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## Feature Article

# Some Expatriate Faculty Members' Assumptions about University Entrance and Entrance Examinations in Japan

Melodie Cook

*University of Niigata Prefecture*

This paper reports on part of an exploratory country-wide survey of tertiary-level expatriate English-language teachers' beliefs and opinions about entrance examinations and their creation. Based on grounded theory, this particular study presents findings which indicate that expatriate English-language teachers, especially those who come from BANA (British, Australasian, North American) contexts make assumptions about the purposes of English entrance examinations, how Japanese students choose universities, and faculties/ departments in which to study. These assumptions appear to be related to three factors: the ways in which expatriate respondents selected institutions for undergraduate study in their home countries, their graduate-level education, and their experience with large-scale English language testing. As more Japanese universities ask foreign faculty members for assistance with entrance examinations, these findings may be helpful to assist expatriate colleagues understand why they may find examination creation perplexing as well as help Japanese colleagues who, when co-creating such tests with their expatriate colleagues, come up against differences in opinions or questions about university entrance policies in general and entrance examination construction in particular.

本研究では、入試やその作成に関する高等教育レベルの非日本人英語教師の信念や意見について全国的調査の一部を報告する。グラウンデッド・セオリーに基づき、本研究では、非日本人英語教師が、特にBANAコンテキスト（英国、北米、オーストラリア）出身者が、入試英語の目的や、日本人生徒の大学や学部・学科の選定方法に関して推定することを示す調査結果を提示する。これらの仮定は、非日本人回答者が自国の学部教育機関を選択した方

法、彼らの大学院レベルの教育、大規模な英語のテストの経験といった、3つの要因と関連があるようだ。外国人教員に入試の支援を求める日本の大学が増えるにつれ、本研究での調査結果は、日本人教員が非日本人教員と入試問題を共に作成する際、総論的な入試方針と、各論的な入試作成に関して意見や疑問に相違が生じた際、有益な知見を与える可能性がある。

In Japan, around 5700 expatriate English teaching faculty work full-time at Japanese universities (McCrostie & Spiri, 2008). Those with tenure are often required to sit on committees that construct the English component of their university's entrance examination; these are crucial administrative bodies in Japanese tertiary institutions because entrance examinations determine the future lives of many young Japanese people. What some expatriate English-teaching faculty members may not realize, however, is that some students studying in their institutions are there for reasons for which they might not have considered. Because they are educated in a different country, possess graduate degrees in TESL/TEFL (these days, the minimum requirement for employment in tertiary education in Japan) and are familiar with large-scale testing systems in their own countries, many expatriate English-teaching faculty members bring with them not only a certain skill set and knowledge base, but also a number of assumptions about how and why Japanese students choose to study where they do, and what tests admitting these students should be like.

As there are few published accounts of expatriate English-instructor voices in the English examination construction process, this exploratory research seeks to understand what roles foreign faculty members play with regards to creation of their university's English entrance examinations, what they believe about the examinations in general, and if they have been successful at effecting change or incorporating innovations into their university's English entrance examinations. This particular part of the study seeks to understand the assumptions that expatriate English-teaching faculty members make, find the sources of their assumptions, and offer recommendations for greater communication among members of entrance examination committees. These recommendations may help prevent or at least ease potential tensions among committee members when

they arise.

## **University Choice in Japan**

In Japan, while some people believe that entrance to any tertiary institution is sufficient, many continue to consider that future success in life is predicated on entrance to a good university (Aspinall, 2005). One study found that when Japanese, British, and German respondents were asked about the importance of the institution of higher education as a recruitment criterion, Japanese respondents tended to rate it more highly than the other two nationalities (Schomburg & Teichler, 2002). This is because in the *gakureki shakai* or “educationally credentialized society” that is Japan (Poole, 2003) in which “... the extraordinary emphasis on ranking colleges and universities has led to a brand-name sensitivity that may affect a person for their entire life” (Poole, 2003). This “brand-name sensitivity” cannot be underestimated, since, according to Blumenthal (1992):

[l]arge companies often recruit their workers from a few top universities before they graduate, which means that enrolment in a prestigious university secures employment in a large company. Japanese universities are ranked in a pyramid structure, with a few national universities and fewer private universities at the top. (p. 456)

This belief persists: Japanese students’ accept as true that they can, even in the current economic climate, gain lifetime employment in prestigious fields by entering highly-ranked institutions (Lee-Cunin, 2005). Thus, one’s chances at improving one’s lot in life, in other words, social mobility, may depend on one’s entering the highest-ranked institution possible.

## **University Rankings in Japan**

As of 2011, in Japan there are 780 universities (Ministry of Education, 2012). Each year the rankings of these universities are published, so that parents and prospective students can select, often with the help of supplementary education personnel (Roesgaard, 2006), the institution that the high school graduates will most likely succeed in entering. The 2010 rankings by Nikkei BP Consulting, for example, listed Waseda University as the highest-ranked in Japan (Daigaku

burandoryoku ranking, 2010, November 12). As an illustration of this “brand power”, almost all government and industry leaders in Japan are said to be graduates of Tokyo University (Cutts, 1997), one key player in the Japanese university hierarchy, currently ranked second-place in Japan.

## **Prospective Students “Choosing” Universities and Departments**

Japanese students who search online may find articles recommending that when they are choosing a university, they consider commuting times, the environment around the school, and the degree of satisfaction they are likely to experience after entering a particular university (Yoshida, 2009, April 1), in addition to the brand power of the institution. Many are advised on which university they will be likely to enter by their high school teachers and increasingly by *juku*, or cram schools (Roesgaard, 2006), which will look at students’ test scores and make recommendations for universities. There seems to be scant information written in English about how prospective students choose universities to enter, but, it appears that they are likely to try to enter the highest-ranked institution that will accept them and will study in whatever department their entrance examination scores qualify them for. For example, Lee-Cunin (2005) found that some of her students at the University of Shiga selected the Faculty of Economics for intellectual enjoyment and the usefulness of economics for a future career; however, others said that they couldn’t find another interesting major or were automatically assigned to that faculty based on their entrance examination scores. In other words, while some students may be genuinely interested in studying in a particular university in a particular faculty, some may only be interested in the university’s brand name power.

## **University Entrance**

Although there are alternative methods of university entrance such as recommendation (students are admitted based on recommendation of their high school principal), and students’ involvement in extra-curricular activities (through an admissions office [AO]), and although the number of accepted students using these alternative methods is on the increase, especially in private

universities, the majority of prospective students, especially those hoping to attend national or public institutions, take entrance examinations (Aspinall, 2005). First they take a unified examination administered by the National Center for University Examinations, followed by “a secondary entrance examination held by individual universities and colleges, although some institutions conduct only the latter” (Arimoto, 2007), the focus of this paper.

University entrance examinations are considered “objective, fair, and open to everyone” (Cutts, 1997), and they remain the most common method for students to compete in the race to the top of Japan’s social ladder. Because they are largely based on detailed, factual information (Aspinall, 2005), adolescents spend long hours inside and outside of school studying to enter the highest-ranked high school, then university, possible.

### **Entrance Examination English**

The English portion of entrance examinations has been the target of much criticism in terms of which “standard” of English is being tested, the use of archaic vocabulary and structures, and the overall difficulty of reading passages (Brown & Yamashita, 1995; Kikuchi, 2006; LoCastro, 1990), as well as the types of tasks commonly occurring on examinations (Kikuchi, 2006). The passive nature of entrance examinations is also considered the main reason why secondary education Japanese teachers’ of English (JTEs) continue to use traditional (grammar translation) teaching practices (Cook, 2010; Sakui, 2004; Sato, 2002; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004; Wada, 2002). Some expatriate researchers and professors have attempted to address the problem by making examinations more in line with what are considered to be, in western countries, good language tests, such as validity and reliability, but they have met with resistance (Brown, 2000; Leonard, 1998; Murphey, 2004). One reason for this may be that many expatriate English-teaching faculty may have only a partial understanding about the ultimate purposes of English examinations (Cook, 2013); while, Japanese faculty, having been schooled in Japan, may implicitly understand what the purpose(s) of the test is (are) and see no reason to change them.

Perhaps this is because the English portion of entrance examinations at

Japanese tertiary institutions is seen to not only serve (or not serve) pedagogical purposes, but may largely just be a tool for gatekeeping and social stratification, generating revenue, and projecting a certain kind of face to the general public (Blumenthal, 1992; Cook, 2013; Frost, 1991; Kariya & Dore, 2006; LoCastro, 1990; Shimahara, 1978). In other words, an entrance examination may not, in fact, be a language test in the ways that it may be conceived by some expatriate English language teaching (ELT) faculty.

## **Purpose of the Research**

This exploratory research hopes to open the discourse about Japanese entrance examination development from the perspective of expatriate English instructors. This paper discusses one aspect of my wider research, and focuses on a country-wide survey of expatriate English-teaching university faculty and their participation in and beliefs about their institution's entrance examinations. This particular study focuses on two questions:

1. What assumptions do expatriate English-teaching faculty members make about university entrance and entrance examinations in Japan?
2. What are the origins of these assumptions?

## **Data Collection and Analysis**

An online survey was constructed and made available to respondents through snowball sampling, "a 'chain reaction' whereby the researcher identifies a few people who meet the criteria of the particular study and then asks these participants to identify further members of the population" (Dörnyei, 2003, p. 72). The survey asked respondents to give demographic information, elaborate on their roles in entrance examination creation at their institutions, share non-specific information about test design, and give their general opinions and beliefs about the English portion of entrance examinations. Respondents agreeing to participate in a follow-up interview were contacted and interviewed via Skype, telephone, or face-to-face session. Interviews generally lasted between 30 minutes to one hour. For this study, Creswell's (2009) generic guide for analysis and interpretation was followed. Data were collected and prepared for analysis and

audio-recordings were transcribed. Data were then read through to gain a general impression of ideas and tone, then typed cases—files containing transcripts of interviews, respondent demographic information, and other communication—were prepared for all participants. Using NVivo software, Version 9 (QSR International), material was organized into chunks (words or groups of words referring to a theme), and coding processes were used to generate themes for analysis (Bringer, Johnston, & Brackenridge, 2004). Finally, emergent themes were identified.

It is important to note that data derived for this study arose from both questions asked directly to respondents as well as spontaneous mentions of or anecdotes about how students choose universities and departments to enter.

## Participants

One hundred and twenty-one expatriate English teaching faculty members who work at tertiary institutions in Japan took part in the anonymous online survey, and 24 of these took part in follow-up interviews. Eight of the 24 commented particularly on university entrance and purposes of entrance examinations, as well as gave their opinions on how examinations should be improved. It is their opinions that are examined in this paper. In order to protect their anonymity,

Table 1

*Interviewee Information*

Pseudonym	Nationality	Years Teaching in Japan	Type of University	Highest Level of Education	Courses Taken in Testing/Assessment
Bob	Canadian	6-10	Private	MA (TESL)	Yes
David	American	11-20	Private	MA (TESL)	Yes
Diogenes	American	31-40	Private	MA (TESOL)	Yes
Jack	Australian	1-5	National	MEd (Language and Literacy Education)	Yes
Mike	British	11-20	Private	MA (not listed)	No
Peter	British	6-10	Public	EdD (Applied Linguistics and TESOL)	Yes
Sam	Canadian	1-5	Private	MEd (TESOL)	Yes
Steve	American	1-5	Private	MA (TESOL)	Yes

pseudonyms have been used. As Table 1 indicates, all the participants who will be quoted in this study come from British/Australasian/North American (BANA) countries, all are male, and all but two (Jack and Peter) teach in private institutions. All hold a master's level degree in TESL-related fields (except for Mike's which was not listed), and all but Mike took courses in testing and assessment as part of their graduate-level study. In order to protect the privacy of the participants, their university rankings are not indicated in the table.

## Findings

Three major assumptions made by the respondents are as follows: 1) that an entrance examination is, or should be, a language test; 2) that students want to be in the institution they have been accepted to; and 3) that students want to be in the faculty/department they are currently studying in. It should be noted that in some cases, assumptions stemmed from unprompted / unsolicited responses from only one or two respondents during interviews.

### **Assumption 1: The English Entrance Examination is a Language Test**

One of the most fundamental assumptions made by respondents was that their institution's entrance examination is, or should be, by their standard, a language test. Respondents' answers to three questions seemed to uphold this hypothesis:

1. "What do you think the purpose of your university's English entrance examination *should be*?"
2. "What, in your opinion, *is* the purpose of the English entrance examination at your institution?", and
3. "What do you believe would improve the effectiveness of your university's English entrance examination?"

### ***The purpose of English entrance examinations: Ideals and realities.***

Responses to the online questionnaire revealed a tendency for respondents to place a high priority on pedagogical purposes for entrance examinations. The "should be" column of Table 2 reveals that the top three responses to the question



“What do you think the purpose of your university’s English entrance examination *should be?*” were “To choose students who will be able to succeed in English classes our university offers” (67.7%), “To get a detailed picture of students’ English ability” (62.9%) and “To indicate if students have successfully understood what they were taught in high school (43.5%). In other words, responses had a primarily pedagogical focus. It is important to note that respondents could choose more than one purpose.

Table 2

*What the purposes of university entrance examinations should be and are*

Responses from interviewees	Purpose should be (%)	Purpose is (%)
To choose students able to succeed in English classes our university offers	67.7	45.9
To get a detailed picture of students’ English ability	62.9	26.2
To indicate if students have understood what they were taught in high school	43.5	27.9
To find students’ strengths and weaknesses	35.5	16.4
To place students in appropriate faculties	30.6	14.8
To get an idea of students’ overall intelligence	22.6	14.8
To determine students’ diligence	16.1	18
To indicate the selective nature of the university	11.3	27.9
To enable students’ mobility levels	4.8	1.6
To support the university financially	3.2	42.6

However, for the question “What, in your opinion, *is* the purpose of the English entrance examination at your institution?” the top three responses were different, moving from pedagogically oriented in the “should be” column, to pedagogical plus socio-economically oriented in the “is” column. As the “is” column reveals, while the number one answer remained the same, although at a lower percentage (45.9%), the second highest-ranked response was “To support the university financially” (42.6%). This was followed by a two-way tie: “To indicate the selective nature of the university” and “To indicate if students have understood what they learned in high school” (27.9% each). These responses suggest a difference in ideals and realities of entrance examination purposes in

the minds of expatriate English-teaching faculty members.

### ***Respondents' suggestions for improvement***

When asked how entrance examinations could be improved, Peter, in an interview, said he thought that aligning his institution's test with a large-scale test would be beneficial, "... whenever I look at a university entrance examination package, I always compare it to that IELTS package which is very well tried and tested over the years." He also thought the following questions would help his institution's examination determine exactly the kinds of students he thought were wanted by the school: "I think a little bit more clarity and discussion would be very, very useful to just review what are our overall aims here. What kind of students are we looking for? What kind of skills are we wishing to test?" What is pertinent here is that Peter is expressing a wish for explication about the goals of his institution's entrance examination; in other words, what these goals actually are is not obvious to him.

A pedagogical orientation is obvious when Bob wondered why his institution did not "... try to test for things that we want our students to be able to do in the first year?" This is also true for Steve, who said, "Ultimately what matters to me is how the admitted students can be separated into levels for the English classes." In other words, Bob would like his examination to resemble a diagnostic test and Steve would like an instrument for placement.

Both Sam and David felt that statistical analysis of test results would be beneficial. Sam, in a discussion of validity and reliability said that he found it "shocking" that universities don't bother doing statistical analyses of tests, since discrete-point tests can be easily analyzed using a machine that costs a mere 10,000 yen. David said he tried to introduce such practices at his institution but felt that his idea wasn't "well received"; he also suggested running statistical tests on the entrance examinations, but that "no one really thought that was necessary." Jack felt that as an instrument for norm referencing, entrance examination "norms have to be made apparent to the people. It'd be much better to just use Center Tests or even just TOEFL as those benchmarks. At least people are quite clear about what's required to obtain a particular level." What we can see from the above suggestions for improvement is a tendency for expatriate English teachers

to view entrance examinations as language tests as having a largely pedagogical purpose; these teachers express a desire to make more robust language tests, too, which includes making test aims transparent not only to test creators, but also the public at large.

However, not all respondents feel this way. Mike, while acknowledging that what he thought were commonly considered good tests—meaning those which were valid and reliable and were therefore also ideal—felt that testing experts don't understand the purpose of entrance examinations in Japan, and their ideas about tests and testing are not necessarily relevant in the Japanese context. While he confuses validity with reliability in the quote below, his point is that looking at Japanese tests from a language-test-construction standpoint may not be necessary.

J.D. Brown<sup>1</sup> has talked about issues of validity, meaning that students who take the same test again, or another test made by that university, might get a very different result. I don't think this is the case with our exam. I think our tests are kind of reliable. In other words, you can have a narrowly-focused or even stupid test that's still reliable, right? I think that's what we have at our place. If that is the case, who cares if it's good or not unless a good test leads to something that's useful for the university. But there is no reason to think that it would. So that's what I think about J.D. Brown. He knows everything there is to know about Japanese entrance exams from a technical point of view, but he doesn't live in Japan or teach in a Japanese university, so I wonder if he fully understands the reality – namely that there are no positive gains to be made for any institution that attempts to make a better or more reliable test.

However, while Mike questions the assumption that entrance examinations should conform to western standards, he does seem to suggest that many entrance examinations may be, while perhaps on the surface, reliable, also “stupid.”

### **Assumption 2: Students Want to be in the Institution to Which they have been Accepted**

The second major assumption expatriate English-teaching faculty members might make about students is that they want to be studying in the institution to which they have been accepted. Diogenes realized that this was, in fact, not true

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after confronting a group of male students at a second-tier national university who, compared to the other students in the class, were not performing at the same level as their peers. When asked why, they told him that they had applied to get into a top-tier university, but were unable to; however, their scores were good enough for them to enter the most prestigious department at Diogenes' institution, and so that is what they did. Although they were not happy because they had not entered a higher-tier institution, they took their next-best option. In our further discussion, Diogenes mentioned an important point which is that one does not "just pass the exam to get into a university, [one passes] the exam to get into the department" which relates to the third assumption.

### **Assumption 3: Students Want to be in the Department in which they are Majoring**

In speaking of the group of male students above, Diogenes continued, "And so, these kids who weren't interested in English and really weren't very good at English nevertheless were able to and were interested in getting into the highest rank in the hierarchy at a second-tier national university..." meaning that students will enter whatever department their scores will allow them to at the highest-tier institution into which they can be accepted. He then told me a related story involving a junior high school teacher he knew:

She was bright, but not very bright, and she had always wanted to be a junior high school teacher. And it turns out that she passed exams to "A" uni and "B" uni. So "A" uni is the national university and "B" uni is the well-regarded private university... And so when she took the exam for "B" uni she chose the English department and for "A" uni she chose the Persian department. And she passed both exams, so which one do you think she took?

The answer to this rhetorical question is the Persian department, because although her career goals were related to teaching, this woman was able to successfully enter a higher-ranked institution by studying a subject not necessarily related to her future employment. For her, entering the highest-ranked university possible would ensure that she would be able to get the job she wanted after

graduation.

For some teachers, such as Sam, however, the fact that students may choose to enter departments they are not interested in, but are highly-ranked within the university, is not clear until made explicit. He said that he “used to have a pretty negative opinion” about his students, especially because they were English majors. His Japanese wife “set him straight” (his words):

I just assumed that because they took English as their major that they would have more motivation or interest in English or something; more determination. And they didn’t have it and it really irritated me, because teaching the English major students was sometimes worse than teaching the elective courses. And I found that students who were studying international politics, they were much more aware and active about their education. They were more into it. And this really disappointed me and I went home and complained to my wife and my wife is Japanese and finally she got tired of it and said, “You know, did you ever think that they didn’t want to study English?”

Again, what we see here is that perhaps the students in Sam’s department probably didn’t want to be there. He admitted the “worst assumption” he made when he started working at his present institution was that students were taking English courses because they actually wanted to. Since being enlightened by his wife, he reported that he started giving students more space, at the same time admitting that “we (expatriate English-teaching faculty members) come in with our own background and our own bias”, and saying that he felt his Japanese colleagues know what the realities for students are.

## **Origins of Expatriate English Language Teachers’ Assumptions**

There seem to be three origins of respondents’ assumptions about university entrance and entrance examinations in Japan: the influence of their own experiences of choosing universities in their home countries, the influence of graduate-level education on their thinking, and their own experiences working

with large-scale language tests.

### **Assumptions about How Students Choose Universities**

Bob felt that having grown up in Canada, where university entrance is largely based on high school scores, coloured his opinions and led him to wish for a test that would at least be re-usable as well as testing for abilities that students should have upon entry. For him, the Canadian system of university selection was “the better way”:

I mean, where in Canada we don't have any SAT<sup>2</sup>, we don't have any entrance exam; all we have are the marks from our high school and that's it. And so there is none of this, studying for an exam and a mark that you get on the exam determines the rest of your life sort of thing. So for me, if we're going to bother to make this big document and make sure that it's perfect in every way that we can possibly make it, well then why not try to use it again? Why not try to test for things that we want our students to be able to do in the first place?

### **Graduate School Education**

The online survey indicated that out of 121 respondents, 112 (92%) had completed master's degrees, generally the minimum educational requirement for employment at universities in Japan. While some were in fields unrelated to ELT, such as Japanese Studies, East Asian Studies, or Communication, the majority of their degrees were for the most part in TESOL, Applied Linguistics, and Education. Of the last group, 67.2% had taken courses in testing and assessment as part of their graduate work. Such courses are likely to include readings about language testing by authors such as Hughes (2003) and Bachman and Palmer (1996), to name a very few. Thus, it may not be surprising that expatriate English-teaching faculty members take a largely pedagogical view of entrance examinations and may be likely to view test construction based on what they have learned in graduate school.

## **Experiences with Large-Scale Language Testing**

When asked what he felt would improve his institution's entrance examination, Peter answered as follows:

I would like a speaking component, but I realize that it's not feasible. You know, that's what I mean. I mean I come from a background of IELTS preparation where IELTS examinations do have tests in the four skills and they even at one time had this intertextuality thing like between the reading component and the writing component and theoretically it looked really, really good, but there were problems with that and they separate the skills. But that four-skills testing is kind of the background I come from in my own training for academic courses. And that kind of embedded in me, so whenever I look at a university entrance examination package, I always compare it to the IELTS package which is very well tried and tested over the years.

Here, Peter is acknowledging not only that he is influenced, not only by his background or training, but also by familiarity with a specific large-scale test which he trusts and believes to be a sound, that is to say, valid and reliable, instrument. People who are familiar with large-scale language tests that are used elsewhere, such as in the UK, US, or Canada, will likely compare entrance examinations in Japan to these kinds of instruments.

Sam, though, seemed to be questioning this kind of thinking. He contrasted foreign large-scale tests with English tests generally used in Japan to make his point:

This other thing, too, is entrance exams for foreign universities... they're supposed to determine whether students are able to do the kinds of tasks they would be doing if they entered the university, right? And that's what the new TOEFL's supposed to be doing. Testing the ability to do university work, right? But for university entrance exams in Japan, I don't think it's that at all. It's just a way of separating people. ... I mean, you have English exams for companies, for jobs where the person will never be required to use it. It's just a way to separate people.

Sam appears to understand that tests are generally used as a way to stratify competitors in different areas of Japanese society.

## **Limitations/Directions for Future Research**

Although the results of this study seem to point to some trends, there are also several limitations. First, there is an obvious imbalance in that the respondents tend to be employed at private universities for the most part. This may not be surprising given that the majority of universities in Japan are private (599) and public and national institutions account for a much lower number (95 and 86, respectively; Ministry of Education, 2012), thus more expatriate faculty are likely to be hired at private rather than public or national institutions. Future research could seek to focus on obtaining the opinions and beliefs of expatriate faculty working at national or public institutions in order to provide a broader picture. Another limitation is that this particular group of respondents were similar in that they were all male and all educated in BANA countries. Whether women or non-BANA expatriates report the same assumptions about entrance examinations and university entrance needs to be studied further. Another limitation was due to the secrecy surrounding entrance examination creation. Several respondents to the online questionnaire mentioned that they would have liked to participate in follow-up interviews, but in the end they felt unable to do that, due to their institutions' demand that their participation in examination creation remain a secret. One respondent revealed that their spouse didn't even know that they were on an entrance examination committee.

While the goal of this particular research project was to obtain the beliefs and opinions of expatriate ELT faculty, it would also of course be useful to find out if our local Japanese colleagues hold the same opinions and beliefs and, if they do, why or and if they don't, why not. Since they are our partners in the process of entrance examination creation, it is necessary for us to know what they think university entrance is about and how entrance examinations should be constructed. Future research with local colleagues (assuming they will participate) is thus, necessary.



## **Conclusion**

This research points to a possibility that expatriate English-teaching faculty members' beliefs about both university entrance as well as entrance examinations in Japan are likely to be influenced by the educational system they experienced as undergraduates in their home countries, what they learned about testing and assessment as part of their graduate school requirements, and large-scale testing instruments they are familiar with. As a result, they may be inclined to believe that large-scale high-stakes entrance examinations should be made using testing expertise, should be valid and reliable, and should serve primarily pedagogical aims.

This may be problematic, then, when they are asked to create entrance examinations with Japanese colleagues who have an implicit knowledge of the forms and purposes of such tests, having been through the Japanese system of education, and perhaps feel it unnecessary to make the goals of such tests explicit to item writers. Problems may arise when expatriate ELT faculty have only a partial understanding of the examination's real purpose, which may have a broader, rather than purely pedagogical, focus. In fact, one respondent not listed in this particular paper, who was very experienced and who struggled to improve his institution's English entrance examination, was removed with all other foreign faculty from the entrance examination committee. He was given the rationale that expatriate faculty did not understand what entrance examinations were for.

Thus, if there is to be mutual understanding and cooperation on entrance examination committees, it would be beneficial for both expatriate and Japanese faculty members to understand each other's points of view with regards to the reasons why students enter particular universities and departments, as well as take certain entrance examinations, and in particular, English on entrance examinations. Expatriate English-teaching faculty members, need to familiarize themselves with more fully about entrance examinations in Japan and thus learn to understand other purposes to which an entrance examination can be put and try to do so without judgement or criticism. If they feel changes are needed, they could make recommendations which will fit in with their institution's overall aims of attracting the best possible students.

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## Notes

1. J. D. Brown has spoken and taught courses in more than thirty countries ranging from Brazil to Yugoslavia. He has also published numerous journal articles and book chapters (on language testing, curriculum design, research methods, and program evaluation) and authored or co-authored numerous books (on reading statistical language studies, language curriculum, language testing, language testing in Japan, testing L2 pragmatics, performance testing, criterion-referenced language testing, using surveys in language programs, doing research, language test development, ideas for classroom assessment, connected speech, and heritage language curriculum). Source: <http://www.hawaii.edu/sls/sls/people/faculty/jd-brown/>.
2. According to the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Web site: “The SAT is a globally recognized college admission test that lets you show colleges what you know and how well you can apply that knowledge. It tests your knowledge of reading, writing and math—subjects that are taught every day in high school classrooms. Most students take the SAT during their junior or senior year of high school, and almost all colleges and universities use the SAT to make admission decisions.” Source: <http://sat.collegeboard.org/about-tests/sat>

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## **Author's bio**

*Dr. Melodie Cook has been teaching at the university level both in Canada and Japan since 1993. Her research interests are in teacher education, entrance examinations and multicultural family use of supplementary education.*  
*cookmelo@unii.ac.jp*

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