

**Japanese home-background students at Monash University:
Who they are and how they are managing in university learning situations**

Abstract

Kuniko Yoshimitsu
Monash University

This paper deals with Japanese home-background students' study experience at Monash University. The study aims to (a) identify and characterise the types of students and (b) analyse their study management in a full degree undergraduate program. Drawing upon previous studies that have attempted to define a "native speaker" (Skutnabb-Kangas et al. 1989; Davies 1991) and Clyne's (1997) classification of ethnic learners in Australia, I have used a number of factors which have affected their study management, including the students' time of arrival in Australia and their educational backgrounds prior to university entry. Using Neustupný's (1985, 1987) language management model, I have analysed the types of difficulties the students experience, and examined how they manage to accomplish their study goals.

The data is drawn from a case study of 17 students, who are made up of seven local students and 10 international students. Data was collected from a written questionnaire, a study diary kept by the students and a semi-structured interview with the students and their lecturers.

The findings showed that the students' educational experiences prior to university entry varied, even in the relatively small sample studied. They had varying degrees of education in both Japan and Australia, and their cognitive academic language proficiency in Japanese and English also varied greatly. The students, who attempted to apply a variety of management strategies to cope with the difficulties, experienced a number of study difficulties.

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