



The First Vulnerable Filipino Migrants in Japan
International Conference (VFM 2011)

**Survival Stories, Coping Mechanisms,
Support Networks,
and Bureaucratic Challenges**

Co-Organizers / Institutional Sponsors

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March 19-21, 2011

**Institute for Higher Education Research and Practice
Toyonaka Campus, Osaka University**

<http://vulnerablefilipinomigrants.blogspot.com/>



VFM 2010 Conference Timetable

March 19, 2011 (Saturday)

13:00-13:30	Registration
13:30-13:45	Opening Address
14:45-15:00	Keynote Papers
15:00-15:15	Coffee Break
15:15-16:25	Session 01 "Filipino Over-stayers and Detainees"
16:25-18:05	Film Screening " <i>Dekasegi</i> "
18:30	Dinner Reception

March 20, 2011 (Sunday)

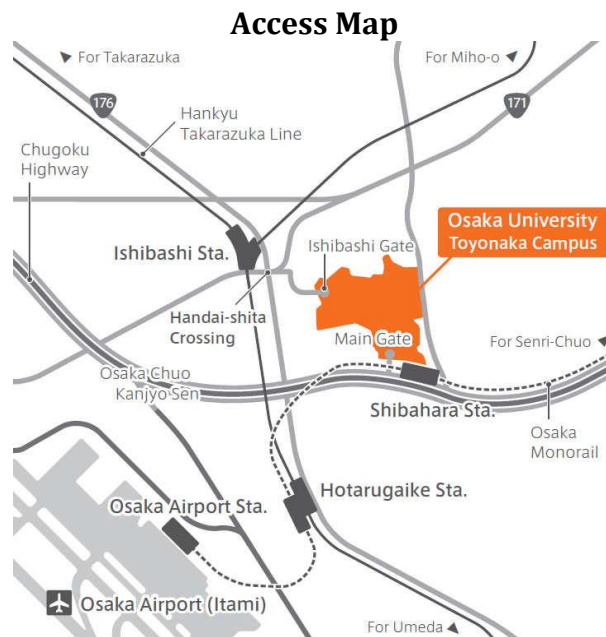
10:00-10:30	Registration
10:30-11:55	Session 02 "Emerging Trends: Filipino Health Workers and Educators"
11:55-13:00	Lunch Break
13:00-14:40	Session 03 "Japanese-Filipino Children/Domestic Sphere PART I"
14:40-14:55	Coffee Break
14:55-16:20	Session 04 "Japanese-Filipino Children/Domestic Sphere PART II"
16:20-16:50	Closing Remarks



Venue

Osaka University, Toyonaka Campus
Institute for Higher Education and Practice I-2, Student Commons 2F Seminar room 1
[教育実践センターI 棟 Kyoiku Jissen Center]

Access to Osaka University, Toyonaka Campus: <http://www.osaka-u.ac.jp/en/access/>
Map inside Toyonaka Campus: <http://www.osaka-u.ac.jp/en/access/toyonaka.html>



By Train: 15-25min. east on foot from Ishibashi on Hankyu Takarazuka Line.

By Monorail: 10-15min. west on foot from Shibahara.

From Shin-Osaka Station: Take the subway Midousuji Line to Senri-Chuo, transfer to Osaka Monorail and exit at Shibahara. (about 1 hour)

From Osaka Airport (Itami): Take Osaka Monorail to Shibahara.(about 30 min.)

From Kansai international Airport:

Take JR line to Osaka, transfer to the subway Midousuji Line, exit at Senri-Chuo, change to Osaka Monorail and exit at Shibahara.(about 2 hours)

Take Nankai Line to Namba, transfer the subway Midousuji Line to Senri-Chuo, and take Osaka Monorail to Shibahara.(about 2 hours)

Take Airport Bus to Osaka Airport, transfer to Osaka Monorail to Shibahara. (about 2.5 hours)



List of Panels and Participants

March 19, 2011 (Saturday)

13:30-13:45

Opening Address

Dr. Masaaki Satake (Nagoya Gakuin University)

13:45-15:00

Keynote Paper 01

Prof. Martin Baldwin-Edwards (Panteion University, Athens, Greece)

"The Regularities of Irregular Migrants: Why and How Governments Promote Irregular Status"

Keynote Paper 02

Dr. Filomeno Aguilar Jr. (Ateneo de Manila University)

"Making Sense of States and Migrants in Irregular Cross-border Migrations"

15:15-16:25

Session 01 "Filipino Over stayers and Detainees"

Chair/Discussant: Atty. Jefferson R. Plantilla (HURIGHTS OSAKA)

Paper Presenters:

Joselito Ranara Jimenez (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University)

"Bilog Boundaries"

Anderson Villa (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University)

"Negotiating Status in Japan: Legalizing Irregular Migrants in Special Circumstances and the Indispensable Role Played by State and Non-State Actors"

16:25-18:05

Film Screening of "Dekasegi"

Mr. Rey Ventura (Journalist, Filmmaker and Author)

Discussant: Prof. Mamoru Tsuda (Osaka University)

March 20, 2011 (Sunday)

10:30-11:55

Session 02 "Emerging Trends: Filipino Health Workers and Educators"

Chair/Discussant: Dr. Shun Ohno (Kyoto University)

Paper Presenters:

Gladys Angala (University of Tokyo)



“Bridging the Gap: An Assessment of the Language Training of the Filipino Nurses in Japan Sent Under the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA)”

Nicolle Comafay, Rieko Aoki, and Teruko Enomoto
(Japan Foundation for AIDS Prevention, CHARM, Kansai Gakuin University)
"Addressing the Health Care Needs of Foreign Residents in Japan"

Benjamin A. San Jose and Prof. Maria Rosario Piquero-Ballescás
(University of Tsukuba, Toyo University)
“Engaging Multiculturalism from Below: The Case of Filipino Assistant Language Teachers in Japan”

13:00-14:40

Session 03 "Japanese-Filipino Children/Domestic Sphere PART I"

Chair/Discussant: Sachi Takahata (Hiroshima Kokusai Gakuin University)

Paper Presenters:

Megumi Hara (Osaka University)

“Longing for Two Homelands: Case Study of Japanese Filipino Youth Growing up in the Philippines”

Alec LeMay (Sophia University)

“The Silent Exodus of Filipino-Japanese Children: What their Flight Means for Japanese Society”

Yellowbelle Duaqui (Sophia University)

“The Arbiters of Migrant Visibility: Communicative Action through Rap Music and other Japanese-Filipino Children Activities”

Yurika Tsuda (Meiji Gakuin University)

“Caught Between Two Walls? Cultural Identity of Japanese-Filipino Youth”

14:55-16:20

Session 04 "Japanese-Filipino Children/Domestic Sphere PART II"

Chair/Discussant: Mamoru Tsuda (Osaka University)

Paper Presenters:

Kimi Yamoto (Osaka University)

“Filipino Mother Tongue Class Activities in Osaka City and Students’ Awareness of Their Mother Tongue”

Peachy D. Araza , Ma. Editha Lim, and Jeorge Dela Cruz
(University of the Philippines, Diliman / Central Luzon State University)



“An Exploration of Filipino-Japanese Marriages: Focus on Vulnerability and Resiliency”

Atty. Amihan Alcazar (University of the Philippines, Diliman)
“Proposed Legislation for Japanese –Filipino Children”

16:20-16:50

Closing Remarks

Hirofumi Yokoi , Atsufumi Yokoi (Akira Foundation) together with Joselito Ranara Jimenez

March 21, 2011 (Monday)

10:00-12:00

Post Conference

Organizing Committee and Keynote Speakers



ABSTRACTS

Session 01 "Filipino Overstayers and Detainees"

Chair/Discussant: Atty. Jefferson R. Plantilla (HURIGHTS OSAKA)

JIMENEZ, Joselito Ranara (A.K.A: ELJOMA (Irregular Migration Information - www.irregularmigration.info)

"Bilog Boundaries"

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A Bilog's boundaries are shaped through his interaction with others. The state labels him as an overstayer but he acts with the single focus of a breadwinner. This paper will explore the dynamics of Bilog boundaries by looking at one specific instance of a "difficult" Bilog decision (or outcome), that is, second marriages in Japan. Specifically, in what ways do Bilog boundaries shape (and justify) the actions of irregular migrants? Utilizing various impression management strategies (Goffman 1971) he negotiates thru the complex myriad of his relationships (12 types in 6 categories) that most often harbor opposing interests, in the process clarifying and validating his own symbolic identity (Cohen, 1985) relative to each. The Bilog's now coherent identity crystallizes his boundaries, becoming, in turn, the foundation of justifying his actions.

Anderson Villa (Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University)

"Negotiating Status in Japan: Legalizing Irregular Migrants in Special Circumstances and the Indispensable Role Played by State and Non-State Actors"

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This paper focuses on the interplay of 'migration-institutions' and the peculiar experiences of former 'undocumented' migrants as human agents in a quest to normalize their status through obtaining 'special permission', on a case-to-case basis from the Japanese courts, either by mere reason of having their children born in Japan or having children born of Japanese father out of wedlock. The issues of the 'child's citizenship' are complex, and this is where I seek to specifically study the nature of cases which involve migrants and their children in Japan, by documenting the processes they have experienced, from arrest and detention to arguing their case through the courts. Their complicated status is their very own vulnerability – prone to abuses and even manipulations from anybody whomever they're seeking help for. Consequently, I will incorporate discussion of transnationalism and network theory, as earlier studies suggest that migrants make use of all possible channels in their struggle, working through NGOs and/or advocacy groups, informal connections, and other sympathizers. The study will also discuss discourses on securitization of migration in relation to how the role of governments (both of the host and sending country) comes into play. Finally, this article, as I reflect on some preliminary case narratives for my dissertation, seeks to show a vignette of perspectives on the innate role of state and the indispensable contribution of non-state actors to the concerns of the distressed migrants.



Session 02 " Emerging Trends: Filipino Health Workers and Educators"

Chair/Discussant: Dr. Shun Ohno (Kyoto University)

Gladys Angala (University of Tokyo)

"Bridging the Gap: An Assessment of the Language Training of the Filipino Nurses and Caregivers in Japan Sent Under the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA)"

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On May 10, 2009, 93 Filipino nurses and 185 Filipino care workers who comprised the first batch arrived in Japan under the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) and were sent to the Training Centers of Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship's (AOTS), Akamonkai Japanese Language School and other training centers for their intensive six-month Japanese language and culture training. This is to prepare them for their jobs as trainees in their assigned hospital and social welfare institution. However, although the language training facilitated communication between the Filipino nurses and their patients and co-workers, it did not consider certain aspects of the Japanese language such as colloquialism and dialect that is very important in conversing with the Japanese, that is why the nurses still encountered difficulties in talking with patients from different age groups. Moreover, it focused heavily on communication that it neglected the fact that the nurses have to take the national licensure examination in Japanese and pass it so that they can practice as full-fledged nurses in Japan. With just six months of language training, the nurses can only depend on an intervention program designed by their assigned hospital or social welfare institution to assist them in studying for the licensure examination, as in the case of Ever Lalin, one of the interviewees and the only Filipino nurse to pass the difficult licensure examination last March 2010. However, not all the Filipino nurses were as lucky as Lalin. Upon arrival at their designated hospitals, they started to work as regular employees and barely had time to study for the test. This study provides a brief background on the guidance received by the Filipino nurses and care workers during their intensive six-month language training based on the nurses' experiences during their stay in the Kenshu Center for the former and on the curriculum prepared by the Akamonkai Nihongo School for the latter. It describes the lessons, exercises and evaluations given in class. It examines the methods used to teach the Japanese language in consistency with its goals and priorities but critiques these methods for disregarding the necessity of preparing for the national licensure examination. The paper also evaluates the intervention program some hospitals conducted and are conducting to prepare their candidates for the examination. Then, it presents the nurses' assessment of the effectiveness of the six-month language training program in terms of achieving its communicative goals and in terms of passing the examination. Lastly, it enumerates some suggestions on improving the program for the benefit of succeeding batches of nurses who will undergo the same training.

Nicolle Comafay, Reiko Aoki, and Teruko Enomoto

(Japan Foundation for AIDS Prevention, CHARM, Kansai Gakuin University)

"Addressing the Health Care Needs of Foreign Residents in Japan"



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Migrants are often identified as a vulnerable population in terms of access to medical care. However, vulnerability in general is contingent to certain aspects of society. According to Goodin (1985), the vulnerability of other people is the source of society's responsibility to them. It emphasizes that vulnerability entails two things, the idea of dependency and of responsibility. This implies that vulnerable people, who are unable to protect themselves, are not necessarily at risk to inadequate health care if "moral agents" exist or measures are taken to protect them. This research aims to understand how to provide the best assistance so migrant residents in Japan can gain easier access to medical care. A questionnaire survey on the general health needs of migrants in Kyoto was conducted to understand the factors that affect their vulnerability. Although language is an important factor affecting the vulnerability of migrants, providing multilingual language support alone is not sufficient to address their vulnerability. We found four pillars that are important in creating an environment where foreign residents in Japan are able to gain access to health care. These are "information", "consultation", "testing", and "securing medical care". The Health Festival that conducted in September 19, 2010, was the first step to bring together all this pillars to address the factors restricting migrants' access to health care.

Benjamin A. San Jose and Prof. Maria Rosario PIQUERO-Ballescas
(University of Tsukuba. Toyo University)

"Engaging Multiculturalism from Below: The Case of Filipino Assistant Language Teachers in Japan"

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Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) refer to English language speakers employed to assist Japanese teachers to teach English to Japanese elementary and high school students. Hired through the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET) which aimed to promote internationalization or *kokusaika* (国際化), ALTs were expected to provide improved foreign language education and international exchange throughout Japan's local communities. Although known as among the English-speaking countries in the world, the Philippines was not tapped as a major source of ALTs for the JET Programme. However, this situation changed in the early 2000s when more Filipinos were hired as ALTs in various parts of Japan. While previous literature focused on the shortcomings of the JET Programme in terms of its English language teaching methods, its impact to internationalization, and its prospects based on budgetary concerns, this study will focus on the situation of Filipino ALTs as well as the implications of this new type of employment for the promotion of multiculturalism. This paper will show that although Filipino ALTs face work-related challenges, their ALT work allows them the opportunity to promote multiculturalism at the grassroots level. Their entry as ALTs also offers another positive site for deeper cultural engagement with the Japanese and other nationalities through the wider incorporation and participation of the Filipino community as a whole within Japanese society, through the educational system.



Session 03 "Japanese-Filipino Children/Domestic Sphere PART I"

Chair/Discussant: Sachi Takahata (Hiroshima Kokusai Gakuin University)

Megumi Hara (Osaka University)

"Longing for Two Homelands: Case Study of Japanese Filipino Youth Growing up in the Philippines"

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Since 1995, over 7,000 marriages between Japanese-Filipino couples have been registered in Japan per annum, more than 90% of which between a Japanese man and a Filipino woman. In turn, these marriages have resulted in the birth of about 5,000 Japanese-Filipino children each year who acquire Japanese nationality. Divorce and marital separation of the parents often results in the children growing up in mother's country while still retaining the nationality of their father. Moreover, there are the hundreds of children unrepresented in the statistics who are born out of wedlock to single Filipino women. This paper focuses on Japanese-Filipino youth raised primarily in the Philippines who are seeking to engage with the Japanese side of their heritage. It is based on the presenter's fieldwork conducted over the past two years in several cities in the Philippines and Japan. This includes structured and semi-structured interviews with 30 Japanese-Filipinos aged 18 to 33, seven of who left the Philippines alone to move to Japan. This paper discusses the socio-economic background of the respondents and their reasons for wanting to go to Japan. It then outlines the efforts made by these young people to gain residence rights or Japanese nationality to allow them to visit or live in their ethnic homeland. Aside from economic push-and-pull factors of both countries, their narratives explain four motivations of migration, which are dekasegi (migrant workers), self-satisfaction, family integration, and nostalgia for their ethnic homeland. The narratives of these Japanese-Filipino youth also paint a picture those who arrive in Japan to face a gap between expectations and reality, where they often find less welcome than they imagined. Ironically, rather than Japanese identity or "two-ness" that they felt prior to their voyage, Japanese-Filipino youths feel their identity as a Filipino strengthen during their stay in Japan as well as a growing longing for their homeland, the Philippines.

Alec LeMay (Sophia University)

"The Silent Exodus of Filipino-Japanese Children: What their Flight Means for Japanese Society"

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The Roman Catholic Church in Japan (RCCJ) with over 60% of its membership coming from foreign Catholics might be one of the most ethnically diverse locations in this country. Despite its growing numbers of foreign believers this religious community is experiencing a grave problem as its Filipino-Japanese (FJ) children leave its pews in throngs. Based on fieldwork conducted in the Archdiocese of Tokyo, the author has seen first hand how many of those FJ children who attend mass while in their elementary years disappear after they enter junior high school. The silent exodus of these children is telling a story of how their needs connected to both their Filipino and Japanese identities are not being met. Through



addressing the push and pull factors of their flight, this presentation aims to explain the need for a new paradigm when considering the bicultural FJ child and their position within the RCCJ. Caught in between two worlds that both make demands on their forms of cultural expression, these children are being forced to choose between Japanese or Filipino communities. This decision is no more prevalent than within the fight for Sunday participation that takes place between after school club activities and Sunday religious worship. Both of these communities desire the attendance of the FJ child for the Japanese and Filipino traits they are expected to hold. The RCCJ is used here as a case study to show how even with this religious community having over thirty times the percentage of foreigners than Japanese society and in spite both Japanese and Filipinos professing a common faith, the RCCJ still struggles with embracing multiculturalism. This is because despite all its efforts toward accepting ethnic diversity it continues to lack the fundamental change needed to transcend the binary of “us” and “them” to a more holistic notion that includes the liminal spaces between cultures where bicultural children live. By looking at the FJ child and their disenchantment with the RCCJ, this study attempts to shed light on this religious and ethnic minority group and the needs they so desperately need met.

Yellowbelle Duaqui (Sophia University)

“The Arbiters of Migrant Visibility: Communicative Action through Rap Music and other Japanese-Filipino Children Activities in Tokyo, Japan”
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Japanese-Filipino Children (JFC) are rendered invisible in Japanese society by various systemic mechanisms in the Japanese “lifeworld” that produces and reproduces a traditional symbolic structure where JFC identity is under-represented. In this symbolic structure, JFC identity is excluded from the core identities enshrined and accommodated within the framework of the racial ideology of the Japanese State. Being treated as novelty or even as a social misfit, the invisibility of JFC in socio-political discourse and popular consciousness in both Japanese and Philippine societies create a condition of economic marginality and poor social mobility, and in the final analysis, vulnerability.

Jurgen Habermas’s Theory of Communicative Action argues that oppression lies in the structures of interpersonal linguistic communication. The underlying assumption of Habermasian theory postulates that human identity is established through relationships formed with others. It is through the lens of Habermasian theory that the vulnerable circumstances of the JFC will be analyzed, in the context of their lived experiences in Japanese society. This paper will examine the various activities aimed at “information and communication” of a JFC group named Espada (meaning “sword” in English) – one of the more than five JFC rap groups based in Japan’s Kanto region. The activities of Espada include popular culture events such as concerts, Internet exposure through Youtube and social networking sites like Facebook, and a soon-to-be published magazine publication named “Youth Japan”. Habermasian theory puts forth the notion of “emancipative communicative reason” which claims that oppressed individuals can be emancipated through free moral discourses or deliberative discourses achieved through social interaction based on equality. In the public lives of the JFC, a musical and, arguably, political



engagement with rap music – among other forms of popular culture – significantly surfaces as a venue for self-expression among their young male members. This paper aims to examine whether rap is becoming a socially and politically legitimate channel for the JFC to carve their selfhood within Japanese society. Through the production of events for public consumption, it is also the concern of this paper to assess as to how far rap produced by Espada facilitates free and deliberative moral discourse. A key informant interview with the Executive Director of the Center for Japanese Filipino Families had been conducted to find out the activities of Espada members.

Yurika Tsuda (Meiji Gakuin University)

“Caught Between Two Walls? Cultural Identity of Japanese-Filipino Youth”

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In Japan, most research on cultural identity have been focused on Zainichi Koreans, “double culture” children mainly offspring of international marriages between Japanese and western countries, or international students. However from the 1980s, Filipinos mostly women, come to work here and increasingly married with Japanese men. Consequently, the number of Japanese-Filipino children and youth officially registered in Japan has been increasing. As this phenomenon is predicted to continue, it is important to study and analyze the patterns, issues and problems of cultural identity formation of this expanding ethnic group in Japan. Thus, this paper investigates these issues and problems and the degree of cultural assimilation of the Japanese-Filipino youth (from here on referred to as JFY). This research is based on 15 interviewees of aged 14 to 24 conducted in Tokyo and Yokohama. They were contacted within Filipino communities based in Catholic churches. Most of the JFY in this study were born in Japan and went through the Japanese compulsory education, while few arrived in Japan with their mothers when they were as old as 10 years, which means much of their early childhood spent in the Philippines. The level of cultural assimilation and adaptation varies among the respondents, which is similar to what was discussed by Berry (1997). Many do not feel any difference or foreignness compared to other Japanese and there is a tendency among them not to discuss or ask questions about their ethnic background. Thus, the cultural identity of the JFY could be summarized into feelings of (a) “belonging to nowhere,” (b) “can be both (Japanese and Filipino), but neither complete” or (c) “gochamaze /halo-halo (mixed).” Such feelings are explained by using the work of Cohen (2001) to look into why the immigrant youth have a vague identity and could not strongly see themselves as part of any cultural, social or political system. One factor that could explain this “hidden” identity of JFY may be that the image of Filipinos in Japan remains negative and gender specific so that the JFY feel inferior talking to their Japanese peers about their ethnic background. They subconsciously practice discrimination unto themselves, and this contributes to avoidance and/or non-appreciation of their ethnicity. Also, there were limited chances for them to learn about their “other” culture including language and values. This further leads to a weak sense of being part of any Filipino community even in churches where most of the interviews were based. Youth organizations could play a role both as a cultural space and community, an agency to build



social support and social networking and also to provide the role as an educator for them to become more aware of the missing piece of their identity.

Session 04 "Japanese-Filipino Children/Domestic Sphere PART II"

Chair/Discussant: Mamoru Tsuda (Osaka University)

Kimi Yamoto (Osaka University)

"Filipino Mother Tongue Class Activities in Osaka City and Students' Awareness of Their Mother Tongue"

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According to the statistics, about 27,500 Filipino nationals under the age of 20 were registered in Japan as of December 31, 2009. It was also reported that about 12,800 Filipino nationals stay in Japan illegally as of January 1, 2010 and some of them might be children. Many of Filipino children or children who have Filipino parent(s) go to Japan's public schools. According to the statistics, more than 28,000 foreign national students who need Japanese instructions enroll in Japan's public elementary, junior high, senior high, secondary schools and schools for special needs education. More than 3,300 of them speak Filipino as their mother tongue, which has almost quadrupled in the past 10 years. It is presumed that many Japanese national students who speak Filipino as their mother tongue and need Japanese instructions also enroll in public schools. Japanese language teaching and arrangement of supporters who can speak each student's mother tongue are main support for foreign students in Japan's public schools for now. In addition, mother tongue classes are also opened in some schools or areas. The objective of this study is to report the activities in a Filipino mother tongue class for 4 years and half in one of Osaka municipal junior high schools and to consider how the students are aware of their mother tongue and significance of existence of the mother tongue class, based on participant observation, whose targets are the students attending the class. This class is open around once a month and for 2 hours at a time. One Filipino and one Japanese lecturers teach the class. The number of students at a time varies from 3 to 20. About 90% of the students came to Japan from the Philippines when they were in upper grades of elementary school or after they entered high school. About 90% of the students were brought to Japan because their mothers got married to Japanese nationals. About 70% of the students were from Metro Manila and around there and speak Filipino as their mother tongue, while about 30% of them were from the other areas and speak the other Philippine languages as their mother tongue. The main activities in the class are the followings: conversations in Filipino, writing in Filipino, reading in Filipino and studying terminologies in school subjects. They also have opportunities to give speeches, dance on stage, cook and eat Filipino foods with Japanese students. Based on the analysis on their compositions written for their speeches and their reports on them, it is revealed that students place equal importance on Japanese and their mother tongue and existence of the mother tongue class is also supportive of them. And they have positive feeling like courage, confidence and delight by sharing their experience and what they think in their mother tongue. Future issues are to analyze in



detail each student's awareness and how to maintain and improve their mother tongue ability.

Peachy D. Araza , Ma. Editha Lim, and Jeorge Dela Cruz
(University of the Philippines, Diliman / Central Luzon State University) "An
Exploration of Filipino-Japanese Marriages: Focus on Vulnerability and Resiliency"
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This paper deals with a case study of Filipino-Japanese marriages and relationships. It looked into how Filipinas who migrated to Japan and had relationships with Japanese men construe and understand international migration to Japan and how they interpret their social status as wives or girlfriends. Furthermore, it explored the socio-cultural experiences of Filipino-Japanese marriages/relationships with a particular focus on the migrants' socio-cultural adjustments, vulnerabilities and forms of resiliency vis-a-vis the socio-economic background of Filipina migrants and the factors associated with the marriage, divorce or separation. In-depth interviews were conducted among four respondents, two of which are married the other two are single parents to children by Japanese fathers. Purposive sampling was used. International migration to Japan is positively regarded by respondents. However, those who are married felt the suspicion of the Japanese community on their motive behind the marriage. Their accounts likewise implied the status of women in the family as housekeeper and caretaker of children and aged parents-in-law, a manifestation on the similarity of role assumed by wives in the Philippine and Japanese society. Socio-cultural adjustment includes the learning of the Japanese language and living with in-laws. One of the respondents submitted to the normative practices of housewives in rural Japan that resulted to a smooth interpersonal relation between them. The other respondent, who has a stronger personality, felt the political dynamics between her and her in-laws. Single parent respondents are more vulnerable than married respondents. Begetting a Filipino-Japanese child does not guarantee a regular support from the Japanese father, thus, they had to bear the financial expenses of child rearing. Married respondents quit their job as soon as they got married. As their spouses assume the responsibility of sending remittances in the Philippines, they become economically dependent with their spouses. In addition, married respondents who were raised in a rural Philippine community with a romanticized view of marriage (i.e. long term), who suddenly become exposed to a society with a new set of values and marital norms resulted to a compartmentalization of the value system accommodating both the Filipino traditional values and the Japanese value system. By recognizing the legality of divorce in Japan, they end up divorcing their husbands when they felt that the marriage is not working. Outside the context of the family, there is also vulnerability at work and vulnerability against Filipino opportunists. The resiliency of Filipina wives is a function of the desire to improve the life of their families in the Philippines. A manifestation of their resiliency is their ability to adjust and fit their identity with the socially constructed image of Japanese wives. Possessing a submissive personality made them more adaptive to the environment of their married life. In the case of single parent entertainers who were impregnated by Japanese nationals, life continued despite the seeming abandonment of their Japanese partners.



Atty. Amihan Alcazar (University of the Philippines, Diliman)
“Proposed Legislation for Japanese –Filipino Children”
[aprilalcazar@yahoo.com]

Filipinos with legal status in Japan are estimated to number 212,000. With that figure, the group is considered the fourth largest foreign group in the country. The product of marriages between mostly Japanese men and Filipina women result are Japanese-Filipino children or “JFC”. Within the legal framework of both countries, what is the possibility of proposed legislation having far-reaching effects in terms of improving the protection of rights of Japanese-Filipino children? Based on the current Japanese laws, the right to Japanese nationality for JFC is established by the existence of a legal marriage between the Japanese and Filipino spouses. However, outside of a legal union, Japanese law does not recognize the right of a child born out of wedlock to Japanese nationality. The rule of jus sanguinis or nationality by blood is not established in Japan, by the mere acknowledgment of the Japanese parent. It must be established within a legal marriage existing between the spouses at the time of the birth of the child. Therefore, unless there is a ruling by the Supreme Court that provides for the right to Japanese nationality through the acknowledgement of the Japanese parent, then, there is no possibility for illegitimate JFCs to be given Japanese nationality. Proposed legislation can push forth the possibility of establishing a paternity claim on the Japanese fathers. With a high divorce rate of more than 50% between Japanese and Filipino spouses, the foreign mother ends up as the “custodian of Japanese children”. Since the primary caregiver cannot work to augment the child support the Japanese government can be at the forefront of enforcing the law on child support payments from the father and providing social services to the mother as caregiver. Such support will enable the mothers to focus on the care giving of their young children and guide them towards at least taking advantage of the public education provided in Japan for their children. Non-payment of child support by the Japanese fathers should have a legal liability that attaches to its non-enforceability, such as withholding of tax deductions or exemptions. Regarding Filipino children whose mothers have married Japanese men, they can be adopted by their Japanese stepfathers, since it is within legal bounds, during their minority and enter Japan. These children can be provided social services by the government to allow them to make the transition to Japanese life and education easier. The proposed research to be undertaken would be to conduct case studies of the Japanese-Filipino children living in Japan. The objective of the study would be to make recommendations to the Japanese government for the enactment of legislation, which will have a positive beneficial effect on the Japanese-Filipino children, such that they can become productive members of Japanese society and contribute to the well-being of Japanese economy. Such a research can also be extended to cover not only Japanese-Filipino children, but all children, who has one foreign parent and who live in Japan.