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PERSPECTIVES FROM JAPANESE INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUPPORT PROGRAMS/SERVICES AT

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I MĀNOA

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We certify that we have read this thesis and that, in our opinion, it is satisfactory in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Education in Educational Foundations.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the difficulties that Japanese international graduate students encounter at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), and the ways they adjust to their new environment. Qualitative research is conducted to explore the strengths and weaknesses of the various programs and support systems at UHM from the perspectives of these students. Three research questions guide this study: 1) What difficulties may Japanese international graduate students face at UHM? 2) What programs and support services have they used at UHM? How effective have these programs and services been for them? 3) What kinds of support would be helpful for these students to adapt to UHM and life in Hawai'i? Interviews are conducted with six Japanese international graduate students attending UHM. Based on their perspectives, recommendations are offered to staff and faculty who serve this population. A literature review is also included about the topic and to support the findings.

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Chapter I

Introduction

At the end of World War II, according to Selvadurai (1998), "many nations began to recognize education as a national priority with a conscious intent to strengthen economic growth, maintain political stability and increase national prestige" (p. 1). During that time, increased funding became available to universities and institutions from sources such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) for the purpose of international education (Johnston & Edelstein, 1993). These additional funds contributed to the growth in the number of international students in the U.S. after World War II (McIntire & Willer, 1992).

In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower endorsed international education. He stated, "[T]he exchange of students . . . should be vastly expanded. . . . Information and education are powerful forces in support of peace. Just as war begins in the minds of men, so does peace" ("Quotes," n.d., p. 1). In 1977, President Jimmy Carter provided further encouragement, saying "Only by knowing and understanding each other's experiences can we find common ground on which we can examine and resolve our differences. . . . As the world becomes more and more interdependent, such mutual understanding becomes increasingly vital" ("Quotes," n.d., p. 1).

With improved funding and national support from the U.S., more international students enrolled in higher education institutions in the U.S. According to the Institute of International Education (2005), the number of international students increased more than 16.5 times from 1954 to 2004; during the 1954-1955 academic year, there were 34,232

international students enrolled in the U.S. and by the 2004-2005 academic year, there were 565,039 international students enrolled. Of the Asian international students in the 2005-2006 academic year, Japan ranked as the fourth highest nation in sending its students abroad; India, China and the Republic of Korea ranked first, second, and third respectively. Huntley (1993) believes that an even greater number of Asian graduate students will study in the U.S., in the years to come.

At the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), the majority of international students were from Asia with the highest number, 592, coming from Japan. More than one-third of the international student population was from Japan and more than half of the international students, or 1,011, were graduate students ("Fall 2006 Fact Sheet," 2006).

However, as a result of the tragedy of September 11, 2001, a downward shift occurred nationwide in the number of international students in the U.S. According to the Institute of International Education (2005), there was a less than one percent increase in international students at higher education institutions in the U.S. from the academic years of 2001-2002 to 2002-2003. Prior to this, international student enrollment in the U.S had been increasing since the 1996-1997 academic year. In addition, ten large research institutions reported a decrease in the number of international students after many years of steady increase (Jacobson, 2003). The Institute of International Education (2005) international student report reflects this decrease in enrollment in the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 academic years.

The catastrophe of September 11, 2001 resulted in greater concern about terrorism. To monitor terrorist activity, the Department of Homeland Security's

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(formerly Immigration and Naturalization Services) Immigration and Customs

Enforcement (ICE) division implemented the Student and Exchange Visitor Information

System, more commonly known as SEVIS. Under the Patriot Act, the government

mandates that all international students, including their spouses and dependents, obtain

student visa petitions, or I-20s. These I-20s are inputted into the SEVIS database

(Hammer, 2003). The intent of SEVIS is to inform Homeland Security officials of what

foreign students are enrolled at U.S. institutions, the dates of students' U.S. entry and

exit, and their purpose for being in the U.S. (Arnone, 2003). If UHM does not comply

with SEVIS regulations, it could be prohibited from enrolling international students

("SEVIS FAQ," 2002). This strict mandate has caused college officials concern that

international students will not want to attend universities and colleges in the U.S.

(Arnone, 2003). With this strict policy, international students may find institutions in

other English-speaking countries such as Canada, Britain, and Australia more appealing

(Jacobson, 2003).

Despite the regulations of SEVIS and the events of September 11, 2001,

international student enrollment, which includes those from Japan, has been gradually

increasing at UHM. While there was more of an increase in students from 2001-2003,

compared to 2004-2006, student enrollment has been slowly increasing ("Fall 2001 Fact

Sheet, 2001;" "Fall 2002 Fact Sheet, 2002;" Fall 2003 Fact Sheet, 2003;" Fall 2004 Fact

Sheet, 2004;" Fall 2005 Fact Sheet, 2005;" Fall 2006 Fact Sheet, 2006"). International

students increased from 1,471 during the fall of 2001 to 1,779 in the fall of 2006.

Similarly, Japanese students who accounted for about 29% (421) of the student body in

the fall of 2001 accounted for 33% (592) in the fall of 2006 ("Fall 2001 Fact Sheet,

2001;" "Fall 2006 Fact Sheet," 2006). Therefore, Japanese students have constituted about one-third of the international student population at UHM.

To accommodate the needs of international students at UHM, programs and services exist. Such programs at UHM consist of the Hawai'i English Language Program (HELP), New Intensive Courses in English (NICE), and the Outreach College's International Bridge Program. Services at UHM include the International Student Services (ISS), the Office of International Education (OIE), and the English Language Institute (ELI). The programs and services used by the students that I interviewed will be discussed later in this paper.

1.1   Definitions

In this paper, I use the following terms as explained below. The term *international students* refers to "individuals who temporarily reside in a country other than their country of citizenship or permanent residence in order to participate in international exchange as students. . ." (Paige, 1990, p. 162). According to Surdam and Collins (1984), *adaptation* means "the satisfaction of those needs related to survival, or the process whereby an individual accommodates to an environment" (p. 241). Finally, Thomas and Althen (1989) define *cultural adjustment* as "a psychological process . . . [that] focuses on the attitudinal and emotional adjustment of the individual to a new environment" (p. 220). In this paper I will use the terms *adaptation* and *cultural adjustment* to mean adjusting to a new culture and surroundings.

1.2   Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to obtain an understanding of the difficulties that Japanese international graduate students encounter at UHM and the ways that they adjust to their new environment. This research will also explore the strengths and weaknesses of the various programs and support systems at UHM from the perspective of these Japanese graduate students. I became aware of these students' concerns through the process of listening to and talking with them. Although there is some research that has been conducted on the perspectives of Japanese students at U.S. colleges and universities, there have not been many studies done on these students at UHM. Based on their perspectives, I would like to offer recommendations to staff and faculty who serve this population. With this study, I hope to shed some light on the experiences of Japanese students and the effectiveness of the programs that are intended to support them.

1.3   Research Questions

To accomplish the stated purpose, there are three research questions that will guide this study: 1) What difficulties do Japanese international graduate students face at UHM? 2) What programs and support services have they used at UHM? How effective have these programs and services been for them? 3) What kinds of support would be helpful for these students to adapt to UHM and life in Hawai'i?

1.4   Limitations

A major limitation in this research was the language barrier between me and the interviewees. During the tape recordings of the interviews, interviewees had the option

of expressing their thoughts in their native language, Japanese, which would later be translated by a third party.

Another limitation of this study was its focus on only Japanese graduate students rather than the broader scope of international students. Since I had more access to Japanese international graduate students, these were the students I interviewed.

1.5 Background and Beliefs of Researcher

While living in Japan for a few years, I taught English to high school, undergraduate, and graduate students. Most of my students were first-year Japanese university students, some of whom were planning to study abroad. In speaking with them, I learned of some of their concerns regarding how they would adapt to living in a new country and culture. These concerns caused the students to feel anxious and prompted them to think of how to prepare for their transition to a new culture.

My own experiences of living in a foreign country included adapting to a new culture and language. Fortunately, I received support from my teaching colleagues and staff. I began this study because I was concerned about the type of support that international students received at their universities in the U.S. and how they were able to adapt to living in the U.S. Having lived in Japan and worked with Japanese students there, I have a strong interest in these students.

As a researcher, it was important to be aware of my own biases. Merriam (2001) states that knowing one's biases increases the internal validity of the research. By recognizing my biases, I was more conscious of how I asked questions during the

interviews. I tried to keep the questions that I asked and the observations that I made from being based on my own preconceived beliefs.

Throughout the study, the main bias I am aware of is the empathy that I feel for those living abroad, such as in the U.S., without the language skills to speak English well. I experienced similar struggles while living in Japan. I found it frustrating at times not to be understood because English was barely spoken in the community. This often caused me to feel discouraged and I developed a sense of inadequacy.

Based on my experiences as a non-native speaker living and teaching in Japan, I came to the conclusion that many international students also faced this language barrier at some point. My hope is that by acknowledging the voices of Japanese international graduate students at UHM, changes could be made and UHM could ease the adjustment for future international students. In addition, I hope to better understand how effective the programs and services at UHM were in helping these students through their experiences.

Chapter II

Literature Review

2.1 Contributions of International Students

This chapter will focus on international students' problems and concerns and, more specifically, Japanese graduate students, as articulated in the academic literature. In this first section, I will discuss the benefits that international students offer to the United States. In the following section I will discuss how international students adjust to the new culture and deal with their problems with academics and culture. In addition, this study will compare the situations of international graduate students, in comparison with those of their undergraduate counterparts, and discuss some of their unique issues.

In general, international students in the U.S. benefit the educational institutions that they attend. Each year, international students contribute about $7 billion in U.S. revenue (Davis, 1997). This funding helps colleges and universities (Nicholson, 2001). Furthermore, international students provide an opportunity for cultural learning and exchange. In 1997, at the meeting of the American Council on Education, Harvard University President Neil Rudenstine stated, "We need those international students. . . . There is simply no substitute for direct contact with talented people from other countries and cultures. We benefit from international students; they drive research and teaching in new directions that are very fruitful" (Petersen, Briggs, Dreasher, Horner, & Nelson, 1999, p. 67).

International students also enhance faculty's teaching by sharing their personal experiences from their home country and culture, thereby expanding the students' and faculty's views of the world (Ladd & Ruby, 1999). An example of this kind of positive

cultural exchange may be seen in the case of international graduate students serving as teaching assistants (TAs). Some TAs are international graduate students who teach classes to U.S. undergraduate students (Petersen et al., 1999). International students may expand the U.S. students' views despite some dissatisfaction with their English accents.

2.2   International Students Concerns and Problems

International students share common experiences of transition, or experiencing change in their lives, while at the same time striving to achieve their educational goals (Mori, 2000). In addition, they share the experience of having left behind a social network in their home countries and needing to develop a new one in the U.S. (Lacina, 2002). These common experiences entail a variety of challenges for international students living in the U.S.

International students' major problems relate to language ability, finances, friendships, and homesickness (Wehrly, 1986). Yi, Lin and Kishimoto (2003) discuss five areas of concerns for international students: 1) academic, 2) physical, 3) financial, 4) vocational, and 5) personal and social. Academic needs consist of learning to study in a different educational system (Mau & Jepsen, 1990), understanding class lectures (Parr, Bradley & Bingi, 1992; Deressa & Beavers, 1988) doing well on essay examinations, and learning the English language (Deressa & Beavers, 1988). Physical health concerns include difficulties in communicating with medical practitioners because of insufficient English language skills (Prieto, 1995). A common financial concern for students is not being able to work off-campus due to immigration policies (Thomas & Althen, 1989). In addition, international students must pay a higher tuition because of their non-resident

status. Vocational difficulties include future employment concerns about whether they should stay in the U.S. to work after graduating, or return to their home countries (Wehrly, 1986). Lastly, personal and social struggles can cause international students to feel isolated, homesick, irritable, and fatigued (Brislin, 1981). In an analysis similar to Yi et al., Tseng and Newton (2002) identify the following four categories of adjustment for international students: 1) living-related, 2) academic, 3) socio-cultural, and 4) psychological. The general living category involves adjusting to foreign food, living accommodations, transportation, weather, finances, and health-care. To obtain academic success, as mentioned earlier, international students struggle with their English language proficiency, study skills, and adaptations to the U.S. educational system. Socio-cultural difficulties include the ways in which international students deal with culture shock, discrimination, new and conflicting customs and values, and differences in social activities. Finally, psychological struggles involve overcoming feelings of homesickness, loneliness and alienation, hopelessness, inferiority, frustration, and identity crises (Tseng & Newton, 2002).

Compared to their undergraduate counterparts, international graduate students mainly struggle with depression, time management, and relationships with romantic partners. International undergraduate students are mostly concerned with academics or grades, anxiety, and depression (Yi et al., 2003). Quinn (1975) finds that international doctoral students are less socially successful than international undergraduate students. This may be because graduate students gather in their own ethnic enclaves, which creates additional distance from Americans (Huntley, 1993). In addition, international graduate students who are over 30 years old may experience greater academic struggles than their

younger, undergraduate counterparts (Han, 1975). Solomon and Young (1987) assert that those graduate students who have not been in the educational system for a period of time may struggle with academic adjustment.

For international graduate students, finances are also a concern as they generally pay the higher cost of out-of-state tuition. Some of them pay their own tuition, and 65% of them rely on their families for their educational funding (Lin & Yi, 1997). However, on a positive note, international graduate students do have more opportunities to receive scholarships, fellowships, and assistantships than do international undergraduate students (Selvadurai, 1998).

Overall, much research has concluded that international students experience language and cultural problems while studying in the U.S. (Haydon, 2003; Heggins III & Jackson, 2003; Selvadurai, 1998). Therefore, success is dependent upon English proficiency skills and the ability to adapt to the host culture (Nicholson, 2001). Since problems with academic and cultural adjustments are prevalent in the lives of international students, I will discuss both in further detail.

2.2.1   Causes of Academic Problems

Many academic problems that international students experience are caused by inadequate English proficiency and differences in learning styles and educational systems. English proficiency is a major factor contributing to academic success (Nicholson, 2001; Stoynoff, 1997). M. Y. Lee, Abd-Ella and Burks (1981) found that international students' feelings about their English language proficiency determined their ability to do well in their coursework. Also, international students with poor language

skills were less at ease with their studies than those with better skills. Heggins III and Jackson (2003) believe that students who do not have enough English language ability are not able to focus their attention when they listen to lectures or participate in class activities. According to Selvadurai (1998), research has provided evidence that one of the first barriers for international students to overcome at American colleges and universities is their insufficient English language ability. Challenges in English proficiency include difficulties in pronunciation and vocabulary (Chen, L., Isa, & Sakai, 1996), discourse patterns such as turn-taking and topic changing (Chamberlin, 1997), and the use of standard accent, idioms, and humor (Huntley, 1993).

In general, challenges in English language proficiency are prominent among Asian international students (Heikinheimo & Shute, 1986). In assessing the adjustment process of ten full-time undergraduate and graduate Asian students, of whom three were from Japan, Nicholson (2001) found that for six of the students, English language proficiency was their main difficulty in the U.S. Although international students have passed standardized English exams before entering U.S. universities, they still have problems with the language in terms of reading, listening, writing, and speaking, inside and outside of class. Many times, international students have trouble grasping lectures, expressing their thoughts verbally, and writing essays (Nicholson, 2001; Selvadurai, 1998). Even for those who have studied English for a long period of time, understanding lectures is still a struggle (Tompson & Tompson, 1996). Many international students struggle to keep up with time-consuming reading assignments (Jun & Park, 2003) and to understand the content of exams (Lin & Yi, 1997). Another difficulty that international students face is taking written notes in class. Students need to take notes well during

lectures while listening for long periods of time to professors, who tend to speak quickly (Briguglio, 2000). It is difficult for international students to do two things at the same time because of their lack of automaticity in the English language. The students' limited English proficiency delays their academic success. Since international students may not have been in an English-speaking environment for some time, they may not have used their English language skills for a while. This results in them spending their time and finances more toward learning English than their overall studies (Huntley, 1993). According to M. Y. Lee et al. (1981), success in the academic setting can be attributed to English proficiency skills, such as speaking and writing. A study conducted by Stoynoff (1997) showed that students who did well academically were able to explain main ideas by speaking and writing and could manage their time better.

If international students' English ability is not strong enough, they will have difficulty when discussing questions and participating in class (Heggins III & Jackson, 2003; Heikenheimo & Shute, 1986). In U.S. universities, class participation is important (Balas, 2000; Selvadurai, 1998); however, international students often cannot participate in class because speaking itself is too challenging (Haydon, 2003). International students have anxiety about speaking in English because they do not want to make mistakes (Jacob & Greggo, 2001). The anxiety of not knowing enough vocabulary or not feeling confident in their speech may add to their language barrier; and as a result, they are constantly under pressure to effectively express themselves in English (Luzio-Lockett, 1998). They struggle with participation because of difficulties with the English language, time constraints for reading and writing, and inadequate understanding of the American culture (Jun & Park, 2003).

Some international graduate students are concerned that the faculty may view their minimal participation as a sign of disrespect and laziness (Chamberlin, 1997). According to Tompson and Tompson (1996), the faculty's perception is that some of the problems affecting international students' overall success are their inability to clarify their questions and their tendency to only associate or study with other international students. When their questions are not clarified, they cannot understand class lectures and cannot feel a sense of belonging (Luzio-Lockett, 1998).

International students also face learning style challenges (Ladd & Ruby, 1999). In American culture, thinking and writing tends to be linear, logical, and analytical (Haydon, 2003). Beasley and Pearson (1999) state, "Essays are supposed to have an introduction which defines any terms, the scope and focus and the theme or thesis of the essay, as well as an outline of the structure or main points to be covered. The body develops in full the points outlined in the introduction . . . and the essay is rounded off with a conclusion that briefly summarizes the main points and theme of the essay" (p. 306). This writing style demonstrates a linear way of thinking. However, this may not be the case in other cultures. For example, in Japanese culture, the writer usually does not make everything explicit but leaves space for the reader to infer. Readers can interpret a piece of writing in their own ways. Therefore, the thinking and writing styles in this culture are less linear (Beasley & Pearson, 1999). Another learning style challenge relates to class discussion. Asian international students tend to dislike participating in discussions because they feel that it is a waste of time. They prefer to listen to lectures and believe that they learn more efficiently that way.

Herbert (1981) and Craig (1981) note that international students struggle to adapt to the educational system in the U.S. One difference in the educational systems involves approaches to study (Khoo, Abu-Rasain, & Hornby, 1994). As mentioned above, one characteristic way of conducting classroom activities in U.S. universities is by engaging students in speaking and discussions. This practice may differ from that in international students' home educational systems.

The educational systems in the U.S. and other countries also differ regarding 1) classroom atmosphere, 2) homework and grading, and 3) faculty. First, classroom atmosphere in U.S. universities is more informal and instructors may not strictly follow a plan or a pre-determined structure. This kind of informal classroom atmosphere is not what international students are accustomed to and this difference can be a problem for them (Craig, 1981). In such classrooms, American students more actively participate and do not wait to be called on by their professors (Tompson & Tompson, 1996). In contrast, Asian international students are not so assertive or expressive (Lin & Yi, 1997). Chamberlin (1997) states that some international students feel that laughter or a relaxed class emphasizes disrespect for the class and creates a poor attitude toward learning. Additionally, behaviors in class that international graduate students view as disrespectful include consuming food and beverages, chewing gum, being late, speaking with a professor on a first name basis, and asking personal questions. It is difficult for international students to change their beliefs and cultural traditions and participate to their maximum abilities (Tompson & Tompson, 1996).

Secondly, the amount of homework and the grading system differ (Haydon, 2003). International students feel that they have extensive writing assignments and

homework (Nicholson, 2001). In regard to grading, final grades in the U.S. may not

necessarily depend on final exams, a practice which, according to Usuki (2001), is not

what international students are used to. In the U.S., the end result is not as important as

the process during a given semester (Haydon, 2003). This may cause confusion among

students who lean toward being task-oriented (Balas, 2000). In other words, task-

oriented students may look toward getting something done rather than its progression.

Another difference in grading is the weight that participation has on course grades.

Huntley (1993) asserts that even though students have the knowledge, they will not excel

if they do not participate in class discussions. Not sharing one's thoughts may make their

professors and domestic classmates feel that the international students are not exercising

critical thinking because they do not speak up (Briguglio, 2000). According to Tompson

and Tompson (1996), 77% of the faculty felt that international students' participation in

class was low despite the fact that the students knew that it was a part of their course

grade. The faculty stated, "International students will rarely debate issues in class,

disagree with their classmates or instructor's opinions, or challenge the status quo"

(Tompson & Tompson, 1996, p. 54).

Thirdly, faculty in the American educational system can differ from what

international students are accustomed to. Lin and Yi (1997) state that international

students struggle with faculty's accents. Sometimes professors have accents that are

different from the standard accent, and students may not be used to their way of speaking.

Faculty's characteristics can also be different from what international students are

familiar with. Kitao (1988) found that Japanese students describe American teachers as

friendly compared to teachers in Japan. According to Craig (1981), however, even if the

faculty is friendly, the international students' cultural traditions prevent them from getting close to their professors. In many cases, these students may have high regard for those in authority, such as professors, which can create a psychological barrier for students. For example, international students may hesitate to talk with professors or may not ask professors for help when class material is not clear (Kitao, 1988; Ladd, 1999). Instead of asking questions, some Japanese students look at the readings to find answers or simply ignore their concerns (Kitao, 1988).

Besides being friendly, faculty may have other characteristics that differ from professors in other countries. Haydon (2003) notes that professors do not spend extra time explaining concepts outside of class with students, may be rude, or may use inappropriate language. International graduate students feel that faculty better meet the needs of American students than theirs because of American students' ability to engage in discussions (Chamberlin, 1997). Goodwin and Nacht (1983) found that some faculty members are hostile toward international students who are passive in class, do not accept their grades, and react slower to their jokes. Understanding professors' jokes involves understanding American culture. International students have difficulty understanding American jokes and expressions (Chen, L. et al., 1996). A primary concern for international graduate students is when faculty use American culture as examples to illustrate a class topic (Chamberlin, 1997). Some expressions can be understood in the light of using proper gestures, which can also be a problem for international students. In a study conducted by Kitao (1988), Japanese students at an American university struggled with understanding American gestures.

Another difference concerned faculty's lecture style. In a study of Japanese students at an American university, Usuki (2001) found that prior to studying English, they had always been given information through the lecture method in their home countries' institutions. This lecture method, in which a professor speaks the majority of the time results in international students being unable to develop autonomy in their learning. In addition, Briguglio (2000) states that international students are used to listening to professors rather than speaking themselves.

In general, academic problems which international students face are caused by lack of proficiency in the English language, changes in the learning styles necessary, and adaptations to the American school system. Ultimately, the different learning styles and educational systems can greatly contribute to their struggle with academics and English communication.

2.2.2 Cultural and Social Problems

As discussed earlier, lack of English proficiency can lead to academic problems; it can also lead to social problems. Hayes and Lin (1994) state that language problems create a strain on international students when interacting socially. While English language proficiency is a major difficulty for international students, Tompson and Tompson (1996) found that social adjustment, such as fitting in, was the most challenging for them. According to Maslow (1954), basic, social needs, like belonging, must be met in order for self-actualization needs, like developing the intellect, to be realized. Once self-actualization needs are met, a person's fullest potential is revealed. A sense of belonging can help international students advance in their education.

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Therefore, besides academic challenges, cultural and social challenges exist for international students in the U.S. (McIntire &Willer, 1992). This sub-section explores the social concerns that international students face, such as difficulty understanding American culture norms, experiences with culture shock, and differences in exercising power.

Understanding American norms can be complex for international students. For example, international students may not know the American norms regarding friends and dating, religion, politics, and nonverbal communication (Selvadurai, 1998). Pedersen (1991) cites that misunderstandings can occur in relationships between friends and in dating. It can be quite astonishing for Japanese students visiting an American university to see friends acting intimately with each other (Chen, L. et al., 1996). Nicholson (2001) also notes that international students have difficulties in everyday life, such as with friendships, and they furthermore identify problems with money, food, transportation, and weather. Regarding money, many Japanese students do not know about tipping customs, garage sales, coupons, the overall value of American money, savings and checking accounts at the bank, or even about the entire check system in the U.S. As far as transportation goes, many Japanese students do not realize how cumbersome public transportation, such as riding the bus, can be. There are also challenges with measurements, clothes, ways of communicating, and manners. The metric measurement system used in Japan differs from that used in the U.S. Therefore, Japanese students experience problems with measuring temperature, weight, length, and so forth. With clothing, Japanese students do not always know what to wear depending on the formality or informality of social events such as going to restaurants and dating. Communication

problems include knowing little about long-distance phone calls, cheaper phone rates, operator assistance, and postage. Socially, manners are a major problem in regard to introducing oneself, hosting events, and table settings (Kitao, 1988).

When Asian international students do not know social norms, they may feel marginalized by others (Heggins III & Jackson, 2003). In a study of Japanese students visiting an American university, L. Chen et al. (1996) found that stereotypes made them feel uneasy. In other words, international students' language and cultural differences may result in discrimination against them. Discrimination can occur not only because of differences in skin colors (Sen, 1970), but also because of deviations from standard English pronunciation (Chamberlin, 1997).

While living in a new country and dealing with academic and cultural concerns, international students may experience some type of cultural shock. Cultural shock occurs when a person in a new culture experiences anxiety, depression, hostility, tension, frustration, anger, resentment, alienation, isolation (Nicholson, 2001), or negative feelings (Adler, 1975). According to Brislin (1981), culture shock is normal when adjusting to a new culture. Adler (1975) states the following five stages of culture shock: 1) contact, 2) disintegration, 3) reintegration, 4) autonomy, and 5) independence. While in the contact stage, novel experiences occur which are interesting to the student. In the disintegration stage, the repetition of these experiences begins to negatively affect international students. In the reintegration stage, students distinguish their preferences, setting aside their differences. In the autonomy stage, these students are able to deal with the situations that they face. In the independence stage, international students appreciate and accept similarities and differences.

Common effects of culture shock are an over concern with health, an inability to do well at work, problems trusting others, feeling irritable, and feeling angry toward those in their community (Brislin, 1981). A person may experience a combination of these feelings at the same time. Wehrly (1980) argues that international students most commonly struggle with homesickness, depression, and loneliness. A change in cuisine can be a factor in homesickness. Depression can come in the form of a change in eating habits, insomnia, or fatigue. In addition, not knowing the new customs and culture can add to loneliness (Lin & Yi, 1997). Loneliness resulting from not having many friends can also occur for international students because they spend so much time studying and feel they do not have enough language capabilities to branch out socially (Chen, S.-F., 1996). Therefore, the effects of culture shock can lead to problems academically and with friends (Lin & Yi, 1997). In the study of Japanese students at a U.S. university, L. Chen et al. (1996) found that they feared speaking in English. They also felt inferior because of their lower English proficiency level, and could easily become depressed. According to Luzio-Lockett (1998), this sense of inferiority results in comparing oneself with others, which can change the dynamics among friends, resulting in fewer quality friendships.

Sandhu (1995) found that some international students have psychological crises because of their feelings of culture shock, inadequacy, indecisiveness, and the loss and absence of support networks originally available in their home countries. One type of psychological crisis is when a person begins feeling isolated. This feeling, or social alienation, is more common among international than domestic students (Owie, 1982). According to a study by Nicholson (2001), despite having friends, 30% of international

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students experienced isolation. International graduate students become isolated from their peers, since these graduate students may be more likely to live with their families (Huntley, 1993). Living with their families demands more of their time and leaves less time for them to interact with friends. This kind of social alienation translates into feelings of powerlessness (Owie, 1982).

Culturally speaking, issues of power and control are evident in the classroom. Power is related to authority, which students either yield to or resist (Benesch, 1999). According to Foucault (1980), power and resistance are interdependent, and one does not function without the other. Whenever students try to do something different, it means "an assertion of power, an attempt to exert control over one's own fate" (Leki, 1995, p. 251). In other words, students who change their responses in class may be trying to change the dynamics to feel a sense of control.

Power is given up or exercised by students for various reasons. Foucault (1980) states that power is relinquished through "self-surveillance," when people begin controlling themselves. For students, norms are so ingrained that they naturally begin to hesitate to change (Benesch, 1999). "Self-surveillance" comes in the form of students' censoring themselves, which is exemplified in a study showing that students were afraid of change and of professors who dismissed student concerns (Benesch, 1999). According to Ide (1982), Japanese students are taught the importance of being polite to someone who has power. Professors are people who have power in relation to students. On the other hand, Benesch (1999) notes that students use their power by asking questions, by being silent at times, and by helping one another. To gain control of prolonged lecturing and to understand new information, students ask questions. When students ask questions,

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the professor is forced to stop talking, and this gives students time to grasp the information. Silence, or not participating, may be a way of resisting the professor. However, among international students, silence may simply indicate a lack of English-language proficiency.

International students tend to refrain from exercising power. Jun and Park (2003) found that in an on-line class, international students were less assertive in discussions than American students, and as a whole, international students' comments were not very profound. For example, whenever international students responded to a comment, they would give their response to the comment rather than initiating a new idea.

Unequal power distribution affects the dynamics in the classroom. If international students do not participate, they lose part of their power because they are not heard. This results in their marginalization (Jun & Park, 2003). According to Jun and Park (2003), "power inequality is mostly caused by linguistic misunderstandings and the misunderstandings of cultural context that exist between international . . . students and American students" (p. 10). For example, Nicholson (2001) found that 10% of international students prefer not to have American friends because they feel unequal in status with them, and alienated from them.

International students experience cultural and social differences in terms of customs, culture shock, and power when stepping into a new surrounding. The next sub-section discusses how international students deal with the new culture.

2.2.3 Adjusting to a New Culture and Environment

This sub-section gives a background to the stages of cultural adjustment, and

explains what helps international students adapt. There are four common stages of cultural adjustment: 1) honeymoon, 2) crisis, 3) recovery, and 4) adjustment (Oberg, 1960). In the honeymoon stage, the novelty is exciting. During the crisis stage, a person begins to experience the most intense culture shock and feels confused. In the recovery stage, a person can better cope with the new environment and culture. The adjustment stage is when a person feels comfortable and is able to handle oneself in the new culture. Similarly, Livingstone (1960) describes four stages that international students experience: 1) spectator, 2) involvement, 3) coming-to-terms, and 4) pre-departure. In the spectator stage international students are curious, are filled with expectations, and enjoy this time. The involvement stage is when the students deal with their environment. In the coming-to-terms stage, their self-esteem returns as they accomplish their goals. In the pre-departure stage, they await their return to their home countries.

When international students are able to adjust to a new culture and environment, they are able to study and maximize their experiences in their host country (Khoo et al., 1994). Nicholson (2001) reported that in order to adjust to a new culture and environment, Asian undergraduate and graduate students engage in shopping, traveling, sports, ethnic student associations and church activities. Surdam and Collins (1984) found that international students who adapted well were those who displayed a positive outlook toward religion. Astin (1984) underscores the importance of students' involvement in their respective environments, which contributes to student learning and development. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) found a high correlation between students who have a sense of belonging and value in the academic setting and those who utilize institutional programs and services. In other words, being involved at school helps

students. Astin (1984) and Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) even state that a relationship exists between students' participation in school activities and increased retention rates.

Moreover, international students' interaction with others can affect their adjustment. For example, Huntley (1993) notes that international students with low-level English language speaking skills communicate less with American students and their community. Since communication with American students is minimal, international students have less of an opportunity to establish deep bonds of friendship with them. Jacob and Greggo (2001) found that some international students have trouble making friends with those not in their cultural and ethnic groups. In addition, the more international students there are from a certain country, the more they will stick to their ethnic group and the less they will develop friendships with people from other places (Chen, S.-F., 1996). Jacob and Greggo (2001) also found that international students struggle with belonging, and at times it is difficult for them to collaborate on group projects. Working together may be difficult because of their backgrounds. Some international students come from a collective culture that emphasizes a highly engaged association with a few similar cultural groups (Haydon, 2003). Feeling connected with others is vital in regard to an individual's self-esteem in Asian culture (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). This type of group-oriented culture differs from the individual-oriented American culture. Family and group relations are highly regarded for Asian international students (Heggins III & Jackson, 2003). Cross (1995) explains that since these students come from collective societies, speaking up in class may be seen as selfishness in their culture since it calls attention to oneself, and therefore is avoided. More specifically, Japanese people tend to be group-oriented. Befu (1971) notes that when decisions need

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to be made, Japanese people take others' views and opinions into consideration. In addition, some Japanese may reflect, blame themselves, or be harsh on themselves if a problem arises, and they are overly concerned about how their actions affect others. In other words, they may be overly self-conscious and polite, and thus not ask for help (Chen, L. et al., 1996).

Cultural values and family expectations influence Japanese people's adaptation process as well (Lebra, 1992; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Chu, Yeh, Klein, Alexander, and Miller state that among Asian international students, emotional and social concerns are not given as high a priority as academic and professional success (as cited in Alexander, Workneh, Klein, & Miller, 1976). In other words, it is more important to excel in school and career rather than be weighed down by personal issues. In these Asian societies, educational advancement adds to one's status (Livingstone, 1960).

Since academic achievement is vital for these students, adjusting to the education system is a high priority. This chapter discussed the literature about international students, including how they benefit the U.S., what difficulties they encounter in a new culture, and how they adjust. Specifically, it considered Japanese graduate students. The next chapter will delve into students' academic and social transitions.

Chapter III

Methodology

In this study, I employ Chickering's (1969) *student development theory* for establishing identity and Schlossberg's (1984) *transition theory* as my points of departure.

The student development theory focuses on the progress that students make throughout their college experiences. Chickering considers the following seven vectors in the development of one's identity: 1) developing competence, 2) managing emotions, 3) moving through autonomy toward interdependence, 4) developing mature interpersonal relationships, 5) establishing identity, 6) developing purpose, and 7) developing integrity (Chickering, 1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Chickering (1969) uses the term "vectors of development" to signify "direction and magnitude—even though the direction may be expressed more appropriately by a spiral or by steps than a straight line" (p. 8). According to Chickering (1969), the first of the seven vectors, developing competence, includes three facets that are developed in college: the intellectual, the physical, and the interpersonal. The intellectual refers to the mind; the physical consists of involvement in the arts and athletics; the interpersonal involves connecting with others. In this first vector, competence and improved self-concept develop as a person's trust in their abilities develops. The second vector, managing emotions, refers to a person's struggle to understand emotions such as fear, hurt, anger, and tension, and how to deal with these. The third vector, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, involves a person exercising self-reliance in terms of goals and dreams without being unduly influenced by others. The fourth vector, developing mature

interpersonal relationships, encompasses a person's ability to value differences in others and allows for intimacy. The fifth vector, establishing identity, involves a person having self-esteem and accepting themself in relation to that person's appearance, gender, and sexual preference. It also means a person's increased understanding of themself in cultural, social, and historical realms. The sixth vector, developing purpose, means a person setting clear goals based on themself and that person's family. Lastly, the vector of developing integrity consists of understanding other views, moving from uncertainty of beliefs to certainty, and connecting values with behavior. These vectors build upon one another as students adapt to changes (Schlossberg, Lynch, & Chickering, 1989).

Chickering's vector of establishing identity includes physical and interpersonal needs such as classes, housing, and relationships with faculty and peers. In order for students to have their needs met, it is important that they experience and address their problems. Chickering (1969) states that "it is . . . difficult for individuals who must identify concrete actions and formulate specific plans to cope with problems and to serve their own development" (pp. 79-80). Although it is difficult to deal with their own problems, these challenges serve as an impetus for their growth. According to Erikson (as cited in Chickering, 1969) and Sanford (1966), by establishing identity, one is able to control anxiety and worries, have diverse experiences, and reach goals with a sense of value. Each of Chickering's seven vectors can be categorized under the vector of establishing identity because a solid sense of identity influences all other vectors included in the student development theory. In other words, the aspects of competence, emotions, autonomy, interpersonal relationships, purpose, and integrity are all connected to identity (Chickering, 1969).

The theory of transition is the second theoretical perspective in my study and is concerned with the changes in students caused by academic and social needs. A transition is anything that creates some kind of change in roles, beliefs, day-to-day occurrences, and relationships (Schlossberg, 1984). According to Schlossberg (1984), the meaning of a particular transition depends on how a person views the change, and transitions can be difficult if a person experiences more than one transition at a given time. Weiss (1976) states that transitions in relationships may involve anger, tension and tiredness. Schlossberg et al. (1989) explain the transition process in the following three stages: 1) moving into, 2) moving through, and 3) moving on. In the first stage, moving into, it is important to become familiar with the rules and expectations in the new environment. An example of a response to this need is the university providing student orientations, which prepare new students for their time at the institution. The second stage, moving through, concerns learning how to manage time and balance academics with other activities in life. The third stage, moving on, occurs when one transition ends and another begins (Schlossberg et al.). The adjustment process depends on how much of an effect a transition has on a person's life. In addition, whether a transition can be viewed as advancement or not depends on the individual. Factors that affect transitions include the nature of the situation, the individual student, types of support, and approaches (Heggins III & Jackson, 2003).

I incorporated the two theoretical perspectives of establishing identity and transition through the interview process. During the interviews I explored Chickering's (1969) vector of establishing identity by asking interviewees questions about what they dealt with when living in a new environment, how they adjusted, and how they

understood themselves academically, culturally, and socially. Also, I incorporated Schlossberg et al. (1989) stages of moving-in, moving-through, and moving-out in the interviews by asking how they coped with transition initially and throughout, and when the present transition ends and the new one begins.

In this study I used the qualitative research method to learn about 1) the participants' experiences, and 2) the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) programs and services' effectiveness through these participants' experiences. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) assert, "The qualitative researchers' goal is to better understand human behavior and experience. They seek to grasp the processes by which people construct meaning and to describe what those meanings are" (p. 38). According to Merriam (2001), "in qualitative research, a single case or small nonrandom sample is selected precisely because the researcher wishes to understand the particular in depth, not to find out what is generally true of the many" (p. 208). Other characteristics of qualitative research includes focusing on context, collecting data in terms of words and not numbers, and rejecting the need to prove or disprove hypotheses (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

I used the phenomenological approach within my qualitative research, which involves studying a particular phenomenon based on individual experiences (Creswell, 1998). According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998), the phenomenological approach tries to understand the participants' perspectives in the context of events in their daily lives. The participants' experiences determine what is real for them (Douglas, 1976). In other words, researchers want to know how people view a particular event. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) state that "[researchers] attempt to gain entry into the conceptual world of their subjects (Geertz, 1973) in order to understand how and what meaning they construct

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around events in their daily lives" (p. 23). Researchers do not impose their own beliefs and experiences (Creswell, 1998). Therefore, in this approach participants should never be viewed as wrong because what they experience makes sense to them.

The qualitative methods I used in my study were in-depth interviewing and document analysis of memos and official records. The primary method I used in my qualitative research was in-depth interviewing. Glesne (1999) asserts that analyzing documents strengthens research validity, helps to solidify research direction, and offers information from other resources. According to Patton (1990), the goal of interviewing is to delve into the minds of the interviewees and to know their thoughts through collecting, managing and analyzing data. "At the heart of interviewing research is an interest in other individuals' stories" (Seidman, 1991, p. 3). This method of interviewing establishes their worth. In addition, researchers do not generalize data, but rather they attempt to find major and minor themes, and interpret these themes (Merriam, 2001). By avoiding focusing on the generalizability, qualitative research allows every voice to be heard.

I learned about participants' experiences and the effectiveness of the programs and services at UHM through in-depth interviews, and what Merriam (2001) describes as "intense contact with participants" (p.8). I evaluated the effectiveness of the programs and services by examining students' feelings of confidence, adjustment to campus life, improvement in English, quantity and quality of friends, and communication with faculty and staff.

This study focused on the experiences of Japanese international graduate students at UHM and the effectiveness of the programs and services that support them.

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Ultimately, this research may help faculty and staff in the international programs and services at UHM improve their service to Japanese graduate students, so that these students may better succeed in the university system. The following research questions guided this study: 1) What difficulties do some Japanese international graduate students face at UHM? 2) What programs and support services have they used at UHM? How effective have these programs and services been for them? 3) What kinds of support would be helpful for these students to adapt to UHM and life in Hawai'i?

3.1   Strategy for Data Collection

Vygotsky states, "Every word that people use in telling their stories is a microcosm of their consciousness" (as cited in Seidman, 1991, p. 1). I hope to have tapped into these students' minds and understood their perspectives. Prior to conducting the interviews, I asked potential interviewees to read the consent form for my research and pose any questions they may have had. The interviewees could withdraw from the study at any time. I did one-to-one interviews with a total of six students.

I used a semi-structured interview format. Semi-structured interviews are in between structured and unstructured interviews and include a combination of rigid and flexible questions (Merriam, 2001). In contrast to structured interviews, which go through a systematic, formal process (Glesne, 1999), unstructured interviews are usually exploratory and the interviewer thinks of questions while conducting the interview (Merriam, 2001). During semi-structured interviews, the interviewer can ask questions at any time. The interviews in my study included three parts. The first part concentrated on the interviewees' personal lives in general, the second part examined the details of their

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experiences, and the third part looked into their future perspectives based on their past and present experiences (Seidman, 1991).

The type of interviewing I conducted can be considered topical, in that it examined a topic or program through interviewees' feelings and attitudes about that topic (Glesne, 1999). I created my interview questions based on my research of the literature. However, during the interviews, additional questions arose or even took the place of the prepared questions. Glesne (1999) asserts that this development of questions supports qualitative inquiry. This is because qualitative research interviews generally consist of open-ended and minimally structured questioning so that the interviewees can share their perspectives in their own manner (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Merriam, 2001).

Interviews and follow-up interviews were conducted for approximately 45 minutes to one hour per session. I conducted two to four sessions per interviewee, depending on how each interview had gone. In Appendix B, there are three sets of interview questions. The questions in the sessions were combined or broken down further, based on the interviewees' needs. Follow-up interviews clarified what was said in earlier interviews and allowed any additional thoughts about the issues to be shared. Furthermore, follow-up interviews increased rapport between myself and the interviewees, increased the accuracy of the interviewees' words, and gave ample time for the interviewees to ponder their responses, feelings, and assumptions. The interviews thereby strengthened the validity of the data (Glesne, 1999). These interviews were conducted in English. In the past, I had noticed that some Japanese students became drained after speaking for a long time in English. Therefore, whenever I saw that an interviewee was tired, I would end the interview session. To create a comfortable

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atmosphere, the interviews were done in a familiar, safe place such as a classroom or a study room in the university library.

After I transcribed each interview, I asked each interviewee to read over the transcripts and make corrections if needed. This is a type of member checking, which allows for a more accurate representation of the interviewees (Glesne, 1999) and verifies what they said, which allowed me to further explore the students' experiences and perceptions (Merriam, 2001). Through member checking, a concise representation of each interviewee was offered because the interviewees confirmed what they had said. This increased internal research validity, in which research findings are true to what is really happening. Therefore, member checking adds credibility to the research (Merriam, 2001).

3.2   Description of Participants

The interviewees were six international Japanese graduate students, three females and three males, enrolled at UHM. Of the female interviewees, one was a friend from my church, another was a former classmate of mine, and the third was a former co-worker of mine; of the male interviewees, two were acquaintances from my church, and the other one was an acquaintance whom I had met at my former workplace.

In this study, I used purposeful sampling. Patton (1990) states, "The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich* cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research" (p. 169).

3.3   Strategy for Data Management

When taping each interview, I stated the date, time, place, and interviewees' name in the beginning of the interviews to help manage the data when transcribing it. I transcribed each interview myself and used pseudonyms instead of real names to protect the interviewees' anonymity, at their request. Each transcription was done within three weeks of the interview. This allowed me to remember difficult-to-understand words on tape. Doing the transcriptions myself gave me a deeper understanding of what the participants were saying. After completing the transcriptions, I constructed a table of themes and individual statements to understand how the interviewees' voices were connected to the research questions. Creating a table helped to organize and analyze my data.

3.4   Strategy for Data Analysis

I focused on in-depth interviewing in this study because it allows for a deeper understanding of the interviewees' experiences. According to Seidman (1991), "At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (p. 3).

As stated previously, after each interview and the following transcription, I looked for themes that may have evolved from what was said in the interview. I created themes by noting categories when reading; for example, I looked at the transcript of the first interview for categories and combined what seemed to connect (Merriam, 2001). I constantly compared what was said in one interview with what was said in another, and natural categories gradually formed (Merriam, 2001). This constant comparative

examination of data underlies this in-depth type of study. Through revisiting data, new

comparisons were constructed. Besides finding connections between the interviewees, I

equally honored all thoughts and opinions of each individual voice. In other words, I

included individual thoughts after charting out the data.

Chapter IV

Results, Discussion, and Analysis

In this chapter, I provide the students' backgrounds, discuss the programs and services which they experienced at UHM, and discuss specific difficulties and sources of support.

4.1   Background of Students

In this chapter, I offer background information on each of the six Japanese international graduate students interviewed, to better understand their experiences. As stated in the previous chapter, pseudonyms were given to students who wished to remain anonymous.

Nobue

Ten Years in Hawai'i
Two Weeks in an English-Speaking Environment Outside of Hawai'i
Six Years in an English-Speaking Environment Before UHM Graduate School

Nobue (personal communication, January 22, 2006; April 12, 2006) was born in Osaka, Japan, and moved to Tottori when she was four-years' old. She considers Tottori to be a rural place defined by its mountains, its proximity to the ocean, and its slow pace of life. The people there are very friendly and her neighbors feel like family to her.

During her pre-school years, Nobue was interested in the English language so her mother began teaching her the English alphabet. Nobue's interest was sparked even more when her neighbor began attending English classes. Nobue also wanted to learn more English, but her mother believed that she was too young and preferred that she

concentrate more on the Japanese language. Despite this, Nobue prevailed by watching American television programs like "Sesame Street," "Full House," and "Beverly Hills 90210," and listening to the English conversations.

Later, in junior high school, she took the mandatory English classes. This rekindled her interest in the language despite the fact that her classes consisted of grammar and memorization. She credits her teacher with strengthening her attraction to the English language.

Nobue has been in Hawai'i for ten years now, since 1996. This is not her first experience living outside of Japan. When Nobue was in her second year of high school, she went to Australia as an exchange student for two weeks as part of a class requirement to learn English and experience a new culture. She liked it so much there that she did not want to return to Japan. Nobue enjoyed the greater freedom that she experienced there, compared to the strict rules and rigorous studying required at her high school in Japan. Students at her high school in Australia studied, but also had dances. Social gatherings were not typical at her high school in Japan.

Prior to coming to Hawai'i, Nobue attended a university in Japan for two years. Nobue came to Hawai'i in 1996 as a student pursuing her Associate in Arts degree at TransPacific Hawai'i College. Formerly known as Kansai Gaidai Hawai'i College, this college focuses on ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, diverse experiences, and small class sizes for individualized attention ("Special Features," n.d.). Nobue enjoyed the program because the terms were only four months long, yet very intense. She said, "I could learn English for a very little short amount of time." Nobue also enjoyed the faculty and staff, who were friendly and helpful with her concerns, as if they were her

adoptive parents in Hawai'i. Tutors were available after school for 30 minutes to an hour to help with writing papers, retrieving information from the Internet, and learning about plagiarism. Nobue felt that the tutors were also friendly and would even make jokes. If these tutors were not available, students could make appointments to meet with professors. Faculty would meet with students during their lunch hours or after school. During her two years at this college, Nobue participated in the homestay program. She lived with a "host mom" who taught her pronunciation, grammar, and writing.

After finishing her degree, Nobue transferred to the University of Hawai'i at Manoā (UHM) as an undergraduate majoring in Journalism. A year after graduating with her Bachelor's degree, Nobue went on to the Master's program in Communications at UHM. She chose UHM because her parents were concerned about her attending a university any farther from Japan. Other reasons included the fact that many of her friends attended UHM and that UHM had a great scholarship program for students from Japan.

Yuri

One and a Half Years in Hawai'i
One Year in an English-Speaking Environment Outside of Hawai'i

Yuri (personal communication, January 21, 2006; April 15, 2006) grew up in the city of Machida located west of Tokyo. Machida is known for its natural surroundings with numerous places for children to play outside. Getting to the city only required a 20-minute bus ride.

Yuri began learning English when she was a 13 year-old in junior high school. Her English education consisted of reading textbooks, memorizing words, and

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occasionally conversing with native-English speakers. Yuri continued to study English in high school and college, but her English skills deteriorated because her college professor only focused on translating newspaper articles from Japanese to English. Yuri said, "No fun, no learning."

During Yuri's third year in college, she went to Singapore as an exchange student for one year. She felt that Singapore was exciting because of its diverse cultures, food, and many more inter-racial relationships than what she was accustomed to in Japan. It was Yuri's first time living in an English-speaking country so it was not easy for her. Yuri felt that it was stressful because she could not communicate well.

After graduating from college in Japan with a degree in Philippine Studies, Yuri enrolled at UHM in the Asian Studies Graduate school program in 2005. She decided to go to UHM because her professor in Japan told her that it was a good place to study about the Philippines. He said that the library had a lot of materials on the Philippines, and that there was a great Filipino professor.

Eiko

Eight Years in Hawai'i
Two Years in an English-Speaking Environment Outside of Hawai'i
Five Years in an English-Speaking Environment Before UHM Graduate School

Eiko Sato (personal communication, January 12, 2006; April 11, 2006) was born in Osaka, moved to Tokyo at age five, and then to Kochi where she lived from the first grade through high school. Eiko describes Kochi as a small town in southern Japan with weather similar to Hawai'i's, although Kochi experiences all four seasons. Eiko's family

moved often because of her father's work, and each time she moved, there was some kind of adjustment to be made.

During Eiko's last two years of high school, she went to Norway as an exchange student. She lived with a local family and attended high school. Her biggest struggle was dealing with culture shock. As one of the only Asians, she felt that she was tiny compared to the general population, many of whom were six feet tall. She said, "I experienced racism, and I experienced just exactly same as what like foreigners in Japan would experience. Like pointing finger at them and calling names and whatnot." Eiko felt fortunate to have such a supportive host family and realized the importance of her own family and friends. After graduating from high school, she went to a two-year college in Japan and then came to Hawai'i.

Eiko has been in Hawai'i since 1998. She first attended UH-KCC (University of Hawai'i at Kap'iolani Community College), taking ESL and regular core courses for two years, and then transferred to UHM's Political Science department. Eiko started her graduate program at UHM in 2003, five years after her arrival in Hawai'i.

At around age 13, Eiko began learning English because of an Australian exchange student who lived with her family for a year and a half. Eiko and this student taught each other their language and culture daily. In junior high school, Eiko learned the basics, including the alphabet, pronunciation and writing composition. However, she felt that in high school learning grammar became most intense. Learning grammar became useful later when Eiko had to write, but she felt that her English conversation experiences in Japan were not useful. She said that it was "based on like formal English structures. And

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then when you used those phrases, people were like, you know, it's not used or it's like, you know, straight from some book . . . you know it totally sounds awkward."

Ichiro

Three Years in Hawai'i
Seven Years in an English-Speaking Environment Outside of Hawai'i

Ichiro Misumi (personal communication, January 22, 2006; April 11, 2006) is from Fukuoka, Japan, which is a major suburb with a population of about one million people. Fukuoka has a lot of houses and is close to the sea.

As an undergraduate student, Ichiro went to Soka University in Japan. Upon graduating in 1996 in Bioengineering, he moved to Oregon to attend the English Language Institute at Oregon State University for one year and then did undergraduate studies in Fishery Science there. After graduating with another Bachelor's degree, Ichiro worked in the U.S. Forest department for almost a year. Soon after, he entered the master's program in Microbiology at Oregon State University.

In 2003, Ichiro came to Hawai'i to study at UHM. Ichiro is in his third year as a PhD candidate in the Microbiology program. He conducts experiments in a lab off-campus.

Ichiro's first English language experiences were as a four-year old when he attended a private English school twice a week. He continued to go until he was in elementary school. Ichiro started studying English again in junior high school, where the focus was mostly on grammar and memorization. Teachers taught some pronunciation, but Ichiro felt that it was not successful. He explains, "The teacher was Japanese so communication skill is not very good for us." Although he enjoyed learning the English

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language, the classes in junior high school and high school were not usually as interesting because they focused on learning techniques to pass college entrance examinations.

Ichiro decided to attend UHM because he wanted to study in Hawai'i, and because he enjoyed the ocean and warm weather. He had wanted to go to UHM from the beginning, but UHM did not have a Fishery Science program. While at Oregon State University, he worked on a project with a professor who was originally from Hawai'i. This professor later transferred to UHM, which prompted Ichiro to choose this institution.

Keizo

Three Years in Hawai'i
Has Not Lived in an English-Speaking Environment Outside of Hawai'i

Keizo (personal communication, February 16, 2006; February 23, 2006; April 20, 2006) was born in Tomakomae in Hokkaido, where the climate is very cold and snowy. Tomakomae's population is roughly 170,000 people, yet he does not consider it to be rural. Keizo had never lived outside of Japan before coming to Hawai'i, but had traveled to California once when he was in junior high school.

Keizo began learning English a year before entering junior high school. He went to a private English school once a week for about an hour to practice conversation in English. In junior high school, Keizo enjoyed learning English by reading textbooks, memorizing words, and taking tests. He got good grades and liked his English teacher, who was passionate and energetic. Japanese was her first language, yet she spoke English quite well. Keizo continued to take English classes in high school and college. During his last year of college, he studied for the TOEFL (Test of English and as Foreign Language).

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Keizo graduated from college in March of 2003, and in August of the same year came to Hawai'i to attend UHM. There were two reasons why he chose UHM. The first was because the founder of his high school would always encourage students to study abroad, saying that the "passport of [the] 21st century is foreign language and philosophy." The second was because the tuition at UHM was low compared to other universities. Keizo felt that these two points were vital. Keizo also liked the Department of Educational Foundations' program of study and felt Hawai'i's history to be important because of its evolving political relationship with Japan.

<u>Yutaka</u>

Two Years in Hawai'i
Has Not Lived in an English-Speaking Environment Outside of Hawai'i

Yutaka (personal communication, August 22, 2005) grew up in Shimane, which he considers to be one of the most rural places in Japan. Shimane has a lot of mountains and is near the sea. Prior to coming to Hawai'i, he had never lived outside of Japan, but had traveled to Australia and San Diego.

Yutaka began studying English in junior high school at age 13. He learned English grammar, vocabulary words, and idioms, yet he felt that he was not able to speak in English. Yutaka felt that he could not practice English conversation because his teacher was not fluent enough in English. His main purpose for learning English was to pass examinations. In high school, he enrolled in the requisite English classes. While he had a native-English speaking teacher, this teacher only came to his class once a month for 15 minutes. Yutaka said that with 40 students in a class, it was rare to practice English individually. If students got a chance to speak in class, they could not say more than four

sentences. In college, he took the four English courses required in school. As a graduate student, Yutaka learned English on his own for the purpose of passing the TOEFL in order to enter an American university. After he graduated with his master's degree, Yutaka did an internship for the Japanese government.

Yutaka came to UHM in 2004 to study Economics in the PhD program. He decided to go to UHM because he learned while doing his internship at a government research institution that many people studied abroad in Hawai'i. Moreover, his boss said that Hawai'i was a good place to learn.

4.2   Programs and Services at UHM

Tillman (1990) notes the value of support programs and services for international students, which in the long run benefit them and further expand campus community learning. At UHM, there are programs for international students such as the Hawai'i English Language Program (HELP), the New Intensive courses in English (NICE), and the Outreach College's International Bridge Program. However, these programs will not be discussed since none of the students interviewed experienced them. The interviewees may not have experienced these programs because they are for those who are not enrolled in a degree program, which all of the interviewees were. In this paper, I discuss the following programs and services at UHM: the English Language Institute (ELI), the Writer's Workshop, the International Student Services (ISS) office, campus clubs and organizations, counseling, academic advising, staff, and faculty.

English Language Institute (ELI)

There are several English language courses that can help international students at UHM. Of the English courses that do not count toward university credit, the most rigorous are at the ELI. ELI is a part of the Second Language Studies program at UHM. The purpose of ELI is to help non-native English-speaking international students at UHM by offering classes designed to help them succeed in their academic reading, writing, speaking, and listening. ELI courses can only be taken by those who intend to study at UHM and who will take coursework to obtain a degree. Students usually take a placement exam and then ELI courses before any university courses. In some cases, ELI courses may be taken concurrently with the university courses. On-line classes are available to on-campus students as well as to those who are not physically at UHM ("English Language Institute (ELI)," n.d.; English Language Institute," n.d.).

Two of the interviewees took classes from the English Language Institute (ELI). During her first year as a graduate student, Yuri took ELI courses. She was very satisfied and enjoyed her instructors because they tried to keep the classes interesting by introducing a variety of activities. Yuri felt more comfortable in her ELI class by practicing the skills she learned there. For example, making presentations in ELI classes improved her confidence because the other students were very encouraging and accepting of incorrect pronunciation and grammar. As stated in the literature review, international students may have anxiety about publicly making mistakes (Luzio-Lockett, 1998; Jacob & Greggo, 2001). This was apparent for Yuri in her regular academic classes, in which she felt pressured not to make errors.

Keizo also took ELI courses for a year-and-a-half, and said they were somewhat helpful. However, he did not feel that his English improved overall from the classes. He took classes in subjects such as Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. Keizo felt that the Writing and Speaking classes were more helpful than the others. Keizo felt the ELI Reading course was not helpful because reading is a skill that needs to be developed over time. In his opinion, improving reading speed, vocabulary, and comprehension depends more on practice than on instruction. In the Speaking class, he made presentations and in the Writing class, he learned how to write academic papers. The usefulness in his writing class supports arguments for teaching American-style academic writing to international students (Haydon, 2003).

The Writing Workshop

UHM's Department of English offers the Writing Workshop to help students with their writing. Writing tutors from the Department of English and the Department of Second Language Studies help individual students with their writing. Students can sign up for this service for 30 minutes each week ("The Writing Workshop," n.d.). Three of the interviewees had used the Writing Workshop at UHM. Nobue would often go there to get help with her writing and she felt they were friendly. However, she said that the tutors were not able to spend enough time with her because students only had a maximum of 30 minutes per week. She may not have known that students could sign up for a longer time if needed. Yuri and Eiko did not feel that this service was helpful. Yuri said she used this service a few times but she felt like she still needed help with her writing. It

helped her with grammar, but not with the content of the paper. For Eiko, appointments needed to be made in advance, and usually filled up early.

However, Eiko said that there were a series of free workshops offered, which were in collaboration with the Writing Workshop and International Student Services (ISS) office. She learned about these workshops from a flier at the Student Services Center on campus and reservations were not required. The workshops consisted of Computer Services, Resume Writing, Business Letter Writing, and Academic Writing, such as how to write in the American Psychological Association (APA) and Modern Language Association (MLA) styles. The workshop on academic writing helped her to write academic papers in the APA style required by her department. This was very helpful because international students are often not familiar with this writing style.

International Student Services (ISS)

Before arriving in Hawai'i, international students receive an orientation packet from ISS. This packet includes information to orient students to Hawai'i and the UHM campus. The packet also includes information about the various programs and services at UHM ("2006 ISS Welcome Brochure," 2006; "2006-2007 International Student Handbook," 2006).

ISS at UHM was established in the 1950s and assists about 1,600 non-immigrant students from roughly 80 countries. The ISS primarily helps international students maintain their visa status but it also helps with orientation, living adjustment, and any concerns they may have. Besides administrative assistance, the ISS offers a Mentor-Mentee program and the International Student Association (ISA). In the Mentor-Mentee

program, new international students, or mentees, receive help from current students, or mentors. The mentors guide the new students by showing them around campus and answering questions to help them adjust to living in a new environment ("Mentoring program," n.d.). The International Student Association (ISA), formerly known as the Peer Advocate Leadership Society (PALS), was established in the 1960s. The ISA holds leadership trainings and hosts events such as picnics, boat cruises, and banquets ("Official Website," n.d.).

The interviewees had both positive and negative responses to ISS. Three of the five interviewees had positive things to say. For example, they applauded the Mentor-Mentee program in ISS. Nobue heard from many people that the Mentor-Mentee program was good, while Eiko and Yuri had been mentors before and felt it was beneficial for them and international students. Nobue said that student mentors in this program helped new students prepare for UHM before arriving, and relieved them of their concerns. This prevented these new students from feeling so isolated. Eiko assisted new students and became friends with them. She said that mentors and mentees pair up based on their home countries. Mentors advised mentees by telling them where to shop, where to get books, and so on. Yuri was assigned to three graduate students, but they were quite independent. Therefore, they did not need a lot of support, but they knew Yuri was available. The interviewees also had positive things to say about the ISS in general. Eiko believed that the ISS staff did their best and that the services were good, and Yuri felt that ISS was necessary for international students who needed to maintain their visa status. Nobue said that ISS helped her with her visa status and health insurance, and gave a lot of information, including job information, by e-mail.

According to Petersen et al. (1999), International Student office staff should be personable and punctual, provide student visa advising and some counseling, implement international and domestic student programs, and collaborate with faculty. However, the staff faces challenges like funding and SEVIS compliance. These result in less availability for international students. The study by Nicholson (2001) indicates that some students felt that the international student office was not very helpful since this office mostly aided with administrative tasks such as orientation, newsletters, immigration, and official documents.

Similarly, none of the interviewees were entirely satisfied with ISS. Four of them felt that ISS mainly helped with legal paperwork, insurance and visa documents, and that information varied depending on who at ISS helped them. Eiko, Yuri and Keizo felt that because there were very few staff members, there was less individual time and care devoted to each student. For example, Keizo said, "When asking a service, it takes pretty long time, many days to complete that form." He also said that the ISS staff always looked busy. The front desk part-time employees were less helpful because only full-time staff could answer regulation questions. Ichiro said that ISS was not very helpful because they were slow. Once ISS lost his insurance paper because it was not filed properly. Ichiro said, "I was so frustrated. . . . The office is not very good." He felt that the front desk workers' friendliness was important but inconsistent because some did not smile. He experienced less frustration when he communicated with ISS by fax and e-mail.

All of the interviewees had suggestions for this office. Three of them felt that an international advisor or counselor was necessary. Ichiro felt that ISS could better support

international students who were struggling to adjust to the culture in Hawai'i and to school life at UHM, and could better support those who experience homesickness by having an "open office." In this type of setting, students could freely talk with an advisor or counselor whenever they had academic or cultural concerns. This advisor or counselor could have close ties with international students and could even help them plan their semester schedules. Keizo suggested having an international counselor talk with students about academic, English language, and personal concerns. He also felt that it would be helpful if these international counselors could speak the students' languages. If counseling services were offered through ISS, Keizo would use them because it would be more accessible to international students. The suggestion of an International Student advisor will be discussed more in detail in chapter five.

Nobue suggested that ISS have a larger office to accommodate a lounge for international students. This lounge could have a cafeteria-like setting so students would feel more comfortable using it. This setting could include a refrigerator, soft drinks and coffee, and could be a place for international students to gather to eat lunch, study, or meet others. She felt that this kind of atmosphere would help international students feel more at home. She said, "Whenever I go to ISS, I just wanted to get the paperwork done, but if they have a place to just relax, I probably go there and then I could have more chance to meet other international students. And then we can talk some of the problems that we had and then help each other."

Yuri felt that ISS was not very organized and suggested that students' questions be answered more quickly. Eiko wished there were more advisors at ISS, in addition to one who could specifically work with each type of visa, such as J-1 visas. Besides more

advisors, Eiko would like to have trained staff at the front counter. Sometimes the counter staff gave the wrong information about which papers to turn into ISS. She said that "there [was] inconsistency in level of their understanding. So they need . . . proper training because it's dealing with the governments." Also, she felt that international students needed more time and care because of their English levels, and varying types of visas. More time is needed for each student to make sure they understand what they need to do to meet the deadlines to legally reside in the U.S. Eiko also suggested a support system where students could get information about international student regulations.

Yuri suggested that legal documents be accessible for students on-line, and that ISS inform students about the importance of checking ISS e-mails. This would lessen students' risk of missing deadlines and changes. Keizo received e-mails from ISS about international student information, but he did not feel that all of the e-mails were necessary, especially the ones about leisure activities. Although he received e-mails from ISS, he did not know about services offered through ISS. He said, "Sometimes . . . we hear the official programs or services but we don't really know about content, what they will do."

The interviewees also responded to questions about the ISA. Two of them had participated in ISA activities, such as an international night, a welcome night, a city tour and a whale-watching event. Only one of the interviewees, Yuri, felt that ISA helped her because it provided opportunities for international students to make friends and adjust to life in Hawai'i. When Yuri did participate, she said that the activities were very organized with snacks, groups and group leaders. She went on to say, "You will know more people who are in same situation as yours. So you can be encouraged by meeting

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those people. . . . It's nice to know that international student can organize thing well."
Ichiro wanted to know more international students from around the world, but did not
seem to receive information about ISA activities.

Two of the interviewees gave suggestions for ISA. Nobue recommended more
joint activities for local and international students. Eiko suggested "a culture festival. . . .
That would definitely draw attention to campus life . . . even get more resources . . . [and]
more funding because it's visible to the rest of the community." Apparently, Eiko did not
know about ISA's annual "International Night." The interviewees' comments make it
clear that there should be ways to encourage students to join ISA and attend its activities.

UHM Social and Campus Clubs and Organizations

According to Surdam and Collins (1984), better-adjusted international students
were those who spent more time with Americans than their fellow nationals. Campus
clubs and organizations may provide international students with a sense of comfort
because they are able to meet new people and make friends. When they make friends,
they may have more opportunities to adjust to living and studying in a new place. UHM
offers Co-curricular Activities, Programs, and Services (CAPS) as a part of the Office of
Student Affairs. Within CAPS are Registered Independent Organizations (RIOs), which
are campus clubs and organizations that are categorized as follows:
academics/professional, politics, ethnic/cultural, service, sports, fraternities/sororities,
honorary societies, and religious/spiritual. Besides friendships, these organizations offer
students opportunities in developing leadership skills, a sense of community and service,
and relations with faculty and staff ("Registered Independent Organizations," n.d.).

Five of the six interviewees were involved in a campus club or social organization, and four of the six felt that these helped them to adjust to living in Hawai'i. Campus clubs and social organizations helped students meet people, make friends, communicate and participate in English-language exchanges, and learn about the local culture. Yuri, Eiko, Ichiro, and Keizo were involved in clubs or organizations on or off campus. Of the other two interviewees, Nobue tried to participate in a club, but was not that involved, and Yutaka was not in any club or organization.

Yuri joined the Katipunan club, the Tagalog Student Association, and the Belly dancing class at the Leisure Center on campus. Joining a language club, the Tagalog Student Association, was effective for Yuri because it gave her a sense of belonging. In the Katipunan club, a Filipino ethnic club, she was able to meet people and attend activities such as picnics, and song and dance festivals. She says that her friends are the ones who helped her adjust to living in Hawai'i.

As an undergraduate student, Eiko was involved in many clubs on campus such as the Earth Charter and the United Nations. She got to meet people and make friends, which she felt broadened her viewpoints. She found it difficult to continue these activities because of her demanding graduate studies. However, she did manage to take part in a peace club at UHM. Keizo and Ichiro belonged to the same campus club as Eiko, which hosted seminars on peace, culture, and education. Keizo did not feel that this club helped with his adjustment while Ichiro had attended a gathering of this campus club only once.

Counseling

International students tend to prefer to talk to people in their own support systems rather than professional counselors, even if their counseling needs are greater than American students' (Dillard & Chisolm, 1983). Therefore, international students will consult their friends instead of seeing a counselor. International students seldom go to counselors because they feel nervous about sharing their problems with someone they do not know, especially if the students are not able to speak in their native language. Some may also feel their problem is not serious enough to talk about with a counselor (Pedersen, 1991). They may seek their faculty or an International Student advisor with concerns they felt were appropriate and not embarrassing to discuss. Such problems might include work, immigration, and finances (Thomas & Althen, 1989). In other words, exceptions are made in terms of what kind of counseling is sought, depending on students' needs. International students find it acceptable to seek counseling when it comes to non-personal concerns such as grades and careers, but perceive psychological issues as projecting a negative image (Yi et al., 2003). This negative perception stems from their culture. A great deal of stigma is associated with mental health counseling among Asian students as a result of their familial traditional values, which dictate that causing dishonor or shame to their family should be avoided (Atkinson & Gim, 1989). Because their cultural values conflict with university services, Asian international students underutilize these services (Heggins III & Jackson, 2003).

More specifically, Zander (1983) notes that Asian international students do not tend to express themselves emotionally because doing so connotes weakness and can create a personal and collective imbalance. Asian international students do not usually

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opt to reveal their problems to others, and especially to professional counselors because of this negative image (Heggins III & Jackson, 2003). Moreover, approaches that incorporate their traditional values are preferred in comparison to Western approaches, which are not deemed trustworthy. In other words, international students may not trust unfamiliar techniques or people. Counselors therefore must understand international students' view of counseling and their respective cultures (Dillard & Chisolm, 1983).

Counseling is one of the services provided at UHM. There is a Counseling and Student Development Center, which is a part of the Office of Student Affairs. The purpose of this center is to help students attain academic success and personal well-being. At the Testing Office, various tests are administered, and counseling services are provided for academics, career, and personal growth. Counseling services are available to individuals, couples, or groups. Individual counseling is available to those who want to better understand themselves while making life decisions, or dealing with stress, anxiety, identity, isolation, and depression. Psychiatric services are offered where psychiatrists can prescribe medication such as antidepressants. Couples counseling is offered to students and their partners, and group counseling based on specific student interests, such as improving social skills and returning to school. Career counseling helps students find their interests and majors, and helps students with career goals. ("Counseling services," n.d.).

Four of the students I interviewed would not consider using counseling services at UHM. Ichiro and Keizo had never heard of this service, while Nobue and Yuri had. Nevertheless, the four of them said that they would never go to a counselor. All of the interviewees believed in a cultural stigma attached to counseling. Nobue explained that

when Japanese students hear of counseling, "they feel like something [is] wrong with us." Her view of counseling is "trying to heal sick people, like something wrong with me. If I go to counseling, more negative. . . . I understand going to counseling, but I still, that's my problem, I should deal with the problems by myself. I don't need professional help." Yuri said, "I'm really . . . skeptical. I'm not really believe in this way. . . .To me, I need more personal conversation to talk about myself, not somebody I don't know." Ichiro said that in Japan, counseling is not popular. He also said, "I don't know who they are and it's kind of uncomfortable to talk myself. . . . It's kind of a shame to talk ourselves to other people. . .in Japan I think lots of depressing people. Normally they go to the hospital because it's like a shameful. . . . I think Japanese people tend to keep inside." One reason Keizo would not see a counselor was because he had difficulty communicating in English. He would go if the counselor spoke Japanese. Whenever Keizo heard of counseling, he associated it with psychological dysfunction. "Maybe in Japan, we have impression that you know, people who go to counseling is . . . psychological problems. . . . I just feel I don't need counseling."

The only person that would consider counseling as an option was Eiko. She said it helped to know that professional counselors were available to talk with. She felt that the views about counseling were changing in Japan, "I think now days more and more schools or people are open to talk about, for example, depression. I guess . . . they don't find it surprising as it would be ten years ago. So it became a common thing that anybody could have it." Eiko's different viewpoint may be because she had been living in Hawai'i for a longer time than the other interviewees. Eiko had been in Hawai'i for eight years and did not feel like an international student anymore. Therefore, she was

more open to Western ideas. The only times she is really reminded of being an international student are whenever she needs to deal with visa documents. Eiko said, "I guess after five, six years of being here, living in a Hawai'i, I [didn't] really experience or encounter any experience of feeling like an international student."

Academic Advising

While ten percent of international students see professional counselors for their personal concerns, only about six percent utilize academic advising, preferring instead to go to professors and friends for academic concerns (Surdam & Collins, 1984). Hagey and Hagey (1974) state that insufficient academic advising is highly related to not being able to graduate within a projected timeframe. Poor academic advisement leads international students to change their field of study unnecessarily, and to do poorly in school (Selvadurai, 1998). Ultimately, according to the National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA) (1976), international students are in vital need of academic advising to attain success.

Based on my own experiences, academic advising for graduate students at UHM occurs in the students' graduate departments. Upon entering a graduate program, students are assigned a professor from their department as an academic advisor. If this advisor does not meet the needs of the graduate student's focus of study, the student may change advisors. In other words, since many graduate advisors are assigned randomly, changing to a more appropriate one is common.

When Nobue, Eiko and Keizo entered their graduate program, they were assigned a professor from their department as an advisor. Keizo felt that sometimes his academic

advisor was helpful and other times not. He wished that his advisor would help him when he asked about his class assignments. Ichiro worked and spoke everyday with the professor who had been his advisor since he began the program. Eiko suggested that UHM have academic advisors who also know about international student concerns and specialize in helping international students. Another suggestion from Eiko was to have some kind of support system where international students could get information about class registration and Graduate Division regulations. She felt that it was quite difficult to find information on one's own.

Faculty

Chickering and Reisser (1993) state that besides peer relations, students' most important relationships are those with faculty. Nobue, Eiko, and Ichiro felt that faculty helped them in one way or another. Nobue and Eiko felt that their communication with faculty was good, and faculty took into consideration international students' language barriers and variations in class discussion capabilities. It helped Nobue and Eiko when their professors understood their cultural background and encouraged them to be involved in class discussions. Nobue felt that professors who had been through similar experiences as international students in different cultures, or had spouses from different countries and cultures, could better understand international students. Nobue also felt that her professors were very supportive because they were more accommodating with giving her additional time to complete homework assignments. The faculty helped Eiko by taking the time to answer her questions during their office hours and by treating all of the students equally. Nobue felt that to succeed in school, it was important to have a

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good relationship with faculty because they determined grades. She felt that communication was key to a good relationship with faculty. If students had a bad relationship with faculty, the faculty would not help them and could make things difficult for them. Yutaka and Ichiro felt that some faculty were very kind to them and cared about students. Ichiro would sometimes talk with his professors over a beer. Sometimes his professors taught him English and corrected his papers. They always helped him when he asked them for academic help. Since Ichiro worked with his professor, he had more access to and probably received more attention from that professor. Ichiro's faculty also helped him by obtaining funding to pay for his tuition and stipend. However, there were other faculty that Ichiro felt did not seem to care as much, and it was difficult to talk with them. For example, Ichiro felt that sometimes it was not easy to talk to or explain things to his advisor.

Yuri and Keizo expressed some dissatisfaction with their relationship with their faculty. She felt that her faculty was not very helpful because students had to take the initiative, and professors did not automatically help them. This coincides with Tompson and Tompson (1996)'s claim that American students do not wait to be called on by the professor in class, thus silencing those less accustomed to taking the floor. Yuri said that her communication with her professors was poor, but that they were patient with her. Keizo felt that he needed more opportunities to talk with his professors and knew that he needed to take the initiative to do so. He said, "I think some tried to help me but didn't know what kind of help I needed."

<u>Staff</u>

Staff too, may not necessarily know how to offer their assistance. According to Briguglio (2000), some do not feel fully comfortable with how to support the language needs of non-native English speaking international students. At times, the interviewees were not pleased with the UHM staff, which may be due to the fact that staff in general must spend a lot of time doing administrative tasks. Nobue felt that UHM's bureaucracy or heavy focus on paperwork, resulted in a lack of friendliness in offices, which did not help her as a Japanese international graduate student. In some offices, Nobue felt some staff were "mean. . . .They are not helpful. . . .Sometimes they are so cocky." Ichiro felt the UHM staff he encountered were very kind, but sometimes felt that they did not think about students' needs. More than one mishap regarding Ichiro's tuition occurred. Although he did not need to pay tuition, he was accidentally charged by the Cashier's Office every semester. The staff apologized each time, but Ichiro was tired of this continually happening. Keizo said, "Some staff are not . . . polite, [or] sincere." Overall, he did not feel it was necessary to get help from the staff to adjust at UHM.

Staff in the interviewees' graduate departments were much more helpful than the general UHM staff. Yuri said that one staff member in her department was very helpful and kind, and had helped her check which courses she needed to take to graduate. Nobue felt that her communication was pretty good with the staff in her department because they helped her to register for a class to graduate on time. The staff from Eiko's workplace helped her by giving her opportunities to meet non-UHM professors and community representatives, and to attend conferences.

Other Programs and Services

The interviewees mentioned other programs and services at UHM, such as Writing Intensive courses and the Student Employment and Cooperative Education (SECE) office. Writing Intensive courses implement writing as often as possible to help students process course content and are offered in various subjects. At UHM, these classes are mandatory for undergraduate degrees ("Twenty Frequently Asked Questions," n.d.). Eiko struggled with academic writing, and said that her writing skills improved when she took Writing Intensive courses at UHM.

The SECE office lists on-campus jobs for graduate students who must maintain a 3.0 GPA to keep these jobs, unless specified by their department. For international students to be employed, they must be full-time students according to federal regulations ("International UHM Students," n.d.). Working on campus may help students develop friendships with their coworkers (Chen, S.-F., 1996). Eiko and Yuri said that working on-campus helped them with their English. Eiko said it helped her the most because she needed to communicate in English on a daily basis.

4.3 Particular Difficulties and Sources of Support

In this section, I discuss the interviewees in terms of their difficulties and what helped them. Their main difficulties were the English language and the education system in Hawai'i. While the interviewees experienced these difficulties, they found three sources of support: friends, religious organizations, and Hawai'i's cultural similarities to their home country's.

<u>4.3.1 Difficulties</u>

English language

      The interviewees' main problem was pursuing an academic career in a language

other than Japanese. As graduate students, the biggest challenge for five of the six was

the English language. This reaffirms the findings that English language difficulties are a

barrier for international students (Nicholson, 2001; Stoynoff, 1997; Selvadurai, 1998),

especially Asian international students (Heikinheimo & Shute, 1986). Yutaka felt that

this held more for native-Japanese speakers than for those from Europe or South

America. Although he had been in Hawai'i for a year, he still felt that he could not speak

English well enough. In chapter two, Heggins III and Jackson (2003) had stated how the

lack of English ability for international students causes difficulty in speaking. Barriers in

English may include vocabulary, ability to format complex thoughts, or ability to

communicate ideas. Yutaka felt at a disadvantage because those from European and

Latin-American countries had improved their English-speaking skills after being in

Hawai'i for a year. Yutaka felt that people did not understand that European languages

were closer to the English language family, in comparison to the Japanese language, and

that the English language was linguistically the furthest from the Japanese language. The

English language was difficult for Ichiro because it had an entirely different writing

system than Japanese. For Nobue, being an international student was very difficult,

especially when using English. She felt at a disadvantage because she could not use her

mother tongue. Nobue felt that it was not easy learning English because of the

vocabulary and grammatical rules, but her English steadily improved. Keizo also felt at a

disadvantage because he had difficulty with the English language. He said, "Everything

becomes English, Japanese to English. So that became hard for me to do." Yuri also said, "Learning language is always difficult." When Eiko first studied in Hawai'i, she felt that she could only express about five percent of her thoughts. She felt that learning English was a continuous challenge.

Five out of the six of the interviewees struggled with writing, echoing a problem articulated in the previously mentioned scholarly literature (Nicholson, 2001; Selvaduarai, 1998). Academic writing challenges Eiko because of its grammatical structures. Ichiro struggled with writing too and was expected to write up experiments at work for journals or publications. While Ichiro had gotten used to writing, he did not feel he was up to par with other students. Keizo said that, "to write, I also need to spend lot of time on the computer, sitting in front [of it], typing. That's frustrating, and I get tired [be]cause I don't wanna do [it] anymore." Yutaka expressed that writing was a difficult process.

Of reading, writing, listening and speaking in English, the most difficult skills for four of the interviewees were speaking and listening. Jun and Park (2003) support the finding that international students struggle most with speaking and listening, as a result of their challenges with the English language. In Japan, English was not as hard for Keizo because he always got good grades in his English classes, which did not focus much on speaking and listening. However, when he came to Hawai'i, he found expressing himself to be challenging, even though he knew what he wanted to say. For example, he had trouble with class presentations because he felt he could not communicate well. He said, "I'm always feel[ing] . . . like I cannot explain myself." He struggled with speaking and listening and did not feel that he has improved much since starting his graduate studies.

He said, "I can't understand all what is said, and also I can't say what I want."

Additionally, Keizo felt that he needed to speak in class because it was a part of his

grade, yet struggled to do so. This relates to Huntley's argument (1993) that students

must participate in class to obtain a good grade. Keizo said, "It's really uncomfortable. I

don't know why, but I always get upset, confused speaking English. And personally, I'm

not [a] talkative man." Keizo felt that while he was more comfortable speaking outside

of class, he was still a shy person.

Yutaka found speaking difficult because of his cultural background which values

avoiding mistakes. Whenever he made mistakes he felt embarrassed, which he felt was

because of his Japanese cultural upbringing. Yutaka felt that in Japan, mistakes were

frowned upon whereas in the U.S., a person need not worry. Coming from this

background, Yutaka would worry about what others were thinking whenever he made a

mistake in English. He expressed that it was initially frightening for him to speak in

English, which he believes is a common sentiment for Japanese students. Again, the

literature of Luzio-Lockett (1998) and Jacob and Greggo (2001) mention how

international students' nervousness about making mistakes adds to their language barrier.

Yuri felt that her listening skills were not good, so she struggled with understanding class

discussions. This affected her participation in class and added to the fact that even if

discussions were in Japanese, she would not speak much.

Although most of the interviewees felt challenged by the English language, some

of them had advantages over the others. Nobue, Ichiro, and Eiko had studied as

undergraduate students in Hawai'i, which eased the transition into their English-language

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graduate studies. For example, Nobue had to write a lot of papers as an undergraduate student, which prepared her for graduate school writing.

Education System

All interviewees felt that the education system in the U.S differed greatly from Japan's. As articulated in the literature review, international students must learn to adapt to a different educational system (Herbert, 1981; Craig, 1981; Mau & Jepsen, 1990). The interviewees agreed that university classes in Japan were lecture-oriented, in which professors gave knowledge to students and students received it. This type of atmosphere was more professor-centered rather than student-centered. This coincides with the finding that the lecture method was more commonly practiced in the students' home country (Usuki, 2001; Briguglio, 2000). Coming from their background of rarely participating in class, all of them found UHM classes difficult at first. All of the interviewees said that there was a lot of discussion in their classes at UHM, unlike their classes in Japan. Eiko said that professors and classmates did not encourage sharing one's opinions in Japan, whereas in Hawai'i, students were expected to share their thoughts. Keizo felt that at UHM, professors did not lecture as much because they wanted students to participate actively. He also said that students did presentations in Japan, but the presentations were shorter and not as serious. Nobue explained that in Japan, students did not raise their hands or speak up. If they had a question they asked the professor privately after class. At UHM, Nobue learned that she needed to raise her hand to ask questions and that professors welcomed questions during class. After this realization, she became more outspoken. Eiko felt that American culture's tendency to

be direct and opinionated affected the education system. She said, "Sometimes I found it very intimidating or . . . uncomfortable, or . . . discouraged to share or even ask a questions in class. So I think that part could be the most challenging for Japanese graduate students." This follows Tompson and Tompson's (1996) statement that American students take initiative in class, and Lin and Yi (1997), who say that Asian international students are not as assertive. Eiko shared that some of her American classmates in the past had a tendency to be very persistent about their ideas and would not give up on their arguments, even if they were wrong.

Similar to the literature in Nicholson (2001) and Haydon (2003), the volume of class assignments was another difficulty for the interviewees. Keizo felt that compared to Japan, there were many more assignments at UHM. He needed to deal with doing assignments and writing papers, as well as speaking during discussions. After finishing her undergraduate studies, Nobue was not in school for a year. When she went back to school, she was out of the habit of reading books, writing papers, doing homework, and taking exams. It took her one semester to adjust to disciplining herself to study.

Another problem for the interviewees was with the faculty. Yuri felt that when students spoke with their professors, it was not done as politely as it was in Japan. As stated in my literature review, international students were not used to being informal with faculty (Craig, 1981; Chamberlin, 1997). Among Japanese students, this especially applied to relations with those in power, such as faculty (Ide, 1982). She said, "It's really hard to just say 'Hello' or 'Hi' to the professor." However, she learned to mimic the casual style used in Hawai'i. Eiko also felt that it took a lot of effort to get to know and approach her professors. Also, Eiko, Yuri, and Ichiro stated that professors expected

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those from Japan to know about Japan. Eiko explained, "It can be intimidating because you are Japanese students but you don't know anything that's happening in Japan. . . .What kind of Japanese are you?" Yuri said, "It's like I represent Japan." Yet Yuri and Ichiro felt a sense of responsibility as international students from Japan. They did feel that they represented their country, even if they were just one person, and that people would judge Japan based on them. Ichiro felt he could not do embarrassing things in class and outside, and had to conform to the ways of his culture instead.

Nobue experienced a case in which the professor's expectations were not clear. Since Nobue did not know the class requirement, she did not participate, which resulted in lower grades. Since Nobue did not participate, her professor could not understand how she was feeling or thinking. This finding reaffirms the literature that international students may hesitate to clarify when the faculty's direction is not clear (Kitao, 1988; Ladd, 1999). After a while, Nobue took the time to talk with her professor about this. After they cleared everything up, Nobue knew what she needed to do in class, and her professor knew where she was coming from.

Part of the professors' expectations was the idea that students were responsible for their own learning. Eiko said, "You have to do everything from [the] paperwork to getting [them] approved . . . to forming [a] committee, [to] making appointment[s] with professors. I think that's a huge challenge for Japanese graduate students."

Students were also responsible for deciding why they chose to study at UHM. For Eiko, UHM had the program she wanted to study. Noriko, Yoko, Ichiro and Yutaka had reasons such as Hawai'i's ocean and warm weather, its close proximity to Japan compared to other U.S. universities, friends who had been to Hawai'i, recommendations

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by their boss or professor, and UHM's good scholarship program for Japanese international students, noted professors, and library resources. Keizo wanted to study English and attend graduate school, liked his program of study, and was pleased with UHM's lower tuition compared to other universities. It is interesting to note that some students struggled more than others to adjust to studying and living in Hawai'i. For students who had difficulties in Hawai'i, it may have been because of their lack of seriously reflecting on the reasons for applying to a U.S. university.

4.3.2 What helped

While the interviewees expressed difficulties, they also explained what helped them. Out of all of the social support systems available to them, friends and religious organizations helped the interviewees the most. Social support systems are important because they can assist international students with improving their English language skills, and increase their understanding of the local culture (Stoynoff, 1997). Another factor that eased the interviewees' transition was the cultural similarities between Japan Hawai'i.

Friends

To adjust to a new culture and environment, international students often consulted their friends (Yi et al., 2003). According to Chickering and Reisser (1993), students' social relations and activities influence their development. Nicholson (2001) found that when Asian international students fostered friendships, it helped to alleviate adjustment problems. For example, these students' classmates helped them to adapt to campus life by introducing them to campus surroundings and friends, assisting them with shopping,

and helping to edit papers. In this study, eight out of ten students felt that most of their friends were international, and one person felt that most of their friends were American or local. Another student felt that they had a balance of both types of friends. Many of the interviewees in this study wanted more American friends so they could learn more about the English language and the American culture.

Some international students feel that having local friends is the greatest way to improve their English (Briguglio, 2000). Friendships between international and local students increases cross-cultural understanding for both populations and creates a sense of belonging in international students (Jacob & Greggo, 2001).

In my research, five of the six interviewees felt that friends were the most crucial aspect of their adjustment to living in Hawai'i. Their friends included both local and international people from their classes, campus clubs, and social and religious organizations. In general, the interviewees' friends varied.

Nobue felt that her graduate school classmates were open-minded, friendly, and understanding of international students' struggles to study in another country and in another language. Her classmates knew how to help students from other cultures because of their inter-cultural communication courses, and therefore knew how to interact with them. For example, her classmates spoke slowly and asked if she understood. Nobue said that her local friends and classmates were always willing to assist her. Academically, they helped her understand the course content and assignments, paper writing, and grammar. One friend would go over to her place to check her homework. Nobue's local friends also taught her slang words. As Nobue made more friends, she became more comfortable in class and group projects. She felt that interacting with local

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friends helped with her English. Nobue's local friends helped her socially by going

shopping and out to eat with her. When they went out, Nobue's friends made her feel

comfortable by introducing her to others, and listening to and not ignoring her. Although

she did not have many friends, she felt that those she had were of quality. Whenever

Nobue had a problem, her friends were there for her. They shared their problems with

each other, so she felt reassured that her problems were common.

Nobue's English-speaking boyfriend, whom she lived with, also helped her

improve her English and express herself. From her experiences with her boyfriend, she

learned the importance of expressing herself. She said, "In Japanese culture, we want to

guess what they feel, but American people, they just speak up, they don't guess what

other people are thinking." Whenever Nobue felt frustrated, she cried and spoke with her

Japanese-speaking friends, her parents, a couple of professors, but mostly her boyfriend.

Her boyfriend encouraged her not to give up. Her classmates complained about terrible

professors and difficult class assignments, but they still encouraged Nobue to not give up.

After talking with her friends, Nobue realized, "Yeah, it will end. It is not forever. . . .

Try [to] do my best and then if it . . . turned out to be bad, then I cannot help [it]. I did

[it], I tried my best and what else I could do?"

Like Nobue, Yuri's friends helped her with her English words, and her friends

helped her socially by including her in activities such as shopping and eating. Yuri's

friends were mostly from other countries or from the U.S. mainland. They were usually

those who did not have family here with them. She felt that those who had family here

already had their own community. Overall she felt that her international friends were

very accepting. She explained, "I feel they are more acceptance among them, if they are

from [a] different community. But if they are from [the] same community, like local people, they have same rules to follow. So I feel like I have to follow that rule. If not, maybe I'm not gonna be accepted." Since her international friends were more accepting of her, she felt like she belonged. Yuri's English-speaking roommate helped her to vent out and deal with any stress she had by talking to her every night. Yuri did not talk with her family in Japan because it would take too much time to explain the situations. It was easier for Yuri to talk to her roommate because they saw each other often.

Yutaka improved his English skills because of his American roommates and landlord. He had opportunities to use his English at home with his roommates because they often had parties at their home, so he got to speak with a lot of American people. Although it was sometimes difficult for Yutaka to study, he was able to become comfortable living in Hawai'i with the help of his roommates. Yutaka also had to speak with his landlord in English about his housing contract.

When Ichiro first started his program, he only knew his professors and did not have friends or classmates with whom he could talk. Once Ichiro made friends, he became more comfortable and felt good about his friends in Hawai'i. Ichiro's friends helped him adjust to life in Hawai'i by taking him surfing, diving, and drinking. They taught him English, Hawaiian culture, how to cut banana trees, how to catch fish, and how to make Hawaiian food. Many of his classmates were graduate students so they experienced similar struggles. Ichiro and his classmates shared their experiences with each other.

Keizo was the only student who did not feel that his classmates helped him, and he never asked them for help. He would have liked them to help check his papers, share

their notes, and share the main points in the readings and class lectures. Ichiro and Keizo spoke with their Japanese-speaking friends because they knew each other well, experienced similar challenges, and often encouraged each other. Each time Keizo struggled, he dealt with his problems directly and took breaks when necessary.

Eiko dealt with her struggles by talking to her family, boyfriend, and friends, or by going out to see a movie. She felt that her boyfriend always encouraged her, "You know, he's kind of like a victim in a sense that when I get frustrated, I always. . .pouring everything onto him. . . . he always has to listen to me and. . . have to encourage me."

A couple of the interviewees suggested approaches that their classmates or domestic students could take to better understand international students. Nobue suggested that students interested in other cultures should take the time to learn about them. Eiko suggested that domestic students study abroad so that they know what it is like to learn, struggle and live in another country as a foreign student. Living in and visiting another country are entirely different experiences. She felt that studying abroad would deepen domestic students' understanding of international students' experiences. Eiko also said that although Japanese culture exists in Hawai'i, it differs from what is found in Japan.

For most of the interviewees, friends were an integral part of their adjustment to living in a new place. Friends helped them both academically, such as with class assignments, and socially, with understanding each other's culture. By having friends, the students interviewed seemed to be less isolated, which helped them deal with their feelings of homesickness.

Religious Organizations

Religious organizations were another source of support. In a study conducted by Heggins III and Jackson (2003), it was found that in addition to family and friends, Asian international students readily sought out religious leaders rather than professional ones. The help that they received from religious organizations may have resulted in these students' optimistic outlook on religion. Surdam and Collins (1984) found that international students who were positive toward religion were more adapted than those who had negative feelings about it.

In my study, religious organizations helped four of the six interviewees. One way religious organizations helped was by offering opportunities for students to improve their English. For example, Eiko went to religious activities, which helped her to speak in English because others expected her to participate in discussions. The activities also helped Keizo because he needed to communicate in English with the local community. In other words, it gave him more chances to use his English and it made him feel more comfortable living here. Keizo said, "I feel. . .[an] affinity to [the] local community and shar[e] something. . .with locals." He felt that they could help each other and share their lives. Ichiro felt that his religious activities helped him to adjust because he made a lot of friends of varying ages. Since he worked in a lab all day, he would not have been able to have these friendships otherwise. Nobue heard from her classmates about a church near UHM's Korean Center. This helped her because it made her feel good to meet others and socialize.

Religious organizations also helped by offering actual English instruction. Nobue heard from her classmates of a church near UHM that offered English support. This

church was near the YMCA, where she saw many students learning English conversation, pronunciation, and grammar for free. These students shared their struggles, which included speaking in class, writing papers, and learning a new culture. Nobue felt that they were supportive there, and that she was not alone in these difficulties.

Culture Similar in Hawai'i

What also helped the interviewees was that they believed that their culture was similar to Hawai'i's. Culturally, living in Hawai'i was a relatively easy transition for students because of the ethnic Japanese faces, Japanese language, and Japanese products in the islands. Because of this, many interviewees did not feel like a minority. Ichiro said, "Hawai'i is much easier to adjust because it's like my home. [The] culture is very similar. So I didn't have any struggle to adjust to Hawai'i." Ichiro used his Japanese language with his landlady and sometimes at his religious activities as well. Yutaka also felt that since Hawai'i is a hospitable place for international students from Japan, people tolerate his English-language mistakes. Yutaka felt that people from Hawai'i were more understanding if Japanese people could not speak English fluently. On the other hand, Nobue said, "I feel more comfortable [speaking with Japanese-speaking people]. I can talk whatever I feel like to talk. If I'm talking to American people, [I have to] make sure my English is right, make sure they understand what I'm saying. But with Japanese, I don't need to think, just say."

The number of Japanese products in Hawai'i also helped. Many of the interviewees said that the food in Hawai'i was similar to the Japanese food to which they were accustomed. Keizo said that he could get many Japanese products, including

medicine, at stores in Honolulu. In addition, many Japanese television programs were available in Hawai'i. For interviewees such as Ichiro, watching these programs made him feel more comfortable.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

As discussed throughout this paper, international students face challenges in adjusting to living and studying in Hawai'i. Selvadurai (1998) states that when international students' needs are met, their institution's enrollment may increase, thereby causing an increase in funds. In addition, as international students' concerns are addressed, they can better thrive in their local environment and culture. As a result, they may develop better relationships with their peers and faculty, thus broadening the culture of all involved. This reaffirms Chickering's (1969) student development theory about progress.

From the findings in the previous chapter, it is possible that the students decided not to use or were not aware of some of the programs and services at UHM. Haydon (2003) found that international students underutilized campus programs and services. Therefore, it is important that faculty and staff, student services, and resource centers provide ways for international students to use their programs and services, and likewise demystify stigmas that international students have about these programs and services (Heggins III & Jackson, 2003). In this chapter, I provide recommendations for UHM.

5.1 How Universities and Colleges Can Help International Students: What the Literature Recommends

First of all, the staff and faculty at universities and colleges must be aware of the following criteria for international students' healthy adjustment: understanding oneself, creating friendships, being open to asking for help, initiating cultural encounters, seeking

and developing relationships with advisors and faculty, improving English language proficiency (Tseng & Newton, 2002), learning as much as possible about the host country, and being patient and flexible (Hendersen, Milhouse & Cao, 1993).

By understanding what international students need to do to adjust, staff and faculty at universities can better serve them. Nicholson (2001) found that these students could better adjust when they had help dealing with accommodations and transportation upon arrival, student employment, homesickness, and counseling, while still allowing autonomy.

Lin and Yi (1997) present the following four stages of adjustment: Pre-Arrival, Initial, On-going, and Return-Home. The first three will be discussed more in detail throughout the chapter. C. K. Smith, Gauld, & Tubbs (1997) state that it is essential that institutions of higher education in the U.S. implement services to help with international students' transitions. Programs and services for international students are more effective if the university is committed to them and has clear goals about the functions of international education (Tillman, 1990). A university's commitment to international students can bring about a positive change in its programs' effectiveness and in the level of student diversity. This kind of dedication can change students' experiences and create feelings of interconnectedness (Lee, R. M., Keough, & Sexton, 2002). For programs and services to be effective, some sort of assessment of their usefulness would need to take place. Owie (1982) recommends that evaluation of campus resources be a continual process and that involvement include all faculty, staff and students so that international students feel more comfortable. In other words, a constant assessment of services and

programs for international students is necessary since the students' needs may be constantly changing.

5.2   How UHM Can Improve Its Assistance to Japanese International Graduate Students

Most of the students felt that more support was needed for Japanese international graduate students to adjust. One student, Nobue, said that UHM needed friendlier support programs and services for international students. As with Chickering's (1969) argument detailed in my methodology chapter, students may not know what actions to take when they have problems. They may not be able to pinpoint what they are going through, so they may not know what steps to take to deal with their struggles. Many of the students' suggestions were supported by the literature. Based on the literature and student interviews, I will present five recommendations for what UHM faculty and staff can do to better serve the Japanese international graduate student population.

Recommendation: Encourage International and Local Students to Interact with Each Other

International and local students can connect with each other even before the semester begins. According to Lin and Yi (1997), during the Initial adjustment stage, university staff should create programs to meet students when they arrive at the airport, help them move and find housing, hold welcome gatherings, and help students to connect with an English conversation peer. This supports what Schlossberg, Lynch, and Chickering (1989) state about the transition process in the methodology chapter. In the

first stage of their transition, students should orient themselves to their new surroundings. While UHM's International Student Services (ISS) office offers the "Mentor-Mentee" program for linking international and American students to new international students, perhaps the new students' academic department can also be of assistance. Haydon's (2003) idea of the concept of peer assistance involves international students pairing up with other students of the same major so that international students can ask questions pertaining to their fields of study. Workshops in the Initial adjustment stage should be held with topics about American culture, stress, sexual harassment, discrimination, finances, healthcare, counseling, student organizations, and university rules (Lin & Yi, 1997). After student workshops, if international and American students were housed together, this would give international students more opportunities to practice what they had learned. This may be because the students' chances of coming into contact with each other again would be greater. Briguglio (2000) explains that university residence halls are a great venue for international and local students to engage in cross-cultural activities, and have farther-reaching effects toward cultural understanding than other places would. Therefore, residence halls promote international and local student relations (Tillman, 1990).

Another way international and local students can interact with each other is through on-campus clubs. More than half of the students interviewed said that their campus club or organization had helped them to adjust to living in Hawai'i. Universities can support international students socially and culturally by encouraging them to join on-campus organizations so that they can interact with local students (Haydon, 2003). I suggest that information on extra-curricular activities and campus clubs be placed on the

counter at ISS so that they are visible to students. Also, ISA could be more attractive to

international students by having more host, native-English-speaking students involved.

By engaging with American students, international students can become more connected

to the campus community. Interacting with American students is a part of Lin and Yi's

(1997) On-going adjustment stage, in which students should receive support in

developing their identities. As articulated in the methodology chapter, Chickering's

(1969) vector of establishing identity involves a person's understanding of themself. In

other words, it is important for students to develop their identity to become a unique part

of their environment. Lacina (2002) states that to retain international students, it is vital

that institutions of higher education provide activities that encourage international and

American students to interact with each other. Activities can include field trips (Tillman,

1990), international food fairs, dances, plays, film festivals, music recitals, and poetry

readings (Haydon, 2003). These events can also involve the community surrounding the

university. Additionally, to increase the university's retention rate and to ease

international students' adjustment, their families can attend activities together with them

(Jacob & Greggo, 2001).

Interaction between international and American students can also increase when

international students take advantage of their course-related internships. As previously

mentioned, working helped two interviewees with their English language skills because

they needed to use English to communicate with other students and their coworkers.

In addition, to improve interaction, international students can become volunteer

tutors of foreign language learning for local and American students. For example,

Japanese international students could volunteer to tutor American students taking

Japanese language courses. This would provide international students with an opportunity for greater interaction with American students.

Recommendation: Use Graduate Students in Counseling programs

It is important to remember that academic success is international students' main goal (Nicholson, 2001). In other words, students may not feel that they should deal with their social concerns because these are secondary to academics. Therefore, the planning of counseling services at universities is essential. There are many ways that counseling can be introduced to international students. Khoo et al. (1994) suggest that during orientation, the International Student office staff have students meet with the counseling staff. Counselors can then explain to international students that if they meet together, anything could be discussed: academics, immigration, finances, the English language, and personal concerns (Nicholson, 2001). By meeting in the beginning, international students may be more likely to set up another appointment later. Counseling information can be initiated through e-mail and flyers (Smith, T. B., Chin, Inman, & Hudson Findling, 1999), ads placed in the campus newspaper, and counseling staff visits to ESL classes and student organizations (Mori, 2000). To create a sense of community for international students, Yeh and Inose (2003) suggest that counseling services be in conjunction with the International Student office, ESL programs, ethnic student organizations, faculty offices, (Mori, 2000), and student housing.

While these ideas may be helpful, from the interviews, it seems unlikely that students would independently seek counselors. In other words, students may not take advantage of counseling services no matter how they are integrated. Furthermore, since

international students may come from cultures, which are not as verbal, other forms of counseling may work better (Komiya & Eels, 2001). For example, peer advisement could be done in cooperation with student organizations and university counseling (Heggins III & Jackson, 2003).

Therefore, I also recommend that UHM graduate students in the Counseling program work with international students as a part of fulfilling their practicum requirement. Jacob and Greggo (2001) suggest that counseling practicum graduate students and university counselors collaborate with each other to provide informal counseling. The Cultural Exchange Program (CEP), developed in 1993 at a private university, is a program that was created to help address international students' stigma about counseling. In this program, practicum students in the university's counseling program were connected with international students to help them with their adjustment in a less formal way. At the same time, these counseling students gained experience in working with students of multicultural backgrounds. This training was important since counselors should be able to provide culturally sensitive counseling services. In order for international students to utilize this program, orientations and gatherings were implemented when international students entered the university. The CEP provided a welcome letter while incoming international students met with the director of International Affairs. The graduate students in the Counseling program attended various activities for international students, such as social gatherings and club meetings. In addition, the counseling students helped international students with shopping, housing, and becoming familiar with the campus and the community (Jacob & Greggo, 2001).

Implementing graduate counseling students may alleviate the problem that students expressed of not having enough time with each ISS advisor at UHM. Also, this informal way of counseling may be less intimidating for international students. One interviewee recommended that the counseling staff member, in this case practicum student, speak the international students' native language to better support them. More of this suggestion will be discussed in the next recommendation. However, if more serious situations arose, the practicum students would refer the international student to a professional counselor. One interviewee, Eiko, especially hopes that counseling improves for students who need to deal with situations in their home countries but are unable to return because of their studies. An example of this type of situation would be a death in the family. She felt that friends can help, but it would be more helpful if there were professional support. As for depression, Eiko suggested that the counseling service provide medical attention for students.

Recommendation: Have an International Student Counselor at the International Student Services (ISS) office

As stated in a previous chapter, it may be difficult for international students to share their personal issues with university counselors or ISS advisors. Students may be reluctant to go to an office with which they are unfamiliar. In addition, ISS advisors are not able to talk much with students because of time constraints due to the amount of paperwork. As Chickering (1969) argues, it is difficult for students to exactly know what they need to do to resolve their problems. Whenever students need someone to help them, International Student staff can accommodate students' needs and address their

problems. At the same time, International Student staff should be able to do more than just perform administrative duties in order to meet the students' personal needs (Tillman, 1990). Therefore, ISS should hire an International Student counselor whose main purpose would be to help with student transition.

Some students suggested having an International Student counselor at the International Student Services (ISS) office since that counselor would be more accessible. One interviewee, Ichiro, said that the International Student counselor should know about immigration laws and visas, help international students culturally and academically, and be available to them. To initially bridge the gap between international students and this counselor, the counselor could correspond with prospective students. This supports Yi and Lin's (1997) first stage, the Pre-arrival adjustment, in which universities should provide international students with information on the American culture, the education system in the U.S., finances, and housing before they arrive in the U.S. When the students arrive on campus, they could meet each week with the International Student counselor and other staff to share ideas of how to create a supportive environment on campus for these students.

Another suggestion to the International Student counselor is to be able to speak the Japanese language. Since the English language can be a problem for international students, an interviewee, Keizo, said that he might talk with a counselor if that person spoke Japanese. As stated in chapter one, more than one-third of the international student population is from Japan, which is also the largest study body representation from a country ("Fall 2006 Fact Sheet," 2006). Therefore, there is the potential for there to be many Japanese-speaking students at UHM.

Nobue felt that since counseling is not openly accepted in Japan, the counselor should focus more on being friendly and on helping students deal with culture shock. Instead of traditional ways of "counseling," she would be more likely to talk to a counselor if she read information saying, "If you're having a cultural shock or if you think you have academic difficulties, then please see so and so, or please come to this building." Nobue suggested announcing counseling services on the ISS website once a month, and through e-mails. The website ad would stress that no appointment would be necessary.

Nobue also suggested a place with general information for international students if they needed help. According to Eiko, this should include information about on-campus job opportunities and how to apply for them, Hawai'i state laws, signing contracts, buying cars, and obtaining driver's licenses. Also, Ichiro brought up needing to know information about renting a place to live since Hawai'i is expensive.

Recommendation: Hold Workshops for International Student Adjustment

Previously mentioned in the methodology chapter, Schlossberg (1984) explains that it can be difficult when multiple transitions occur simultaneously. Transitions could include changes in academic and social settings. To create a better atmosphere for international students to transition into studying and living in a new environment, UHM could provide workshops for not only these students, but also for American students, faculty, and staff. These workshops could cover academics and culture for international students, and cross-cultural understanding for American students, faculty, and staff. The workshops would provide the opportunity for culture awareness. This would also inform

international students about what to expect in their own transition process. When international students develop an awareness of the cultural adjustment process, it helps them understand what they are going through and reassures them (Jacob & Greggo, 2001).

To help students with the English language, academic workshops such as reading and writing could be held. Keizo felt that there was a great need to help international students in these areas. He would especially like to see help in understanding class material, but not so much with speaking and listening since he felt those depended on students' efforts. For writing, Yuri suggested that the Graduate Division have a Writing Workshop specifically for graduate students. While Yuri took ELI writing courses, they were very basic and did not concentrate on help she needed for academic writing.

To help students socially, these workshops would integrate counseling methods, thereby avoiding the distrust attached to explicit counseling sessions. According to T. B. Smith et al. (1999), to alleviate the stigma of counseling services, one-hour informative gatherings were held with refreshments. These gatherings were titled, "Questions about American culture" or "Dating in America." The topics discussed the American education system and discrimination. Other ideas include time and stress management (Yi et al., 2003), and career development (Tillman, 1990).

Workshops could also help with cross-cultural understanding for American and international students. For example, Eiko felt that cultural awareness workshops about Japanese and American cultures were needed for both of these kinds of students to understand and learn about each other.

Staff and faculty could also enhance the support that international students receive from American students. Many times, staff and faculty are not aware of international students' difficulties (Huntley, 1993; Nicholson, 2001). It is important that staff and faculty are aware of international students' challenges and concerns in order to retain enrollment of these students (Petersen et al., 1999). Lacina (2002) states that by having a better understanding of the students' problems, staff and faculty can better help the students. In other words, by learning more about the difficulties that international students experience, staff and faculty would have the tools and understanding to improve programs and services for the students. Together, staff and faculty share a vital role in international student development.

To understand international students' backgrounds, staff and faculty can attend cross-cultural workshops (Nicholson, 2001). The cooperation of staff and faculty can alleviate the idea that the international student office is solely responsible for international students' problems (Petersen et al., 1999). Language faculty, counselors, academic advisors, students groups, and the community could be invited to these workshops. To increase staff and faculty's awareness of international students' difficulties, these workshops could help faculty and the community better understand the students' ethnic identity (Heggins III & Jackson, 2003). Supporters can come from disciplines such as Peace Studies, Ethnic Studies, Environmental Studies, and Service Learning, and workplaces like the Minority Student Office, Multicultural Student Center, and Women's Center (Petersen et al., 1999).

Throughout the U.S., various staff and community development and awareness programs have been implemented to understand international students' culture. For

example, Iowa State University noted the importance of its staff having had experiences abroad. In this professional development program, staff from various offices moved to Scotland for a period of one month to a year to experience learning about a new culture, including the novelty, confusion, and challenges that come from living in another country. Through these experiences, the staff could better empathize with international students, become more broad-minded, and enhance student services. Also, the American staff personally learned about other cultures, which could lessen their tendency toward stereotyping (Petersen et al., 1999).

Recommendation: Faculty Can Help International Students

Since international students may have difficulties with speaking English in class, faculty can help these students participate by implementing various techniques.

Ladd and Ruby (1999) suggest that professors initially require less participation of international students, who may be more accustomed to a lecture method, which allows less verbal interaction. Students from this background will rarely answer questions which require their opinion. At first professors could have students respond to factual questions, then move toward short answers, open-ended opinions, problem solving, and decision-making. Taking a step at a time would increase students' confidence. Even if answers are not correct, instructors should not make students feel bad because it could discourage them from participating. Furthermore, professors should explain that disagreeing with them is acceptable and should respond positively when international students challenge their positions. S.-F. Chen (1996) notes that if professors were patient and interested in what international students said, the students would be

more likely to share their thoughts. According to Miyakoshi (1997), students felt more comfortable when they sensed they were understood and when professors were concerned about their problems. If students feel understood, they are more likely to keep speaking in English. Yuri, a student, suggested that professors help international students to feel more relaxed, and encourage them to ask questions in class. If Yuri were more comfortable with her professors, she would have an easier time talking with them. Another interviewee, Eiko, suggested that faculty could help by encouraging international and local students to get to know each other. The faculty could arrange study groups with both kinds of students. These study groups could help international students with their speaking skills and increase their participation in class because they would know the other students and feel more comfortable with them.

Another way in which faculty could help international students is by offering Service Learning opportunities in their courses. This would give international students the opportunity to interact with people in the community, and would benefit them both. Service Learning is "a method of teaching, learning and reflecting that combines academic classroom curriculum with meaningful service . . . throughout the community" ("Service Learning," n.d., p. 1).

An example of service in the community is a program called the International Cultural Service Program (ICSP) at Oregon State University. In this program, international students gain experience in teaching and leadership by contributing to an educational community that may not have been as accessible. This program is more beneficial than one-time, random volunteer visits (Campbell, 1987 as cited in Petersen et al., 1999).

Overall, the International Student Services office must provide coordination and leadership for these recommendations to be implemented. A campus-wide effort is needed for international students to adjust and succeed in school. Through a conscious effort to understand students' needs and by taking action, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa can create a positive experience for all students in the university community.

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Appendix A

Agreement to Participate

Agreement to Participate in
Study of Perspectives of International Japanese Graduate Students at the
University of Hawai'i Manoā: Supportive Programs and Services on Campus

Jennifer L.S. Iwasaki
Primary Investigator
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This research being conducted as a component of a thesis for a master's degree. The purpose of the research is to explore the experiences of international Japanese graduate students at the University of Hawai'i Manoā (UHM) and what types of programs and services at UHM are beneficial as well as those that are not as helpful. You are being asked to participate because you are an international Japanese graduate student at UHM.

About 6 people will participate in the study. Participation in the project will consist of about 2-4 interviews of approximately 30-45 minutes each. Interview questions will focus on your adjustment to living and studying in Hawai'i and campus programs and services that help your adjustment. Interviews will be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription. From this data, the investigator will find common themes as well as single-voiced experiences. Depending on your preference, your name will be kept anonymous and another name will be used to represent you. After I transcribe each interview, I will ask each interviewee to read over his/her transcripts and make corrections if needed.

The investigator believes there is little or no risk to participating in this research project. Participating in this research may be of no direct benefit to you. However, UHM campus programs and services may gain insight as to better serve international Japanese students from the results of this study.

Research data will be confidential. Agencies with research oversight, such as the UH Committee on Human Studies, have the authority to review research data. All research records will be stored in a secure place in the primary investigator's home for the duration of the research study. Audiotapes will be destroyed after completion of the research study.

Participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time during the duration of the project with no penalty, or loss of benefit to which you would otherwise be entitled.

If you have any questions regarding this research project, please contact the researcher, Jennifer L.S. Iwasaki at jlsiwasa@hawaii.edu.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the UH Committee on Human Studies at 956-5007.

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Participant:
I have read and understand the above information, and agree to participate in this research project.

_____

Name (printed)

_____   _____

Signature   Date

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Session 1: Approximately 20 minutes

Life history: Interviewees share as much as possible about themselves, up to present time.

-Please share a bit about your background.
    -Where did you grow up? Where is your hometown? Please explain what it is like.
    -Have you ever lived outside of Japan? If so, for how long and what did you do?
    -In your family, are you the oldest or youngest or middle child?
    -When did you begin to learn English? How was that for you?
    -What did you do before going to UHM? Why did you decide to go to UHM?

Session 2: Approximately 30-45 minutes

Contemporary experience: Focus on interviewees' details based on experience and supporting reasons, not opinions.

-What is your day usually like from the time you wake up until you go to sleep?

-Are you in any social clubs and/or organizations?
    -If you are in any social clubs or organizations, please explain whether or not they help with your adjustment.

-What is it like for you to be an international student? How about as a Japanese international student? Explain the details of your experiences.
-What are some of your experiences as a Japanese graduate student at UHM?

-What transitions do/did you have to make to adjust to living in Hawai'i and going to school at UHM?
-How do/did you feel about your time management and balancing school and activities?
-How are you or are you not balancing it?
-Are there transitions that ended and new ones that began?

Academic and Cultural:
    -What are some of the difficulties you went through or are going through?
    -What are the main problems you encounter in this country? Please explain if there are any academic or social problems.
    -How do you feel when you are going through these struggles? How do you deal with it?

-How do you deal with fear, anger, homesickness, and so on? What do you do
when you have a problem or feel frustrated? Who do you talk with?
-What have been some examples of easy transitions academically? What have
been some examples of easy transitions culturally?
-How do you understand the new culture you are in?

-What have your experiences been with learning English?
-Is learning the English language easy or difficult for you? Please explain.
-Do you feel that your level of English proficiency is adequate to meet your
academic needs at UHM?
-Do you feel that your level of English proficiency is adequate to meet your social
needs at UHM?
-What are your experiences of using English at school and out of school?

Session 3: Approximately 30-45 minutes

Reflect on and understand past and present, looking toward the future: Interviewees
bring meaning to where they are today.

-What does it mean to you to be an international student? How about as a Japanese
international student?
-From interviews one and two, how do you make sense of being a Japanese international
student?

-What support programs and services do you know about or have used at UHM?
Programs:
-What do you know about the HELP (Hawai'i English Language Program)?
-What about the NICE (New Intensive courses in English) program?
-And the Outreach College's International Bridge Program?

Services:
-What do you know about services such as counseling at UHM?
-What about academic advising at UHM?

Office:
-How about ISS (International Student Services)?

Institute:
-Or ELI (English Language Institute)?

-What do you think about those program, services, and institute? Describe your
experiences with each of them.
-Which were helpful or unhelpful? In what ways were they helpful? If you do
not use them, why do you not?

-How have these helped you to adjust to campus life? In what ways could they help you?

-What kind of suggestions do you have for programs or services that you used or came into contact with? What other program or programs are needed?
-What kind of support would you like to see as an international graduate student?
-Have other students or professors/staff helped you to adjust? How? How could they help you?

-What has helped you to prepare for graduate school in the U.S./Hawai'i?
-If I were a new Japanese graduate student, what advice would you give me?

Questions to ask every now and then:
-What was that like for you?

Additional questions

-What are your experiences with money (tipping customs, garage sales, coupons, value of American money, savings/checking accounts at the bank, checks) in the U.S./Hawai'i compared to Japan?

-What are your experiences with transportation (buses, etc.) in the U.S./Hawai'i compared to Japan?

- What are your experiences with measurement in the U.S./Hawai'i compared to Japan?

-What are your experiences with clothing (formal/informal events such as at restaurants, dating) in the U.S./Hawai'i compared to Japan?

-What are your experiences with communication (long distance phone calls, cheaper phone rates, operator assistance, and postage) in the U.S./Hawai'i compared to Japan?

-What are your experiences with manners (introducing oneself, hosting events, and table settings) in the U.S./Hawai'i compared to Japan?

Program/service effectiveness based on:

-Has any program/service/institute helped you to improve your English? Which ones and why?

-How do you feel about the quantity and quality of your friends here in Hawai'i?

-How is your communication with faculty and staff?