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| Title | A Review Essay on Internationalization Strategies in Japanese Universities with a Focus on English Language Support |
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| Citation | 大阪大学大学院人間科学研究科紀要. 2017, 43, p. 237-260 |
| Version Type | VoR |
| URL | https://doi.org/10.18910/60570 |
| rights | |
| Note | |

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A Review Essay on Internationalization Strategies in Japanese Universities with a Focus on English Language Support

Mahboubeh RAKHSHANDEHROO and Beverley Anne YAMAMOTO

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1. Introduction

Worldwide many governments and higher educational institutions (HEIs) are promoting initiatives to internationalize the higher education (HE) sector. Internationalization can be defined as ‘policies and practices undertaken by academic systems and institutions—and even individuals—to cope with the global academic environment’ (Altbach and Knight, 2007: 290). In the context of globalization and a neoliberal ‘free market’ in the HE sector, leading universities are in competition for students and research excellence not only at a local level, but also often regionally and globally. This competition is being filtered by the instruments of neoliberalism, such as global and local rankings and international (but English based) citation indexes. Internationalization may be regarded as little more than a necessary evil by some, but few would deny that to be recognized as a top university today the institution needs to engage in the global competition for students, researchers, faculty members, research funding and citations as a measure of research output. For leading institutions today, internationalization is inevitably a key part of the mission statement.

Japan is a major player in the Asian region as well as being recognized as a strong player globally for its research output, as reflected in the number of Japanese recipients of Nobel and other prestigious prizes and awards. It is less well represented, however, when it comes to global rankings, which are heavily biased towards the Anglophone countries (Ishikawa, 2011: 211). Japan also does well on international student recruitment, both in terms of regional and global competition. Based on data from UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) for 2014, Japan was the 7th most attractive destination for international students globally, attracting 3% (135, 803) of the total mobile student population (UIS, 2016). The Japanese government currently has a policy in place to attract 300,000 international students to Japan by 2020; a policy which was launched in 2008. This means more than doubling the current intake. If the target of 300,000 international students were to be met, Japan would move from 7th to 3rd place as the most popular destination country, assuming today’s figures for other countries were not to change (UIS, 2016, see country data).

In order to meet the target of 300,000 international students, the Japanese government has

been encouraging leading HEIs to expand their provision of courses offered in English and, even more ambitiously, to design entirely English-taught programs (ETPs) at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Starting with the five-year Global 30 (G30) initiative launched in 2009 and continuing with the more recent ten-year Super (Top) Global University Project (SGU) launched in 2014, key funding for HE is being linked to the expansion of ETPs and English medium instruction (EMI) course offerings. In order to ensure the quality of such courses and programs, those institutions awarded SGU funding have also been encouraged to set targets for expanding foreign faculty. To date, foreign faculty has made up a very low proportion of all faculty and those working in Japanese universities have overwhelmingly been restricted to language teaching positions, even though this has been changing since the launch of the G30 project.

The reaction from commentators on internationalization in Japanese universities has been highly critical with concerns that the focus of government and HE strategy has been overly focused on quantitative issues (attracting target numbers of students and foreign faculty; increasing the number of ETPs and EMI course offerings). It is argued that too little attention has been given to preparation of the learning environment and the question of how students with little, if any Japanese proficiency manage on and beyond campus; in environments that are almost exclusively monolingual (Tsuneyoshi, 2005; Kuwamura, 2009; Hashimoto, 2013; Bradford, 2016).

This paper reviews the literature on internationalization policy and strategy for Japanese universities focusing particularly on international student recruitment. It pays special attention to the development of EMI and ETPs, and criticisms that policy has focused too much on quantitative issues and largely ignored the qualitative aspects of increasing the number and diversity of international students. The paper begins by outlining in greater detail government policy aimed at internationalizing universities through setting targets for international student recruitment. Next it offers a statistical overview of trends in international student recruitment and recent shifts that have occurred in tandem with ETP and EMI course expansion. Following on from this, we discuss recent policy that has specifically targeted the expansion of EMI offerings and ETPs. Finally, we offer a critical review of the literature that has emerged in response to this shift. We conclude that while significant progress has been made in creating an environment conducive to study in English in leading Japanese universities, the gains are fragile relying largely on the dedication of key staff and the continuation of temporary funding prioritizing increased international students and faculty recruitment through the expansion of ETPs and EMI.

2. Overview of Internationalisation Policy and Challenges

The Japanese national government is the main actor in internationalization of both public and private Japanese universities through different policy initiatives (Yonezawa.Y & Yonezawa.

A, 2016: 193; Yonezawa & Shimmi, 2015: 174). These internationalization policy initiatives can be divided into two main categories, internationalization abroad and internationalization at home (Knight, 2004: 16).

2.1. Internationalization abroad

Internationalization abroad concerns policies and activities that occur overseas or across borders, rather than in the home university (Knight, 2004: 16). This typically involves sending students or faculty overseas for varying periods of time to become ‘internationalized’. The assumption is that these internationalized individuals will subsequently return to their home institutions to become resources of internationalization on their own campuses.

Japan first started to send students overseas during the Meiji era (1868-1912) when elite young men and some women were sent to Western countries to gain knowledge that would help modernize the nation. During this period study abroad became established and returnee students became future leaders of the country (Kuwamura, 2009: 190; Maruyama, 2011: 1). Later, after Japan’s defeat in World War II, scholarships were created for short-term exchange, such as the Fulbright and the Rotary Club scholarships (Maruyama, 2011: 2; Huang, 2006: 105).

Today, study abroad is regarded as a means of equipping young people with cross-cultural understandings and enhancing foreign language proficiency to enable them to perform well in our globalized world (Asaoka & Yano, 2009: 174). While the number of Japanese students studying abroad increased considerably in the 1980s and 1990 (from 18,066 in 1983 to 82,945 in 2004), it then began to decline, hitting a low of 57,501 in 2011 (Yonezawa Y. and Yonezawa A., 2016: 193). Reasons given to explain the decrease in students studying overseas since 2004, despite government initiatives aimed at increasing the number of outbound students, are the difficulty of finding a job in Japan after returning home; the cost associated with studying abroad; and ‘introversion among the Japanese youth today’ (Maruyama, 2011: 5). With fewer Japanese young people going to study overseas, attention has shifted to providing more opportunities for internationalization at home.

2.2. Internationalization at home

Knight (2004: 16-17) defines internationalization at home as policies and activities that happen on the home campuses, which includes internationalizing curricula in order to attract inward student mobility. In recent years the attention of the Japanese government, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has prioritized internationalization at home strategies in the HE sector. In this section, we offer a brief overview of the historical background to inbound student mobility and then focus on recent policy seeking to internationalize Japanese university campuses.

Japan welcomed its first international student in 1881, when a Korean national came to study

at Keio University. Thereafter, the number of inbound students rose quickly, reaching 10,000 by 1906 (Maruyama, 2011:2). With the country emerging as a ‘model of modernization’ following its victories in the Sino-Japanese (1894-1895) and the Japanese-Russo (1904-1905) wars, Japan became an attractive destination for Chinese students (Maruyama, 2011:2). The literature is relatively silent about flows of students into Japan during the period of colonialism and military expansion, but a government scholarship system was established after World War II in order to compensate for wartime activities and to promote peace and understanding in the region (Maruyama, 2011:2).

The number of international students coming to Japan began to increase again during the period of rapid economic growth. Japan attracted 3,003 international students in 1964 and by 1976 this figure had risen to 5,671 (Yonezawa Y. & Yonezawa A., 2016: 194). In 1971, the OECD in a report entitled *Reviews of National Policies for Education: Japan* called on Japan, as a developed nation, to make a greater contribution to international education by enrolling more foreign students into Japanese universities. The response of the government was to make internationalization of Japanese HE a ‘high priority’ (Yonezawa Y. & Yonezawa A., 2016: 194).

Yonezawa noted in 2009 that Japanese universities had relied in the postwar period on the individual initiative of faculty members and researchers to internationalize campuses, educational content and research (Yonezawa, 2009: 199). There has been little in the way of systematic strategy to engineer internationalization, however conceived, in Japanese universities prior to the 1980s. It is therefore noteworthy that since the 1980s the Japanese government has pushed universities to internationalize, albeit with a focus largely on recruitment of international students (Ninomiya, Knight and Watanabe, 2009: 117). Indeed, since the early 1980s, the recruitment of international students has played an ever more significant role in the government’s strategies for the internationalization of Japanese universities (Lassegard, 2006: 120). By increasing the number of international students, Japan started to open its universities and also its society to students from a diversity of different cultures and backgrounds and the term *kokusaika* (internationalization in Japanese) became widely used in Japanese society and HE (Eades, Goodman, & Hada, 2005 cited in Whitsed and Volet, 2010: 150; Burgess et al., 2010: 465).

Two important government initiatives have been introduced since the 1980s to increase the number of international students (Huang, 2006: 102; Kuwamura, 2009: 190). The first was the Nakasone Plan introduced in 1983 with the goal of attracting 100,000 international students to Japan by 2000. Given that in 1983 the number of international students in Japan was just 10,480 this was an ambitious plan. Nevertheless, the goal of 100,000 international students was reached in 2003. The second initiative was introduced in 2008 by the Fukuda administration with a goal of attracting 300,000 students to Japan by 2020.

The very ambitious target of the 300,000 International Student Plan required a new strategy

for student recruitment. Attention started to focus on diversification of the international student body to include talented students who may not feel inclined to spend a number of years learning the Japanese language in order to pursue their studies in Japan. In order to support the 300,000 International Student Plan the Fukuda cabinet introduced the G30 program which aimed to create platforms for internationalization at some of the leading universities. The original plan was to award G30 funding to 30 leading universities, which would each work to expand the provision of ETPs and further enhance internationalization on campuses. In the first round, 13 universities were selected, all leading institutions. A second round of funding, although planned, never came to fruition as a change of administration saw a massive scaling back of the project (Bradford, 2013: 226; Yamamoto and Ishikura, forthcoming).

The G30 funding required universities to have established an overseas office if they wanted to apply and to then forward plans for developing full ETPs at undergraduate level (Yonezawa, 2009: 208; Burgess et al., 2010: 467; Hashimoto, 2013: 26-27; Brown, 2014: 52). Scholarship funding for G30 undergraduates was established (Ninomiya, Knight and Watanabe, 2009: 123) by directing hitherto funding away from the graduate to undergraduate level.

Following on from this, in 2013 the government introduced the Project for the Promotion of Global Human Resource Development (Global 30 Plus) which funded 42 universities to develop programs to send students overseas, but also to further internationalize universities at home. This also included support for the expansion of EMI courses and the improvement of English language classes (Brown, 2014: 52). *Jinzai* is the Japanese word for human resources, and the program aimed to develop Japanese university students as global *jinzai* or global human resources (The British school in Tokyo, 2014).

More recently, in 2014, the Super Global University Project (SGU-later to be renamed the Top Global University Project) was launched with the aim of enhancing the 'international compatibility and competitiveness of higher education in Japan' by providing 'prioritized support for top world-class and highly innovative universities that can lead the internationalization of Japanese universities' (JSPS, 2016). Thirty-seven universities were selected for either Type A (13 universities) or Type B (24 universities) awards and, according to category, were tasked with establishing stronger international relationships with leading universities overseas (Brown, 2014: 52), increasing educational mobility and research linkages, as well as hiring dramatically more foreign faculty members (East Asia Forum, 2014). Project funding is for ten years.

These internationalization policies are acting as *pull* factors for increasing the number of international students coming to study in Japan. The number of internationally mobile students from neighbouring East Asian countries, especially China, has grown dramatically in recent years. Japan has emerged a major destination in the region for internationally mobile students (Yonezawa Y. & Yonezawa A., 2016: 192). The following section moves on to describe the number and characteristics of international students in Japan.

3. A Statistical Overview of Trends in International Student Recruitment

While the 100,000 International Student Policy resulted in a gradual increase in incoming students, recent initiatives aimed at achieving the target of 300,000 international students resulted in a sudden upturn (Table 1). Between 2011 and 2013 there was a decline in incoming students, largely due to the fallout of the triple disaster in the Tohoku region, thereafter the annual overall increase in international students (HEIs and Japanese language schools) has been quite dramatic. Nevertheless, the percentage increase in students attending HEIs accounts for a much smaller percentage of the overall increase than those enrolled in Japanese language schools.

The majority of international students studying in Japanese HEIs and Japanese language schools are from Asia. In 2014, 92.7 percent of students were from Asian countries (Yonezawa Y. & Yonezawa A., 2016: 192). Japan has long been a popular destination for students from China and South Korea, but recently there has also been an increase in students coming from South East Asia (Table 2). While the number of students attending HEIs and Japanese language schools from China has increased over the past 10 years, Chinese students account for a smaller percentage of the overall international student body today. This reflects dramatic increases in students coming to Japan to study from other Asian countries, especially Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia and Nepal. It is important to note that none of the major sending countries use either Japanese or English as a first language (L1), therefore second-language learning issues remain even with the move to expand EMI courses and ETPs.

Table 1- The Growth and Percentage Increase in the Number of International Students in Japan, 2011-2015

| Year* | Number of students in HEIs and Japanese language schools | Annual increase | Annual % change | Number of students in HEIs | Annual increase | Annual % change |
|-------|--|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2011 | 163,697 | — | — | 138,075 | -3,699 | -2.6% |
| 2012 | 161,848 | -1,849 | -1.1% | 137,756 | -319 | -0.2% |
| 2013 | 168,145 | 6,297 | 3.9% | 135,519 | -2,237 | -1.6% |
| 2014 | 184,155 | 16,010 | 9.5% | 139,185 | 3,666 | 2.7% |
| 2015 | 208,379 | 24,224 | 13.2% | 152,062 | 3,666 | 9.3% |

Source: JASSO, 2016a

*As of May 1 for each year

International students who come to Japan to study are often enrolling in Arts courses that are language intensive. In 2005, for example, the Social Sciences were the most popular field for

international students, but in 2010 this had shifted to the Humanities, with the Social Sciences coming second place. Since 2010, the Sciences have moved up to third place as the most popular field (from 9th place in 2005) and has stayed in this position through to today. Agriculture has also moved from being the 7th most popular major in 2005 to the 5th most popular in 2015. On the other hand, Art, Teacher Training and Medicine have lost their popularity since 2010 (JASSO 2016b).

Local public universities accept few international students (2.6% at undergraduate level and 4.4% at graduate level in 2015). National universities receive a larger portion of graduate level students (61.7% in 2015) and in contrast, private universities take in the majority of international undergraduate students (81.1%) (JASSO, 2016b). This data has not changed very much over the past 15 years. Undergraduate students are more likely to study Humanities and Social Sciences; while graduate students are more likely to study Natural Sciences and technical fields (Brown, 2015). Overall, more international students are studying at undergraduate level (67,472), while there are 41,396 graduate students in Japan (JASSO 2016b).

Table 2 – Trends in the Number of International Students and Top Sending Countries Attending HEIs and Japanese Language Schools in Japan, 2005-2015

| Year | Number of students | Annual change | Five major sending countries | Number of students | Percentage |
|------|--------------------|---------------|------------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 2005 | 121,812 | 3.8% | China | 80,592 | 66% |
| | | | Republic of Korea | 15,606 | 13% |
| | | | Taiwan | 4,134 | 3% |
| | | | Malaysia | 2,114 | 2% |
| | | | Vietnam | 1,745 | 1% |
| 2010 | 141,774 | 6.8% | China | 86,173 | 61% |
| | | | Republic of Korea | 20,202 | 14% |
| | | | Taiwan | 5,297 | 4% |
| | | | Vietnam | 3,597 | 3% |
| | | | Malaysia | 2,465 | 2% |
| 2015 | 208,379 | 13.2% | China | 94,111 | 45% |
| | | | Vietnam | 38,882 | 19% |
| | | | Nepal | 16,250 | 8% |
| | | | Republic of Korea | 15,279 | 7% |
| | | | Taiwan | 7,314 | 4% |

Data sources: JASSO, 2006, 2011, and 2016a

Although some leading national universities and a few elite private universities are providing scholarship opportunities for international students, the majority of international students in Japan are privately funded. Over the past 15 years, the number of privately financed students has increased rapidly (from 45,439 in 2000 to 195,419 in 2015), however the number of students with Japanese government scholarship has changed little (from 8,930 in 2000 to 9,223 in 2015) (JASSO, 2016b).

4. The Challenges of Japanese Internationalization at Home, Improvements and Recommendations

In university world rankings Japan scores badly on indices that measure the attractiveness of universities to international students. A piece written by QS in 2012 on Japanese universities focused specifically on addressing the question why Japanese universities were failing to attract larger numbers of international students. In this piece it noted that Japan has a mature education system, a very safe environment and popular culture that is regarded as extremely attractive by young people, so the authors ask why are international students not flooding to Japan (QS Top Universities, 2012). Although recent policy appears to have accelerated the number of students coming to Japan from Asia, a key question addressed in the internationalization literature on Japanese HE is how to make the country a more attractive study destination. A number of challenges have been identified and recommendations made for improvement. We will now turn to review this literature.

4.1. The cost of living

While the costs of tuition for international students is regarded as quite competitive, the cost of living in Japan is regarded as being relatively high when compared with other countries, including the United States (QS Top Universities, 2012). Given that many students are privately funded, this may cause difficulties.

4.2. Spring university admission

Japan's academic year starts in April, which is out of step with schools, colleges and universities in many parts of the world. This results in key admissions, enrolment and graduation dates being out of line with most other countries. For students who intend to be globally mobile, this can create problems if decisions have to be made regards an offer in one country before any screening has even begun in another. Some students also have to wait for almost a year between graduating and starting a program in a Japanese university. At the end of the program, graduation often occurs too late for applying for jobs or graduate programs in other countries, resulting in another gap period being required. Japanese universities are aware of this issue and some are

expanding programs that can accommodate autumn admissions, with The University of Tokyo being an often cited example. At the same time, some universities are unwilling to accommodate autumn admissions, with Kyoto University being a member of this camp (QS Top Universities, 2012).

4.3. The quality of international students

Attracting 'high quality' international students has been identified as desirable but another challenge. There is concern that Japan is attracting students of relatively low quality (Kuwamura, 2009:189 ; Lassegard, 2006: 119 ; Horie, 2003: 77). The discourse of 'quality' here focuses on the perceived readiness of students for Japanese HE studies in terms of their skills and knowledge at the time they enter university (Lassegard, 2006: 122). While the main measures of quality for domestic students has also been perceived skills and knowledge at entry point, high trust has been placed on the National Centre Test for University Admissions (Centre Test) results and *hensachi* scores generated by *juku* or institutions offering supplementary education. There is unease about measuring and ensuring quality in the case of students with diverse backgrounds offering test scores from a wide variety of systems (Yamamoto, 2016).

The discourse around perceived problems relating to student quality can be divided into two areas: perceived problems caused by a lack of Japanese language proficiency, and/or problems caused by insufficient academic knowledge and skills (Kuwamura, 2009: 196-197). In both cases a deficit model is employed where the concept of quality is loaded with expectations that student will have the skills to function in the Japanese system *as it is*, rather than the system being adjusted to enable incoming students to develop and realize potential. Kuwamura (2009: 196) notes that one quality issue is that many international students do not have sufficient Japanese language proficiency to study comfortably here. Even Chinese students, who make up the majority of the student body and share a similar writing system, *kanji* or Chinese characters, are generally perceived to be lacking. As the statistical data above makes clear, many international students attend Japanese language schools before enrolling at universities, yet a lack of Japanese language proficiency continues to be regarded as an obstacle to ensuring quality education. For students without a *kanji* background, issues around language loom even larger. While some may be taking courses in English, others may be struggling to understand in regular Japanese classes where few adjustments are made. In this regard, Kuwamura, (2009: 196-197) argues, somewhat idealistically, that there is a need to develop curricula based on each group of international students' special needs and requirements. With a traditional 'chalk and talk' method of pedagogy prevailing backed by seminars that tend to focus on translation of texts from English to Japanese, any deficiencies of students are arguably exacerbated by the lack of innovation in pedagogy to welcome international students. Sadly, the literature tends to represent students as deficient, rather than the teaching and learning environment offered to them.

4.4. Internationalization of Japanese students

Another issue raised in the literature is the perceived lack of English language skills and international mindedness of Japanese students (Eades et al., 2005; Mcveigh, 2002 in Yonezawa, 2009: 205). Given that for the majority of Japanese students, classes and daily communications take place largely in their native Japanese language (Yonezawa, 2009: 210), there may be little incentive to build on the English they have learned in school. The fact that Japanese test takers score notoriously badly on the TOEFL test compared to their counterparts in other Asian countries is taken as further evidence of language deficit (Miyahara & Yamamoto, 1999 cited in Pritchard, 2006: 142). The relevance of the test content of TOEFL and the artificiality of the setting for assessing English proficiency is not generally questioned.

Several reasons are offered to explain the reported problem of Japanese students' lack of English language proficiency. Firstly, 'bad' English teaching in schools is held up as one issue. It is argued that although English language education in Japanese schools has been the subject of a number of reforms in recent years, it is noted that students still have too few opportunities for productive use of the English language (Pritchard, 2006: 153). One recommendation is focusing on English as an International Language (EIL) in schools, which means promoting a 'de-Anglo-Americanized' English as a means of expressing indigenous values in international communication' (Hino, 2009: 103). Yet the practicalities of this remain unclear. It is argued that Japanese people would be able to communicate in English more proficiently if they were expressing their own values through a form of 'Japanese English' (Hino, 2009: 116).

The lack of 'international mindedness' of Japanese students is also raised as an issue. There are calls for courses in intercultural understanding for Japanese students to expand their worldview (Kuwamura, 2009: 200) and enhance their understanding of other cultures (Brooks and Waters, 2011: 151). Another recommendation is to offer courses on intercultural communication that both domestic and international students can earn credits by taking, and then supporting Japanese students to communicate in English in the class (Morita, 2013: 39). While suggestions abound, there is little. Serious theorization of what it means to be internationally minded or culturally competent.

4.5. Faculty and professional internationalization

The above mentioned QS Top University report also noted the failure of Japanese universities to employ sufficient numbers of international faculty and administrators (QS Top University, 2012). Since the first Japanese universities were established in the Meiji period, it has been recognized that a small body of international faculty are required to support the international dimensions of teaching, learning and research. Even with the expansion of internationalization activities, foreign staff continue to make up a very small proportion of all faculty. In 2012, the most recent year for

which data is available, fulltime foreign faculty members (tenured and contract-based) accounted for just 3.8 percent of all faculty members (MEXT, 2013). It is noted with concern in the literature that there has been relatively little interest in recruiting international staff, and those that have been hired frequently face different, arguably discriminatory, treatment compared to regular faculty and administrative staff (Kuwamura, 2009: 197). As ‘faculty members are one of the most important and major “engines” to simulate internationalization of higher education nowadays’ (Huang, 2009: 157), the literature calls for an increase in international faculty, especially given the increase in the number of EMI courses and ETPs (Goodman, 2010 cited in Burgess et al., 2010: 470). The Top Global University funding is attempting to address this issue and we can expect an increase in foreign faculty in leading universities in coming years.

In order to attract more foreign faculty, it is argued that a more flexible system of employment is needed (Kuwamura, 2009: 197-198) as well as changes to the campus environment. A more diversified faculty, it is argued, would not only allow Japan to secure its place more easily in the global knowledge economy (Yonezawa, Akiba and Hirouchi, 2009: 126) it would also aid the development of the intercultural competencies of Japanese professors at home (Kuwamura, 2009: 200). Again, these terms are used with little reflection or critical understanding.

4.6. Professionals in international education field

There are not enough professionals in the field of international education it is argued (Kuwamura, 2008; Yokota et al. 2006 cited in Kuwamura, 2009: 198). As a result of a shortage of experienced staff in international student offices in universities there is inefficiency. All of the staff of international offices, international centers, and academic professors are working with little coordination to cover everything related to international students and internationalization processes at Japanese universities. This causes overlap and complications of job responsibilities among staff and faculty. It has been suggested that more professional international staff are needed, as well as better training including professional training in international student advising, cultural exchange and language training in order to better support the various needs of international students (Kuwamura, 2009: 198-199).

4.7. Japanese government’s control over internationalization

It is noted with concern in the literature that internationalization of HE in Japan is very much controlled by the government (Kuwamura, 2009: 199; Yonezawa, 2009: 206; Yonezawa, Akiba and Hirouchi, 2009: 138), and that the main focus of its initiatives is increasing the number of international students. With the focus on quantitative issues, there has been less focus on issues surrounding the preparation of the campus environment for increased diversity, including training academic staff and training experts in the international education field. It is argued that these

qualitative aspects have been left to individual institutions to deal with. As a result, it has been recommended that Japanese universities collaborate with their domestic and foreign counterparts, rather than just follow along with the government's internationalization plans (Kuwamura, 2009: 200). It is suggested that Japanese universities and academics should make autonomous initiatives for the internationalization of universities (Yonezawa, 2009: 199), and the institutions themselves should plan to become international based on their own priorities (Tanikawa, 2012: 2). In addition, there is underfunding of internationalization initiatives, with universities relying on short term, competitive funding awards from the government to further, often top down, internationalization strategies (Yonezawa, 2008 cited in Yonezawa 2009: 211). Most Japanese universities including national, local-public and some private, do not directly gain any financial benefits from internationalization, and in most cases it is viewed as costly with few returns (Yonezawa, Akiba and Hirouchi, 2009: 137).

4.8. Lack of attention to the intercultural dimensions of Japanese universities

It is argued that there is a lack of intercultural development in Japanese universities (Whitsed and Volet, 2010: 147). In Japanese universities, it is argued, in/out (*uchi/soto*) metaphors may make international students and faculty feel like outsiders (*soto*) and that this may limit opportunities for intercultural understanding. To transcend this perceived cultural inwardness, it is proposed that new metaphors should be invented to promote intercultural understanding, and to decrease the notions to otherness in the light of changing definitions of *kokusaika* or internationalization (Whitsed and Volet, 2010: 159-163). Yet, few concrete examples are offered for achieving such a transformation.

4.9. ‘Asianisation’ rather than ‘internationalization’

Many international students in Japan are from Asia, with the majority from neighbouring China. Although Japan is starting to be able attract students from different parts of the world, it is argued that there continues to be a need to make more efforts to increase the diversity of Japanese campuses (Burgess et al., 2010: 465).

5. Providing Programs in English as an Internationalization Strategy

A major strategy in international student recruitment in non-Anglophone countries is to create courses that use English as the medium of instruction or degree programs that are taught in English (Korenov, 2012: 1). A recent report from the British Council and the University of Oxford points out that in non-Anglophone countries worldwide, EMI is widely being used for teaching academic disciplinary subjects such as sciences. In the report, EMI was defined as, the ‘use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of

the majority of the population is not English' (Dearden, 2014: 4).

In countries in both Europe and Asia, EMI courses and EPTs at HE level have increased dramatically over the past two decades (Macaro, 2015: 4; Bradford, 2012: 1). Unlike many Asian countries, Japan escaped colonization and was able to build its own HE traditions and develop scholarship in the vernacular (Ishikawa, 2011). Use of English as a medium of instruction was, until recently, limited to a few liberal arts offerings at universities with direct ties to the West. Waseda University (a leading private university) started using EMI from 1963, and Kyushu University (a former imperial university and now a National University Corporation or NCU) began offering some EMI courses from 1994 (Tsuneyoshi, 2005 cited in Kuwamura, 2009: 195). A small number of universities founded by Christians, such as the International Christian University and Sophia University, both in Tokyo, created a niche for themselves by offering of dual language education from as early as the 1950s.

Largely in connection with short-term exchange programs, there was an increase in EMI offerings at Japanese universities in the late 1990s and early 2000s. By 2007, EMI courses were being offered at 30 national, 35 private and one municipal (public) university at the undergraduate level, and at 42 universities (national, public and private combined) at the graduate level. Yet, there were still few full ETPs. By 2013, about 25 universities in Japan were providing ETPs for undergraduate students (Brown, 2014: 9), but at graduate level the number was lower. In leading research universities, developing EMI and ETPs at graduate level is regarded as important in order to attract talented graduate students (Kuwamura, 2009: 195).

The launching of the Global 30 project in 2009 is notable as it required leading national universities to develop full ETP provision as part of the government's internationalization strategy. Often without any real commitment to developing ETPs, leading universities at very short notice (around one month between details of the funding being made public and the submission date) put together and submitted plans for undergraduate programs that would be delivered totally in English. The 13 universities that were awarded the G30 funding in late summer 2009 were suddenly tasked with developing their initial plans into a full degree curriculum, recruiting students in upper secondary education directly from overseas, often with no previous experience of doing this, hiring faculty who could teach in English and creating an environment conducive to study for students with no or little Japanese ability. The G30 project created considerable interest nationally and internationally, and generated research outputs on EMI and ETPs focusing on this initiative (see for example, Bradford, 2013; Burgess, C., Gibson, I., Klaphake, J. and Selzer, M., 2010; Ishikawa, M. 2011; Ishikura, 2015; Yamamoto and Ishikura, forthcoming).

With the Japanese government's focus largely on quantitative issues (i.e. increasing the number of international students and EMI courses and EPT programs), it is suggested that insufficient attention has been paid to the qualitative aspects of internationalizing campuses. Some universities

face challenges related to finding English-speaking faculty, providing a suitable study and living environment for students who come to Japan with little Japanese language proficiency, and assuring the quality of education (Tsuneyoshi, 2005 in Kuwamura, 2009: 195). For the increasing number of international students in Japan studying in English, providing sufficient support and planning for program improvements that take into account their academic, linguistic and cultural background is seen as necessary (Andrade, 2009: 221), and there is growing recognition that there is a need for more qualitative research for better program evaluation metrics in this area.

6. Perceptions of the Challenges of EMI and ETPs in Japan

Internationalization at home via EMI and ETPs is seen to raise particular challenges. Tsuneyoshi (2005) divided the challenges in implementing EMI in short-term study abroad programs in Japan into three categories: linguistic, cultural and structural. Bradford (2013: 230) has used these categories in a new form to investigate the G30 undergraduate all-English programs. However, Bradford points out that 'there is overlap among these categories, and many linguistic and cultural challenges lead to structural challenges for HEIs' (Bradford, 2013: 230):

6.1 Linguistic challenges

Outside of university settings, English is not utilized to any significant degree in daily Japanese life (Morita, 2010 cited in Morita 2012: 2). The majority of Japanese people use only Japanese language for their daily communication (Seargent, 2009 cited in Morita, 2012: 2). Therefore, even if international students can get by only using English language at their universities, they will still need Japanese language for their daily life, intercultural interactions and for making friends outside campus (Morita, 2012: 2). In reality, however, even students studying in English may find a lack of Japanese proficiency a hurdle to overcome even on campus (Rakhshandehroo, 2014).

Bradford notes that there are 'concerns that the quality of education is compromised when English is a foreign instructional language for both the students and teachers. Among these concerns is the fact that non-native English speaking students have difficulty in coping with content presented in English' (Bradford, 2013: 230). With relatively few foreign faculty, it can be hard to secure sufficient faculty who are proficient or comfortable teaching in English (Kuwamura, 2009: 195). It has been estimated that it takes four to five times more effort for Japanese professors used to the Japanese medium to teach in English compared to Japanese (Tsuneyoshi, 2005 cited in Bradford, 2013: 233).

The above problems are further complicated by the fact that many international students are non-native English speakers (NNES). There are concerns that the quality of education and learning will be lowered in EMI classrooms. It is argued that to raise the quality of EMI courses,

'high standards of English language are essential' (Andrade, 2009: 222) for both instructors and international students. Nevertheless, little in the way of monitoring data has been collected to evaluate what is happening on the ground.

6.2. Cultural challenges

In attempts to implement EMI, universities are receiving students and professors from more diverse backgrounds than previously. While this is part of the motivation of offering courses in English, there is a strong sense in the literature that it also creates many problems. It is argued that diverse classrooms may present significant problems and challenges for educators if there hitherto experience is largely with teaching relatively homogeneous groups of students. Some commentators point to the need to create interventions that would promote the intercultural and interpersonal skills of educators and international students (Whitsed and Volet, 2011 cited in Bradford, 2013: 233).

6.3. Structural challenges

Structural challenges include challenges related to the administration and management of the EMI courses and ETPs. For instance, Tsuneyoshi argues that these 'challenges lie in finding international education professionals who can cope with the pressures of adopting English and working with a diverse population' (Tsuneyoshi, 2005 cited in Bradford, 2013: 233). Here she is referring to professional administrative staff able to promote and support international education. Japanese university systems may exhibit administrative inflexibility when introducing significant change in pedagogical approaches or in dealing with more diverse student populations. Tsuneyoshi highlights a number of problems inherent in administrative systems in Japanese universities such as the requirement for administrative staff to change job assignments on a rotating basis – usually every two years (Tsuneyoshi, 2005 cited in Bradford, 2013: 234). Therefore, finding suitable staff with the language and cultural skills that can work consistently and over a long-term with international students and faculty can be difficult (Bradford, 2013: 234).

In a recent study, Bradford (2016:9-13) sub-divided these structural challenges into two different categories: administrative and managerial challenges, and institutional challenges. Administrative and managerial challenges are associated with 'English language assessment policies' (Rivers, 2010 cited in Bradford, 2016: 9), 'the job rotation system of administrative staff' (Tsuneyoshi, 2005 cited in Bradford, 2016: 9), and 'the recruitment and retention of teaching faculty' (Lassegard, 2006; Tsuneyoshi, 2005 cited in Bradford, 2016: 9). Institutional challenges are related to the way the EMI 'is perceived from the outside, how it relates to the rest of the university, and how it maintains its own standards' (Bradford, 2016: 11).

7. Areas Highlighted as Needing Attention

In order to confront the challenges in implementing EMI, Bradford concludes with the following recommendations:

‘Japan should direct attention to solving linguistic, cultural and structural challenges.

Both students and faculty involved in the EMI programs should receive *support* to help overcome linguistic and cultural challenges. Valuable elements of this *support* could be *language and academic skills classes for students*, and *intercultural teaching skills classes* for faculty. In addition, faculty should ensure their continued engagement with the international academic community through participation in conferences and *international collaborations*. In order to address structural challenges, universities should *adjust administration practices*, including those related to administrative staff and faculty employment, to enable positive outcomes for EMI programs’ (Bradford, 2013: 235, emphasis added).

In terms of Japanese universities’ support, Ishikawa (2011: 207-209) points out that from the late 1980s to 2000s in Asian countries the policies concerning the support of international students underwent a shift from paternalism (traditional aid approach) to global competitiveness (trade approach). While paternalism may appear student friendly initially, the student is often left in the position of having to rely on the benevolence of others to steer his or her way through the university system. The global competitiveness model positions the students as a client and services are provided to ensure they can autonomously pursue their studies. Ishikawa makes the critical observation that in 2011 Japanese universities had still not moved away from the paternalistic model, especially the national universities. She argues that taking a trade perspective would lead to more efficient and suitable support for autonomous students than the paternalistic model which guides students ‘like parents’ (Ishikawa, 2011: 209). Based on Ishikawa’s model (2011), we can perhaps expect a shift in Japanese universities’ support systems to provide a setting where international students have greater autonomy.

8. Conclusions

In the context of a shortage of literature on international student support, especially language support, in Japanese universities, and with the rapid increase of the number of international students in the recent years, this paper builds on the existing literature on the internationalization of Japanese universities. We began by identifying the background to internationalization policy in the HE sector in Japan, and followed this by giving an overview of the challenges that have been

identified in the literature along with recommendations. We offered a specific focus on policy around EMI and ETPs as strategies to diversify international student recruitment. We then critically discussed the challenges identified in the literature.

We have argued in this paper that the 300,000 International Student plan is an ambitious and that by introducing EMI and ETPs a particular set of challenges has been created that key stakeholders need to address. These challenges have been identified in the literature as cultural, linguistic and structural. The top down approach to internationalization and the inflexibility of some university administrative systems are seen to create specific structural challenges that cannot be addressed sufficiently with goodwill and hard work. We note the shortage of literature on international student experiences, especially those studying in English, and their specific needs in Japanese universities. We call for more evaluative research on the efficacy and appropriateness of current support mechanisms. In this regard, this paper calls for more research that reflects the experiences of all key stakeholders so we can evaluate not only how current internationalization policies are impacting students, but also faculty and administrative staff.

Finally, we end on a relatively optimistic note, pointing to the extent to which the challenges raised by the introduction of EMI and ETPs have created a dynamic towards internationalization in the sense of opening up Japanese universities, with all they have to offer, to a more diverse student and faculty body, who will be able to work, contribute and enjoy, hopefully, in this more inclusive environment that is in the making.

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A Review Essay on Internationalization Strategies in Japanese Universities with a Focus on English Language Support

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This paper offers a review of the English-language literature on internationalization policy since the 1980s in Japanese universities focusing particularly on the use of English Medium Instruction (EMI) as a strategy for 'internationalization at home'. The paper begins by offering a broad overview of government policy aimed at internationalizing universities. Next we give a statistical overview of trends in international student recruitment, highlighting recent shifts that coincide with English Taught Program (ETP) and EMI course expansion. From this, we explore in greater depth the Global 30 and Super Global University policies that have specifically targeted the expansion of EMI courses and ETPs. Finally, we critically review the literature that has emerged in response to this shift. The conclusion we draw from this review is that while significant progress has been made in creating an environment conducive to study in English in leading Japanese universities, the gains are fragile relying largely on the dedication of key staff and the continuation of temporary funding prioritizing increased international students and faculty recruitment through the expansion of ETPs and EMI.

Key words:Internationalization at home, English-medium Instruction, English taught programs, higher education policy