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〈論文〉

Working as *Hijōkin Kōshi* - Contextualizing a Precarious Form of Employment in Japan

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Abstract:

Part-time teachers (*hijōkin kōshi*) are the embodiment of precarious employment at Japanese universities. These part-time lecturers are hired per course and have risen in numbers over the past ten years, but nonetheless have not received much attention from the academic community. The discourse in the few sources written by unions mainly focuses on their working conditions and the consequences on the quality of education that their increase in numbers might bring. However, these works have not adequately addressed why academics are willing to take positions as *hijōkin kōshi*. Furthermore, the concrete impact of this kind of employment on the life and career of those people and the implications for Japan's system of higher education remain unexplored.

This paper sheds light on the work and life of *hijōkin kōshi* with special attention to their motivation and the impact this form of employment has on their lives as academics.

I argue that this kind of employment distracts them from their actual goal of career advancement by disrupting their research efforts while sustaining their hopes for a full-time career in academia and therefore progressively binding them to this kind of work with all its economic vulnerabilities and consequences. Higher education in Japan will therefore become even more education focused.

In conclusion, this type of employment cannot be understood by merely looking at working conditions. A closer look at the individuals' lives as academics and their motivation is required.

Key Words : precarious employment, *hijōkin kōshi*, PhD graduates, managing work and life, *hiseiki koyō*

1. Introduction

The number of non-regular employees in Japan has been rising drastically since the period of high economic growth came to an end in the late 1980s. Now comprising about one-third of the workforce, non-regular employment is spreading through all industries, including academia. Even though there is an abundance of studies on various forms of non-regular employment, academics have not shown much interest in the ways their own colleagues are employed. My own survey on the work and life of Japanese PhD graduates from the humanities brought this issue to my attention because all interviewees were or had been working as *hijōkin kōshi*. Secondary literature on part-time teachers working at Japanese universities mainly focuses on their working conditions, but provides little information

on their motivations nor does it elaborate on the consequences for the academic careers or lives in general of these workers. In order to close this gap, I analyze the case of *hijōkin kōshi* using data from an interview survey that I conducted in 2015. A grounded theory approach was used due to the lack of data on the situation of PhD graduates from the humanities, and 'working as *hijōkin kōshi*' was established as a category. In the following paper, I will contextualize the employment form *hijōkin kōshi* by comparing it to other forms of non-regular work. In addition, I will explore *hijōkin kōshi* motivations and problems from their point of view as academics. Even though part-time university teaching proved to have a big influence on the interviewees' chances to eventually gain a full-time position by reducing the time they could spend on their own research projects, it was of course not the only thing that influenced their careers as academics. However, due to the length restrictions of this paper, the focus will be limited to this form of non-regular employment.

2. Non-Regular Employment in Academia

Since the end of Japan's economic high growth period in the late 1980s, the country has been subject to many structural changes, one of them being the significant increase of non-regular employees. While they made up 16.4% of the working population in 1985 (The Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training 2016a), this share went up to 20.9% in the following ten years (Okunishi 2009), sharply rising further to 37.6% in early 2016 (The Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training 2016b). This situation was caused by more women and senior citizens joining the workforce and a growing number of young workers between 25 and 34 joining the ranks of non-regular employees (The Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training 2016a). Regular employees in Japan still benefit from seniority-based wages and a high level of employment security, while non-regular employees working part-time, on fixed-term contracts, or as temporary dispatched workers, are earning less and are relatively unprotected against fluctuations of the labor market. In recent years an increasing number of workers joined the auxiliary labor force because they were unable to find regular employment. This development has emerged as a significant social problem.

To date non-regular employees have received much attention from the academic community, but other than in the case of contract workers, the research is focused on people involved in unskilled labor. In this paper, however, the focus is on highly skilled PhD holders working as part-time teachers. In this section, the working conditions of these *hijōkin kōshi* will be introduced and compared to those of other non-regular employees. In addition a literature review on part-time teachers working at Japanese universities will be conducted.

2 – 1. How many are there?

To give the reader an idea of the extent of non-regular employment in academia I first examine two studies from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) that gather data on teaching staff working at universities. One of them is the *Gakkō Kihon Chōsa*¹⁾, which is carried out annually. The second one is the *Gakkō Kyōin Tōkei Chōsa*²⁾, which is carried out every three years and is specifically focused on teaching

staff in Japan. The latest edition is the study from 2013. Analyzing the results of both studies, it is difficult to derive a precise estimate for *hijōkin kōshi*, because the studies use overlapping categories and therefore individuals are counted multiple times. Full-time teaching staff, whether tenured or on a fixed-term contract are subsumed under the category of *honmusha*³⁾, while part-time teaching staff are subsumed under the category of *kenmusha*⁴⁾. For the purpose of data collection, every university reports their numbers of *honmusha* and *kenmusha* to the MEXT. For the *honmusha*, who are working in full-time positions, this method of data collection is suitable, since a person can only hold one full-time position. For calculating the number of *kenmusha*, the category in which *hijōkin kōshi* are counted, this system is ineffective. First, there are a number of full-time teachers who work as part-time teachers as well, who are also reported as *kenmusha*. In addition, *hijōkin kōshi* tend to work at multiple universities and are therefore also reported as *kenmusha* multiple times. For this reason, the figures of the *Gakkō Kihon Chōsa* only show the total number of reported *kenmusha*. This is the number of cases that have been reported for filled part-time teacher positions and not the actual number of part-time teachers. By taking these stipulations into consideration, it becomes clear that the actual number of *hijōkin kōshi* will likely be much lower than the case figures. In the *Gakkō Kyōin Tōkei Chōsa*, in contrast, it is claimed that the actual number of persons working as *hijōkin* is given in the results. However, the numbers for *kenmusha* in the datasets of both studies for the same year raise doubt about the accuracy of the results of the *Gakkō Kyōin Tōkei Chōsa*.

For comparison, the *Gakkō Kihon Chōsa* (MEXT 2013a) reported a total of 196,454 *kenmusha* as case numbers, while the *Gakkō Kyōin Tōkei Chōsa* (MEXT 2013b) provides the figure of 206,202 *kenmusha* as the actual number of *hijōkin kōshi*. Therefore, to be accurate, the numbers provided as the total number of cases would have to be higher than the number provided as the actual number of *hijōkin kōshi*, taking into account that *hijōkin kōshi* work at several workplaces. These discrepancies have to be kept in mind when taking a further look at the figures of the *Gakkō Kyōin Tōkei Chōsa*. The study provides a detailed breakdown of the *kenmusha* recorded, which is helpful for identifying *hijōkin kōshi* that exclusively work as non-regular employees. The total of 206,202 *kenmusha* is divided into those who have their main occupation at another university or school (55,816), those who work at research facilities (8,690), those who have their main occupation outside academia (52,406), and finally those who have no main occupation and therefore only work as *hijōkin kōshi* or have other part-time arrangements other than teaching at university (89,290). The latter group is certainly the most interesting because they do not have any additional income from a full-time position that would allow them to compensate for their low pay as *hijōkin kōshi*.

Although both studies showed contradicting results, I assume that the data of the *Gakkō Kyōin Tōkei Chōsa*, which was carried out with consideration of the difficulties in tracking non-regular employment in academia, reported fairly accurate results. With total numbers of 177,263 *honmusha* and 206,202 *kenmusha* (MEXT 2013b), it becomes clear that more than half the posts in academia are non-regular. Nonetheless, at 89,290 workers, there are actually only half as many non-regular workers without any other full-time position than regular workers employed in academia. The rest of those posts are filled by people with a steady income from other full-time positions.

2 – 2. Literature Review

Other than official government statistics, there are not many sources on the topic of part-time teachers in Japanese universities. The papers available cover *hijōkin kōshi* working conditions, and are of an introductory character. In the following section, the three main sources on the topic shall be briefly introduced and the part-time teacher's working conditions explained, while comparing them to other non-regular employees. I will end the section by summing up the shortcomings of the existing literature before subsequently introducing my own methodology and sample.

The first source of interest is titled "*Daigaku kyōshi ha pāto de ii no ka*"⁽⁵⁾ and was published by the Shutoken Daigaku Hijōkin Kōshi Kumiai⁽⁶⁾(1998). This book is an edited volume and the declared goal is to raise awareness of the part-time teachers' situation by giving them a voice through this book. The working conditions of part-time teachers are introduced with special focuses on pay and the insecurity of the occupation. The main criticism of the authors is the particularly large gap in remuneration between full-time and part-time teaching staff. Even though they acknowledge the fact that responsibilities and tasks are different when comparing both employment tracks, they come to the conclusion that paying *hijōkin* only one-sixth of what a full-time teacher earns for the same number of classes is disproportional and unfair. To illustrate their point, they compare the yearly income of a regular staff member teaching 4 to 6 classes per week to a *hijōkin kōshi* giving the same number of classes. While the full-time teacher would earn 9 million Yen per year, the *hijōkin kōshi* would only make 1.5 million Yen (Asano 1998:9). They try to connect the issues of part-time teachers to part-time workers in Japan in general and, citing a court case from 1998, make clear that such a gap in salary would be illegal. In the case mentioned, the court ruled that it is against the law if part-time workers earn less than 80% of what full-time employees earn doing the same job. However, part-time teachers do not even earn 20% of what their full-time colleagues get (Ibid.). They identify hiring of *hijōkin kōshi* as a cost saving measure for financially troubled institutions. Most importantly they make clear that the improvement of working conditions is vital, because being a *hijōkin kōshi* is no longer a temporary experience for many of them, with many academics spending their whole career as part-time teachers (Ibid.,17). They close their argumentation by criticizing high tuition fees that stand in no relation to the sinking class quality due to the working and research conditions of *hijōkin kōshi* (Ibid.,19).

The second source that stood out was titled "*Daigaku kiki to hijōkin kōshi undō*"⁽⁷⁾ by the Daigaku Hijōkin Kōshi Mondai Kaigi⁽⁸⁾(2000). It takes a slightly different stance on the whole problem. It is an edited volume as well, comprised of the accounts of part-time teachers, unions, parents and students regarding the *hijōkin kōshi* issue. The goal here as well is to raise awareness of the problems of part-time teachers and gain support by pointing out the consequences for the quality of university education as a whole. The authors see the quality of research and education being diminished through what they call "*yasuagari kyōiku*."⁽⁹⁾ This policy, according to the authors, has an impact on how teachers are employed and is the main reason many people are only hired on a temporary basis. They also try to establish a connection between the *hijōkin* issues and those of part-time employees in general. They argue that the *hijōkin*, just like other *hiseiki shain*⁽¹⁰⁾, are there to preserve the system as it is for full-time employees. As a

solution to the '*hijōkin kōshi crisis*', they demand better working conditions for *hijōkin kōshi* in order to improve the overall quality of research and education, and point to the principle of equal pay for equal work (Ida 2000; Kinoshita 2000). Instead of blaming universities directly, they blame neoliberal policies that have led to fierce competition among education institutions. According to the authors, the problematic structures of unequal funding causing these problems were created when the first universities were founded in Japan. These inequalities in funding are sending higher education into a downward spiral. Private or municipal institutions especially have to cut costs by hiring even more *hijōkin*. Instead of just focusing on working conditions, the authors of this book go slightly further in exploring the reasons for the increasingly insecure and temporary employment practices in academia. They blame the situation on the facts that universities are more and more run like companies and that there is increased competition for educational funding in Japan. From their point of view, the only solution to those problems would be more investment in research and education, and they cite the low percentage of GDP that Japan invests in higher education compared to other OECD countries.

In the following paragraphs, the working conditions of part-time teachers at Japanese universities will be introduced and compared to those of other part-time workers to whom they are often connected in secondary literature. The figures are derived from the "*Daigaku Hijōkin Kōshi no Jittai to Koe 2007*," (Kansai ken Daigaku Hijōkin Kōshi Kumiai et al. 2007) which was carried out by a group of university part-time teachers' unions across Japan. It is the only quantitative study that offers insights into their working conditions, but has some limitations. It has to be noted that the sample was mainly composed of people with a background in the humanities and social sciences. For the purpose of analysis, the authors divided the sample into various categories in order to accommodate the respondents' employment situations. I will therefore only introduce the data of those who either exclusively work part-time at universities (Univ. PT main) to earn a living and those who have additional part-time teaching jobs outside academia that are their main source of income (Other PT main). People of both groups only work as non-regular workers and are therefore those who suffer the most from insecure working conditions.

Both *hijōkin kōshi* and part-time workers in general are mainly hired on yearly contracts (Statistic Bureau Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications 2013; Shinda 2000). The way part-time teaching jobs are distributed and the specialized skills that only allow them to apply for posts within their own field make it more difficult for them to find positions. According to Asano (1998:8), the common way to get a *hijōkin* job is through introduction from regular staff members. This makes it difficult to find jobs without a well-established network, and also can make it difficult to turn down offers because of the bad influence it may have on future opportunities. Other part-time workers do not suffer from such restrictions because they usually work in industries that do not require special skills (Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare 2009). As a result, *hijōkin kōshi* employment comes with more insecurity.

Additionally, whether they are hired part-time or full-time, academics are evaluated on the basis of their academic achievements (Kinoshita 2000:176-77). This requires them to advance their own research. However, due to the fact that they have to teach many classes and are unable to decline offers, Asano concludes that this extended workload

pushes class preparations to the weekends making it difficult to conduct their own research (Asano 1998:10). They cannot work on their own projects at their *hijōkin* workplaces either, because they are only allowed to use the facilities to prepare for their classes (Ibid.,8; Kinoshita 2000:176-77).

For part-time teachers, only the time spent in class is counted as working hours, which denies them access to social insurance because they cannot meet the requirement of 20 hours of work or more per week (Asano 1998:9-10; Kansai ken Daigaku Hijōkin Kōshi Kumiai et al. 2007). A *hijōkin kōshi* would have to teach more than 13 classes¹¹⁾ per week in order to be eligible, but the survey on university part-time teachers shows that neither the Univ. PT main with 10.1 classes (15.1 hours) nor the Other PT main with 7.3 classes (11 hours) on average are able to cross that line. The actual time they use for their work is a combination of class preparation and the class itself. In case of the Univ. PT main, 2.8 hours of preparation were spent per class (Kansai ken Daigaku Hijōkin Kōshi Kumiai et al. 2007). The time spent for classes and preparations adds up to a total of 43.4 hours per week. For the Other PT main with 4.7 hours of preparation time per class, the actual working hours per week add up to 45.3 hours. Part-time workers in general work 26.5 hours on average per week (Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare 2009) and therefore have access to the social security system, while having a comparably lower workload. In terms of wages, *hijōkin kōshi* are paid 25,000 Yen on average per month for a class (Asano 1998:9), whereas part-time workers receive hourly wages. In terms of yearly income, wages of part-time workers in general peak at around 1 million Yen per year (Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare 2009). It is important to consider the fact that the income from these jobs is often earned as 'extra money' (49.5%) (Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare 2011) and that workers try to avoid increasing their income too much because of additional costs in the form of taxes and fees for social insurance. They furthermore do not want to lose the support payments provided by employers for spouses of full-time workers who are mainly working in the household (Toyokeizai Shinbun 2015.12.22). In comparison, *hijōkin kōshi*, both Univ. PT main and Other PT main, earn slightly more than 3 million Yen per year (Kansai ken Daigaku Hijōkin Kōshi Kumiai et al. 2007). With this income they are well above the poverty line and earn more than other part-time workers in Japan. However, this is their main source of income.

In sum, *hijōkin kōshi*, like other non-regular workers, have been increasing in numbers in recent years and those only employed part-time comprise about one-third of the teaching staff in higher education. A review of secondary literature suggests that their share will further increase in the future because of the growing need to lower costs, especially at private and municipal universities. Even though *hijōkin kōshi* are often compared to other part-time workers, many differences can be observed: firstly, because of the nature of their jobs and how they are distributed, it is more difficult for part-time teachers to find a position. Secondly, *hijōkin kōshi* spend a lot of time on work outside official working hours. It is furthermore suggested that they have problems containing this high workload, and thus have less time for their own research. However, this point is not further explored in the sources noted above even though it was mentioned that *hijōkin kōshi* are evaluated on their academic achievements when hired. In secondary literature, the focus is on part-time teachers as educators. Therefore, there are two questions: what kind

of influence does working as *hijōkin kōshi* have on their careers as academics and why do they spend so much time for their *hijōkin kōshi* jobs even though it is threatening their career advancement? I will answer those questions in the following sections using the data of an interview survey I conducted with Japanese PhD graduates from the humanities in 2015 and 2016.

3. Methodology and Sample

The data used in this paper is taken from a study I conducted regarding the work and life of Japanese PhD graduates from the humanities. Because there is almost no information on about half of Japan's PhD graduates, a grounded theory approach was used in order to categorize what exactly they are doing after graduation and what factors influence their daily lives. I conducted an interview survey with 12 Japanese PhD graduates from the humanities in 2015 and 2016. I interviewed 10 of them once in individual interviews and met the two youngest participants of the survey for three individual interviews in order to track their development right after graduation. The first interview was conducted before they graduated in March of 2015. The second one followed 3 months after graduation, and the last one 9 months after graduation. All interviews were semistructured and left the interviewees room to openly address what they identified as important influences in their lives. In accordance with Charmaz's "Constructing Grounded Theory," (2014) the interviews were analyzed in multiple coding steps, starting with line by line coding. During this step, the importance of working as *hijōkin kōshi* became evident. The interview guide was constantly updated in order to accommodate the first findings, and during focused coding, the various implications of working as part-time teacher on the interviewees' lives were derived. Snowball sampling was used to recruit respondents: the interviewees referred me to other PhD graduates. The sample, nonetheless, was quite diverse, with an age range from 27 to 51 years old. All of the participants had been working or were still employed as *hijōkin kōshi* at the time of the interviews. The following chart provides an overview of the interviewees, indicating their working conditions.

(Figure 1)

Alias	Interview Date	Age	Sex	Class Types	Major	Length of Service ※	Number of Classes ※	Number of Schools ※	Preparation Time (per class)※	Group
Takashi	March 2015 July 2015 January 2016	27	Male	Lecture	Security Policy	1 year	1	1	10 hours	Univ. PT main
Kaori	August 2015	30	Female	Lectures	Agronomy	3 years	10	5	2.5 hours	Univ. PT main
Naoki	July 2015	30	Male	Lectures	Economic Geography	3.5 years	2	2	3 hours	Other PT main
Ichiro	February 2015 August 2015 January 2016	30	Male	Language Classes	Korean Literature	1 year	4	1	8.5 hours	Univ. PT main
Saburo	July 2015	32	Male	Lectures	Political Science		5	4	Does not use much time	Univ. PT main
Yachiro	August 2015	32	Male	Language Classes*	Sociolinguistics	1 year	0 (4*)	1 (1*)	3 hours	Univ. FT main (Other PT main*)
Nachiko	August 2015	32	Female	Language Classes*	Japanese Education	1 year	0 (15*)	1 (1*)	not given	Univ. FT main (Other FT main while Student*)
Ogai	July 2015	35	Male	Lectures	History	1.5 years	3	2	Spends a whole day for 3 classes	Other PT main
Tadase	June 2015	41	Female	Lectures	Anthropology	2.5 years	3	3	1-2 Days	Univ. PT main
Yahiko	June 2015	43	Male	Lectures Language Classes	History	13 years	??	3 (outside University)	not given	Other PT main
Okito	June 2015	45	Male	Lectures	Sociology	10 years	6	1 to 5	3 hours (plus time for homework correction and assignments)	Univ. PT main
Ukiko	July 2015	51	Female	Lectures	Classic Literature	7 years	2	2	Could not specify that point since she is teaching Intensive Courses	Univ. PT main

※ Length of Service: Specifies the total number of years worked as hijikin koshi // Number of Classes and Number of Institutions: Specifically the number of classes and institutions at the time of the interview // Preparation Time: is the preparation time how it was indicated by the interviewees
* is used to indicate past experiences and classifications

4. Analysis and Results

In the following section, I will discuss the differences I observed in my sample to the secondary literature on part-time teachers at Japanese universities before the results on my two major questions regarding *hijōkin kōshi* will be addressed.

4 – 1. Identifying Differences Between the Utilized Sample and Secondary Literature

Per usual in grounded theory, I delayed the secondary literature review until I had developed a theory of *hijōkin kōshi*, and noticed that the samples used in the publications of the university part-time teacher unions are composed of people who have been working as *hijōkin kōshi* for a long time. They were therefore teaching more classes and had a higher income than people in my sample. I therefore assume that the working conditions of part-time teachers at their career start are likely to be worse than featured in union statistics. None of my interviewees were in a union.

Further differences from the secondary literature on part-time teachers at Japanese universities were the fact that my interviewees spend significantly more time for class preparations than the respondents of the quantitative survey on part-time teachers (Kansai ken Daigaku Hijōkin Kōshi Kumiai et al. 2007). Especially for Takashi and Ichiro, who just graduated, this aspect was the most striking. Another aspect that was different from other sources was how jobs are distributed. Almost all interviewees said that positions were handed down to them from seniors leaving a post. By calling them senior or *senpai*, it is clear that there is a connection on the institutional side. Those *senpai* are either graduates of the same university, graduate school or even the same *kenkyūshitsu*¹²⁾. After applying for many positions shortly before graduation and failing to obtain any of the posts he applied to, Takashi was finally able to secure his first *hijōkin* position thanks to his network. A *senpai* of his former university was looking for someone to replace him, and Takashi, in desperate need of any kind of job, accepted it. Even though he found his one and only post thanks to his network, he was critical in regards to the way those jobs are distributed:

“I think that the mobility in regards to posts at universities and research facilities tends to be very limited. I can observe this especially in my field of politics. [...] For example, for a long time there has been the system of the *kenkyūshitsu* at Japanese universities, and among the members of this *kenkyūshitsu* posts would be distributed. My post at °° University is a classic example of that, [...] posts are distributed in a very closed environment. In my case, the *senpai* from my time at XX University would hand down posts to their *kōhai* and so on, it was an environment in which that was very likely to happen. [...] What I have heard is that they call it a colony. A colony, for example [...] for XX University °° University is a colony. The teaching position for the class 'Introduction to Politics' of °° University has been continuously filled by people of my graduate school at XX University.”¹³⁾

He identified those distribution mechanisms as the very problem that made it difficult for him to find a position in the first place. The introduction of jobs by full-time university staff as mentioned in the union sources could be observed. However, the distribution by *senpai* was the most common. Other than that, the descriptions by other

sources have proven to be accurate.

4 – 2. Why Work as *Hijōkin Kōshi*?

There are many similarities between *hijōkin kōshi* and other non-regular workers when it comes to their reasons to choose this kind of employment. Just like an increasing number of people in the Japanese labor market (The Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training 2016a), many participants of my sample were unable to find a full-time position after graduation and therefore started their careers as non-regular employees. Similar to 47.8% of contract workers (Tokyo Metropolitan Government 2016), they however showed a strong desire to use their special skills and to stay connected to their profession, which is why they preferred working as part-time teacher. When asked what kind of post he desired Ichiro explained: “[...] Definitely the post of a professor I would say. [...] What comes closest at the moment is a part-time teacher position [...]”¹⁴⁾

However, many of the young academics in my survey considered it normal to start their own career in non-regular employment. They saw the difficulties that come with such a situation as an aptitude test that has to be passed if someone wants to find full-time employment in academia. Takashi explained: “If a normal person would enter the world of academia I think he would not feel satisfied. You cannot lead a regular life. [...] Living under insecure circumstances for four to five years, a long time, and during this time being pitied by friends, family and the people around you.”¹⁵⁾ Others did not perceive it as a test, but were convinced that having work experience as part-time teacher was a qualification they needed in order to gain a full-time position at some point in their career. Ogai told me: “I’m not working at my current job (as *hijōkin kōshi*) because I couldn’t find anything else. I see it as a step towards the job I want to have in the future (a full-time job in academia).”¹⁶⁾ The interviewees of my survey expected their career start to be difficult, but were convinced that this suffering would only be temporary and bring them closer to their goal of finding a full-time position. Therefore, rather than considering other jobs, they embraced their work as *hijōkin kōshi*.

In the understanding of the humanities PhD graduates of this study, the choice to work in low-paid non-regular employment in academia instead of more lucrative employment opportunities elsewhere had to do with their perception that they were trapped in their academic career path. On one hand, people like Yahiko made clear that they would not have a chance anywhere else: “At my age (30s) only with a background in the humanities and without any experience as businessman, there is probably no chance to work at a Japanese company. So there is probably no chance for most of those who quit research to become a normal salaryman.”¹⁷⁾ But on the other hand, people like Takashi saw themselves as trapped because they felt that research is the only thing they can do. He explained:

“It’s somehow difficult to explain but [...] one reason (to choose a career in academia) was my vocational aptitude. [...] I had side jobs and tried out various jobs through internships. [...] I for example even considered applying to a normal company, but I came to the conclusion that these jobs did not fit my vocational aptitude. I felt that research was the best fit for me. [...] I thought if I have this ability I should use it.”¹⁸⁾

Nonetheless, none of the respondents actually tried to change their careers. When asked whether they would accept an offer for a full-time position outside academia, only two interviewees stated that they would consider it. The others showed a strong commitment towards academia and were not willing to settle for anything else. Saburo, when asked if he would take the full-time job replied: “I don’t think I would take the job. [...] Because I want to work as a researcher, I want to do the work I like [...].”¹⁹⁾ It is therefore questionable whether the respondents really saw themselves as trapped, or were just making excuses. It however shows their strong commitment towards their academic careers that influenced their choice for part-time jobs. Put differently, they were working as part-time teachers because they had a strong fixation on working in academia.

For most women in my sample, the reasons for working as *hijōkin kōshi* differed from those given by the male interviewees. Ukiko, Tadae and Nachiko all had careers outside academia before they decided to go back to university. For them, the contrast to their experiences in the private economy made working in academia and even working as part-time teacher attractive for them. Nachiko explained:

“When you work at a company [...] you can't do anything besides work when you're in the office. [...] The point that there are a lot of things you can't decide yourself makes it very restrictive. [...] There are many people who like working within those rules, [...] but I like it when I can decide freely how I do things. [...] Here (at her workplace in academia) we have the philosophy that you can do things your way as long as you get your work done. [...] It doesn't matter when you do your work. [...] It is for example okay when a teacher says, ‘I have to leave early today to get my children from the daycare center,’ [...]. In this sense it is really free.”²⁰⁾

Right after quitting her regular job, she went back to university studying Japanese Education, which she was really interested in. She explained her future plans at that time as follows:

“[...] I thought it would be fine to earn a living working as *hijōkin kōshi*. Teaching a couple of classes per week while raising children. I thought if I even have summer holidays and more time off, I can manage both career and family. But when I was finishing my Masters I came to like research and recently a PhD is required to work as part-time teacher anyway. So I decided to get a PhD and thought if I go this far I might as well try to get a full-time position [...].”²¹⁾

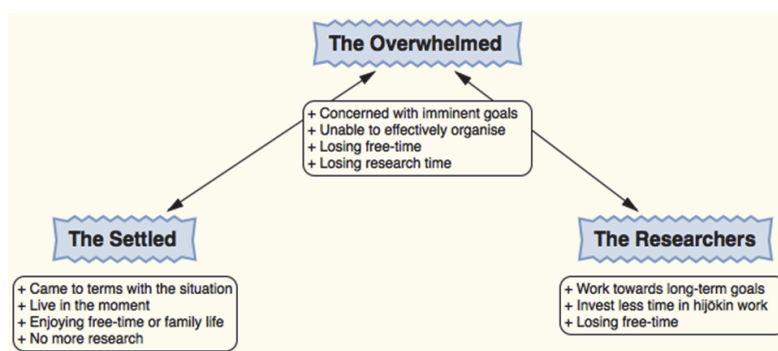
The women I could interview were more positive about their *hijōkin* jobs because they saw them as opportunity to do work they are actually interested in, while allowing for better work-family reconciliation. They furthermore preferred the working style of academia, which in contrast to employment in the private economy offers the freedom to be creative and to approach tasks on their own terms, instead of following rigid rules and procedures.

4 – 3. What Impact Does Working as *Hijōkin Kōshi* Have on the Lives of Japanese PhD Graduates from the Humanities?

The previous section made it clear that all interviewees intended to work full-time in academia in their future. In order to reach that goal, continuing their own research was seen as essential. Ichiro noted: “I think it is most

important to study in order to become a professor or to get such a position. [...] writing a lot of papers, publishing a book, giving presentations at conferences. I think it's most important to show such accomplishments.”²²⁾ Saburo added: “In order to become a full-timer, you need publications, achievements in research and education I think.”²³⁾ Their work as *hijōkin kōshi* however, made it more difficult for them to find time for research activities that are necessary to reach their career goals. Preparations for classes have to be done in their own free-time. It is therefore up to the individual to limit the time spent for work and to make time for their own research and leisure as well. Within my sample, three different approaches (Figure 2) to managing personal life could be observed. In the following section those three approaches will be described, and the possible consequences will be discussed.

(Figure 2)



I called the first group the Overwhelmed. Ichiro was a good example of this group so I will use his story to explain its characteristics. I met him for the first interview before he graduated, but he was already in trouble because he could not find a place to work. Unfortunately, he was not able to find anything by the time he finished his PhD course, so he moved back in with his parents. Officially unemployed, he enrolled in a language school in order to take a qualification as Japanese teacher. Ichiro nonetheless managed to continue his own research, and was approached at a conference and offered a *hijōkin kōshi* position. After he had started to work teaching 4 classes as a part-time teacher, he was no longer able to spend time on his own research. His lack of experience in combination with rules that determined how he had to prepare his classes caused his part-time job to take over his life. He explained:

“When I was a student I did research, but now because I'm busy preparing my classes I can't do any research. [...] Other people finish their preparations quickly. But I need a whole day. [...] I need a whole day to prepare one class. So I need 4 days to finish my preparations. After the classes you need to spend time making corrections. That again takes one or two days, so I spend a whole week.”²⁴⁾

When asked if he was allowed to prepare the classes the way he wants, he replied:

“At my university everything is fixed. It's decided what textbooks I have to use, and what I have to do during class. The test questions are decided too. By decided I mean there are guidelines from the full-time teachers on what exercises to prepare for class. That's why everything is fixed for me. In that sense, it is easier but not free at all. [...]”²⁵⁾

Being characterized as Overwhelmed was common especially for those interviewees who had just graduated. They were relieved that they found a post and wanted to keep it, so they were motivated to do a good job. Above that, work standards defined by full-time teachers were setting expectations that pressured the inexperienced teachers to put in long hours to meet them. Instead of focusing on their long-term goal of full-time employment, the Overwhelmed were preoccupied with the immediate needs of their daily lives like fulfilling expectations for their jobs. As a result, they were no longer doing research and lost their leisure-time as well.

I named the second and largest group the Settled. As the name suggests, those were the interviewees who had come to terms with their situation and were therefore not doing much to change the status quo. Compared to the other interviewees the Settled had a longer working experience and were working as *hijōkin kōshi* for three years or longer. As mentioned before, part-time teaching jobs are usually distributed through networks. As a result, those longer on the job were teaching more classes and therefore spending more time for class preparations. Okito had been working as *hijōkin kōshi* for ten years at the time of the interview. Asked how he spends his time, he explained:

“I work as *hijōkin kōshi*, it is pretty tough, the preparations for class and so on, it takes a lot of time. That’s why my head is filled with this on weekdays. I can only write papers on the weekends, but even on the weekends (laughing), if I could really focus I would be a lot faster, but because I do some useless things as well. It takes a lot of time (laughing).”²⁶⁾

Apparently, his relationship to the students and his interest in their progress were making him spend much of his time for his teaching jobs:

“If I start, I don't see the end of it. If you think about the students [...] and you really want them to get better, you have to make them write small reports because that's most effective. I feel bad if I don't do anything. I want feedback, I don't feel satisfied if I don't do anything to get feedback. That's why I make them write reports about two or three times each semester. [...] That's difficult in classes of about 100 students. I have classes with 200 students. [...] I can't help it.”²⁷⁾

Okito was satisfied with his teaching job because he put more work in. Above that, he still had time for ‘some useless things’, as he described his hobby and some of his limited time at the weekend was used for research, as he mentioned. The Settled tended to be immersed in part-time teaching work, but enjoyed various aspects of their jobs. All of them had a hobby and were happy that they could spend time for leisure activities. However, when inquiring further into their research efforts, they turned out to be very limited. They would only have a couple of hours per week or some time on the weekends, certainly not enough to make timely progress. Research activities seemed only symbolic or had become a hobby as well. The Settled were satisfied with their lives at the moment and pushed away fears or negative feelings they had regarding their own lives: “I'm only dissatisfied (with my life) when I think about it from a regular person's point of view, but I myself usually try not to think about it. When you ask whether I feel dissatisfied in my daily life, the answer is no.”²⁸⁾

The Researchers were those who spent the least amount of their time for preparing *hijōkin* classes. Instead they

used every free minute of the day to advance their own research. The main difference between them and the other groups in terms of employment was that interviewees of this category had an additional place of work. It was most common to work as research assistants or to have research jobs in companies or municipalities. There they would work on fixed-term contracts as well, but they had regular working hours and work only took place during this time. These jobs gave their daily lives a structure and made it easier to make time for other activities such as research. They spent less time for preparing classes because they had fewer classes to teach. As a result of having another stable affiliation, worries of losing their *hijōkin kōshi* positions were apparently not strong and thus the pressure to deliver good work was lower than, for example, for the Overwhelmed. The Researchers had the capacity to focus on their long-term goal of gaining full-time employment in academia and therefore organized their daily lives accordingly. However, they even replaced their leisure-time with research. Naoki represents the Researchers in the sample. Four days of the week, he worked at the research center of a municipality on a three-year contract. Only on Fridays he taught two classes part-time. He described a regular workday as follows: “At the moment, [...] I start work at 8:30 and finish at 5 in the evening. I would get home at around 6 [...] and from 7 I would usually do my research at home until 11 or 12.”²⁹⁾ Thanks to his regular working hours and his strong desire to become a professor, he kept his research going: “At the moment I work as a researcher at the city office of XX, but I want to find employment as a university teacher as soon as possible.”³⁰⁾ Asked how much time and effort he spends for his *hijōkin* classes, he answered: “I have an idea of how the ideal class, how the ideal preparations have to be, but I don't think that I'm preparing them to that standard.”³¹⁾

These three categories helped to understand what different reasons the interviewees had to spend so much time for their *hijōkin* jobs, and to assess the influence their employment situation had on their research activities and therefore on their career prospects as academics. The Overwhelmed, usually at the beginning of their careers, were more concerned with delivering good work in order to keep their jobs and thus sustain their own livelihood. Demands regarding class content and class standards pressured them into putting in more time, which disrupted their research efforts. The Settled had a more stable economic standing because they taught more classes. They were investing more time because they wanted to feel satisfied. Working as a part-time teacher was seemingly close enough to what they aspired. They had given up on career advancement and therefore any significant research activity, because they either lost hope or interest in getting ahead. As a result, they made the best of their situation and enjoyed their present lifestyle with all its flexibilities, so they pushed away thoughts about their insecure future. The Researchers had another job that was at the center of their attention. Working as *hijōkin kōshi* was not as important for them. They therefore were only teaching a few classes and did not spend much time to prepare them. Their regular working hours made it possible for them to advance their own projects and made them the only group in this sample with a chance for a full-time career in academia.

The reactions of the different types found in this study made clear that the more academics are involved in teaching part-time, the less time they had for their own research and the worse their chances were for career advancement.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, the working conditions of *hijōkin kōshi* were compared to those of other non-regular employees in Japan. There were similarities in terms of employment insecurity, and the work as part-time teacher clearly served as a substitute for those who were not able to secure a full-time position. However, the fact that most of a part-time teacher's work takes place outside specified working hours, and that it was seen as normal to start a career in academia as part-time teacher were unique for non-regular employment.

The PhD graduates from the humanities perceived working as *hijōkin kōshi* as a necessary step towards regular employment in academia, not realizing the irony that *hijōkin kōshi* employment is probably the biggest hurdle in reaching that goal. It was too difficult for most interviewees to manage their own lives and they therefore set the wrong priorities. They were involved in this form of work out of their own motivation, but employers in academia managed to pressure the interviewees into spending more time on *hijōkin* work by exploiting their economic insecurity, their ideals, and values. The Overwhelmed were for that reason unable to focus on anything else. Under the illusion of being close to their goal because they were already teaching at university, and because of the freedoms of an academic work style, the majority of the interviewees settled in. They were not feeling bad enough to make changes, and living in the here and now was their response to the omnipresent insecurity. The only participants who were able to overcome this hurdle for the time being were those with additional workplaces that made managing their lives easier by providing them with regular working hours and salary.

The consequences of being stuck in a non-regular career in academia were more severe for men than for women. For women it actually seemed to be attractive to settle in as *hijōkin kōshi* because it helped them to do something they considered meaningful using their skills, while at the same time having better work-family reconciliation.

Higher education in Japan will also be heavily influenced by the effects observed in my study. With the prediction that the number of *hijōkin kōshi* working at Japanese universities will rise, it can be expected that universities will further be reduced to places of education, with research only being of secondary concern. Academic progress will slow down because academics are spending their time on education instead of research. At the same time, tenured positions will likely be reduced, which will endanger the intellectual freedom of academia in Japan.

My advice for PhD students as well as PhD graduates is to consider other forms of non-regular work, and to keep the number of part-time teaching positions low in order to not lose focus on what they really aspire to. From the interviews we learn that it is possible to lead a happy life working part-time in academia, but this happiness heavily relies on staying in good health and not getting old. With the latter certainly happening, it has to be questioned whether it is responsible or not to hire people in a way that most certainly will cause them to live in poverty after they retire. This, however, is again a question that could be posed for all non-regular employees.

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Notes

- 1) 'Basic Survey on Schools' covering student and graduate numbers, the number of schools and universities as well as data on teaching staff.
- 2) 'Statistical Survey on Teaching Staff'
- 3) People with a main place of employment working full-time.
- 4) Describing someone who is working part-time, not specifying whether the person is working elsewhere full-time or not.
- 5) Is it really ok to hire university teachers part-time?
- 6) University Part-Time Teacher Union of the Kantō-Region
- 7) University crisis and part-time teachers' movement
- 8) Conference on the part-time teacher problem. A committee of the Japan Scientists' Association
- 9) Economical education
- 10) Non-regular employees
- 11) The duration of one class is 90 minutes.
- 12) Translation: Laboratory. A *kenkyūshitsu* is an organizational unit at Japanese universities. Members of the *kenkyūshitsu* are a supervising professor and his graduate students. The same word refers to the locality, usually a larger office like space, where the graduate students can study and seminars are hold.
- 13) 少し思うのは、大学とか研究機関のポストが非常に流動性が乏しくなりがち、なりやすい傾向があると思うことが、特に僕の政治学とかの世界ではかなり見受けられます。[...]例えば日本の大学には研究室という制度が昔からあって、研究室の仲間の中でさまざまなポストを融通したり。例えば、僕が〇〇大学のポストを獲得したようなケースが典型的なんですけれども、[...]非常に閉ざされた中でポストがやり取りされていますね。僕の場合だと、僕のXX大学にいたときの先輩から後輩に対してポストが渡されたりとか、そういうことが非常に起きやすい環境になっている。[...]僕が聞いたことがあるのは、植民地という言い方をするんですね。植民地、例えば、そうですね、XX大学にとって〇〇大学は植民地なんですね。〇〇大学の政治学概論という授業を教えるポストは、いわばXX大学の私のいた研究科がずっと歴代、繰り返し、いわば、ずっと独占し続けたわけです。
- 14) やっぱあの教授と言いますか、うん、そうですね、だからまー、これから一番近いのは非常勤でまー [...]
- 15) 普通の人アカデミアの世界に入ってきてても、満足はできないと思いますね。普通のごく一般の人たちのような生活は絶対にできないと。[...]たぶん4年とか5年とか、かなり長い間、不安定な状況に置かれて、その間に家族とか友達とか、あと周囲の人たちから、なんていうか、同情されたりとか、[...]
- 16) えーと、現在行っている職業は、単に希望する職業がなくて行っているのではなくて、今後、将来的に自分の希望する職業に就くためのステップとして行っているものだと考えています。
- 17) いや、でもやっぱり。日本の企業で。そのいわゆるビジネスマンとしての経験がなく、30代で、文学部出身、これはもう一般企業に入るという選択肢は多分ないと。えー。だからほとんどその、途中で研究を辞める人間が、普通のサラリーマンになることは多分ないと思いますね。
- 18) [...]それを説明するのはちょっと難しいと思うんですけども、[...]1つはやはり僕の適性ですね。[...]アルバイトとか、まー、インターンみたいな形でいろんな仕事は見ていたんです。で、その中には例えば、[...]民間企業に普通に就職するというのも考えたりしていたんですけども、いろいろ経験しているうちに、やはり自分の適性があまりないんじゃないかということを感じるようになりました。で、そうした中で研究というのは、ある意味、自分の適性にならなっているんじゃないかというふうに、[...]まー、そういう能力であれば、[...]世の中に通用するかもしれないというふうに思ったことが1つと。
- 19) (...)働かないと思いますけど。...研究者の、自分のやりたい仕事があったらという [...]

- 20) [...] 企業は、[...] 仕事以外のことはオフィスでは 100%できない。自分だけではいろんなことも決められないので、という部分でまったく自由がなかったです。そういう決められた内容で動くほうがいいという人もすごく多い。[...] 私は自分でやったほうが好きです。[...] ここは一応、[...] 成果さえ出せば OK という主義。[...] 何時から何時に働こうと関係ない。[...] 例えばこのほかの教員で保育園のお迎えが、ちょっと今日は早く行かないといけないからといってすぐ出るというのももちろん OK ですし、[...]、その辺はホントに自由ですね。
- 21) 非常勤講師ぐらいでやっていくのもいいかなって思っていたんです。子どもを育てながら何コマか、週何コマこなして、夏休みもお休みがあってというほうが両方、家庭と両立できるかなと思ったんですけど、修士の修論を書き終わるにつれて、やっぱり研究も面白いと思ってきて、それプラス、けっこう非常勤でも最近ドクター P h D を持っていることとかというのを書いてあったりとか、そこまで来たら、もうちょっとフルタイムのポジションも考えたいなというのもあってドクターを受けたというのと、[...]
- 22) 教授とかそういうポストに、就くにはやっぱりあの勉強するのが一番大事だと思います。[...] たくさん論文を書いたりとか、あの本を出したりとか、まー学会で発表するとか。まっそういう実績を積むのが一番重要だとは思いますが。
- 23) まず常勤になるには、実績と、研究実績と教育実績だと思う。
- 24) 学生のころ、やっぱり研究をしていたんですけど、今はもう全然研究ができないので、授業のほうの準備ばかりしている。[...] ほかの人は、なんていうんですか。すぐに終わるんですけど、準備とか、僕なんかもう 1 日中かかっているんですよ。[...] 1 つの授業の準備に、1 コマの授業の準備に 1 日ぐらいかかっちゃうので。[...] だから、その授業の準備に 4 日かかって、授業が終わった後に、なんかいろいろ、丸つけをしったりとかするじゃないですか。それも 1 日、2 日かかっちゃうので、それで 1 週間全部。
- 25) うちの大学の場合は決まっているんですよ。教科書も全部決まっていて、授業中にこれをやりなさいというのが全部決まっているんですよ。テストの問題も全部決まっている。決まっているというか、上の専任の先生から、こういう問題を作りなさいというのがあるので、だからやること自体は全部決まっているんですよ。そういう意味ではけっこう楽なんですけども、逆に自由になれないというか、[...]
- 26) まっ非常勤講師をやっています、はい、でそれで非常勤講師もまっ結構大変ですね、あの授業の準備とか、まっ、まっどちらかというと結構時間がかかります、だから、まっ平日はちょっとそれのことで頭がいっぱいです。はい、だからまっ週末だけ (laughter) 論文を書きますが、はい、まっ週末であの、はい、まっそこで本当に集中してあればもっとう早いけど、まだ mhm (thinking) まだちょっと無駄なこともちよっとするから、それでまたちょっと時間かかる (laughter)。
- 27) [...] やり始めたら切りがないですね。つまり学生のこと考え出すと、[...] 実際に向上する能力が向上させようと思ったら、[...] やっぱり小レポートみたいな、あのことがやっぱり一番効果があるので、[...] やってしまうんですよ。全くやらないとなんか、まーあまり効果がないというなんか気持ち悪いんですよ。だからフィードバック、フィードバックが欲しい、だからやりがいがないんですよやらないと。まーだから一学期にまー 2 回か 3 回ぐらいやるんですけども、あのそれぐらいですからね。[...] 1 0 0 人ぐらいいる授業だったら、もう大変ですね。はい。2 0 0 名ぐらいいるんですよそれ。[...] しょうがないけど。
- 28) 一般的なそういう話を聞いたら不満に思う、そっちの観点から不満に思う。だけど、はい、私自身はあまりそういうのはまっ考えないようにもしているし、あまり本当に生活している時感じているかちょっとあまり感じてないんじゃないかな。
- 29) 今だと、[...] 8 時半から仕事です。で 5 時に終わって、まー、だいたい家に帰ってくるのが 6 時ぐらいですね。[...] 7 時から、いつもだと 11 時から 12 時ぐらいまで、えっと、家で研究をやっています。
- 30) まー、XX の市役所の研究員をやっていますけども、うーん、まー、なるべく早く大学の先生に就きたいなあと思っているので、[...]

- 31) やっぱり自分が思う理想の授業、理想の準備があると思うんですけど、そこまでの準備はやっぱりちょっとできてないかなというところはあります。

非常勤講師として働く——文脈の中の不安定な就業形態

Kai Macyowsky

論文要旨

非常勤講師は大学での非正規雇用の代表的な存在である。このパートタイム講師は担当授業単位で採用され、過去10年来飛躍的に増え続けているのに、研究者からあまり注目されていない。わずかに存在したとしても、主に議論されるのは非常勤講師の労働条件や彼らの増加による高等教育の質への影響であった。しかし、研究者がなぜ非常勤講師の職を歓迎するのか、また非常勤講師職が彼らのキャリアや生活にどのような影響を及ぼすのかについてはまだ把握されておらず、こうした研究者を輩出する日本の高等教育制度のあり方についての示唆はなれさせていない。

この論文では非常勤講師の仕事と生活に光をあて、彼らが抱える問題、明らかに不利な労働条件下で彼らが働き続ける動機、彼らをそこに押しとどめているメカニズムを明らかにしたい。また、学術機関での正規研究者という彼らの目標に向かう道りにどのような影響があるかも明らかにする。

本論文では、非常勤講師として働くことは、彼らの研究活動を妨げ、その目標から彼らを遠ざけていると同時に、正規研究者になる希望を持ち続けさせていると主張する。

結果として、多くの非常勤講師はますますその就業形態に縛られてしまう。要するに労働条件の調査だけでは非常勤講師の問題を理解することはできず、非常勤講師の実態を理解するためには、研究者としての個人の生活や彼らの動機をより詳しく分析することが必要になるだろう。

キーワード

不安定な雇用形態、非常勤講師、博士課程修了者、ワーク・ライフ管理、非正規雇用