
Mr. Samson	Male	English	English	February 19, 2013	41
				March 6, 2013	42
				March 16, 2013	29
Mr. Okubo	Male	Japanese	Japanese	March 7, 2013	49
				March 14, 2013	58
Mr. Inoue	Male	Library Studies	Japanese	March 9, 2013	91
				March 19, 2013	57
				March 23, 2013	82

Note. Language indicates the language of the interview. Time is in minutes.

Table E2. *Initial and Purposely Selected Interviews*

Name	Gender	Department	Language	Date	Time
Mr. Toda	Male	English	English	March 4, 2010	12
Mr. Tadachi	Male	English	English	March 8, 2010	13
Ms. Abe	Female	English	English	March 4, 2010	17
Mr. Matsudaira	Male	English	English	March 9, 2010	18
Mr. Tsuchiya	Male	Assistant Principal	Japanese	April 14, 2011	62
Mr. Ogasawara	Male	Academic Affairs	Japanese	April 21, 2011	43
Mr. Akimoto	Male	Principal	Japanese	May 2, 2011	102
Staff	Male	Staff Hyogo BOE	Japanese	October 11, 2011	40
Ms. Hashimoto	Female	Graduate	English	February 8, 2012	13
Director	Male	Director Hyogo HS	Japanese	March 23, 2012	35
Mr. Kuze	Male	Gakunen Head	Japanese	March 18, 2013	27
Staff	Female	Staff Hyogo BOE	Japanese	February 24, 2015	20
Mr. York	Male	Student Government	English	July 12, 2015	67

Note. Language indicates the language of the interview. Time is in minutes.

Total: 27 interviews (19 hours 5 minutes)

APPENDIX G
LIST OF ARTIFACTS

Campus Map

Eiken Test Results for Jogo High School 2008 to 2011

Extra Pay for Assignments Schedule

Extra Work Agreement

University Recommendation Requirements

Multiple Choice Survey on Reasons for Applying to Jogo Junior High School

High school entrance exam numbers 2002-2012

Third-year Interview Hallway Duty

Japanese Labor Law Article 35

University Recommendation Information I

Teacher Assignments 2010

Teachers and Students by *Gakunen* 2010

Gakunen Meeting Agenda March 31, 2010

Teacher's Meeting Agenda March 31, 2010

Gakunen Meeting Agenda April 1, 2010

Gakunen Meeting Agenda April 13, 2010

Gakunen Meeting Agenda April 20, 2010

School Trip Meeting Agenda April 21, 2010

Club Assignments 2011

Second Term Exams Proctoring Assignments 2011

Third-year High School University Meeting Schedule 2011

Reasons for Entering Jogo High Survey 2011

Teachers and Students by *Gakunen* 2011

Second Foreign Language Class Coordinators 2011

Eiken Class Assignments April to June 2011

Gakunen Meeting Agenda February 7, 2011

Gakunen Meeting Agenda March 8, 2011

Seitobu Meeting Agenda April 13, 2011

Seitobu Meeting Agenda May 18, 2011

Teacher's Meeting Agenda May 25, 2011

Teacher's Meeting Agenda June 15, 2011

Seitobu Meeting Agenda December 7, 2011

Teacher Assignments 2012

Gakunen Meeting Agenda January 20, 2012

New Curriculum for 2013

Jogo High School Graduates Talk on their University Experience Sept. 7, 2012

Eiken Level 2 Second Round Test Strategy Class Responsibility Chart 2011

Hyogo Prefectural High School English Teachers List

APPENDIX H

LIST OF FOCUS GROUPS

Student Focus Group	May 26, 2012 (61 minutes)
Student-teacher Focus Group	June 16, 2012 (31 minutes)
Student Focus Group	June 23, 2012 (58 minutes)

**APPENDIX I
INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Participant's Name:
Contact Information

Researcher: Richard H. Derrah
(address)
(phone number) (email address)

Explanation of the Study

This letter is asking you to participate in a research study. The research is being conducted on secondary education in Japan and is for the purpose of Richard H. Derrah's doctoral dissertation at Temple University Japan.

Material for this study will include observations, interviews, and documents. These materials will be stored in a secure location.

Participant's Understanding and Precautions:

Participants will be asked to participate in three interviews of approximately forty minutes each over the course of the study, however, this may vary per person.

I understand that the results of this study may be published, but my identity will not be disclosed without written consent by me. All the proper names (names of people, places, etc.) used in this study will be changed and only Richard H. Derrah will have access to my identity. I understand that recorded data may be sent to a third party for transcription as long as a non-disclosure agreement is signed by the transcriber. I permit Richard H. Derrah and Temple University Japan to keep, publish, or dispose of the results of this study.

I understand that I may refuse consent or withdraw from the research project at any time without penalty.

I have discussed the study with Richard H. Derrah and had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that I may, at any time, ask questions about this study and Richard H. Derrah will answer the questions to my satisfaction.

I have read and understood this consent form and I voluntary agree to participate in this research project.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

APPENDIX J

INFORMED CONSENT FORM (JAPANESE)

インフォームドコンセント (同意書)

御協力者氏名:

連絡先:

調査実施者:リチャード デラ
(address)
(phone number) (email address)

調査についての説明

この手紙は研究調査に関する御協力のお願いです。この研究は日本の中等教育を対象に行われ、リチャード・デラによる、テンプル大学博士論文の為に使用されます。

本研究では、観察、面談、そして書面での資料を作成いたします。また、これらの資料は安全な場所に保管されます。

御協力者の皆様へのご理解と事前確認

本調査を通して、それぞれ約 40 分間の面談を 3 度に渡り、行わせていただきたくお願い申し上げます。(多少の時間差が御協力者間で生じる可能性有)。

私はこの調査結果が公表されることを了承します。しかし、個人を特定するものが本人の書面による同意無しに公表されることはありません。この調査で使用されるすべての固有名詞(名前、場所等)は変更され、リチャード・デラのみが私の個人情報を知り得ます。私はこの調査結果が転写の為に第三者機関に送られるかもしれないことを了承します。ただし、転写者が守秘義務契約を行った場合に限りです。私はリチャード・デラとテンプル大学日本校にこの調査結果を保持、公表、処理することを許可します。

私はいかなる時でも罰則無しに、この同意を拒否し、この調査研究参加を取りやめる可能性があることを認めます。

私はリチャード・デラと、この調査について話し合い、質問をする機会を持ちました。私は常にこの研究における質問をする可能性があることを示し、リチャード・デラが私の納得のいく答えをするものと理解します。

私はこの同意書を読み、理解し、自主的にこの調査研究に協力することに同意します。

御協力者の署名:

日付:

調査実施者の署名:

日付:

APPENDIX K

CLASS HOURS BY GRADE

Table J1. *Class Hours First-year High School*

Subject	Hours in one week
Japanese	4
Japanese History	3
Communication English I	3
English I	2
Oral Communication	2
Mathematics I	3
Mathematics A	2
Chemistry	2
Biology	2
Physical Education	2
Music	2
Information Science	2
Geography and History	1
Biblical Studies	1
Long Homeroom	1
Total Hours	32

Table J2. *Class Hours Second-year High School*

Subject	Hours in One Week
Modern Japanese	2
Classical Japanese	2
Geography	2
World History A	2
Communication English II	4
English II	2
Mathematics II	4
Mathematics B	2
Physics	2
Physical Education	2
Health	1
Home Economics	2
Electives	2
Applied Research	1
Christian Studies	1
Long Homeroom	1
Total Hours	32

Table J3. *Class Hours Third-year High School*

Subject	Literature and Arts Course	Science Course
Modern Japanese	3	3
Classical Japanese	2	0
Modern Society	2	2
World History B	2	2
Japanese or World History	2	0
Communication English III	4	4
English III	2	0
English Reading	0	1
Mathematics	2	4
Science	1	0
Physics or Biology	0	4
Chemistry	0	2
Physical Education	3	3
Home Economics	1	0
Art	2	0
Health	1	1
Electives	2	2
Applied Research	1	1
Christian Studies	1	1
Long Homeroom	1	1
Total Hours	32	31